



December 13, 2020

To: LaJune Lange, International Leadership Institute (ILI)

Kevin Reich, City Council member - Ward 1  
Cam Gordon, City Council member - Ward 2  
Steve Fletcher, City Council member - Ward 3  
Phillipe Cunningham, City Council member - Ward 4  
Jeremiah Ellison, City Council member - Ward 5  
Lisa Goodman, City Council member - Ward 7  
Andrea Jenkins, City Council member - Ward 8  
Alondra Cano, City Council member - Ward 9  
Lisa Bender, City Council member - Ward 10  
Jeremy Schroeder, City Council member - Ward 11  
Andrew Johnson, City Council member - Ward 12  
Linea Palmisano, City Council member - Ward 13

CC: Randy Furst, Reporter Star Tribune

From: Charles E. Rucker, President  
Minneapolis African American Professional Firefighters Association (MAAPFA)

Re: Support for the Preservation and Identification of Former Fire Station 24 Located on  
4501 Hiawatha Avenue, Minneapolis, MN

Dear Judge Lange and City Council Members,

On behalf of MAAPFA, I would like to give our support to the International Leadership Institute's (ILI) efforts to have the City designate former Fire Station 24 as a historic site and landmark so the early history of African American people can be identified and preserved. We agree that former Fire Station 24 is a historic resource and look forward to the hearing with the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission to discuss the future of this building. The 1907 history behind this building is amazing and a testament to the cultural dynamics of the time and in fact reflective of the social dynamics of today. This building will serve as a great memory of the progress that the citizens of Minneapolis have made over time and indeed a beacon of hope indicative of the work that still needs to be done.

MAAPFA was started in 1989 and it was created to address the many issues within the Minneapolis Fire Department such as the cultural environment in which firefighters worked, needs within the broader community, and of course support hiring and promoting Black firefighters within the Fire Department. We are a Chapter with the International Association of Black Professional Firefighters and stand on the legacy of past Black firefighters who fought discrimination and institutional racism in the City of Minneapolis and around the country. Those firefighters with the help of the Black community and other allies spent a great deal of time in courts fighting against Fire Chiefs and City Councils to hire more African Americans, Indigenous Americans, Latino Americans and women firefighters, and to make the appropriate changes to unfair hiring practices. They all were successful in changing many of the unjust practices in the Minneapolis Fire Department. In the 1970s, the Black firefighters with the Mayor were opposed by the City Council and Local 82 IAFF union, in a lawsuit against the City of Minneapolis to hire BIPOC and women firefighters. The lawsuit was finally settled in our favor by the US Supreme Court. As you can see, our history is rich with the sweat, blood and tears of men and women fighting for their humanity. We want these stories and others to be shared in profound ways in order to penetrate the consciousness of our youth and citizens in general. This is how we continue and ensure that Black lives matter.

Lastly, we look forward to working with Judge Lange, ILI and the City in the coming year to make this historical designation of former Fire Station 24 a reality. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles Rucker". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Charles E. Rucker, President  
Minneapolis African American Professional Firefighters Association (MAAPFA)  
(612) 695-0022  
ruckce@hotmail.com