



241-249-257 Ninety Ninth Avenue LLC  
C/o Dennis Homel  
14 N. Mallard Ct.  
St. Paul, MN 55127  
651-482-1175

December 6, 2013

Mr. Clark Arneson,  
City Manager of Blaine  
10801 Town Square Drive Northeast  
Blaine, MN 55449

Re: **Parking Request for City Council Consideration**  
**Royal Oaks Apartments**  
241-249-251 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast

Mr. Arneson:

To address a serious need for additional parking for residents, we are requesting the City Council approve a modification of winter parking restrictions along 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue Northeast. Our examination, and discussions with Mayor Tom Ryan, Council members Wes Hovland and Dick Swanson, and with Bryan Schafer, led us to this request for Council consideration.

We have been working to address the parking need since early in 2011. We have completed boundary survey and topographic survey to allow the review of options for the expansion of the existing parking on the site.

When the site was developed in the 1960's, the buildings and parking were placed efficiently and effectively on the site and now occupy nearly all of the buildable portions. The parking/driveway areas were built to the, then, required setback of 5 feet from the property lines. The three buildings enclose a courtyard area that is extensively landscaped with mature trees, planting beds, and walkways. In addition, there is a 38 stall parking garage on the rear portion of the site. Currently, 2 of the garage stalls are used for storage of maintenance equipment.

There is little room to construct additional parking. The possible removal of courtyard trees, plantings, and walkways, would only provide approximately 7 additional stalls, a small portion of the 20 needed stalls. The effects on the apartment complex would be very detrimental to its appearance and rent ability.

The east side of the easterly building is the only area large enough to construct a parking lot that would provide most, but not all of the needed parking. Constructing a parking lot at this location would be difficult and expensive. With the current setback requirements, variances would be required. Further, the terrain slope is up to 17% and is such that a 210-foot long, 6 to 8 foot tall retaining wall would be required. This would also require removal of 8 to 10 mature trees. With all of that, only 12 of the needed 20 stalls could be provided. Like the construction of parking in the courtyard, the

construction of a parking lot and retaining wall would be obviously harmful to the overall environment of the site with significant tree removal, lawn removal, substantial grading and filling, together with the sizable retaining wall.

We have been leasing a small area from the adjacent property owner for some of the necessary parking. We have been informed that this area will not be available after December 1, 2014. Additionally, that adjacent homeowner also owns all properties surrounding Royal Oaks Apartments. This homeowner has stated that he wants to retain all of his current parcels with a long-term plan to have the entire property developed as a single parcel. He does not want to divide and sell any portion of the property. This, of course, limits our ability to expand into adjacent property.

Further to the west is University Avenue Elementary School with the playgrounds/athletic fields/green area being nearest to the apartments. Nearest, but not contiguous with Royal Oaks Apartments property due to the relatively narrow parcel owned by the previously mentioned homeowner.

There is approximately 350 feet of frontage along 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue that is used for parking by the residents except from November 1 through April 1 when parking is restricted so that between 2:00 am and 7:00 am parking is not allowed. With some modification to this restriction, parking along the street can work and still provide for the necessary unhindered snow removal. The modification of this restriction would provide the needed parking for the residents.

Our request is for City approval to modify the parking restriction to provide for a "snow emergency" rule that would provide for the moving of parked vehicles when necessary in a "snow emergency. Several cities have such "snow emergency" provisions. For example,

### **City of Bloomington**

#### **Snow emergency parking ban**

A snow emergency parking ban is declared when the National Weather service announces that three or more inches of snow have fallen.

This means that no motor vehicles are allowed to park on any street for 48 hours, or until the streets have been plowed from curb to curb. Failure to move vehicles from the street could result in the vehicle being towed.

### **City of Excelsior**

Snow emergency means every occurrence of snowfall where snow has accumulated to a depth of two inches or more. Each snow emergency shall commence at 1:00 a.m. following the accumulation of snow to a depth of two inches and shall remain in effect on each city street until 7:00 a.m.

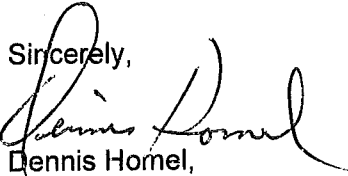
Additional information regarding the "snow emergency" provisions for many Minnesota cities can be found at [minnesota.cbslocal.com/snow-emergency-information](http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/snow-emergency-information).

The following information is also important in considering our request:

1. 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue is paved to a width of approximately 44 feet, thus is wide enough to comfortably allow two-way traffic flow in addition to the parking requested.
2. The traffic volumes on 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue are relatively low.
3. With the construction of the 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue collector, 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue is no longer a through street in that it does not directly connect to University Avenue.

Thank you in advance for considering the serious parking problem needs for the residents at Royal Oaks Apartments.

Sincerely,



Dennis Homel,  
Managing Partner