

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Tuesday, April 18, 2017

Open Book

1011 Washington Avenue South, 2nd Floor Meeting Room

Minneapolis, MN 55415

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Joe Tamburino called the Board meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Other Board members in attendance were:

Jennifer Bernhardt
Kevin Frazell
Stephanie Hill
Pamela McCrea, Vice Chair
Travis Nordgaard
Tomek Rajtar
Carletta Sweet, Secretary
Dianne Walsh, Treasurer

Staff member Christie Rock Hantge was absent.

Guests in attendance included:

Gwen Campbell, People Serving People
Kelsey Fogt, Minneapolis Department of Public Works
Jacob Frey, Ward 3 Council Member
Tom Novak, American Trio Lofts
Lynn Regnier, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.
Ben Shardlow, Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District
Amy Sweasy, Metropolitan Lofts
Dale White, RiverWest Condominiums
Charlene Zimmer, Zan Associates

II. Consideration of the Agenda

Sweet moved and Bernhardt seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Tamburino called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. Consideration of the Consent Agenda

After a motion made by Sweet and seconded by Bernhardt to amend the March 27th minutes to reflect McCrea's absence was passed, Bernhardt then moved and McCrea seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda which included the Board meeting minutes dated March 27, 2017 as amended, and the F2017 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending March 31, 2017. Tamburino called for discussion. The motion passed.

IV. MDC/DID Tree Watering Project

Ben Shardlow, Director of Urban Design (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/benshardlow>), advised he asked to share an update on a project in which they have an interest. Greening is part of their mission

(<http://www.mplsdid.com/green>) and, as a consequence, they maintain a lot of landscaping on several corridors in downtown; however, street trees are not in their purview. When Charles Loring (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_M._Loring) founded the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, he wanted to take care of street trees so it is a peculiarity of our city that the MPRB is responsible for all street and boulevard trees.

Shardlow came to gauge the DMNA's interest in being a partner in an effort to take better care of street trees because he believes it is entirely possible for a tree on a downtown sidewalk to grow, reach maturity and benefit the public. That isn't happening and DID and the Forestry Department of the MPRB know why it isn't happening. What is missing to help trees get established downtown is **water**. Most trees downtown are planted in 5' x 5' tree grates and when a new tree is planted, the MPRB only has resources to water it two to three times total in its first year. Last week Shardlow met with MPRB's Director of Forestry, Ralph Sievert (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sievert-ralph-8678379>), and Assistant Superintendent of Environmental Stewardship, Jeremy Barrick (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jeremy-barrick-70993323>), who are partners on this project and discovered they are under-resourced for the work at hand, especially replacing all the trees being lost, but are doing what can be done with the resources they have available.

What they recognize is hundreds of trees are planted downtown every year to replace those that are dying because they are not planted in a manner in which they could thrive. Shardlow reached out to and met with Tamburino to discuss the situation and they realized there is a potential match with leadership from the City, MPRB and County to plant trees in a better way. Essentially, in every case where streets downtown are being reconstructed, the landscaping plan is better, i.e.: structural soil, tree trenches, irrigation systems are being installed, but there is still the constant churn of new trees being planted that soon die and need replacing, e.g.: those planted last year in front of the Cerasota Building (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceresota_Building); the 55 new trees planted under the Downtown Pedestrian Improvement Project (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cip/future/WCMS1P-150295>); and those planted after the LaSalle Avenue reconstruction in 2015 (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/all/WCMS1P-104039>). This project is coming together in real time and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (<http://mwmo.org/>), who he met with this afternoon, is also interested in the project.

Because they recognize every summer that passes is an opportunity missed for getting trees established, DID is seeking seed funding from the DMNA in the amount of \$10,000 to pay for DID Ambassadors watering crews (who already water planters, hanging baskets, and several street medians) to fill watering bags once a week. Although they don't know yet what trees downtown are the most important and where the MPRB is replanting, he thought it opportune to broach the topic and receive feedback and then return with a formal request in May in order to have the project up and running by the warmer months of this year. If this fleshes out, there are a whole host of fun possibilities for the DMNA to increase its community engagement, e.g., hanging tree tags that indicate they are an adopted project partner, watering trucks becoming mobile billboards to raise visibility of issue to community.

Thereafter, Shardlow entertained questions during which it was noted \$50,000 is needed for the project and they would be pursuing this amount from the four downtown neighborhood organizations, but there's a lot more details to be worked out before he puts the ask on the table. DID is pursuing broader partnerships (e.g., employers, employees, residents, Minnesota Environmental Fund) to help maintain this infrastructure and hopeful to get this project going in 2017. Other partners they work with include developers as they go through the development review process at the City to encourage them to plant trees the right way and install irrigation to provide sufficient watering. Most trees outside of downtown are not planted in hardscape environments and thus are able to do better. Having the Ambassadors perform this service on a fee basis versus a tree service or the MPRB will get you more bang for the buck.

V. Ward 3 Update

Council Member Jacob Frey reported on the following activities:

- Today, the Community Development & Regulatory Services Committee approved passage of Minneapolis Code of Ordinances related to consuming in public in Downtown East Commons Park (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-184493>) and he anticipates it will be approved by the full City Council. He appreciates the support of the DMNA because he, his colleagues and staff are looking to the neighborhoods on how it will be implemented [for Rules of The Commons, visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmSP-197291.pdf>].
- Visit <http://www.commonsmpls.com/eventcalendar> for the 2017 summer season of events coming to The Commons.
- The Nicollet Mall reconstruction project has only been delayed by a couple months and is anticipated to be complete by October (<http://www.nicolletmallproject.com/construction>).
- They have seen an uptick in crime in the Warehouse District area, and although police officers report to the Chief of Police who reports to the Mayor, the City Council has asked for beat officers to patrol certain areas at certain times in order to have a consistent visible presence throughout the day and night.
- Development projects and other issues:
 - *800 Washington Avenue South.* Have completed final negotiations with Mortenson Development and hope they will be proceeding shortly. The American Academy of Neurology will no longer be a part of the development, the one significant alteration to the plan.
 - *Nicollet Hotel Block.* Giving United Properties more time to secure partners to manage the hotel and residential components of the project. The City could put it back out to bid to adhere to the RFP process, but given current market conditions, there's a strong likelihood they'll get less money than initially anticipated, and there is no guarantee of the same quality of project which UP has done anyway in its revised plan, but it is still a beautiful project.
 - *5th Street Reconstruction/Samatar Crossing.* Both the DMNA and Cedar-Riverside want a pedestrian only/bike trail. They are hoping to secure City funding to implement. He believes it is wide enough to do something special based on community input that can join the communities on each end.
 - *Proposed Tree Watering Project.* He'll be happy to talk with the MPRB about this initiative; they were just given \$10.5 million annually to conduct this type of maintenance via the 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan (<https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/about-us/budget-financial/20-year-neighborhood-park-plan/>).
 - *Mississippi River Pollution by Dogs.* McCrea wanted him to be aware of downtown residents' concerns over this issue (<http://www.startribune.com/what-pollutes-the-urban-mississippi-lawns-dogs-and-lots-of-pavement/417995413/>).
 - *Minimum Wage Increase.* For a long time he has been for an increase, but there needs to be a substantial phase-in, especially for small local businesses, and an understanding of how restaurants function. He's not concerned for some entities, e.g., McDonald's, Wendy's who can get to \$15 in a relatively short timeframe and should be doing so (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/minimumwage/MINIMUM-HOME>).

VI. MDC/DID Tree Watering Project (Continued)

Tamburino advised he likes the plan but the MPRB has its hands full and it's doubtful they would begin watering trees in downtown. It's great DID is stepping up to the plate and that it would only take \$50,000 annually to water each tree downtown once a week, but losing hundreds of trees a year is ridiculous.

What he has learned since becoming the DMNA Chair is when asking for City approval to fund a project, it's either no or a yes with 10 different conditions attached. Therefore, to avoid confusion as to what a neighborhood association is permitted to fund, he sent Robert Cooper at the City's Finance Division, Minnesota Statute 469.1831 (https://www.lawserver.com/law/state/minnesota/mn-statutes/minnesota_statutes_469-1831) wherein it states we can "physically maintain facilities" also "preserve and enhance the private and public physical infrastructure." There is nothing more important than making sure our trees are alive because if they're dead it looks like the neighborhood is lacking. Funding this project fits into our Downtown Development strategy as well as Purpose under our Bylaws (<http://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/DMNA-final-Bylaws-10-25-2016.pdf>). Cooper, who was reluctant to approve this type of funding (they have turned down funding for maintenance), is now seeking legal advice from the City Attorney. Tamburino believes we will win this battle legally and reiterated that Shardlow will return in May with a formal request and that he himself will approach the other downtown neighborhoods. Also, Tamburino agreed to follow up with the MPRB about its responsibility to help the trees it plants downtown to become established.

Shardlow advised when streets are being reconstructed, more expertise and resources are being brought to bear on how trees are planted and established and we'll reap the benefits in 10 to 30 years. One of the reasons they are taking this approach is because it would be a major victory for the MPRB to increase annual watering from 3 to 5 times and, if DID can raise the funds, they can be good partners and step beyond the adopt-a-tree incremental approach to solving the problem at scale. Another sign of progress is that the MPRB has a staff person charged with commenting on the tree species installed and they are all about diversification.

VII. 4th Street Reconstruction Project

Kelsey Fogt, Project Planner (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kelsey-fogt-5906a31b>), distributed a 2-page, 2-sided handout on this project (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/future/WCMSP-191561>) and advised they are in the very early planning stages to reconstruct 4th Street from building face to building face from the exit ramp off of I-394 on the west to 4th Avenue South in front of City Hall on the east. The redesign process is guided by determining what's necessary to have in the corridor and the best use of the corridor with input from a collection of voices including property and business owners along the corridors. The goal of the project is to significantly expand and enhance the pedestrian realm with a diversity of tree plantings; relocate the bike lane away from the contra-flow bus lane to a more friendly protected area similar to what's happening on Washington Avenue; and maintain transit access through the corridor to Marquette and 2nd Avenues.

Charlene Zimmer, president of Zan Associates (<https://www.zanassoc.com/>) and consultant to the project, assured the Board the bike lane will be relocated and mostly likely designed as on Washington Avenue with off-street bike lanes, but what happens to the bus lane is more complicated to answer. Hearing what the community thinks about these issues would be helpful as they go forward as they are in the process of analyzing the best way to provide for good transit service downtown that doesn't affect the contra-flow lane and service on 4th Street. They are working with Shardlow and DID on what they have learned in their value engineering process related to street landscaping and what is done underground to help establish the longevity of trees.

Thereafter, Fogt and Zimmer entertained questions from the Board during which they advised there will be Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), which is the case for all street and traffic signal upgrades occurring in downtown. Hill expressed encouragement for an easily visible protected bike lane because of bicyclists who ride on sidewalks and are a hazard to pedestrians.

They are trying to create a couple design options fairly quickly to bring back to the DMNA and/or at an open house. Then by early summer they hope to have a decision from the City Council as to what the design will be. The full engineering and design work will begin thereafter with construction planned for 2019.

VIII. People Serving People Security Camera Report

Gwen Campbell, Development Director (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gwencampbell1>), distributed a 1-page sheet with a before “fuzzy” exterior still shot from their previous security camera and an after exterior “clearer” still shot from their new security camera the DMNA helped fund. She explained with the DMNA’s \$10,000 seed money, they began fundraising using the “fuzzy” photograph to submit a grant request to Deluxe Corporation and received a matching grant from them. They were able to raise additional funds through individual donations and expect to have all funds that are needed by Friday, April 28th.

After entertaining questions from the Board, she thanked them for their support.

IX. Land Use Committee Report

Kevin Frazell reported on the following projects reviewed at the April 5th meeting:

- A. **Mill Place, 101-115 3rd Avenue South.** Certificate of Appropriateness application for an exterior painted sign on what is now known as the Barrel House (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-197929.pdf>). The LUC offered a letter of support recommending LED lighting should reflect a warm white light versus a cool white light; and the new “building sign light fixtures” should not be left on all night because they will cast light on the adjacent new residential apartment buildings.
- B. **Thresher Square, 700-708 South 3rd Street.** Certificate of Appropriateness application for a historic rehabilitation of the property was granted in May 2015 but a few changes were needed (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-198484.pdf>). Now it will only be a 183-room Canopy™ by Hilton Minneapolis hotel (a new lifestyle-focused brand inspired by the destination) with first floor retail/restaurant space on the corner of 3rd Street and Park Avenue. It will be more upscale than the Aloft Minneapolis, Sherman Associates’ other hotel nearby on Washington Avenue. The LUC offered a letter of support recommending the LED lighting should reflect a warm white light versus a cool white light.
- C. **205 Park Avenue South.** Variance applications to reduce the rear yard building setback from 15 feet to 8 feet along the east property line; reduce the minimum on-site loading requirement from one small space to zero; and increase the size of a kennel or exercise run from 200 square feet to 1,536 square feet, subject to certain conditions. Site plan review application for a 6-story, mixed-use building with 122 dwelling units and 7,300 square feet of commercial space, subject to certain conditions (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-198219.pdf>).

Frazell noted greening was added on 2nd Street and much time was spent on the dog park, i.e., having two of them, one on Washington Avenue and one on 2nd Street, and the height of the fence. Lots of compliments to Sherman Associates for accommodating the DMNA’s requests.

- D. **Mill City Museum, 708 South 2nd Street South.** Certificate of Appropriateness application for the rehabilitation of the Mill City Museum ruin walls (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-197179.pdf>). It will cost approximately \$1 million to preserve which they hope to receive from this year’s state bonding bills. The summer opera series will be relocated during this work (<http://www.millcitysummeropera.org/>). The LUC offered a letter of support.

- E. **Downtown East Commons Park, 425 Portland Avenue South.** Amendment to the Consuming in Public Ordinance (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-197438.pdf>). The LUC offered a letter of support.
- F. **Impact of Dog Waste on Mississippi River and Neighborhood.** The LUC would like to have the MPRB and the Gold Medal Park Conservancy come before them to discuss this matter (<http://www.startribune.com/what-pollutes-the-urban-mississippi-lawns-dogs-and-lots-of-pavement/417995413/>). As dog waste has also been a problem in Elliot Park, EPNI Executive Director Lynn Regnier offered to work with the DMNA on this issue.

X. Old, New or Other Business

- A. **Candidate Forums Discussion (Continued).** Tamburino advised space has been reserved at the Minneapolis Central Library on September 12th for Ward 3 candidates in collaboration with the North Loop Neighborhood Association; a blueprint for the event is forthcoming.

Space has also been served on October 12th for the mayoral candidates and they are working with the other downtown neighborhood organizations of Citizens for Loring Park Community, Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc., and NLNA.

- B. **Open Streets Minneapolis 2017.** Tamburino explained the costs related to this June 11th event is \$1,000 to match the NLNA's contribution (which was voted on at the last Board meeting) and an amount to be determined for Joan Bennett who is willing to man the DMNA table. Frazell commented there was no need to hire anyone because he's available and that Rock Hantge is following up with the NLNA regarding sharing a table.

XI. Exploratory Committee to Hire FTE Executive Director Update

Tasked with delving into the current role (e.g., job description, billed hours, level of outreach that currently happens, the City's needs, level of support Land Use Committee needs), McCrea emphasized the LUC is adamant about having staff because of the number of projects and developers coming before them, the importance of being able to contact City staff and other stakeholders involved in the development in a timely manner, and the desire to have a prominent presence in the community. All this requires staff hours and having someone serve in this capacity is sorely missed.

Then reporting on the meeting she and Frazell had with David Rubedor, Assistant City Coordinator and NCR Director, and Robert Thompson, Policy Specialist (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ncr/WCMS1P-122935>), they were told it was a good idea, we have the funding, poverty and crime are big issues in our area, if we hire an executive director be clear on the role and that person could also work on strategic partnerships (like what Sweet does). There are a lot of partnerships going on and we don't want to duplicate those efforts. One thing they want us to work on is community outreach because we have a diverse community and issues may be different in other areas. Our true stakeholder group is the residents and don't forget that; employers and employees are supplemental. Connect with other groups only to be partners. Communication with residents is important and you have to figure out how to get the information out. You can also be in partnership with the City, but you can also ask questions and challenge them. They would like to see a stronger community approach. Print your own media, newsletter, use the *Mill City Times*. If you recommend employees versus contract employee, hire another person and pay them as an employee, get away from the contracted staff. They were given the names and contacts for the best run associations with executive directors, i.e.: Stevens Square, Nokomis East, Jordan, Lyndale, and ???

Frazell clarified Rubedor told them every neighborhood is different and has its own structure, but he and McCrea had asked for good executive director models that work well, were clear about their respective roles,

where the board is driving policy and the executive director is implementing.

McCrea and Frazell then reported on the open meeting laws. Frazell believes they clearly said meetings need to be open, maybe some exceptions for subcommittee meetings when dealing with sensitive matters, and the public should be able to see our board materials on our website; files, except personnel or legal issues, should not be password protected.

Tasked with examining staff structure of the other downtown neighborhood associations, Bernhardt advised she and Nordgaard met with CLPC's long-time Coordinator Jana Metga (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jana-l-metge-66984365>), NLNA's new President Tim Bildsoe (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/timbildsoe>), and EPNI's Executive Director Lynn Regnier (<https://www.facebook.com/lynn.regnier.3>) who was in the audience. Then she summarized the results of those meetings (reference the 4-page document she sent via email on this date). The key message from each is that the executive director does not do the books; a lot of the work Rock Hantge does is contracted out. NLNA also contracts out their minutes but has a savvy board member [Scott Woller] who manages the website. CLPC also contracts out their web work.

Whether it's members of the board (e.g., Green Team, Livability Team) or the executive director, they are focused on outreach. Much of what Regnier does is connecting with people and attending as many events as possible, rather than worrying about all of the financial parts. Bernhardt found it fascinating when she asked EPNI about its 2017 priorities, Regnier was able to print them out and community engagement was key. Because Regnier is retiring in February 2018, EPNI is also working on a succession plan.

What both CLPC and EPNI share with the DMNA is that board meetings are not that exciting because most work happens at the committee level where most people in the community attends.

CLPC is proud of its safety initiative; it has an active Nicollet Avenue Safety Coalition where representatives from the City's Attorney Office and MPD work with the community on actionable items.

Because of limited funds and the desire to do more than what is allowed with City funds, both CLPC and NLNA conduct fundraising events for projects they wish to support; NLNA also sells NLNA logo merchandise. They also have a goal to have a contact in every residential property and business. This should also be a goal for the DMNA.

Bernhardt then relayed how the NLNA turned its annual meeting into a party where everything was donated from local businesses and residents were engaged and signed up for the following committees: Planning and Zoning (land use); Infrastructure (road repairs and traffic signals); Parks and Beautification; Safety; Community Engagement; and North Loop Business. She thinks it's an interesting way for the DMNA to approach its annual meeting.

Bernhardt believes we have an amazing LUC, but we need to start with community engagement and she is willing to put together some goals to implement and raise funds for our projects and annual meeting. She does not recommend hiring an executive director to manage community engagement, but does support whatever hours per month the LUC needs to function. We need to find out what the LUC needs and look into what Rock Hantge does and design what works best.

Discussion ensued about the pros and cons of hiring an executive director, after which the Exploratory Committee was directed to ascertain the hourly needs and costs related thereto to support the LUC. Bernhardt also agreed to research the cost to manage the website.

XII. Downtown Partnerships Update

For a complete listing of the organizations and committees in which the DMNA is engaged, please reference the Outreach and Collaboration Chart prepared by Sweet included in the April 2017 Board materials on the DMNA's Website under Board Members Only.

XIII. Adjournment

Walsh moved and Bernhardt seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tamburino called for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Chair

Secretary