

on highway 61.
Gloria Anderson was walking south and crossing Third Street in the crosswalk at the time of the incident, according

states that Chernisky looked left for oncoming traffic and proceeded through the crosswalk, where he struck Anderson.

LEGISLATURE

Ethics complaint filed against McNamara

by Chad Richardson • Editor
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A Minneapolis legislator filed an ethics complaint on Monday against state representative Denny McNamara of Hastings. In the complaint, DFL state representative Phyllis Kahn said she felt "threatened" after McNamara began yelling at her and a lobbyist in his office during a meeting on May 16.

McNamara, a Republican, released a statement Monday in which he apologized to Kahn for yelling during the closed-door meeting. In an interview Tuesday, he acknowledged the exchange.

"You could not yell any louder than I did," McNamara said.

McNamara said he only did so after his son's landscaping

business was threatened by a lobbyist and after he was accused of being a liar by a different lobbyist.

Kahn said the ethics complaint ought to be straightforward. Whatever happened with the landscaping business was included in the complaint just as background information, she said. Her complaint, she said, is about the yelling.

"In my entire time in the legislature I've never felt as threatened and domineered as I did on that afternoon," Kahn said in a press release about the ethics complaint. "I reached out to Speaker (Kurt) Daudt three times to resolve this matter, requesting a public apology and that Rep. McNamara might consider taking anger management classes. As

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elected representatives, it's our responsibility to act in a way that casts the best light on the House and to treat everyone with respect, fairness, and courtesy while doing so."

She said she's easy to get in touch with and McNamara has had plenty of time to call with a more personal apology than the one he issued in his statement Monday. She's also hoping for a public apology on the house floor at some point.

Daudt is reviewing the complaint and has seven days from its filing to refer the complaint to the House Committee on Ethics for further action.

Funding

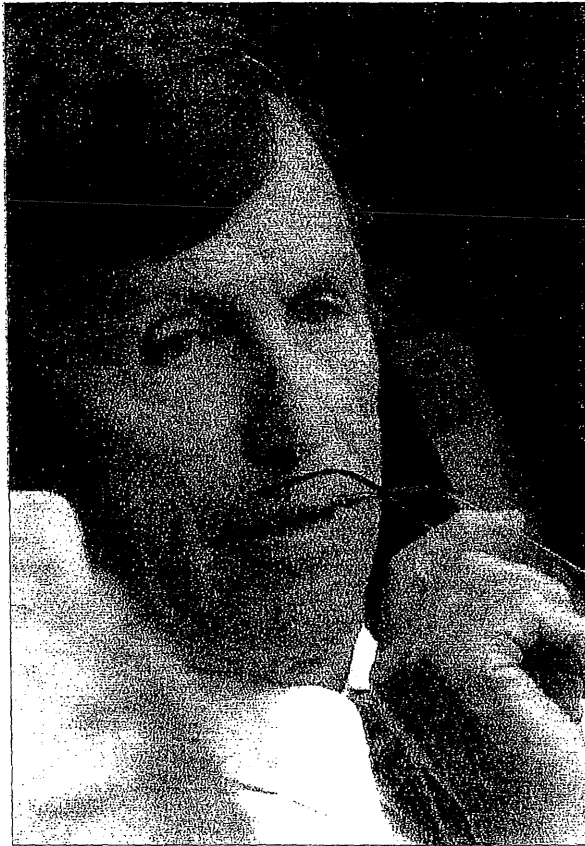
At the heart of the matter is some funding for a large park in north Minneapolis, North Mississippi Park. About 27 years ago, an earmark was put in place to capture interest the Metropolitan Council receives on unspent parks money and funnel it all toward one park - North Mississippi Park, which now also includes Webber Park. The earmark has meant a \$14 million windfall for the parks.

The Star Tribune did a story about the arrangement in September 2014. When the 2015 legislature convened, they set about to eliminate that earmark and instead spread that money around the metro.

Alice Hausman, DFL-St. Paul, authored the house bill in early February that would use the interest for the "betterment of all regional recreational open space lands under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Council." McNamara was soon added as a co-author.

From there, the story picked up in mid-April when McNamara and Hausman, the DFL representative, had a brief conversation at the capital.

Hausman told McNamara that a lobbyist upset about the change in legislation, later identified as Maryann Campo, said to her: "I don't know why we would (continue to) buy trees from his son's business."



Denny McNamara FILE PHOTO

Campo denies saying that to Hausman.

Hausman, though, said she remembers the exchange clearly. When contacted Tuesday, she didn't back down, saying she remembers Campo making what she perceived to be a threat to the business owned by McNamara's son.

Hausman said she soon told McNamara about the exchange.

"I was dumbfounded by what Rep. Hausman said," McNamara said. "I was aghast at what she said. I came back to the state office building and let our staff know what had happened. They were as troubled as I was that some lobbyist would actually threaten my family."

Hausman said the time has come for the earmark to go away.

"This whole park thing is just so unbelievable," Hausman said. "Twenty-seven years ago they put something in this bill and now, the way

they're responding to this, it's as though we are taking their money."

"The thing is, among the park agencies, they all want to change this. They all know this has been unfair. The parks agencies know this has been going on long enough and we should change it."

The bill at the legislature would keep things as they are for the next three years, then the interest would be spread out to parks evenly.

The meeting

On May 16, McNamara and Dennis Smith - R-Maple Grove - met with Kahn and Minneapolis parks board lobbyist Brian Rice in McNamara's office to talk about the change in funding and what McNamara perceived to be a threat against his son's business.

During the meeting, McNamara asked Rice why a parks board lobbyist had threatened his son's business.

Rice, according to McNamara, went into some background information on the landscaping business.

"It was clearly evident he had done some investigating into my son's landscape business," McNamara said.

McNamara said he then told Rice and Kahn that he and his business partner Gary Hoffman had sold the landscaping business to McNamara's son Michael in 2004.

Kahn then asked McNamara: "Why is your name still on the trucks if you aren't the owner?"

Rice then asked: "Why are you alleging that you aren't the president of Hoffman and McNamara?"

All of this, McNamara said, felt like a personal attack against him and his family and that's when he got upset.

"I became extremely agitated at that point," he said. "I became visibly shaken. I got up, opened the door and told (Rice) to get out of my office. Don't ever come back again."

The reason Kahn and Rice were convinced that McNamara did in fact own the landscaping company was in part because they had pulled up McNamara's statement of economic interest that all legislators must file with the state. In it, legislators list their sources of income and real estate.

McNamara's statement lists him as an owner and partner in Hoffman and McNamara LLP, which is listed as a real estate business on the form.

Hoffman and McNamara Co. is the landscaping business and entirely separate from Hoffman and McNamara LLP, McNamara said.

"Hoff and I own that partnership together with our wives," McNamara said. "We've had that partnership since 1975, I believe."

When contacted Tuesday afternoon and told about the two separate companies, Kahn said:

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Considering filing ethics complaint against lobbyist



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Kahn, a reference is made to an allegation McNamara had brought to Kahn, claiming that the Minneapolis Park Board was no longer doing as much business with his son's business as "political payoff."

"Representative Kahn is now saying I threatened her at some point in time that if they didn't sell more trees to my son's business, that I was going to continue with this policy that was in this bill," McNamara said. "Never did I make a demand that they (buy) more trees (from) my son's business. That's untrue."

McNamara continued:

"I am extremely troubled by the ethics complaint and what they've done. Maryann Campo threatened my son's business. You don't go after your family. My family is not going to be held hostage to my votes on the house floor."

"It's clear that these people all investigated my son's business because they wanted me to drop a proposal to change an earmark. You don't operate that way. That is ethically wrong."

McNamara said he is considering filing an ethics complaint of his own against Campo.

"I would say that I have to do that," he said. "She has clearly gone after my family."

Smith's take

In the room with McNamara, Rice and Kahn was Smith, the Maple Grove Republican.

He said he is surprised that the matter rose to the level of an ethics complaint.

"It was a passionate conversation," he said. "I can't imagine that this is the first time since our state has been conducting legislative business that, near the end of a session, there was a passionate conversation between two legislators in a room. The voices got loud."

"I really am surprised that, from what I witnessed, that that rose to the level of an ethics complaint."

Car show is this weekend

The downtown Hastings Cruise-In car show will be held again this weekend.

Classic cars will be lined up on downtown streets Saturday, June 13, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Shows will continue until Oct. 3. The remaining schedule is June 24, July 11 and 25, Aug. 8 and 22, Sept. 5 and 19, and Oct. 3.

For more information, contact Kevin at 651-437-4400 or Tony Berens at 651-491-1563.

Silver maples, elms showing signs of stress

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources foresters are seeing many silver maples and some elms with stunted or no leaves and an abundance of seeds this spring. These trees are not dead and will rebound over the next couple of years. The DNR encourages proper tree care and patience.

"Silver maples from Minnesota to Ohio are experiencing this phenomenon," said Brian Schwingel, DNR forest health specialist. "Environmental stressors and natural cycles of large seed production are factors in this situation."

The large production of seeds means less energy is available for leaf development, causing stunted and sparse patches of leaves.

Watering trees during periods of drought is important. The best way to water an established tree is to slowly apply water once a week for four to eight hours in the tree's dripline (area underneath the canopy). This can be done by moving around a hose that is trickling water under the tree's canopy or laying drip tubing on the ground under the tree's canopy.

Fertilizing stressed trees is not recommended.

To learn more about tree care, visit the DNR's tree care Web page at www.dnr.state.mn.us/treecare/caring-pruning.html.