



February 10, 2021

Mayor Rosenberg and Wausau City Council
407 Grant Street
Wausau WI 54403

Dear Mayor Rosenberg and Wausau City Council:

Citizens for a Clean Wausau has addressed the Council repeatedly and provided data regarding contamination issues in the City. There has most often been negative pushback but after literally years of debate, once testing was finally completed, the testing results validated the concerns that were expressed and shown to be factual.

Again, the City has a decision to make – this time regarding 1300 Cleveland Avenue. This property has a history of gross contamination and the City was willing to move forward without additional testing with the Community Partners project and a place for the homeless. Alderperson Kilian provided factual data regarding the contamination and he also arranged to allow community feedback.

Interestingly, the Phase I done by REI advised no additional testing was necessary. However, after further examination of the factual history – again provided by Alderperson Kilian – additional testing was done and the test results reflected gross contamination – even above industrial limits, per the DNR. Thallium was found throughout the property. It is our understanding that Thallium is an extremely toxic metal that has been known as the “poisoner’s poison”. At a meeting of the Economic Development Committee on July 7, 2020, Alderperson Neal asked Alderperson Kilian if people were afraid of it (referring to the soil) “because we’ve heard there’s poison there.” Well, poison has been found in this soil and, YES, we are very afraid of it and we are extremely concerned.

We now understand that the City mistakenly rezoned this area from residential to industrial. We also understand that that mistake has been confirmed by City Planner Lenz. When a mistake is made and known to be a mistake – particularly one that could negatively impact the health, safety and welfare of residents surrounding that area – anyone with a conscience would correct that mistake. If that mistake is not corrected, it is an insult to the residents. That property must be remediated based on nonindustrial standards. It must be remediated to the most protective levels for residents in the area.

In addition, there must be no additional industrialization allowed on that property. Alderperson Rasmussen at a City Council meeting on November 13, 2018, said “Nowadays, if the Plan Commission would look at a proposal to have industrial zones right next to a neighborhood, they would likely deny it.” We are counting on that attitude from the City Council in this regard since the property was mistakenly recently rezoned from residential to industrial.

We do not want to continue battling with the City regarding gross contamination which affects its citizens. However, if the City decides to make this a fiscal matter rather than a matter of safety for its residents, we will not cease our efforts to obtain what is right and owing to the residents of this area and to the residents of this city.

Sincerely,

Citizens for a Clean Wausau
Randy Radtke and Terry Kilian
Spokespersons