

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Thursday, June 5, 2014 Mill City Museum, 6th Floor ADM Conference Room 704 South 2nd Street, Minneapolis, MN

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Board Chair Nick Cichowicz called the board meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Other board members in attendance were:

Chad DiDonato, Vice Chair
Gerry Ewald, Treasurer
Laurie Jones
Claudia Kittock
Carletta Sweet
Jesse Winkler
Peter Zenner, Secretary

Staff member Christie Rock Hantge was also present.

Guests in attendance were:

Gretchen Camp, BKV Group
Steve Cramer, Minneapolis Downtown Council
Amy Erickson, RiverWest
Mike Fronk, RiverWest resident
Nita Fronk, RiverWest resident
Katie Haas, Aeon
Matt McNeill, Ecumen
Julie Murray, Ecumen
Chris Palkowitsch, BKV Group
Rich Sheffer, RiverWest resident
Doug Verdier, RiverWest resident
Nancy Verdier, RiverWest resident
Miranda Walker, Aeon

II. Consideration of the Agenda

Sweet moved and Kittock seconded a motion to approve the June 5, 2014 board meeting agenda. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. Public Comment

Cichowicz explained that the DMNA is trying to have more engagement with the public so a public comment period was added to the agenda the last couple months. It is an opportunity for the public to share thoughts or ideas about anything pertaining to the neighborhoods.

Rich Sheffer, a RiverWest resident who admitted unfamiliarity with the DMNA, asked to hear more about what it does and stated that he came to this meeting to hear more about the Mill

City Quarter Phase II project.

Cichowicz responded that the number one objective this year, subsequent to undergoing a strategic planning process, is to get the word out about the DMNA. It is the officially recognized neighborhood association for Downtown East and Downtown West and affords us the opportunity to review and weigh in on development projects (e.g., via letters of support) such as those on tonight's agenda and where the community may come and be part of the discussion. Cichowicz also advised that the DMNA receives funds from the city that can be spent on specific projects. The goal is to be a neighborhood advocate by discovering the thoughts and passions of the community through a reciprocal and collaborative process. Further, we want to get the agenda out to more people and to get people to sign up for the mailing list. They can also access the agenda via DMNA's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Downtown-Minneapolis-Neighborhood-Association/7303027778>) or website (<http://www.thedmna.org/>).

Upon further inquiry by Sheffer, Sweet briefly explained the history of the DMNA and how it evolved from the Downtown Minneapolis Residents Association of the 1980s to the DMNA in 1997 to allow downtown business owners and workers to participate along with the residents in the priority-setting process for its Neighborhood Action Plan as required by the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). For more information about the NRP visit <http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/Basics/Primer.html#History>.

Jones explained that being the most tenured member of the board, Sweet interfaces with many other associations and specialty groups that deal with issues that are important to our community as it grows. Further, as a result of the strategic planning discussions, the DMNA has recognized the need to cultivate engagement and set up a structure to enable residents to have more active involvement with the DMNA.

IV. Consideration of Consent Agenda

Sweet moved and Jones seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda that included the May 1, 2014 board meeting minutes; the June 2014 financial report; the June staff report; letters of support for Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army's applications to the City's Emergency Solutions Grant and a letter of support for a sign variance for the Nic on 5th project. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

V. Community Development Update

Community Development Chair Jesse Winkler introduced the following land use items:

- **Mill City Quarter Phase II.** Matt McNeill, Director of Business Development at Ecumen, introduced the rest of the team: Julie Murray, VP of Sales at Ecumen, and architects Gretchen Camp and Chris Palkowitsch from BKV Group. Then he gave a brief history of Ecumen. In 2012 it celebrated its 150th year in operation and began as a regional center for nursing home operations and has transformed into mostly market rate housing for seniors as well as home care and a number of other business lines that support aging in the home. A few years ago, Steve Minn approached Ecumen about an opportunity here through a project he was pursuing on Parcel A. Ecumen now has a letter of intent with Minn in place to purchase, own and operate Phase II. Although Minn will be the master developer for

both phases, Ecumen will be a subdeveloper and at closing will take possession of Phase II then proceed with development of the site. They are proposing a 140-unit senior housing services building, and a variant of some memory care and independent living for older adults.

Camp reminded the board that the BKV Group came before them last summer/early fall and subsequently received a letter of support for Phase I. To re-familiarize the board, Camp displayed renderings (reference MCQ2 slides) and described the 150 affordable units at 3rd Avenue South and South 2nd Street with the shared street space known as the woonerf, a Dutch street concept. The entire project is centered around the woonerf zone, a street calming thoroughfare from South 2nd Street connecting to West River Parkway where pedestrian and bicyclists are primary and vehicular traffic is secondary. The woonerf itself follows the path of an old railroad spur and will be curbless with other design elements to define space between parking and driving. They plan to manage storm water with pervious pavers and move storm water through rain gardens along the trail toward Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board land and City land under South 1st Street. They have pursued a couple grants from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization for this purpose. The woonerf will also be tree-lined and lighted with surface parking for Mill Place during the day and for visitors in the evenings and on weekends.

McNeill added that they have had conversations around easements shared by the MPRB in association with Mill Place, Ecumen and MCQ to allow each to cross over each other's land. The owner of Mill Place has been committed to creating a connection to the riverfront for a number of years. About 15 years ago he received a grant from MnDOT; however, the MPRB at that time was unwilling to consider opening the land for that purpose and thus there was no reason to proceed. Today, there is Metropolitan Council money supporting the development and money from MWMO to do a demonstration project to move storm water more efficiently. Metered parking will support the operation of the woonerf, and the three parties surrounding it will pay for ongoing maintenance.

Chris Palkowitsch gave a presentation on the floor plans and design elements of Phase II. The overall look of the 5-story brick and metal building will complement the rest of the historic district in the area. The main entrance will be off of South 2nd Street with adjacent public accessible dining and café space further along the woonerf. Vehicular entry will occur along a service alley off of 5th Avenue South behind RiverWest. The residents will have a shared outdoor space around walkup units along South 2nd Street and additional walkup units along 5th Avenue South. The second floor will contain memory care units, outdoor gardens and a solarium, and floors three through five will contain independent senior units, all at market rate with minimal amenities, and a roof deck with a clubroom and open space. The total program is still to be determined.

McNeill advised that subsequent to a series of meetings with RiverWest residents and based on new studies conducted by the master developer, they have found a happy medium and brought down the building by one story and reconfigured the design so that view obstruction is reduced from what would have occurred in the original design. RiverWest has a memorandum of understanding with the master developer (although the board of directors itself did not approve the project), and the master developer and Ecumen are accepting the terms of that MOU.

McNeill also explained that pursuant to the MOU distributed, the first public meeting was the HPC hearing on Tuesday evening to get feedback from the commissioners on the design. Ten days prior, drawings and schematics were distributed to RiverWest residents. On Phase I they received 492 emails; however, on Phase II they received none so from his perspective wearing two hats as a RiverWest homeowner and president of the homeowners association, he believes there is some positive feelings that Ecumen will own and operate this project versus Lupe Development Partners and John Wall. Both Council Members Frey and Goodman are on record saying that there will be a 6- or 7-story building developed on this site. It is City-owned land and they are looking forward to moving forward with development of the site. Ecumen's goal is to complete their financing this winter while the master developer is submitting to HUD so that each can close and rise together in order to break ground in March 2015 and be completed by summer of 2016.

Julie Murray advised that she has been working with Mill City Commons for 8 years; they helped to get it started. In 2011 she began conversations with the neighborhood residents to find out what they wanted for this type of facility and what amenities it should have. This design is in response to that process.

Thereafter, the team entertained questions ranging from the rationale for their business line downtown, landscaping, the distinction from the Ceresota Building project, moving bus routes, traffic studies and rerouting post office truck traffic off of 5th Avenue South.

Ewald moved and Sweet seconded a motion to provide a letter of support for the concept plan for the Mill City Quarter Phase II project. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

- **501 1st Avenue North.** Rock stated that the architect for this project, David Kelly, was unable to attend the meeting and noted that she provided details of the project and land use application via email and asked if there were any questions. Cichowicz shared the fact that the Warehouse Business District Association had not been brought into the loop regarding this project and expressed concerns about the potential proliferation of balconies on the building.

Ewald moved and Jones seconded a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for the Pocket Hercules balcony located at 501 1st Avenue North. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

- **Graves 601 Hotel.** Rock advised that the Graves 601 Hotel is being sold to Loews Hotels & Resorts who is seeking a liquor license application. She received notice of this after she emailed the board packets and wondered if there were any concerns.

DiDonato moved and Kittock seconded to approve the liquor license application for the new owners of the Graves 601 Hotel. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

VI. Action Items

- ***Consideration of letter of support for Aeon's grant application***

Miranda Walker, Project Manager, and Katie Haas, Director of Supportive Services and Resident Connections, introduced themselves then Walker explained that they are seeking a

letter of support for the grant application to renovate their Opportunity Housing Partnership properties and reminded the board it had done so in 2013.

As a refresher, Walker advised that Aeon is a nonprofit affordable housing developer focused primarily on rental apartments. It began in 1986 as Central Community Housing Trust in response to the building of the Minneapolis Convention Center that caused the loss of hundreds of affordable units in Elliot Park. Since that time, Aeon has built, acquired and managed over 2,00 apartments. Their mission, vision and values is to create homes; safe, affordable homes where people are plugged into the space, place, community and resources that are available, i.e., OHPs. They own and operate three OHPs in Minneapolis – the Continental Hotel at 66 South 12th Street, Lamoreaux at 706 1st Avenue North, and Coyle at 1801 LaSalle Avenue – that house a total of 130 units and serve people who experience long-term homelessness. The intent of the rehabilitation of these buildings is to: upgrade mechanical systems, windows and insulation; reconfigure units so that they have a bathroom and small kitchenette; and provide stronger services to enhance the feeling of home. Some of the units meet the federal requirements for the disabled and all of the units are affordable, some at 30% of area median income and some at up to 50% of area median income.

Haas advised that they are fully rented and that there is a waiting list for the 51 Section 8 units. Rental assistance and the supportive services come through the Group Residential Housing (GRH) program funded by the county and state.

Ewald moved and Winkler seconded a motion to provide Aeon a letter of support in connection with the grant application to renovate its Opportunity Housing Partnership properties. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

Walker then distributed a two-page, two-sided overview of their OHPs. For more information on Aeon, please visit: <http://www.aeonmn.org/>.

- ***Consideration of providing financial support to Aeon's "Neighbor to Neighbor" event***

Winkler advised that he attends Sanctuary Covenant Church in north Minneapolis and that his pastor's wife, Susan Edwards, works for Aeon and is working on a project in Elliot Park called Neighbor to Neighbor. Aeon provides a grocery cart of clothing and toiletries to give to 500 residents transitioning out of homelessness within the DMNA and Elliot Park neighborhoods. In response to Edwards' email request for financial support, he connected her to Council Member Frey and Target and told her he would also bring the request before the DMNA. Winkler suggested this event would be a great opportunity for the DMNA to do some outreach and engagement with people experiencing homelessness in the downtown community.

Haas, who was unaware this was on the agenda, offered additional details. The project is resident led. In recent years Aeon has focused even more on resident leadership. They have always had residents on the board and in the organization and in the past 2 years have been able to send resident groups to national leadership training. At the training they determined a project they wanted to do for the benefit of the community. The residents at Paige Hall that Edwards works with determined they wanted to hold an event that supports residents in Elliot Park and downtown with some basic needs because that is what they

value in their community and want to give back. The way the event is structured, neighbors can go to Paige Hall at 727 5th Avenue South and shop for what they need, e.g., they can choose a gift card or clothing voucher or groceries (there was a significant donation from Second Harvest Heartland). What they are in need of right now are household goods and toiletries. They have been working very hard to receive in-kind donations but with little luck. Funds would be very helpful to make those purchases. After discussion ensued about how much to donate and where the funds would be drawn from, Jones commented that what is important about this project is to support this group of emerging leaders in our community and the size of the contribution will give them a sense of importance and she would be uncomfortable with anything less than \$1,000. Thereafter,

Jones moved and DiDonato seconded a motion to contribute \$1,000 to Aeon's Neighbor-to-Neighbor event. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

In response to additional questions, Haas will provide statistics on participation and their feedback, information on volunteer opportunities and ensure DMNA's name will be acknowledged in connection with the event.

- ***Consideration of renewing 2020 Partners membership***

Sweet reminded the board that 2020 Partners is a powerful voice for the Downtown West and North Loop neighborhoods. It was established to facilitate the transformation of the area around Target Field and has been laying the foundation and attracting investment for future development. It has representatives from major downtown corporations, developers, businesses and neighborhood associations as well as city and county officials. Further, that the DMNA has been a supporting member almost since its inception and has matched the North Loop Neighborhood Association's contribution at the \$1,000 level. Rock noted that this amount has been budgeted.

Sweet moved and Ewald seconded a motion to renew its membership on 2020 Partners at the \$1,000 level. Cichowicz called for discussion. The motion passed.

For more information on 2020 Partners, please visit: <http://the2020partners.com/>

VII. NRP Phase II Update

Cichowicz explained that Steve Cramer was asked to return to hear what the DMNA had decided pursuant to his and Mikkel Beckman's request, on behalf of the Downtown 2025 Taskforce to End Homelessness, for \$100,000 to increase the number of St. Stephen's street outreach workers and to hire a PR firm to develop a strategy to raise money and awareness regarding the issue of homelessness. Cichowicz advised him that a motion was passed to provide \$60,000 for street outreach for Year 1 with the potential to contribute another \$60,000 in Year 4, pending the MDC's success in raising matching monies in Years 2 and 3. If the position is successful, and the Downtown Council is able to raise matching funds to maintain the position in Years 2 and 3, the DMNA will contribute an additional \$60,000 in Year 4.

Steve Cramer thanked the board for their generous counter-offer and acknowledged that requests for resources are based on availability and priorities. Then he accepted the counter-offer and DMNA's partnership on this effort. He thinks the timing is good and Cichowicz

would know since he is on the Tactical Urbanism Task Force that is working on strategies where outreach will be a key part on Nicollet Mall. This is a great technique to deal productively and constructively with those issues. From Year 1 through Year 15 of this partnership these recommendations will have been developed, Beckman will have time to put resources behind them, and he's confident that this matching component can be put in place for Years 2 and 3 and, if his math is right, it will be the year of the Super Bowl.

Rock will work with Bob Cooper at CPED Finance to get the funds under contract as quickly as possible.

VIII. Committee Updates

- **Community Engagement Task Force.** Cichowicz noted that he, Jones, Kittock and Winkler had an opportunity to meet and that now is a good opportunity to talk about how to move forward and prioritize.

Winkler noted that at their meeting they continued to discuss locations for board meetings as well as the annual meeting and queried whether the instant meeting if held at the Central Library would have had as big a showing, or whether the showing was driven by the MCQ2 project. They also discussed community engagement, e.g., the Aeon project, and taking a half sheet of board meetings to distribute them as wide as possible.

Kittock said they also discussed the Webster School and possible outreach and engagement opportunities that will arise when the school opens in the fall of 2015. She also plugged the new Girls on the Run program.

Discussion was also held on gathering various email lists to forward to Rock to incorporate into a master list. Cichowicz thanked her for the work she has done on Facebook.

Cichowicz announced that the August and September board meetings would be held at the Mill City Museum, and that he is working on a location for November and December. The board then agreed that there would be no board meeting in July. Discussion ensued regarding where to hold the annual meeting in October (pros and cons of returning to Open Book or pursuing Orchestra Hall). Winkler noted that the task force discussed building momentum over the summer / early fall culminating into a gala annual meeting.

IX. Old / New / Other Business

- **Outreach and collaboration with other downtown organizations.** Reference the Outreach and Collaboration chart and attachments emailed from Sweet in advance of the meeting.

X. Adjournment

Being no further business, Ewald moved and Sweet seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Cichowicz called for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2014.

Chair

Secretary