

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Monday, July 20, 2015

Mill City Museum

710 South 2nd Street, 6th Floor ADM Conference Room, Minneapolis, MN 55415

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Board Chair Chad DiDonato called the board meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.

Other board members in attendance were:

Claudia Kittock
Carletta Sweet, Secretary
David Tinjum
Peter Zenner, Treasurer

DMNA board members Nick Cichowicz, Laurie Jones, and Ken Searl were absent.

Staff members Joan Bennett and Christie Rock Hantge were also present.

Guests in attendance included:

Kathleen Anderson, North Star Lofts
Kathleen Boe, Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership
Gretchen Camp, BKV Group
Dan Collison, East Downtown Council/Minneapolis Downtown Council
Doug Craven, Bridgewater Lofts
Julie Craven, Bridgewater Lofts
Scott Elofson, BKV Group
Jacob Frey, 3rd Ward City Council Member
Kerry Gullickson, LAN Construction
Will Jensen, BKV Group
Cynthia Kria, Humboldt Lofts
Randy Manthey, Carlyle Condominiums
John Miller, Mill City High School
Lynn Regnier, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.
Charlene Roise, Hess Roise and Company
Brent Rogers, Saturday Properties
Allen Sando, Bobby and Steve's Auto World
Al Swintek, CenterPoint Energy
Casey Tollefson, CenterPoint Energy
Doug Verdier, RiverWest Condominiums
Steve Williams, Bobby and Steve's Auto World
Frances Woodson, Mill City High School
Mary Zbikowski, Stonebridge Lofts

II. Consideration of the Agenda

Sweet requested amending the agenda to include under Staff Contract Revision a motion to have the Finance Coordinator record both the board and executive committee minutes and,

pursuant to DiDonato's, request, include under Land Use an update from CenterPoint Energy regarding their construction project on South 4th Street.

Sweet moved and Tinjum seconded a motion to approve the July 20, 2015 board meeting agenda as amended. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. Consent Agenda

Sweet moved and Tinjum seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda that included the June 15, 2015 board meeting minutes; Finance Coordinator Staff Report (Invoice 006) for June 2015; and the Outreach and Program Coordinator Staff Report for June 2015. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

IV. Financial Report

Zenner displayed the FY2015 Budget vs. Actual as of June 30, 2015 and advised that these financials were reviewed at the July 13th executive committee meeting wherein focus was placed on evaluating staffing resources and hours, more of which will be further discussed under the next agenda item. This is a good time to reevaluate the situation at this 6-month mark.

Also considered at that executive committee meeting was the amount remaining in the Meetings/Community Building Events line item, i.e., \$14,551.34, and how best to use these funds.

Kittock moved and Sweet seconded a motion to receive and file the June financial report. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

V. Proposed Staff Contract Revisions

A. Consideration of Increasing Finance Coordinator's Contract Hours. DiDonato reiterated that a discussion was held during the last executive committee regarding increasing Rock Hantge's hours from 20 to 35. As background, when the board determined the initial 20 hours, it was just an estimate since how staff roles would play out with the new Outreach and Program Coordinator onboard was unknown. Now, after 6 months of operating with both positions, it is clear that the hours for the Finance Coordinator need to increase.

Tinjum moved and Kittock seconded a motion to amend the Finance Coordinator's contract to increase the hours from 20 to a maximum of 35 a month. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

B. Consideration of Recording Board and Executive Meeting Minutes. Sweet requested that the Finance Coordinator's contract be amended to include the task of recording both the board as well as the executive committee minutes.

Sweet moved and Tinjum seconded a motion to amend the Finance Coordinator's contract to include the task of recording both the board and executive committee meeting minutes. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

- C. **Consideration of Addendum to Staff Contracts.** To allow for flexibility in any given month for special tasks and unforeseen projects/events, Tinjum recommended adding a clause to staff contracts allowing them to exceed the maximum contracted hours if they obtain prior written approval from the Board.

Tinjum moved and Zenner seconded a motion to add to staff contracts the clause "Contractor agrees to obtain written approval from the Board prior to exceeding authorized hours in any given calendar month." DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

VI. Land Use Update

- A. **800 Washington Avenue South RFP Project (Liner Parcel to Riverfront Municipal Parking Ramp).** BKV Group Partner Gretchen Camp introduced herself and the BKV team in attendance: Scott Elofson, Senior Project Designer; and Will Jensen, Partner. They are the architects on Saturday Properties' (<http://www.saturdayproperties.com/#connect>) proposal for this vacant parcel.

Camp advised this is the third and newest proposal submitted in response to the City's RFP, the other two being a mixed-use project by Sherman Associates, and a mixed-use project by M.A. Mortenson Company. Then using a slide presentation, she described their plans for which they are seeking initial community feedback. The bookends of the property call for restaurants or retail and an alley/service drive at the rear with a one-way drop off to the hotel to buffer the property from the adjacent parking ramp. The main entrance to the hotel would be on Washington Avenue with a wide planted plaza on the Chicago Avenue side of the property similar to that found at the American Academy of Neurology.

Because of the adjacent parking ramp, the plan calls for single-loaded corridors from the ground level through the 4th floors with hotel rooms facing Washington Avenue, and double-loaded corridors on the 5th and 6th floors above the height of the adjacent parking ramp with hotel rooms facing both Washington Avenue and South 2nd Street. The hotel will have 166 rooms with a total square footage of just over 110,000.

Then Brent Rogers, founder of Saturday Properties, introduced himself and gave a brief description of his background. He began SP this past spring after spending 9 years as a partner at Greco Properties where they developed seven urban infill projects in both the uptown and downtown Minneapolis markets. Having spoken to Camp prior to the release of the City's RFP, he was already excited and interested in putting together a project that fits within the fabric of this neighborhood as well as brings vibrancy to a vacant site.

As a consequence, a team of professionals with a 15-year history working with BKV on a number of successful projects was assembled to put together a project they considered feasible, financeable, and could move forward quickly. They landed on this 6-story structure, a product type they know well and understand its cost structure. It will be wood frame construction above concrete podium, a product type used on multiple other BKV projects, that will allow them to deliver a hotel well under \$200,000 per door.

The team includes Aimbridge Hospitality (<http://www.aimbridgehospitality.com/>), one of the nation's leading independent hotel investment and management firms that will operate a 5-story Element Hotel over 1-story of retail/restaurants; and Hopkins-based Frana

Companies (<http://frana.com/>).

Will Jensen then praised the group for its past work in building community. The internal conversations about this project have been about what's right for the community versus massing out return on investment. The project wants to be a good neighbor, talk to the AAN building, announce Chicago Avenue, and stand for all the things Brent has done before with Greco filling in empty urban spaces.

Thereafter, an audience member suggested having rooftop amenities followed by a number of questions from others regarding street level activity. Several also inquired about whether the team had met with the American Academy of Neurology and why space for them was not included in the plan. Tinjum stated the importance of working with AAN as they are an important part of the neighborhood. He also expressed concern about the hotel competing with the Aloft Hotel. Rogers said that he had not communicated with AAN, but would work with them if they expressed interest and the City selected them as the preferred developer for the site.

No action was taken on this item.

- B. *Proposed Demotion of 1207 Washington Avenue South.*** Hess Roise and Company (<http://www.hessroise.com/>) President Charlene Roise introduced herself and explained she is working with the owners of Bobby and Steve's Auto World located at 1221 Washington Avenue South to assess the historic significance of their adjacent property at 1207 Washington Avenue South. In addition to that site, they also own the building Scandia Furniture occupies at 1203 Washington Avenue South. BSAW would like to demolish the 1207 building and the rear of the 1203 building in order to reconfigure the layout of their current site. This will allow for better traffic circulation and create a safer pedestrian environment. The City, however, will not issue a demolition permit until the Heritage Preservation Commission gives its approval. As a result, the owners of BSAW hired HR&C to assess the historic significance of the property. They are seeking a letter of support for the Certificate of Appropriateness Application for Demolition (reference attachment in email from Joan Bennett to Land Use Advisory Committee dated July 14, 2015).

After distributing photocopies of the building, Roise described its historical background including previous owners and uses. Constructed in 1892 by Norwegian-born architect Carl Struck (who also built the Pracna Building on Main and the recently renovated Grain Belt Office Building on Marshall Street NE), the building was originally 4 stories in height; however, it suffered a number of fires in the early 1900s resulting in the removal of the upper 2 floors. The building began as a saloon and a clothing company with boarding rooms on the upper 3 floors for people working in the mills. Subsequent uses included a furniture store, printing company, and eventually Twin Cities Florist Supplies. Today the property is vacant and not generating any income and the Minneapolis Fire Department has fined the owners because the building is considered hazardous. Roise stated that based on all of her research, the building has no historical significance, therefore, the HPC should approve the demolition.

Steve Williams, son of Bobby Williams and owner of BSWA, introduced himself and gave a brief history of their business at this site since it was built in 1997. At the time, it was considered overbuilt for the area but as time proved they were blessed by its location on

Washington Avenue at I-35W and the increasing traffic flow that ensued.

However, the success of the increased traffic flow also brought some downsides, i.e., parking congestion, near-miss traffic accidents, and increased difficulty in accessing their facility that will only be exacerbated 10 days a year by the new Vikings stadium. The demolition plan will help resolve these downsides. Kerry Gullickson of LAN Construction, who built the 1221 facility, has been hired to fix these problems and since the City is not allowing any more gas stations in the neighborhood, Williams asked that they be allowed to demolish the 1207 building and the rear of the 1203 building to make their site more accessible to the community.

After distributing the site plan, existing conditions, and two planning phases, Roise, Williams, and BSAW Operations Leader Allen Sando provided additional information and responded to questions. If the HPC approves the demolition, the owners would need to go through the site plan approval process with the City's Planning Commission. They were willing to share the concept plan, but have not solidified anything yet. The board agreed that at this point in time, it should only consider the HPC demolition application, and that BSAW should come back to the DMNA's Land Use Advisory Committee and present the site plan for review and feedback.

Tinjum moved and Kittock seconded a motion to support Bobby & Steve's Auto World's Certificate of Appropriateness Application to Demolish 1207 Washington Avenue South, contingent on the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission agreeing with Hess Roise and Company's assessment that the building lacks historical significance. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

- C. CenterPoint Energy Construction Project.** Al Swintek, Manager of Local Government Relations at CenterPoint Energy, distributed a map and provided an overview of CPE's upcoming South 4th Street construction project. It is a systems upgrade that will replace approximately 1,600 feet of 16-inch old steel main distribution line with 1,600 feet of 12-inch plastic main distribution line along South 4th Street from Marquette Avenue South to 2nd Avenue North.

In Minneapolis, they are not allowed to leave in the old main line and because the main line is live and in service, they will have to put stoppers on both ends, i.e., kill the main/stop the gas flow and then do the work. However, they cannot put a stopper on the east end in front of the Mortenson development where the main gas line is located until its project is complete, and because of the Nicollet Mall reconstruction and Xcel Energy's new corporate headquarters development, CPE has to complete its work across the Mall by this fall.

After the construction scaffolding is removed, the sidewalk will be closed on the south side of South 4th Street and bus traffic will be rerouted. This is yet another construction activity that will cause an inconvenience for everyone who lives and work downtown but it's all part of the infrastructure upgrades that need to occur. After CPE's work is done, they are unclear about the City's plans for resurfacing South 4th Street.

Casey Tollefson, Gas Distribution Engineer II, explained the construction schedule. It is expected to begin the first week of September pending the completion of the 4Marq development, and will require approximately 2-1/2 months thereafter to complete.

Motorists should expect lane closures and traffic delays. Then he distributed cards with project contact information:

Construction Website: www.centerpointenergy.com/construction

Construction Hotline: 612-321-5329

Restoration Inquiries: 612-321-5042.

For more information, visit <http://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/InYourCommunity/Pages/ConstructionZoneProjectSites/Minneapolis-4th-Street-S-.aspx>.

VII. Community Development Update

- A. **Mill City High School.** Frances Woodson, spokeswoman from the Mill City High School, introduced co-founder and academician, John Miller, who described their new public charter high school opening fall of 2015 in First Covenant Church at 810 South 7th Street. They want to work with and offer downtown residents a neighborhood high school.

The Minnesota Guild of Public Charter Schools that was borne out of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers, the first teachers union in the U.S. to form a charter school, authorized MCHS.

Miller, who worked the past 5 years in a western-centric classical charter school in Eden Prairie that has been extremely successful, advised that the centerpiece of MCHS's program is more multicultural, i.e., Global Classical Studies that include east/west and indigenous studies and fits with downtown's diverse population as well as that of today's world. And one of the ways to close the achievement gap, they are also conducting Mastery Learning Studies designed to challenge all students to achieve their highest potential. Other cutting edge studies include Complexity, and Integrative Learning.

Miller advised that enrollment and recruitment of faculty and staff is going well and wanted to get the word out because there's still space for enrollment. MCHS will be a teacher majority board but will also have parents and community members.

Responding to questions, the audience was advised that the student to teacher ratio is about 23-25 to 1. They hope to have 150 students by the time school starts; there are 90 enrolled at this point. Student population per grade this year will be 75 for the 9th as well as the 10th with some 11th graders, but eventually there will be 75 per grades 9 through 12. They are in the middle of a federal Charter School Program (CSO) grant and there are 2 more years of federal start-up money, but now the state operation money has just kicked in.

For more information, visit <http://www.millcityhigh.org/>, or read the MinnPost article at <https://www.minnpost.com/learning-curve/2015/06/new-mill-city-high-will-be-unlike-any-other-school-minneapolis>.

- B. **Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership.** Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership Executive Director Kathleen Boe introduced herself and gave an overview of what the MRP is: a state-chartered 501(c)(3) nonprofit formed in 2008 that facilitates and supports coordinated revitalization of the Mississippi Riverfront in the City of Minneapolis. She noted that both

Carletta Sweet and David Tinjum serve on the organization's board of directors. Boe then went on to describe the three overarching strategies employed to fulfill its mission:

1. **Inform** the public about riverfront revitalization by:
 - a. Producing high-quality, data-driven research, i.e., the *Riverfront Vital Report*, that measures progress and sheds light on key areas of urban vitality: economic health, environmental health, cultural resources, and access to the river (copies of which she distributed, along with a 1-page public versus private investment fact sheet);
 - b. Conducting three annual Riverfront Vitality Forums, the next being on Thursday, July 23rd at Open Book. The Theater of Public Policy (<http://t2p2.net/>) will interview Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Superintendent Jayne Miller on the topic of *Finding the Green for Parks* (flyers for which she distributed).
 - c. Conducting an annual Riverfront Summit/Mississippi Minute Film Festival fundraising event where the updated *Riverfront Vitality Report* is released. The next will take place on October 26th at the Mill City Museum (flyers for which she distributed). Boe advised that last year Zenner helped with the production of the film festival and then encouraged the audience to summit entries now through September 15th.
2. **Engage** the public in riverfront revitalization through an annual placemaking event, i.e., the Riverfront Festival. The next will be the Friday, July 31st at Orvin "Ole" Olson Park (flyers for which were distributed). This is an opportunity to bring the community to areas along the riverfront that are less well known to spark interest in visiting and using the parkland.
3. **Accelerate** riverfront revitalization efforts by coalescing community partners around key areas of priority along the riverfront, e.g.: currently working on protected bike lane project on Marshall Street NE and recently received a commitment from Hennepin County to study parking spaces in the area; and turning attention to the Upper Harbor Terminal redevelopment effort.

Boe requested \$5,000 from the DMNA to help support the future work of the MRP. After Boe and Hantge entertained questions,

Kittock moved and Zenner seconded a motion to support the Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership in the amount of \$5,000. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

For more information about the MRP as well as any of its upcoming events, visit <http://www.minneapolisriverfront.org/>.

VIII. Third Ward Update

Council Member Jacob Frey reported on the following projects:

- Dinkytown was recently designated a Historic District by the City of Minneapolis' Heritage Preservation Commission. For more information, visit http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/projects/cped_dinky_study.
- The City recently amended Title 13, Chapter 297 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances relating to Licenses and Business Regulations: Hotels. The amendment modernizes the code and allows for hotels with fewer than 50 rooms.
- Planning to introduce a proposal that will require rental property owners to distribute voter registration cards to new tenants as part of the process for obtaining or renewing a rental license.
- Provided an update on the three developers (Sherman and Associates, Mortenson, Saturday Properties) that submitted a response to the City's RFP for 800 Washington Avenue South. City staff is now reviewing the proposals and will make a selection probably in the next couple weeks then submit it to the full City Council for affirmation.
- Believes the City can do a much better job in staggering when construction takes place to avoid adverse impact on pedestrian and vehicle traffic; however, most of the underground utility work has to take place now.
- Trying to facilitate a full connection of the river trail across the river. Greco is one impediment and the City is working through negotiations with them.

Thereafter, Frey entertained questions from the audience, during which he proposed exploring mechanisms to expose a greater number of age demographics and socio-economic backgrounds to the arts and culture to make sure the next generation is in line to carry the torch. Examples he gave for an annual event included piping music in the Mill Ruins, and ballet or modern dance companies perform on the riverfront.

IX. Community Development Update (Continued)

C. *Livability and Public Realm Committee.* Kittock advised this committee has met twice and the offshoot of one of them was a discussion about having free events in Gold Medal Park open to all neighbors that the DMNA could sponsor, i.e.:

1. *Yoga in the Gold Medal Park.* The proposal is to have a free 6-week pilot yoga class on Saturday mornings during August and September sponsored by the DMNA. This is something that can be done this summer to learn what does and does not work. The request is for \$600 to pay a yoga instructor. The DMNA would partner with Emanuel House and Mile in My Shoes to promote the program to create a better sense of community between the Mill District/Downtown East residents.
2. *Art and Music in the Gold Medal Park.* Other ideas generated by the committed were art classes and music events in GMP. They are in planning discussions with the Guthrie's artistic director, Joseph Haj, to do something by next spring.

After Hantge responded to funding questions,

Sweet moved and Zenner seconded a motion to contribute \$600 towards a 6-week Yoga in Gold Medal Park pilot project on Saturday mornings during August and September in partnership with Emanuel House and Mile in My Shoes. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

Kittock then announced that the next L&PR committee meeting is on Monday, July 27th,

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Open Book and encouraged all to attend.

D. Overview of Separate Neighborhood Boards Outreach Plan. While displaying a slide presentation, DiDonato explained that the board met with its NCR Neighborhood Specialist Carrie Day-Aspinwall to outline a plan of engagement and outreach regarding the proposal to give each neighborhood, i.e., Downtown East and Downtown West, its own board.

Working with Day-Aspinwall, the high-level process for engagement and outreach will involve:

1. Conducting a total of four outreach and engagement meetings, i.e.: two in each neighborhood, one in August and one in September;
2. Recapping the outcome of these meetings during the September 21, 2015 DMNA board meeting; and
3. Based on that feedback, taking a membership vote to determine if the DMNA will remain as one board or if each neighborhood will have its own board.

DiDonato then described the timing for each event and the objective to be achieved as well as the types of marketing that will be employed, e.g., via the DMNA website, *The Journal*, *Mill City Times*, Facebook, and email list.

Addressing the boundary change issue, DiDonato explained that the City and the Planning Commission probably would not consider it without first having two independent neighborhood boards pursuing that change.

Thereafter he entertained a few questions from the audience.

E. Open Streets Programming. Bennett presented a request to increase the Open Streets budget by approximately \$900, which would enable the DMNA to offer programming at the event on Sunday, August 23, 2015. Bennett noted that she did not take into account that the sponsorship only paid for space and marketing, not programming. She has been working with a number of different downtown groups, including Downtown Families Minneapolis, to develop programming for a “kids’ activity zone” during the event. She would like some additional monies to rent tents, tables and chairs, as well as purchase some office supplies for arts and crafts activities and water for volunteers.

Sweet moved and Kittock seconded a motion to increase the Open Streets budget by up to \$900 for kids programming. DiDonato called for discussion. The motion passed.

For more information on Open Streets Minneapolis, please visit:
<http://www.openstreetsmpls.org/downtown>.

X. Adjournment

Being no further business, Zenner moved and Kittock seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. DiDonato called for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Chair

Secretary