

## **DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Monday, December 16, 2019

*Mill City Museum Mill Ruins Building*

710 South 2nd Street, 6th Floor ADM Room

### **I. Call to Order and Introductions**

Chair Pamela McCrea called the Board meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.

Other Board members in attendance were:

Max Erickson  
Kevin Frazell, Vice Chair  
Tomek Rajtar  
Laurie Rice  
Carletta Sweet, Secretary  
Joe Tamburino  
Dianne Walsh, Treasurer

Board Member Joey Senkyr was absent.

Staff member Christie Rock Hantge was also present.

Guests in attendance included:

Michael Huffman, St. Stephen's Human Services  
Randy Manthey, The Carlyle Condominiums  
Tom Schmid, Washburn Lofts  
Ben Shardlow, Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District  
Beth Shogren, Green Minneapolis  
John Tribbetts, St. Stephen's Human Services  
Dale White, RiverWest Condominiums

### **II. Consideration of Agenda**

After Vice Chair Kevin Frazell added an update on Neighborhoods 2020 under New / Old / Other Business,

*Sweet moved and Frazell seconded a motion to approve the Board meeting agenda as amended. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

### **III. Consideration of the Consent Agenda**

Because she didn't have time to review the draft November 18th Board minutes, Sweet requested postponing approval until the next Board meeting on January 21, 2020.

Treasurer Dianne Walsh advised she reviewed all the financial documents received from Hantge and found no issues.

Hantge clarified the NRP Phase II Plan Modification to move \$60,000 from the Housing Opportunities Fund strategy to the End Homelessness strategy to support St. Stephen's Human Services Street Outreach program was previously approved by the Board and subsequently by community vote in February and March 2019 respectively. McCrea reiterated that every time the DMNA awards funds, there should be an annual accounting of a program's activities. Thereafter,

*Sweet moved and Tamburino seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda which included the F2019 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending November 30, 2019; and the Neighborhood Coordinator / Finance Coordinator staff report for November (Invoice #059); and the NRP Phase II Plan Modification, all of which were made available online for advance review. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

#### **IV. Downtown Forest/Greening Lab Project**

Having received another generous \$10,000 grant from the DMNA in February 2019 to help with supplemental watering, Beth Shogren, Executive Director of Green Minneapolis, and Ben Shardlow, Director of Urban Design at the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District, came to give a progress report on the Greening Lab activities in 2019 (<https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/191216-Greening-Lab-update-to-DMNA.pdf>).

Shogren first reviewed the goals for Greening Lab Year 3. Photo images displayed included watering of a new tree in downtown during its establishment period with DMNA's logo on the tree tag, one of the *Downtown Tree Census* events held at The Commons (comprised predominantly of white, young U of MN students, professionals from related fields, and empty nesters), detailed map of where trees are located in the *2025 Plan* definition of downtown which comprises over 3,300 trees, and Shogren showing how to measure the circumference of a tree.

Shardlow then described the successful outcome of their efforts resulting in an increase in the street tree survival rate and average growth rate of 1.4 inches; watering earlier in the year seems to have made a big difference. In past years they've sent the research assistant out to document the condition of each tree, this year through two community engagement tree census events attracting approximately 70 volunteers they were able to accomplish more in less time and find people who really care about the downtown forest.

New trees received new tags that included the DMNA logo, and existing tree tags were corrected and updated with the new tag which also included an invitation to the tree census events; the Board was encouraged to visit, text a tree, and use the hashtag #greeninglab to raise awareness.

Another step they've taken to overcome variables that make it difficult for trees to survive downtown is to partner with the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (<http://www.mwmo.org/>) and recently conducted a training event for property managers to learn how to use up to 80% less salt during harsh winters without hindering the walkability of sidewalks. And in a few spots around downtown, they've installed soil sensors to receive minute-by-minute real time information on a tree's soil chemistry to learn more about nutrient, water and salinity conditions.

Lastly, Shogren reviewed the goals for 2020:

- Engagement will be their primary focus to get people interested in trees, e.g.:
  - Conduct at least two *Downtown Tree Census* events annually
  - Applied for Hennepin County grant to support a *Walk and Talk with an Arborist* event
  - Partnering with Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on Arbor Day celebration in the North Loop ([https://www.minneapolisarks.org/activities\\_events/events/arbor\\_day/](https://www.minneapolisarks.org/activities_events/events/arbor_day/))
  - Grow tree tag and text a tree program with scavenger hunts
- Continue monitoring and documenting conditions of individual trees
- Continue maintenance through weekly watering of trees during the establishment period to work towards higher survival rate and expand the soil sensor pilot.

Thereafter, Shardlow and Shogren entertained questions from the audience about ways to collaborate on and advocate for greening and tree planting projects. For more information, visit <https://www.mplsddid.com/greeninglab>.

#### V. **St. Stephen's Human Services Street Outreach**

Michael Huffman, Director of Outreach and Shelter (<https://ststephensmpls.org/who-we-are/board-staff>), and John Tribbetts, Street Outreach Manager, were asked to return and report on what they've been doing since the DMNA awarded \$60,000 toward their Street Outreach program. Huffman first explained they strive to accomplish their mission to end homelessness through three programs: (1) emergency services by the operation of two emergency shelters, one in South Minneapolis and one at First Covenant Church in downtown Minneapolis, and street outreach; (2) housing for families and singles; and (3) community engagement via, e.g., A Day in the Life (<https://ststephensmpls.org/learn-advocate/day-life>), and zAmya Theater Project which has now become an independent nonprofit organization (<https://zamyatheater.org/>).

Then they reviewed the current realities and trends of the homeless in the metro area by sharing the unsheltered Point-in-Time Count (Point-in-Time Count) conducted annually on one night in the last week of January to provide a one-night snapshot of homelessness. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count of people experiencing homelessness who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night (<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/hdx/pit-hic/>). Shelter is often at or near capacity, so the numbers reflect individuals staying at places unfit for human habitation, e.g., transit system, under bridges, in tents wherever people are. Year by year they've been seeing concerning increases, and they consider these numbers being an undercount. It's reflective of the racial gaps and disparities for those who experience unsheltered homelessness in the Twin Cities.

Since they were last before the DMNA, the Navigation Center that opened last winter to assist people living in the encampment on Hiawatha Avenue closed in June, and the Green Line ceased operations between 2:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday in August, which prevents homeless people from sleeping on the trains. On a positive note, the Hennepin County Board recently approved a 2020 budget increase of \$1.1 million to increase case management services in the adult shelter system and add a 30- to 50-bed women's shelter that will come online sometime in 2020.

Lastly, they expressed gratitude for the DMNA's funding and described how its support, along with a variety of funding streams, is improving the downtown community: the Street Outreach Team has expanded from 6 to 13 allowing for expanded service times; in collaboration with MPD, DID and other partners such as Health Care for the Homeless (<https://nhchc.org/hennepin-county-health-care-for-the-homeless/>), they've implemented a biweekly focus outreach and expanded their footprint; working directly with the Strategic Justice Program (formerly known as the Downtown 100) to reestablish best practices around how to work with people having a lot of criminal justice practice, the unsheltered being a subset of this group; translated their 3-prong approach into three additional languages – Somali, Spanish and Hmong; and continuing to innovate within their SO program to find creative ways to outreach.

Thereafter, they entertained questions from the Board during which he acknowledged they were awarded \$5 million from Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos's \$98 billion-dollar Day 1 Fund. Although it will help them serve more families experiencing homelessness over 5 years, it may impact their fundraising ability. For more information, visit <https://ststephensmpls.org/>.

## VI. Ward 3 Update

Council Member Steve Fletcher shared the following information:

- *Downtown Public Safety*. Thanked the DMNA for supporting St. Stephen's which is often at the table when the Mayor holds a downtown public safety meeting; it collaborates on the different approaches to addressing the array of needs of people who end up in downtown. The City is trying to take some of the inappropriate responses made by the MPD off its plate and ensure it has the resources needed for what it does best. Having all partners involved conducting targeted outreach to specific populations becomes critical to understanding the whole picture.
- *Mayor's 2020 Budget* was approved (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/news/WCMSP-222024>). Since they're investing in law enforcement, they want it balanced with crime prevention as well.

They also wanted to make sure the long term was considered because the staffing conversation was frustrating. The honest reflection of what they were going to do is invest in an extra recruit class to get caught up. Once this was realized, everybody could see this is something in which they should invest without making a single change to the Mayor's budget. They permanently separated salaries for recruit school out onto another budget line because they're not on the street and don't want it coming out of the officers' who are active.

Through the DID, they funded specific downtown safety initiatives geared toward street outreach/de-escalation programs, and Ambassadors to add a late-night shift this coming summer.

- *Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance* was approved (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/WCMSP-222027>), which requires developers to include affordable units in residential development projects. One of the roles he played was getting a version that works for student housing in Dinkytown across the river. He commended the DMNA for supporting Beacon Interfaith's Bimosedaa project (<https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/blog/organizing/overview-bimosedaa/>).

Thereafter, discussed ensued around other crime and public safety issues and initiatives in the downtown community, e.g., the proposed Public Safety Center at The Vicinity and the MPD homeless initiative that would operate out of it. Tamburino asked Fletcher to put in a good word for this idea to their supervisor Grant Snyder.

## VII. Land Use Committee

LUC Chair Kevin Frazell reported on the following projects from the December 3rd meeting:

- A. Pips & Bounce Minneapolis** Liquor, On Sale, General Entertainment, and Sidewalk Café Applications by Laura Boyd, Alcohol Compliance Services ([http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/licensing/alcohol/business-licensing\\_liquor\\_alcohol\\_service\\_training\\_resources](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/licensing/alcohol/business-licensing_liquor_alcohol_service_training_resources)), and Eugene Jung, Co-owner (<https://www.pipsandbounce.com/about>). This Portland, Oregon-based ping pong, bar and restaurant is expanding to Minneapolis and will be located at 575 Hennepin Avenue South on the ground level of Embassy Suites by Hilton Minneapolis Downtown in the historic Plymouth Building ([https://www.bomampls.org/files/9314/7922/8915/Autumn\\_16\\_for\\_web.pdf](https://www.bomampls.org/files/9314/7922/8915/Autumn_16_for_web.pdf)).

The floor plan has 7 ping pong tables with a ball retriever at each, full bar, dining area, kitchen, and Prince-themed purple corner suite for small parties. The concept drawings, designed by Cunningham Group (<https://www.cunningham.com/minneapolis/>), have an authentic nostalgic vibe inspired by Jung's childhood basement growing up playing ping pong with family and friends, as well as the historic nature of the site. They're still working on external signage.

The menu is described as casual shareables. Initially the hours will be 3:00-10:00 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays, noon-2:00 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays, noon-10:00 p.m. on Sundays, but they predict they'll open earlier on weekdays for the lunch crowd. In order of quantity, revenue is generated by (1) table time of ping pong, (2) drinks, (3) food, and (4) parties. And according to Jung, Judy Hoarfrost, the owner of Paddle Palace (<https://www.paddlepalace.com/>), the largest U.S. distributor of ping pong supplies located in Portland, advised him Minneapolis has a very strong ping pong community. P&B's customer base is anyone who can hold a paddle, whether they hit the ball or not, hold food, hold drinks and want to have fun.

Because of the multi-year Hennepin Avenue Reconstruction project (<https://www.hennepindowntown.com/>), the City has already approved the sidewalk café be moved from the traditional location up against the building to curbside between the bike lane and sidewalk. This site has been vacant for many years after being occupied by several restaurants, the last being Thom Pham's Wondrous Azian Kitchen. The targeted opening is in June 2020.

*Frazell moved and Tamburino seconded a motion to approve the letter of support for the Pips & Bounce liquor license and sidewalk café application. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

- B. Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board "Parks for All" Comprehensive Plan** by Emma Pachuta, Senior Planner at Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/emma-r-pachuta-3aa18217>). The current plan was adopted in 2007 and runs through 2020 ([https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/082019-CompPlan\\_Neighborhood-Association-Presentation.pdf](https://www.thedmna.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/082019-CompPlan_Neighborhood-Association-Presentation.pdf)). An internal and external engagement process to update the plan by January 2021

has been underway since 2018; it will provide policy guidance to the organization through the year 2027.

Pachuta described what the Comp Plan is and isn't, with whom they've engaged, how and where engagement was conducted. Once this process is completed, she'll pivot over to the Cedar Lake-Lake of the Isles planning process (<https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/park-care-improvements/park-projects/current-projects/cedar-lake-lake-of-the-isles-cedar-isles-master-plan/>), and because it's a regional park they'll be seeking applicants from all over the region to sit on the advisory committee.

Since this was for informational purposes, no action was taken by the LUC. For more information, contact Carrie Christensen, Senior Planner, Parks for All Program Manager at [cchristensen@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:cchristensen@minneapolisparcs.org) or 612-230-6540.

- C. **Land Use Committee Structure.** McCrea reported on the plan to create a more formal structure; electing a chair, co-chair or vice chair, and a board liaison was proposed. The committee would also like members to take on more responsibility to help monitor development in the downtown community. Further discussion will occur at the next LUC meeting on Tuesday, January 7th, 6 p.m., at the Mill City Museum.

## VIII. Old / New / Other Business

- A. **Police Safety Center.** Tamburino reviewed changes made to the License Agreement with Sherman Associates since the November Board meeting. He also highlighted comments from Attorney Jess Birken's client guidance letter based on her review of the agreement. There was discussion about the cost of liability insurance; Hantge stated the DMNA's insurance provider has given a quote of \$1,200. She's unsure of the deductible amount but will find out. Walsh wants to work on the contract in greater detail and expressed a need to go through the agreement line by line.

*Walsh moved and Rajtar seconded a motion for Tamburino and Walsh meet first with Attorney Jess Birken to obtain answers to the Board's questions about the License Agreement with Sherman Associates at a cost not to exceed \$1,000. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

Tamburino will arrange the meeting and then report back to the Board in January.

- B. **Strategic Planning Session.** The Board decided to meet for an hour prior to the start of the January 21st Board meeting at the Mill City Museum, i.e., 4:45 p.m. McCrea and Hantge will develop a strategic planning survey with four to five questions and distribute it to the Board in advance as a thought starter for developing the 2020 goals and priorities.
- C. **Neighborhoods 2020.** Frazell provided an update on the two meetings he attended in the past few weeks facilitated by CURA. The meetings have been slightly contentious, but there is consensus that neighborhood organizations fulfill an important role within the structure of the City related to outreach and engagement. There is also a need for a minimum amount of funding to conduct that work. The next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2020, and the plan is to bring more clarity to the program guidelines and funding allocations.

**IX. DMNA Outreach and Collaboration**

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 December 2019 Board materials on the DMNA’s website.

**X. Next Board Meeting**

Tuesday, January 21st, 5:45 p.m., in the ADM Room at the Mill City Museum. The strategic planning session will precede it beginning at 4:45 p.m.

**XI. Adjournment**

There being no further business,

*Frazell moved and Rajtar seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. McCrea called for discussion. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.*

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary