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**North Loop Neighborhood Association  
Board Meeting Notes**

**August 25, 2021**

**7:00 P.M.**

**Colonial Warehouse Common Room, 1st Floor  
212 3rd Ave N**

**Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82054201839>**

7 of 11 Board members were in attendance: Diane Merrifield, Mollie Scozzari, Scott Woller, Pedro Wolcott, Dima Rozenblat, Jo Hamburge, and David Crary.

Neighbors in Attendance: Andrew Morse, Dillon Fried, and Cristy Blake.

1. August Board Meeting called to order at 7:03 P.M. by Diane.
2. **Motion is made by Scott, seconded by Pedro, and unanimously approved by the Board to approve the Board meeting agenda with no changes.**
3. **Motion is made by Pedro, seconded by Scott, and unanimously approved by the Board to approve the July Meeting minutes with no changes.**
4. Neighborhood Engagement
  - a. Councilmember Steve Fletcher was not present. However, he provided the following update via email:
    1. We extended the COVID state of emergency through election day, to make sure we have the flexibility to implement COVID-safety measures for voting if needed. One happy by-product of that is it gives us a little more time to work on extending the two measures (use of outdoor space and caps on delivery fees) that the Council thinks are worth making permanent. That gives us more time to solicit and incorporate feedback than I feared we might have... stay tuned.
    2. We've continued to pass on feedback to the County about Washington and 8<sup>th</sup> and will continue to work to raise the priority of that.
    3. Not TECHNICALLY in the North Loop, but Bimosedaa (the new affordable/transitional housing at the Rockler Fur Building built in partnership with Red Lake Nation) will open this month).

4. I inquired but wasn't able to shake loose capacity for gravel removal or find interest in the gravel from the dog park.
  5. I see you've got the parking meter changes on the agenda, so I'll leave that to parking staff present their work. They have shared it with me, and to my read, it looks like it will solve several problems and makes sense. Let me know if there's additional feedback from the meeting.
5. Parking Meter Changes - Dillon Fried, City of Minneapolis Parking Services
    - a. The City is at 60-70% of normal parking activity.
    - b. The purpose of parking meters is to serve the adjacent land uses and have adequate access to those land uses. On-street parking should encourage turnover, not long-term occupancy. Therefore, the hourly pricing of meters should be balanced or higher than off-street parking options.
      1. Parking ramps and other off-street lots are meant for long-term occupancy.
        - a. Parking ramps are pretty poorly utilized and have especially declined since COVID with employees working from home.
    - c. The following changes will commence at the beginning of October:
      1. The area North of Washington between Hennepin Ave and 3rd Ave N has seen a lot of development in retail and housing. Three blocks in that area have free parking on evenings and weekends. Those meters will now require payment from 8a-10p every day to accommodate the rise in demand for those parking spaces.
      2. Parking meters along Washington Ave from 10th Ave to 1st Ave will change from \$2/hr from 8am-10p every day at a 2-hour maximum; to \$2/hr from 8am-midnight, and \$3/hr on Th-Sat from 4p-midnight at a 4-hour maximum. These changes are due to an increase in the number of restaurants and other entertainment venues along Washington Ave. Customers of these venues need more time to enjoy their experience.
      3. Parking meters along 5th Ave, 6th Ave, and 5th St, particularly near the breweries, are seeing a high level of demand. 6th Ave meters will change to require payment on evenings and weekends. The City also proposes to increase the rates to \$1/hr (from \$.50/hr) on the meters along those streets.
6. Finance Report – Dima Rozenblat
    - a. NLNA is in good financial condition with approximately \$42k in unrestricted funds.
      1. \$80k left on CPP contract, \$20k left on NRP contract.
      2. **Motion is made by Dima, seconded by Scott, and unanimously approved by the Board to authorize \$2,500 in previously spent tree watering funds, and approve additional tree watering funds up to \$4,000 for the rest of the season through September.**
    - b. There is potential for NLNA to receive a larger allocation of City funds after the Census results are published, which should show an increase in the residential population.
  7. Secretary Report – Jo Hamburge
    - a. No updates. Continuing to work on the NLNA by-laws.

## 8. NLNA Priorities and Committees

### a. Community Engagement – Scott Woller

1. National Night Out was a success. Roughly 300 people attended.
2. Putting together a Halloween event for kids in the North Loop. Considering an indoor venue. More details TBD.
3. The Board will begin to plan for the Annual Meeting in September.

### b. P&Z Committee – Mollie Scozzari

1. Pedro presented a rooftop patio design for his residential building located at 918 N 3rd St.
2. Pedro also presented design plans for his new restaurant Guacaya Bistreaux located at 337 N Washington Ave. He asked for support of the design plans and for the liquor license.
3. Design plans were presented for exterior improvements on the Steelman Exchange building located at 241 N 5th Ave. They asked for a letter of support for HPC approvals.
  - a. Plans included exterior main entry improvements, security desk and lounge seating in the lobby, and rooftop deck amenities for tenants.
  - b. The goal of these improvements is to make the building more desirable for commercial tenants, and to subsequently lease up the vacant spaces on the 6th, 7th, and ground floor levels.
4. Design plans were presented for exterior improvements on the Minnesota Opera/Lab Theatre spaces located at 620 1st St N/700 1st St N, respectively. They asked for a letter of support for HPC approvals.
  - a. They are proposing to shift, expand, and improve the storefront; replace and improve the existing accessible ramp at the front entrance; and expand the lobby.
5. **Motion is made by Mollie, seconded by Pedro, and unanimously approved by the Board to provide letters of support for the developers presented above (918 N 3rd St, Guacaya Bistreaux, Steelman Exchange, and Minnesota Opera).**
6. Greco Properties also presented at the P+Z Committee meeting. They proposed to alter the alley behind The Copham, located at 607 Washington Ave N. The alley behind the building is currently being used for parking and as a pedestrian pass-through. Greco is proposing to turn the alley into a private amenity space for its tenants.
  - a. P+Z made a motion to approve a letter of support for vacation of the alley, on the condition that the alley would still support public access. They did not approve a letter of support for the design plans, and asked Greco to return with more detailed plans.
  - b. NLNA will refrain from voting on this item. Mollie will communicate further with the P+Z Committee to determine the best form of action.
7. P+Z Committee determined an approach to encourage developers to present to the Committee. The approach involves a form on the website for developers to submit to the Committee prior to presenting, and a checklist that developers should utilize for their presentations. Furthermore, the Committee will be more vigilant about reaching out to developers in the community who have not presented to the Committee, or who have been asked to present to the Committee again.

- c. Safety & Livability – Pedro Wolcott
  - 1. There was a lethal shooting in the North Loop on Sunday, August 22. A man was shot in his car.
    - a. The Board is going to encourage venues with late-night events to have added security on-site and on the streets surrounding the venue. This is especially important given the current shortage of police.
  - 2. David has a meeting with the Hennepin County Commissioners to talk about pedestrian safety on Washington Ave, from Hennepin Ave to 10th.
- d. Communications – Diane Merrifield & Scott Woller
  - 1. There were 19,108 site visits in July, a testament to the North Loop comeback!
    - a. Food Truck Fair related posts accounted for nearly 7,000 visits.
  - 2. September newsletter will be sent following Labor Day weekend.
    - a. Newsletter archive is now available on the NLNA website.
- e. Civic Engagement – David Crary
  - 1. Public Safety civic engagement forum was held on August 25 and addressed the amendment to replace the MPD with the “Minneapolis Department of Public Safety”. Yes4Minneapolis spoke in favor of the amendment, and Steve Cramer from the Downtown Council spoke in opposition of the amendment. A recording of the event will be posted on the NLNA website.
  - 2. On Monday, September 13 there will be a candidate forum at Modist Brewing. The event will include a meet & greet with the Park Board candidates; a debate between Ward 3 Councilmember candidates; and a livestream of the mayoral debate hosted by The League of Women Voters. It will be a hybrid event, allowing for both in-person and Zoom attendance.
- f. Parks & Beautification – David Crary
  - 1. 18 trash receptacles will be ordered and delivered to the North Loop businesses that agreed to maintain them. 12 of the receptacles will be on or near Washington Ave.
    - a. They will arrive in 8-10 weeks.
  - 2. David and Bri will be Co-Chairs of the NLNA Park Committee. Seven individuals have already applied to be on the Committee.
    - a. The Committee will work directly with the Minneapolis Parks Board on programming and caring for the parks in the North Loop.
  - 3. On the September 11 Service Saturday event, NLNA will host an environmental talk with Friends of the Mississippi and the Mississippi Watershed District. Following the talk, there will be a planting event in James Rice Park at 10am and a subsequent thank-you event for all volunteers at noon.
- g. Dog Park – Pedro Wolcott
  - 1. North Loop Dog Park fundraising event is on Saturday, August 28. The campaign is only \$800 shy of the fundraising goal. Many businesses have donated gift cards and gift baskets to the event, including a pet basket from Chuck & Don’s.
  - 2. Need to remove current gravel in park and replace with mulch.
    - a. Potentially host a mulch-spreading volunteer event at a future Service Saturday.

- h. Historic Preservation & Public Art – Diane Merrifield
    - 1. There will be a downtown guide developed by Zeus Jones marketing agency that will include the North Loop.
- 9. Old Business
  - a. TractorWorks River Connection Project Update - Jo Hamburge & David Crary
    - 1. Fundraising outlook isn't good. TractorWorks will have to decide if the project is feasible.
      - a. If the project does not move forward, funds raised from the public for the River Connection Project will go into beautification for the North Loop. If this happens, donors will receive a formal email from the NLNA. NLNA will return funds if requested.
  - b. Organics Recycling Update - Cristy Blake
    - 1. There will be a formal request into the City for a couple of additional organics recycling bins since the current bins have been full.
- 10. New Business
  - a. No new business to report.
- 11. The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

**Motion is made by Scott, seconded by Diane, and unanimously approved by the Board to adjourn at 9:09 PM.**