

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Tuesday, January 11, 2011
Hennepin County Central Library
300 Nicollet Mall – Room N-202
Minneapolis, MN

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Carletta Sweet called the board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board members in attendance were:

Andrea Christenson
Gerry Ewald, Vice Chair
Andy Hauer, Land Use Committee Chair
Paula Klimek, Treasurer
George Rosenquist, Crime and Safety Liaison - Arrived at the meeting at 6:30 p.m.
Wally Swan, Secretary
Jesse Winkler

Guests in attendance were:

Laura Boyd, Alcohol Compliance Services
Ann Calvert, City of Minneapolis CPED
Matt Dickhut, Bullfrog Cajun Bar
Ryan Dupuis, Kaas Wilson Architects
Elizabeth Flannery, Everwood Company
Eric Fortney, Brothers Bar and Grill
Jeff Kastor, Bullfrog Cajun Bar
Mary Kollen, Carlyle Condominiums
Tony Lappin, Bullfrog Cajun Bar
Jenni Lilledahl, Brave New Workshop
Matt Lokowich, Bullfrog Cajun Bar
Michael Mechtenberg, Metro Transit
David Nye, Everwood Company
Richard Kolleen, Carlyle Condominiums
Carina Ruhlandt, Salvation Army Harbor Light Shelter
Ryan Sailer, Everwood Company
Doug Verdier, RiverWest Condominiums
Dale White, RiverWest Condominiums
Link Wilson, Kaas Wilson Architects
Charleen Zimmer, Zan Associates

DMNA staff member Christie Rock was also present.

II. Consideration of the Agenda

Sweet moved the third item on the agenda, “election of officers” until after the Land Use items. Under old / new / other business, Swan asked that the consideration of sending a letter of opposition to the Towle Building and Reit Management and Research for closing the Skyway over the holidays also include weekends.

Ewald moved and Klimek seconded a motion to approve the amended agenda. Sweet called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. Land Use Update

Land Use Chair Andy Hauer thanked all of the land use presenters for being at the meeting. He asked that in the interest of time that the presenters keep their presentations brief. Hauer also asked that the presenters state upfront the type of land use application they are submitting to the City, i.e. site plan, conditional use permit, variance, liquor license application, or whether the presentation is for information only. He also asked that they state what they are looking for from the DMNA, i.e. motion and letter of support.

- **824 Hennepin Avenue.** Hauer introduced CPED Project Coordinator Ann Calvert. Calvert explained that the City held an RFP process this past year seeking a new owner for the former Hennepin Stages Theatre. City staff members are recommending selling the property to the owners of the Brave New Workshop. The business is a good complement to the surrounding uses, and the owners offered a market value price for the property. The City is seeking the support of the DMNA to sell the property to the owners of the Brave New Workshop.

Calvert introduced Jenni Lilledahl, co-owner of the Brave New Workshop. Lilledahl explained that she and her husband John Sweeney have operated the Brave New Workshop for the past 14 years. They purchased the business from Dudley Riggs in 1997. They are now interested in growing their business; however, their current space is too small to accommodate expansion. The former Hennepin Stages building is the perfect location for them to expand, and their business plan fits perfectly within the Hennepin Theatre District niche.

Lilledahl indicated they are excited about the location for a number of reasons, including an opportunity to connect with children in the Downtown Inter-District School, as well as the variety of transportation options for patrons. She also stated this is an opportunity to turn the Dudley Riggs name into a national brand. The location in the Hennepin Theatre District will give them more national recognition.

Swan moved and Ewald second a motion to support the sale of City-owned property located at 824 Hennepin Avenue to the ownership of the Brave New Workshop. Sweet called for discussion. The motion passed.

For more information about the Brave New Workshop, please visit <http://www.bravenewworkshop.com/>.

- **East West Transit Spine Study.** Anna Flintoft from the City of Minneapolis Public Works Department introduced herself and Mike Mechtenberg from Metro Transit. She indicated they are at the meeting to give an informational presentation on, as well as seeking input on the draft East West Transit Spine Study. This study is actually a component of the larger Access Minneapolis 10-Year Transportation Action Plan.

Mechtenberg distributed a short PowerPoint presentation, which explained that the purpose of the East-West Transit Spine is to improve transit service and to improve the quality of transit facilities for passengers traveling east and west through downtown. Flintoft stated that consolidating transit service into spines concentrates financial resources, simplifies the transit system for users, and is an efficient way to provide a very high frequency of service and a high level of transit facilities in selected downtown corridors. This helps provide better internal downtown transit circulation service for visitors and consumers who do not use the transit system on a regular basis and encourages transit use for a variety of trips.

Flintoft summarized the following four main objectives of the east west transit spine:

- Provide an improved level of transit service that is fast, reliable and direct.
- Provide a high-quality waiting environment for transit passengers.
- Provide a transit corridor with the capacity to grow.
- Provide a high quality environment for all pedestrians.

She stated that at the same time, it will be important to provide reasonable options for curbside uses, maintain reasonable traffic flow through the downtown core, and avoid impacts on existing bike lanes.

After Flintoft and Mechtenberg completed their presentation, they responded to questions about the study. Several board members raised concerns about the recommendations that came out of the study, and the impact they might have on downtown retailers. There was concern that the study took very little consideration to the needs of the retailers. Flintoft and Mechtenberg indicated that Metro Transit has extended the timeframe for reviewing the recommendations to give retailers more time weigh in.

For more information about the East West Transit Spine Study, please visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan>.

- **730 Hennepin Avenue.** Hauer introduced the group of representatives from the Everwood Company. Ryan Sailor spoke on behalf of the group. He indicated that they are seeking a letter of support for an application to the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Sailor explained that Everwood Company is in the process of acquiring 730 Hennepin Avenue and intends to convert five floors (floors four through eight) of vacant office space into affordable and market rate apartment units. The current tenant on the lower floors, the International Education Center, will remain in the building. The site plan calls for a mix of studio, one and two bedroom units. Rents range from \$650 to \$950 a month.

There was discussion about whether the International Education Center and rental housing could exist successfully together. Sailor said they believe that it can, and indicated that David Gaither, the executive director of the Center is supportive of the project. He also referenced a market study that indicates a need for affordable and market rate units in the Downtown West neighborhood.

Swan moved and Ewald second a motion to send a letter of support to the City for Everwood Company's application to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for the City Place Lofts located at 730 Hennepin Avenue. Sweet called for discussion. The motion passed.

- **Salvation Army Harbor Light Shelter.** Hauer introduced Carina Ruhlandt, the contracts and grants manager from the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Shelter. Ruhlandt indicated she is seeking a letter of support from the DMNA for the Shelter's application to the City's Emergency Shelter Grant program. The Shelter is seeking funds to replace the 6th floor roof. The City approached the Shelter about submitting an application, because there were funds remaining in the 2010 allocation for the program. The Shelter submitted the application in December, but due to the holidays was not able to present to the DMNA board until January.

Ewald moved and Klimek seconded a motion to approve the Salvation Army's application to the City's Emergency Shelter Grant program for a new roof at the Harbor Light Shelter located at 1010 Currie Avenue. Sweet called for discussion. The motion passed.

- **1111 Hennepin Avenue.** Hauer introduced Laura Boyd from Alcohol Compliance Services. Boyd introduced the owners of Bullfrog Cajun Bar, Matt Lokowich and Jeff Kastor. She explained that they are seeking a Class E liquor license for the former Gladius space located at 1111 Hennepin Avenue. She stated that the owners currently operate the Bulldog in Lowertown. Lokowich stated that they plan to keep some of Gladius' design elements, including the black granite-top bar and the Roman-style arches that extend over the booths. However, he intends to cover the walls in wood, hang old light fixtures and add more windows. The price points will be comparable to the Bulldog. They are hoping to capitalize on Twins traffic and capture some theatre patrons.

Christenson moved and Ewald seconded a motion to support the Class E liquor license application for Bullfrog Cajun Bar. Sweet called for discussion. Motion passed.

Christie will send a letter to City of Minneapolis license inspector Craig Eliason.

- **430 1st Avenue North.** Boyd introduced Eric Fortney from Brothers Bar & Grill. Fortney stated that the Brothers ownership group is seeking a Class B liquor license to expand the existing Brothers Bar & Grill into the existing Refuge Bar & Grill Space. The Brothers ownership group is in the process of purchasing the Refuge Bar & Grill from Mike Jennings who is planning to refocus his business efforts in the suburbs. This is a purchase that has been a long time in the making. The expansion will allow Brothers Bar & Grill to offer a full menu until 10 p.m. Fortney indicated the basement operation would remain open after the expansion into the main floor space.

Christenson moved and Sweet seconded a motion to support the Class B liquor license application for Brothers Bar & Grill. Sweet called for discussion. Motion passed.

Christie will send a letter to City of Minneapolis license inspector Craig Eliason.

- **430 1st Avenue North.** Fortney stated that as a condition of the purchase of the Refuge Bar & Grill, Jennings is requiring the Brothers ownership group to also acquire the space where the former Rosen's City Tavern was located. The Brothers ownership group is seeking a Class B liquor license for this space. The name of the bar and restaurant has yet to be determined, but one of the possible names under consideration is Jack's Joint. It would feature a sports bar concept.

Ewald moved and Christenson seconded a motion to support the Class B liquor license application for the Brothers ownership group for the former Rosen's location. Sweet called for discussion. Motion passed.

Christie will send a letter to City of Minneapolis license inspector Craig Eliason.

IV. Election of Board Officers

Chair Sweet facilitated the elections to the DMNA Executive Committee.

- **Chair:** *Ewald moved and Christenson seconded a motion to nominate Ewald to the position of Chair. Ewald accepted the nomination. Sweet called for any further nominations from the floor three times. Seeing none, she closed the nominations. The motion passed. Ewald was elected Chair of the DMNA Board of Directors.*

Newly elected Chair Ewald took over facilitating the elections to the DMNA Executive Committee.

- **Vice Chair:** *Hauer moved and Christenson seconded a motion to nominate Sweet to the position of Vice Chair. Sweet accepted the nomination. Ewald called for any further nominations from the floor three times. Seeing none, he closed the nominations. The motion passed. Sweet was elected Vice Chair of the DMNA Board of Directors.*
- **Secretary:** *Christenson moved and Sweet seconded a motion to nominate Swan to the position of Secretary. Swan accepted the nomination. Ewald called for any further nominations from the floor three times. Seeing none, he closed the nominations. The motion passed. Swan was elected Secretary of the DMNA Board of Directors.*
- **Treasurer:** *Swan moved and Christenson seconded a motion to nominate Klimek to the position of Treasurer. Klimek accepted the nomination. Ewald called for any further nominations from the floor three times. Seeing none, he closed the nominations. The motion passed. Klimek was elected Treasurer of the DMNA Board of Directors.*

V. NRP Implementation

- **SafeZone Collaborative.** The SafeZone Collaborative approached the DMNA about reallocating \$5,000 originally awarded to the Downtown 100 Initiative to the purchase of a Polaris EV LSV electric vehicle. A motion was made and seconded via email to approve the transfer of funds; however, several board members requested that additional discussion take place at the board meeting before final approval. Rock also expressed an interest in having the motion ratified at the board meeting upon the recommendation of City and NRP staff. The reallocation requires a modification of the DMNA Phase I NRP Plan. This is purely paper shuffling, but none-the-less requires that the board approve the plan modification.

Rock explained the circumstances behind the request. She indicated that the DMNA approved the \$5,000 request for the Downtown 100 Initiative in November of 2008. She prepared a check to the SafeZone Collaborative, because they were serving as the fiscal agent for the Downtown 100 Initiative. The Downtown 100 Initiative never accessed the money, because it was able to access funds from another source. The SafeZone Collaborative is now seeking to repurpose the funds for the purchase of the Polaris EV LSV Electric Vehicle. The Collaborative will use the vehicle to help patrol the downtown neighborhoods. Rock indicated that the original source of funds is from the Restorative Justice strategy under Crime and Safety. In order to complete the request, the board needs to approve a Plan Modification to move the funds to the Nuisance Crime Reduction strategy under Crime and Safety.

Swan moved and Sweet seconded a motion to ratify the Phase I Plan Modification motion that occurred via email to reallocate \$5,000 from the contract with the SafeZone Collaborative, which was suppose to support the Downtown 100 Pilot Program, to help fund the purchase of the Polaris EV LSV electric vehicle. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed. Ewald and Klimek voted nay.

VI. Consideration of the December Meeting Minutes

- **December 14, 2010 Board meeting**

Christenson moved and Swan seconded a motion to approve the December 14, 2010, board meeting minutes. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed. Winkler abstained.

- **December 14, 2010 Annual meeting**

Christenson moved Swan seconded a motion to approve the December 14, 2010 Annual meeting minutes. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed. Winkler abstained.

VII. Consideration of the January Financial Reports

Sweet moved and Hauer seconded a motion to receive and file the January financial report. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.

VIII. Staff Report

Rock summarized her activities for the period 12/11/10 to 1/7/11 from the report she previously submitted via email.

Sweet moved and Hauer seconded a motion to receive and file Rock's staff report. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.

IX. Old / New / Other Business

- **2010 Annual Meeting Update and Discussion.** Discussion took place regarding whether to change the month of the Annual Meeting. Poor turnout at the event could be the result of winter weather and the impending holidays. Board members ultimately decided to move the meeting to October. Hauer indicated he would try and reserve Pohlard Hall for October 11, 2011.
- **Web site Discussion.** There was limited discussion regarding the Web site home page, and the types of information to be included under "Hot Topics" and "Let's Dish", as well as how to collect it. There was a general feeling that maintaining the Web site could be a full-time job depending on how the information is gathered. Most felt that letting the people who appear before the board under land use know about the Web site and how they could use it to promote their respective businesses was the best methodology at this point. Rock indicated she also uses the *Downtown Journal* Web site, and the City's Web site as sources of information and stories.
- **Consideration of sending a letter of opposition to the Towle Building and Reit Management & Research for closing the Skyway over the holidays and also on weekends.** Board Member Wally Swan introduced this item for discussion. He indicated that over the holidays the Towle Building and Reit Management & Research closed the Skyway. Hauer stated that they are also closing the Skyway on weekends. Swan noted that he encountered several frustrated and confused Skyway users who did not know which way to go after coming upon the closure. Swan stated that building owners are required to uniformly keep the Skyways open for certain hours during the day. He contends that they should not be able to arbitrarily close them. Swan suggested that the DMNA prepare a letter of opposition to the Towle Building and Reit Management & Research for closing the Skyway over the holidays and also on weekends. The letter should cc. Mayor RT Rybak, the entire City Council, the Downtown Council, the Skyway Advisory Board, TriTech, and the building tenants.

Swan moved and Winkler seconded a motion to send a letter of opposition to Towle Building and Reit Management & Research for closing the Skyway over the holidays and also on weekends. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.

Swan indicated that he would draft the letter and forward to Rock for her finessing and the distribution process.

- **Update on outreach and collaboration with other Downtown organizations.** Sweet asked Board members for any additional information beyond what was provided in the Outreach and Collaboration chart previously distributed via email.
 - **Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.** Swan noted that he distributed his report via email, but told the board that it was essentially an introduction to and update from the 2011 Legislative session.
 - **Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc. / DEEP 2100 Initiative.** Winkler inquired about how the outreach and collaboration assignments are determined. He indicated that he lives in Elliot Park and often attends the neighborhood association meetings. Sweet stated that she would be more than willing to pass this outreach and collaboration assignment to Winkler. He accepted and will now give updates regarding Elliot Park Neighborhood Inc., and its activities at the DMNA Board meetings.

There were no other outreach and collaboration updates aside from the two above.

VIII. Adjournment

Being no further business, *Swan moved and Klimek second a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ewald called for discussion. The motion passed.* The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2011.

Chair

Secretary