

# DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## Minutes from the Board Meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2013 *Hennepin County Central Library* 300 Nicollet Mall, Room N-202, Minneapolis, MN

### I. Call to Order and Introductions

Board Chair Gerry Ewald called the board meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Other board members in attendance were:

Nick Cichowicz  
Andy Hauer  
Eric Laska, Treasurer  
Wallace Swan, Secretary  
Carletta Sweet  
Jesse Winkler, Vice Chair

Board member Andrea Christenson was absent.

Staff member Christie Rock was also present.

Guests in attendance included:

Jack Albrecht, Albrecht Sign Company  
Chuck Becker, CenterPoint Energy  
Dan Bauman, South Beach  
Elizabeth Bowling, PLACE  
Laura Boyd, CPED Alcohol Compliance Services consultant  
Burt Coffin, ESG Architects  
Mike Dimond, Fox Sports North  
Mike Faulk, North Loop Neighborhood Association  
Eric Galatz, Leonard, Street and Deinard  
Lisa Goodman, 7th Ward Council Member  
David Graham, ESG Architects  
Charles Hesse, Nordquist Sign Company  
David Koch, restaurateur and consultant for South Beach  
Tom Melchior, CliftonLarsonAllen  
Richard Morris, South Beach  
David Paeper, HGA Architects  
George Rosenquist, The Crossings resident  
Chris Velasco, PLACE  
Doug Verdier, RiverWest resident  
James Wallenburg, South Beach  
Heather Whalen, ESG Architects  
Charleen Zimmer, Zan Associates

### II. Consideration of the Agenda

Winkler requested that the Xcel Energy presentation be removed from the agenda, based on the City's decision not to move forward with municipalization.

*Thereafter Winkler moved and Sweet seconded his motion to approve the August 13, board meeting agenda as amended. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

### III. 7th Ward Update

Council Member Goodman reported on the following items:

- The September 25th Lunch with Lisa will feature Barry Clegg, chair of the Minneapolis Charter Commission, who will discuss the proposed "plain language" amendments that will organize it and to delete obsolete and inconsistent provisions without in any way changing the roles of the Mayor, the City Council or our independent boards. She will also be conducting a Lunch with Lisa on October 23rd.
- The City is in the process of resurfacing 14th Street East, expect some temporary delays so look for alternative routes. For more information visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/all/WCMS1P-102005>.
- The City is in the midst of a signal light retiming project. The City is retiming approximately 50-lights per week until the project is done. For more information, visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/all/WCMS1P-106521>.
- The City has decided not to pursue the municipalization of gas and electric utilities.
- The City is not selling the Nicollet Hotel site at this time; if it should decide to do so it will issue an open RFP for anyone interested in doing a mixed-use development.
- 222 Hennepin Apartments is open but the grand opening will be on August 22nd followed by the opening of Whole Foods in September.
- Izzy's Ice Cream opened last week and has a fairly large sidewalk café, over 80 seats. It's been a big positive for downtown.
- Mortenson Construction's Hampton Inn & Suites project is moving to the Planning Commission and the Committee of the Whole for the Heritage Preservation Commission approval process. Goodman is very supportive of this 210-room privately developed hotel.
- Goodman is supportive of Alatus' proposed apartment project at 301 Washington Avenue South.
- The City is working to resolve issues raised concerning Megabus' (an intercity, express bus line dedicated to bringing high-quality, low-cost travel options) current location and its impact on adjacent property owners. Goodman believes the solution lies in locating it closer to a transit facility like the Interchange.
- Mayor Rybak is delivering his last budget address on Thursday, August 15th, 12 p.m. at Thrivent Financial. The speech will be televised on Channel 79 or to read the full speech, visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/mayor/news/speeches/WCMS1P-113009>.
- The City is seeking voter ambassadors for the upcoming election where rank choice voting will be used for the first time. For more information, visit <http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/volunteer/index.htm>
- The One Minneapolis One Read project is underway. For more information, visit <http://oneminneapolisone.com/about>
- Regarding the Mill City Quarter project, Goodman advised that she is diligently working to make the text amendment that would allow assisted living in C3 zoning. Once that is done, the goal is to have all of the land use approvals and financing in place by the end of 2013.

#### IV. Land Use Update

Land Use Chair Andy Hauer explained to the presenters that they would be allowed a 5-minute presentation of the project itself and to include what action they are seeking from the DMNA (e.g., variance, letter of recommendation), followed by a 3-minute Q&A period.

- ***Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Study.*** Charlene Zimmer from Zan Associates distributed and explained the 3-language notice of Transit Open Houses document and the August 2013 Volume 3 Detailed Evaluation of Alternatives document. She indicated that there are three decisions left to be made: (1) the preferred mode; (2) the best river crossing; and (3) the locally preferred alternative. For more information, visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/nicollet-central/>.

No action was taken on this item.

- ***Hampton Inn & Suites (North 8th Street and 1st Avenue North).*** Burt Coffin from ESG Architects updated the board on a few changes to the site plan and architectural design of the Hampton Inn & Suites project presented to the DMNA in June 2013. Instead of back of house space on the building's prominent corner, there will now be front of house, breakfast and public room space with clear windows, as opposed to opaque. There will also be more landscaping and pervious surfaces in the courtyard area.

Speaking on behalf of the DMNA, Andy stated that it is a fine project and that we are very excited about it.

No action was taken on this item.

- ***Double Tree Suites Hotel (1101 LaSalle Avenue).*** Jack Albrecht from Albrecht Sign Company presented the proposed sign for the Double Tree Suites Hotel. They have a sign facing traffic on 11th Avenue and would like to put up a sign facing traffic on LaSalle Avenue and noted that they are seeking a height variance of 41 feet because if the sign were to stay with code at 21 feet, it would put it right on top of the canopy and thus unreadable.

*Winkler moved and Swan seconded a motion to approve the sign variance applications for the Double Tree Suites Hotel. Hauer called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- ***Alatus Mixed-use Residential Project (301 Washington Avenue South).*** David Graham and Burt Coffin of ESG Architects and Carl Runck of Alatus, LLC, introduced themselves then gave a presentation on Alatus' proposed 320-unit, mixed-use residential development to be constructed on the surface parking lot located on Washington Avenue South between 3rd and 4th Avenues South. The site is immediately to south of the Minneapolis Depot across Washington Avenue and west of the Gateway Parking Ramp that Alatus owns across 4th Avenue South.

David Graham advised there are no variances required but will need alternative compliances because they are going to widen the right-of-way on Washington Avenue by at least 10 feet because one of the urban designs is to create a boulevard. It is basically filling in a parking lot with a new mid-rise concrete construction building featuring a restaurant at the corner of Washington and 3rd Avenues, widened streetscape, and retail at the corner of Washington and

4th Avenues. There will be 12 stories of residential with penthouse on top with a mix of studio (20%), one-bedroom (50%), two-bedrooms (30%), and two-bedrooms with den. Hennepin County is redoing Washington Avenue from Hennepin to 5th Avenue and they'll reduce the eastbound lanes from three to two so there will be a widen sidewalk from 3rd Avenue South to about mid block and they will need a right turn lane at 4th Avenue. Alatus is proposing a bike lane just inboard from the curb. It is all about the streetscape and creating a more powerful public realm and filling in the parking lot gap.

Burt Coffin explained that a key piece about this project is that it will connect into the skyway system that runs along the rear of the parking lot. They are proposing a public elevator with street access to the skyway system without going through their building.

The board asked a few questions, including one about whether there would be a porte-cochère (a roofed structure extending from the entrance of a building over an adjacent driveway and sheltering those getting in or out of vehicles). Graham advised that the idea is to do a very urbanized porte-cochère drop off that works with the public realm and bike paths and have been working with the Planning Commission on getting approval for this architectural feature. Runck advised that construction would start ideally this winter and be completed in spring 2015. The purchase of the land is under contract.

*Cichowicz moved and Sweet seconded a motion to approve the site plan and alternative compliance application with a recommendation for a drop off on Washington Avenue for Alatus' mixed-use development project at 301 Washington Avenue South. Hauer called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- **PLACE Mixed-use Development Plan (Nicollet Hotel Block).** Chris Velasco, President and Executive Director of PLACE, explained that his company is a nonprofit builder located in downtown that specializes in sustainable communities and that they work with cities to create and build leading-edge communities that promote the arts, environmentalism and social justice. Velasco first approached the City last year regarding development possibilities for the Nicollet Hotel site and they had suggested that at some point they would put out an RFP. Because PLACE is a community-driven organization, Velasco wanted to come before the DMNA and present the kinds of things they were proposing for the site and get input about what the community wants to see on the site so that their proposal is driven by the community. Andy advised Velasco that what he is trying to do is premature and is part of the City's RFP process wherein a committee is usually assigned to make recommendations. Thereafter, Andy ended the discussion and indicated that the DMNA would look forward to hearing from PLACE in the future.
- **Fox Sports North (19 South 8th Street).** Charles Hesse of Nordquist Sign Company distributed materials and explained that Fox Sports North is seeking a height and area variance for a new dynamic display sign to be placed on the second level of LaSalle Plaza facing South 8th Street and Hennepin Avenue. And, as a consequence of being told by the Planning Commission that half of the display is inside the Entertainment District and half is outside, they are also seeking a Conditional Use Permit. Then he presented several display boards showing what the sign would look like positioned above Capital Grill.

Mike Dimond of Fox Sports North explained the kinds of non-audio static messages that would be displayed (e.g., FSN identification, logo and studio images, public service announcements, and announcements about FSN programs).

Hesse and Dimond then entertained questions from the board. Thereafter,

*Winkler moved and Cichowicz seconded a motion to oppose the CUP for Fox Sports News dynamic display sign. Hauer called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- **CenterPoint Energy (505 Nicollet Mall).** Chuck Becker from CenterPoint Energy introduced himself and explained that CNP has a purchase agreement with United Properties for the former Neiman Marcus property located at 505 Nicollet Mall and it is their intention to renovate the building for four floors of office space for a total square footage of 115,000. They will be replacing an opaque façade on both Nicollet Mall and on 5th Street with transparent glass on all levels. They will be activating the street to the extent that they will be using the same entrance and exits. People will be coming and going via LRT, bicycles, buses and walking who will be using the current retail on Nicollet Mall.

David Paeper, the project architect from HGA Architects, presented the site plan. The lobby will be the primary entrance for employees and will have active functions such as a large conference room at the corner and a break room on the opposite side of the lobby. There are no plans for retail in the building because they need as much square footage as possible to accommodate its workforce. The City ordinance requires 60% of retail on the first floor. Therefore, CPE needs a variance from the Nicollet Mall overlay standards to allow office space on the first floor. After a few questions and some discussion,

*Ewald moved and Swan seconded a motion to approve the site plan and variance application for CenterPoint Energy's project at 505 Nicollet Mall. Hauer called for discussion. The motion passed with Cichowicz voting against.*

- **South Beach (323 1st Avenue North).** Laura Boyd from Alcohol Compliance Services introduced David Koch from South Beach who, along with a group of owners, is interested in reopening the former Bootleggers space. She described Koch's bar and restaurant experience (e.g., Seven The Steakhouse and Seven Sushi Ultralounge and Skybar) in Minneapolis and gave a brief overview of the facility's format (reference the handouts distributed at the meeting). They are seeking a Class A liquor license.

Koch advised that they would be using all types of music, i.e., American Idol, X Factor, not the old days of gangster rap and hip-hop. They look for contemporary artists, R&B, and even some country and are looking to work with Live Nation to create some events as well as be an event destination for when Seven is overbooked. They want to be what they were before they left. As a learning process, they went from worst to first then he quoted Rob Allen who said that if they had an owner like David Koch they wouldn't need a downtown police force. They want to bring back the beauty and classic design of this particular spot. Winkler commended Koch for the way he operates his existing businesses and encouraged the board to approve the liquor license application for South Beach. Thereafter,

*Cichowicz moved and Sweet seconded a motion to approve the Class A liquor license application for South Beach. Hauer called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- **Orchestra Hall.**

*Swan moved and Cichowicz seconded a motion to ratify the electronic vote recommending support for sign variance applications submitted by the Orchestra Hall Association. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- **Salvation Army Harbor Light Center.**

*Hauer moved and Swan seconded a motion to ratify the electronic vote providing a letter of support for the Salvation Army Harbor Light Center's application to the City's Emergency Shelter Grant program. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- **Hyatt Place Hotel (425 South 7th Street).**

*Sweet moved and Swan seconded a motion to ratify the electronic vote recommending support for the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and sign variance applications for the Hyatt Place Hotel. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

## **V. Neighborhood and Community Engagement Update**

Mike Falk from the North Loop neighborhood presented a request in the amount of \$500 for the 2013 Riverfront National Night Out celebration that took place on August 6th. The board asked a number of questions about the event's financial statements and other contributors. Rock indicated that she had requested this information in advance of the board meeting, but did not receive a response. Falk explained this year's budget and noted that they had more income this year than expenses. This gives them a reserve fund for next year's event. The board indicated that they prefer to review the request for donation a few months in advance of the August event, and asked that Falk come back in June of 2014 to request funds for the August 5, 2014 event.

*Swan moved and Sweet seconded a motion to deny providing post-event support to the 2013 Riverfront National Night Out celebration. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

## **VI. NRP Implementation Update**

- ***Continued discussion regarding how the DMNA can have an impact on the issue of homelessness in the Downtown community.***

There was discussion around the board developing a values statement or policy regarding what it wants to see developers include in downtown housing projects. Laska will summarize for consideration at an upcoming board meeting.

## **VII. Consideration of Board Meeting Minutes from June 11, 2013**

*Swan moved and Sweet seconded a motion to approve the June 11, 2013 board meeting minutes. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

## **VIII. Consideration of Financial Report as of July and August 2013**

*Swan moved and Laska seconded a motion to receive and file the July and August 2013 Financial Reports. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

## IX. Consideration of August Staff Report

*Winkler moved and Cichowicz seconded a motion to receive and file Rock's staff report for the period 06-08-13 to 08-09-13. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

## X. Old business / new business / other business

- **October 8th Annual Meeting.**

*Cichowicz moved and Laska seconded a motion to host the 2013 Annual Meeting at Open Book starting at 6 p.m.*

There was discussion about potential guest speakers, how to make the event fun and different, how to highlight area businesses as well as whether area restaurants should be invited to provide food samples. It was decided that the DMNA would host a candidates' forum for those people running for the Third Ward City Council seat. Rock will contact all of the candidates.

- **Update on outreach and collaboration with other downtown organizations.** Reference the Outreach and Collaboration chart and attachments emailed from Sweet in advance of the meeting.
  - *Consideration of renewing East Downtown Council Membership.* Sweet presented the request to renew the DMNA membership with the East Downtown Council, which is the business association for the Downtown East and Elliot Park neighborhoods. She is asking for the DMNA to join as a sponsor at \$300, plus an additional \$130 to attend 10 monthly business forums.

*Sweet moved and Swan seconded a motion to renew the EDC membership. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- *Discussion regarding Jesse Winkler's July 23rd email to the board.* Jess explained the purpose of the email. Not to be divisive but because he wants to see the board do more events for the neighborhood (e.g., 3rd Ward Neighborhood Fest, council or mayoral races). He became frustrated and believes the DMNA could do a ton more.

Laska stated that he doesn't think any of these things will come to fruition unless someone steps forward and takes the lead. Eric himself has taken the lead on a number of initiatives (e.g., housing and working with NLNA and EPNI on the downtown school initiative) and others can do so as well and considers it not just the responsibility of the chair.

Christie reminded Jesse that she is the only staff, the organization is small and has always been with just 2 to 3 people doing all the work, and there's not a lot of money.

## XI. Adjournment

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013.

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Chair

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Secretary