

**North Loop Neighborhood Association**

**Board Meeting Notes**

**September 28, 2016**

**7:00 P.M.**

**Heritage Landing Community Room, 415 1st Street North**

**Attendees**: David Frank, Tim Blidsoe, DJ Heinle, Fritz Kroll, Phil Ailiff, Francesco Parisi

**Absent**: Katie Day, Bryan Hollaway, Scott Woller, Diane Merrifield

1. September Board Meeting called to order at 7:02 P.M.; those in attendance introduced themselves by stating their names and building of residence or business or employment in the neighborhood.
2. Motion is made, seconded, and approved by the Board to approve the Board meeting agenda.
3. Motion is made, seconded, amended, and approved by the Board to approve the minutes from the August meeting.
   1. The amendment includes the text listed below.

To be inserted after Point V (b)(i):

“(ii) Given the informational nature of the meeting, and given the full agenda, David explains that neighbors’ questions and comments will not be taken on the United proposal.”

1. Council Member Presentation – Jacob Frey
   1. Councilmember Frey was unable to attend.
2. Finance Report – Tim Blidsoe
3. August financials were presented: the balance in the checking account has gone up substantially due to recent contributions made. There is now a $36,277.69 current balance for both the checking and savings accounts. There haven’t been many new expenditures.
4. Tim would like to explore options for having a bookkeeper, as the current one is leaving. Tim would like to get that on the agenda for October. He proposes some potential bookkeepers come in and introduce themselves; he has interviewed some already. The cost should be the same and the goal is to have the hiring process completed in October.
5. The current commercial insurance package includes liability and property insurance. Bremer is the agent and our existing policy expires in October. The policy covers some property, though there is no property to speak of held by the organization; it also has liability coverage that is “premises” coverage and doesn’t fiscally address what the association’s exposures are. Tim asked for a quote on replacement coverage for “event” coverage; he would like to get this quote, and one more quote, send to Board members, and get feedback for the next meeting. A decision must be made by the next meeting; voting can be done via e-mail. In terms of cost it should be similar, but decision must be made by October.
6. CPP application update: DJ, Tim, and Diane met with Robert, who went through the whole application. The goal is to get it presented and then brought back for approval in the October meeting.
7. Neighbor Comments – Robert Thompson, City of Minneapolis
   1. A couple of years ago, a diversity survey was done. The data collected will not be aggregated at the neighborhood level; rather, it will be aggregated at the City level, and perhaps at the community level.
   2. The survey is totally voluntary; if it is not completed it will not be held against the NLNA. Robert will take with him the surveys completed tonight and electronic versions will be sent to members who are not present.
   3. Robert distributed paper copies of the survey to be completed.
8. Committee Reports
   1. Marketing and Promotions – Scott Woller
      1. David relays that Scott suggested that a location be picked for the annual meeting in January (which was requested via e-mail). A suggestion was made for the Hines T3 building. David has contacts there and will ask about its availability.
   2. North Loop Businesses – Scott Woller
      1. No update.
   3. Website – Diane Merrifield
      1. Diane sent out a report showing that the volume for the month was 5,000 – the highest month ever. There have also been many inquiries/hits from Facebook; there was a report promulgated by David.
   4. Planning and Zoning Report – DJ Heinle
      1. For the 759 Washington Avenue Apartments, a historic architect was hired. The mixed-use development will have a historic, blended, but largely brick façade. There will be a total of 48 rental units and retail use on the 1st floor. Night and weekend public parking is also being proposed. The parking structure is highly modernized and deviates a bit from the historic design of the building. The architect and developer had a meeting with the Planning & Zoning Committee and with HPC and will return in October to get approval on suggested changes.
      2. Smack Shack – permanent, stand alone, canopy structure the restaurant is proposing, meant to protect patrons from rain and provide shade, is up for approval. **Motion made, seconded, and approved.**
      3. Proposal from Jun Restaurant – new Szechuan restaurant, second operation for a family business which currently runs a Chinese restaurant in Roseville. **Motion for liquor license was made, seconded, and approved.**
      4. Update on C Line and Metro Transit – none. The C Line presentation will be at the next meeting.
      5. Francesco inquires about a building in disrepair near Sex World. David responds that, unlike for residential property, the City will not take action for commercial property in disrepair.
   5. Livability – Fritz Kroll
      1. The banners’ cost would be $27.50 each for just the banner itself and then hanging hardware costs would be $130 per pole and another $30 per pole for installation. The suggestion is made that the banners should be similar to the ones hung on West Broadway. Fritz thinks they should reach out as a neighborhood for sign ideas, then if they can get an idea they can create the signs. David has the contact information for the man at West Broadway; Fritz will reach out to him to see how they can work together.
      2. Mark Huting provides an update on the tree planting campaign along Washington Avenue. There is a fair amount of money in the bank from donors and the association – the account is just shy of $30,000. Mark will be making a presentation to 801 to inform their decision making. Francesco suggests allowing 801 to make a contingent pledge. He suggests explaining that they can do a contingent approval so that they aren’t afraid to expose themselves; tell them $13,000 is their share. (If one side commits, the other will do it, too.) DJ wants to make sure that the Board is contributing; Mark confirms.
   6. NL Park Update – Katie Day
      1. Katie was not at the meeting; however, her plan is to meet with homeowners surrounding the park and try to get some movement by the Park Board, with whom they are working.
   7. Safety & Livability – Phil Ailiff
      1. At the last meeting, they reviewed the ongoing problem with theft in motor vehicles in underground garages. Since August 1, there have been 51 motor vehicles broken into; there should be a drop in that number as the weather gets colder, but it isn’t a good strategy to rely on the weather to deter and to act as the police. Instead, the strategy is to promulgate educational materials.
      2. Inspector House tried to meet with a neighbor who left a lot of vulgar voicemails to other neighbors. Phil went out with the purpose of taking pictures of the cameras across from Pizza Luce, but didn’t accomplish it. He did talk to Shane about getting some camera equipment for 2nd and Washington Avenue.
      3. Phil asked what would the cost be to get a permit speed sign (with an electronic barometer) Less than $3,000 is available for safety and livability, but the signage would be able to be moved to different locations.
      4. A City information handout containing information about 911, 311, 411, the DID, etc. was distributed.
   8. Next PAC meeting is October 5 in City Hall – all people are welcome. There was supposed to be a tour of the North Minneapolis Greenway, but it probably isn’t going to happen, as there is a lot of opposition to the project. Court Watch meeting is a week from this Friday, on October 7 at 10:00 AM in the Hennepin County Central Library Conference Room. There will be law enforcement, city attorneys, neighborhood stakeholders present; it is a great meeting.
   9. If anyone is interested in serving on the bicycle coalition, the group is looking for ethnically engaged, diverse people to serve. The coalition is taking on pedestrian issues, too.
9. Neighborhood Priorities
   1. Infrastructure investments
      1. Tim had a conversation with Zack about streets to get added to the CIP. His understanding is that 5th Avenue & 3rd Street will be added to the CIP (Councilmember Frey is also saying to Tim that it will be added). United Properties is building on 3rd Street so it might want to have the work done at the same time as its development so that the street isn’t torn up twice. Maybe someone should talk to the City. This will make a difference in Tim’s score card. He thinks there is good progress on it. Tim can do this application because it shouldn’t require a lot of time; the application is due mid-October. David suggests that if someone is going to do it, then the Board should vote to write a support letter for it because it feeds into the capital plan and into getting streets in order.
      2. **The motion to write the letter of support is made, seconded, and approved**. David will write the letter.
      3. Phil asks for updates on bricks.
   2. On-Street Parking
      1. David referenced the fact that people near Itasca were very unhappy when the meters were changed to charge until 10:00 P.M.; such a change is something to be leery of. The Board’s interest is to make the retail meters short-term parking; whatever else happens is not a matter for the Board to weigh in on.
      2. Tim mentions that the timing was unique and that they didn’t want people to think there was a correlation between the two changes.
   3. Affordable Housing – no update.
   4. Neighborhood Beautification
      1. Zack and Tim reached out to MnDOT to find out who owns the parcel. They received an incredible response from MnDOT, who was very willing to talk about development of the area. They then had a subsequent meeting with MnDOT, which was extremely positive. MnDOT owns the parcel and is quite interested in working with the Board to beautify it.
         1. MnDOT is also willing to spend money on the plantings and the greenery; they would provide somewhere in the ballpark of $10,000 to $12,000. Tim forwarded to MnDOT old drawings from years ago and MnDOT liked them. A MnDOT staffer who does plantings was present and is working with Mark on updating the design, which MnDOT will do for free.
         2. Approval will be needed from the City. Tim wants to bring to the Board in November getting an approval/working agreement for the parcel. City will require that “MPLS” be on one of the signs.
         3. Mark explains that the design will basically need to be done over – they want to move existing trees and put in flower bed plantings. There might be Austrian Pines, Day lilies, lots of mass plantings like St. Paul Center Island on 35 E south of St. Paul. DJ asks about the possibility of an art or lighting installation. Mark mentions that MnDOT may be interested in something like that; however, they don’t allow decorative rocks because people throw them on the highway. MnDOT will provide all the mulch, planting material, but the Board must figure out how to get labor, volunteers, and maintenance (there is a Design Document showing all this). MnDOT projects the total cost will be about $30,000; DJ suggests it will be even more if there is lighting. He also wants the NLNA’s logo on the sign. Francesco suggests that a three-sided sign, one that can be seen from all sides, might be best; Mark and Tim mention limited visibility exiting the freeway and the reading of the sign; lettering will have to be on both sides. The overall intent for timing is to get this all planning completed this year and start construction in the spring.
         4. MnDOT is checking to see if there are there any plans to improve the intersection itself, as those might impact the design and plans of the beatification area. It would be great to have a dedicated left-hand signal on Washington at that intersection and also if it were ADA compliant. MnDOT will talk to the City about this. David summarizes: what if everything moved over, was made ADA compliant, cars exiting 394 have a dedicated lane, and there is space for the left-hand turn, too. If we are able to make cars happy, we could make the crosswalk happy, too. Tim stresses the need to talk about that intersection and raise it in the conversation with MnDOT. He then iterated how incredibly eager MnDOT was to work with the Board.
      2. Lighting improvements on Washington Avenue with a tree lighting for the holidays
         1. DID is a special zoning district with many lighting areas like what is being proposed. They are going to survey the electrical grid to see what is available and talk to the City electrician to see if something like this is even feasible. It would be late in this season, but ideally it would be available all year long. David found someone at the County named Trudy who is the right person to talk to; DJ will follow-up and talk to her. One thing to note: there will be a fee associated with having the lights taken down and serviced twice a year. Fritz contends that they would have to consider security, but that it would be minimal and that it would be awesome to have the bridge done.
10. Old Business
    1. NRP Funding Update
       1. Tim mentions that the NRP funding must be spent, otherwise, the Board loses the funding. There are many uses outside and inside the North Loop, but there must be a developer willing to use it on a project within the North Loop. There is some leeway but Robert presumes that it must be spent by the first quarter of next year.
       2. Tim suggests that the Board analyze the priorities in the neighborhood – the need for a grocery store, increased public safety, whatever the case may be. Francesco suggests using the funds for paying for the street lighting that was just talked about; Tim liked that idea. Tim suggests examining the priorities required in NRP funding stipulations and then petitioning the City to change them, but the 70% must be spent. Maybe the funds can buy down some leases in a rental property or be used for up lighting buildings, or for housing. Tim iterates that the Board must look for ways to spend that money – maybe it needs to work with some developers to offer the money as construction loan, etc. Whatever the case may be, things must be in order within the next 6 months.
       3. DJ suggests that $150,000 may be too small on some of these building projects, and simply not attractive to larger developers. Tim suggests giving the money to another association in a way that the Board can get it back – like in the form of a loan, which means that the funding doesn’t need to be spent in the North Loop.
    2. Farmers’ Market
       1. No update.
    3. 2020 Partners – David Frank
       1. There was a presentation about parking needs in the neighborhood. Metro Transit is moving forward with its plans.
    4. Downtown Neighborhood Group – DJ Heinle
       1. Robert Thompson’s presentation was on the future of neighborhood funding – what will happen when NRP and CPP money go away?
       2. The 26-year TIF District will expire in 2020. The City has started a process called Neighborhoods 2020 (the planning process will officially begin in January or February of 2017), which will have ongoing workgroups. The Board will need to put someone on this group to help. There are many discussions about the political and social impacts and what it will all entail. There is a fear that all the money will go away, especially in neighborhoods that receive a lot of funding – which the North Loop does not. It may be a good idea, however, to partner with other neighborhoods to help.
       3. From 2020 onward, there will need to be some sort of funding source that offsets the loss. The origins of these funding sources were from excess development money the 1980s. David iterates that the NLNA does not live on very much and that it would be easier for the Board to jump forward because of its autonomy. Fritz cites the area’s sensitivity to property taxes. David thanks DJ for his involvement in the conversation with the City.
    5. Community Engagement
       1. Downtown Neighborhood Arts Day is Saturday, October 1, from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. at the Elliot Recreation Center, 1000 East 14th Street.
11. New Business
    1. There will be a pumpkin giveaway by downtown Edina Realty Office on October 15 from 1:00-3:00 PM. There will be snacks, drinks, and fall festivities.
    2. Fritz asks about the vacancies on the Board. David informs all that the Board has the ability to appoint another person to fill the vacancy. Brian is still on the Board, but is currently on vacation. Francesco asks if it make sense to appoint an interim person. Fritz contends that they don’t need to since only October and November meetings are left and that there is no December meeting. David mentions that if the Board doesn’t take action, there will be two open seats. Francesco says that the seats would be voted on in January; both JR and Brian’s seats are up to be filled in January.
    3. Tim thanks Mark for his work on the MnDOT project.
12. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.