

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Minutes from the Board Meeting on Monday, February 22, 2021

Via Zoom

(https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/wGNfzXszj5CwX8i9k0l9rpR7KHvslfDlIzviNmWA9_Ih6eBU-7ImBQwSol1oZm_f.jkgS52yeZvlw-x2Y)

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Pamela McCrea called the Board meeting to order at 5:48 p.m.

Other Board members in attendance were:

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

Staff member Christie Rock Hantge was also present.

Zoom guests in attendance included:

Brandi Bennett, Bolger Printing	Brenda Langton, Mill City Farmers Market
David Brown	Ellie Lucas
John Butler	Merv Moorhead, DMNA Public Safety Task Force
Christopher Campbell	Dick Morris, Fraser Morris Electric Company
Dan Collison, East Town Business Partnership	Dan Nelson
Sharon Eiden Cornejo, A-Mark Precious Metals	Dean Ramos, Stonebridge Lofts
Curtis Deering	Margaret Richardson, Friends of the Falls
Larry Dole, The Legacy Condominiums	James Roth
Spencer Eddy, Leading Edge Consulting	Wendy Rubinyi, Bridgewater Lofts
Susan Field	Sharon Ryan
Steve Fletcher, Minneapolis Ward 3	Thomas Schmid, Washburn Lofts
Lynn Vander Haar	Mary Suilmann, Bridgewater Lofts
Andrea Hemingway, FirstService Residential	Steve Thorson
Lisa Herman	Doug Verdier, RiverWest Condominiums
Chris Jordan	Zimdoa Wehdorliae, Hennepin Crossings
Judy Ann Karon, 1225 LaSalle Condominiums	Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls
Nick Klebs, Bridgewater Lofts	
Mark Klukow, MPD 1st Precinct	

II. Consideration of Agenda

Rajtar moved and Walsh seconded a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.

III. Consent Agenda

Gittleman moved and Walsh seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda which included the amended January 2021 meeting minutes; F2020 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending January 31, 2021; and the Neighborhood Coordinator / Finance Coordinator staff report for January (Invoice #73). McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.

IV. 1st Precinct Update

Lieutenant Mark Klukow, who has presented before the DMNA HOA Advisory Group (<https://www.thedmna.org/dmna-committees/civic-engagement-committee/hoa-advisory-group/>), provided an update on the crime stats for the 1st Precinct which the Downtown neighborhoods share with Elliot Park, Loring Park, and North Loop (<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/government-data/datasource/crime-statistics-dashboard/#d.en.94911>). Year-to-date there has been a decrease in violent crimes over previous years. Since January 1st, there have been 62 victims of violent crimes, the average is 78.25 over the past 4 years, and those include 7 rapes, 23 robberies, and 5 domestic assaults which are included in the 32 aggravated assaults. Violent crimes are what they are most concerned about and capture the vast majority of their time, attention, and resources.

There has also been a decrease in property crimes. YTD there have been 329 victims of property crimes compared to 415 victims they've had at this time over the past 4 years, and it includes burglaries, common theft, theft from motor vehicles, and auto thefts which can be attributable to a million fewer people (10-15% less) coming downtown every week. The trend they identified in auto thefts 2 weeks ago was 22 cars were stolen within a mile of U.S. Bank Stadium and once they diverted resources to address it, they saw only 2 auto thefts the following week. There is also a problem with stealing from inside the vehicles, inside parking ramps, and of catalytic converters. For the latter, local and state governments are attempting to enact new laws requiring dealers to obtain identification from anyone selling catalytic converters or engraving the VIN on the converters (<https://www.brakeandfrontend.com/catalytic-converters-regulation-replacement-and-theft/>); the MPD puts more officers in the area, especially under cover of darkness so that they'll have fewer thefts.

Klukow also provided an update on their security plans for the upcoming trial of former MPD officer Derek Chauvin. Last August they started preparing and building resources for particular elements of the projected unrest, and about a month ago they amplified it and now have a more unified command approach, i.e., Operation Safety Net (<https://safetynet.mn.gov/pages/default.aspx> and <https://www.facebook.com/MNOperationSafetyNet>). It's great news to have that level of participation and oversight. The damage and destruction the city suffered last May, and June was an embarrassment to public safety; it was unforeseen, they were unprepared, and they've gotten F's on their report card. But now they're prepared for the upcoming potential unrest, and everyone is engaged to maintain a safe place for all people to demonstrate. Klukow coordinates the blanket of safety that's

over the entire city.

He then responded to Andrew Gittleman's inquiry about recommendations to buildings on how to protect themselves and whether the MPD has enough manpower. *Klukow, who has been conducting site visits, recommends for those who are most familiar with the building (managers, engineers, security) to find ways to make it impenetrable and less attractive. Having researched for the past 6 months where damage occurred and what was targeted, frankly housing wasn't targeted apart from the one building under construction at 29th Street and 26th Avenue. Other housing did see some damage of paint and a couple broken windows but not to level of destruction to auto part stores, pharmacies, liquor stores, restaurants on the Lake Street corridor. They won't have the personnel to surround all housing, they're concentrating on the business districts and if they see something different, they're ready to pivot personnel to allow them to do something else.*

Responding to McCrea's inquiry about the timing of the trial – starts on March 8th with jury selection, the trial itself followed by jury deliberations – and whether she can assume things will remain calm until a verdict is reached, *Klukow said there still is a large group of folks doing the fundamental amount of service and the average day will be like it is now, but the moment chaos shows itself which will be right around closing arguments, the MPD with the different agencies will go into the Operation Safety Net roles they're going to play.*

Responding to Joe Tamburino's inquiry about whether law enforcement agencies are able to deal with the confluence of the trial, protests, and fans attending up to 11 Twins home games in April, *Klukow advised they met with the Twins last week and talked about those potentialities and possibilities, and they have a couple contingencies on board. They're keeping an eye on it and making sure they're not adding fuel to the fire.*

Klukow also responded to questions from other Board and community members on the call and recommended visiting the City (<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/trial-support-safety/>), Downtown Improvement District (<https://www.mplsdid.com/>), Minneapolis Downtown Council (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/trial/>), and Meet Minneapolis (<https://www.minneapolis.org/safety-updates/trial-george-floyd-death-case/>) websites for information they're pushing out to the public.

V. Ward 3 Update

Council Member Steve Fletcher reported on the following:

- The City is well prepared for the upcoming trial (<http://news.minneapolismn.gov/2021/02/17/city-leaders-provide-update-on-preparedness-efforts-ahead-of-former-mpd-officer-derek-chauvin-trial/>).
- The City is starting to plan for re-opening the economy as more and more people get vaccinated. He's working on a Right to Recall ordinance (<https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/File/2021-00108>), the purpose for which is to give laid off hospitality workers the first opportunity to come back to their jobs.
- A new program has been established for those seeking rent relief, the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance (<https://www.mnhousing.gov/sites/np/covid19emergencyrentalassistance>).

- They've been advocating for Metro Transit to reroute Route 3 (<https://www.metrotransit.org/route-3>) to Washington Avenue, which will connect the North Loop, Downtown East, and the University of Minnesota.
- Because of an Arterial Transitway Corridors Study (<https://www.metrotransit.org/abrt-study>), Central Avenue is the next location for a BRT line. The F Line will travel along Central Avenue from downtown Minneapolis north through Columbia Heights and Fridley into Blaine.

VI. Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam Update

Amanda Wigen, Communications Director at Friends of the Falls (<https://thefalls.org/friends-of-the-falls/> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/amanda-wigen/>), the nonprofit organization hoping to create a community gathering space at the Upper Lock, explained it has been closed to commercial navigation since 2015 and has been mostly sitting vacant. In their mind, this was an opportunity to connect the Stone Arch Bridge, Water Works project, and entire riverfront to the downtown core.

They've presented to the DMNA before and have returned to give an update on a couple key milestones. In past years they've talked specifically about a visitor's center, but this past year they paused the discussion around that design element and changed the structure of their community engagement. It became clear the voice most underrepresented was the native community, so in partnership with the Native American Community Development Institute (<https://www.nacdi.org/>) they launched the Native Advisory Council (<https://thefalls.org/2020/07/27/friends-of-the-falls-and-nacdi-launch-community-engagement-for-the-falls-initiative-convene-native-advisory-council/>), to build relationships with the tribal community in Minnesota, particularly the four Dakota tribes (the area is known as Owámniyomni in Dakota), discuss the narrative and meaning of the site, and create guiding principles for their engagement going forward.

Another key milestone was passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) on December 27, 2020 (<https://infrastructurereportcard.org/asce-legislative-victory-passage-of-wrda-2020/>). Because the Lock is a federally owned site, anything that happens there needs to be directed by Congress. There are two key pieces included in WRDA: it authorizes the Secretary of the Army to (i) continue operating and maintaining the site [via the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Act]; and (ii) convey lands adjacent to the Upper St. Anthony Falls lock to the City of Minneapolis and provide additional licenses over the lock structures for recreation, tourism, and interpretative purposes. This leaves Friends of the Falls room to decide how best to use the space for the community. Wigen clarified the land surrounding the Lock, the dirt, parking lot, and paths is still in government hands versus the concrete structure/the Lock itself that controls the water level.

Because of the above milestone, Friends of the Falls was surprised when the Army Corps of Engineers Disposition Study draft report came out, which was authorized by Congress (<https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Home/PN/Article/2446042/public-notice-upper-st-anthony-falls-lock-and-dam-disposition-study-draft-report/>), recommending complete disposal of the project and to seek a new owner (<https://myvillager.com/2021/01/06/u-s-army-corps-seeks-new-owner-for-upper-st-anthony-falls-lock/> and <https://fmr.org/river-corridor-and-land-use-updates/st-anthony-falls-disposition-plan-could-threaten-twin-cities>). Friends does not believe Lock operations should be in the hands of a private entity; it should be

safely operated into perpetuity, and whatever entity is in control needs to prevent and react to issues that arise with water control and invasive species. Therefore, they're looking for acknowledgment that the Lock and Dam and infrastructure under the river are integrated and should have some federal oversight going forward.

Their response to the USACE draft report that is due March 18th will be twofold (<https://thefalls.org/disposition-study/>): urge USACE to continue owning and maintaining the Lock itself; and comply with WRDA to convey lands adjacent to the Upper St. Anthony Falls lock to the City of Minneapolis for public use. They also recognize commercial navigation is no longer a use, so they support any new designated purpose of water supply.

Their ask today is for individuals and residents on the call to add their signature to their sign-on letter in partnership with Friends of the Mississippi River at <https://thefalls.org/disposition-study/>, and for the DMNA Board to submit a letter of support or through the Saint Anthony Falls Alliance letter being drafted by Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association (<https://www.niebna.org/>) and Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association (<https://www.marcy-holmes.org/>).

After responding to Board questions, Wigen was directed to present before the Land Use Committee on Tuesday, March 2nd to receive a broader community recommendation that will be presented to the full Board for ratification on Monday, March 15th.

VII. Land Use Committee Report

Committee Chair Kevin Frazell advised because there were no pressing issues, they did not meet in February, but there are two projects of significance that are proceeding:

- **21 Washington Avenue.** There was some dispute about the demolition of the 21st Century Bank/Dolphin Staffing Building (<https://www.minnpost.com/cityscape/2021/01/no-minneapolis-should-not-preserve-the-car-centric-21-north-washington-building/>) to make way for a 27-story project by CA Ventures and Harlem Irving project that the LUC enthusiastically endorsed. The appeal to overturn the Heritage Preservation Commission's vote against demolition was granted.
- **800 Washington Avenue.** Just this afternoon the leadership received an updated plan from AECOM, and it will be presented to the LUC at their March 2nd meeting. The building is different from the earlier proposal: it's now only 7 stories versus up to 14, and it has nice public realm amenities including an art alley way on the side facing the Riverfront Municipal Parking Ramp. It is still owner occupied and 50% affordable.

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 2nd at 6 p.m.

VIII. Civic Engagement Committee Report

Committee Chair Max Erickson reported on the following:

- **Committee Charter.** Reviewed and approved the final draft.

- **Finances.** Hantge reviewed the DMNA organizational structure, provided a high-level overview of the DMNA's funding sources, and explained what is available for outreach and engagement activities.
- **Historic Sign Project.** Walsh provided an update and asked for volunteers to identify 10 buildings, contact and work with the owners, conduct the historical research, design the signage, and get them installed.
- **Neighborhood Identification Signage.** Hantge stated there are also funds available for the design and installation of neighborhood boundary signs. Committee Member Wendy Rubinyi volunteered to coordinate and facilitate this project. She will work with Hantge to promote the opportunity in the DMNA e-blast.
- **National Night Out.** A small sub-committee volunteered to help plan an event for August 3rd, pending the status of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The next meeting is on Thursday, March 11th. Shane Stenzel from the MPRB (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/stenzel-shane-73276826/>) has been invited to come and talk about programming for The Commons

IX. Public Safety Task Force

PSTF Member Merv Moorhead gave an overview of the draft results of the Safety Surveys; he intends to do three things during his report

1. Review the cover letter that accompanied the survey itself that explains what the purpose is of the survey; how the task force will use the responses collected; and where the DMNA will post the survey results.
2. Review the draft survey report prepared by Tom Schmid and Dean Ramos. He stated that they have taken a lot of time over the past few weeks to review, analyze and summarize the results.
3. Talk about the release of the survey report to the public.

Moorhead then reviewed the main conclusions the Public Safety Task Force gleaned from the survey responses.

- Downtown residents are highly dissatisfied with city leadership on public safety policies.
- Among city leaders, residents view Chief Arradondo as being most effective in responding to community safety issues.
- Residents overwhelmingly believe that MPD should report to the Mayor, and not to the City Council.
- Residents strongly want law enforcement to have a central role in responding to public safety calls.
- Lack of police presence downtown is residents' top safety concern.

Upon concluding his report, Moorhead asked how McCrea would like to proceed. She noted the

next step would be to have Hantge post the survey report to the DMNA website and for the PSTF to develop a communications plan for how they plan to distribute the results.

McCrea also mentioned the DMNA had previously done a community survey back in 2018 that included questions about residents' perception of safety, but it was not as elaborate as this current survey, nor did it reach as many people.

Moorhead stated they received 1,129 responses from across 43 different residential buildings both condos and rental. He thanked the HOA Advisory Group members for helping distribute the survey to their residents.

McCrea stated the previous survey did not indicate people felt unsafe in the downtown community. There was more concern about opportunities to be engaged in the community. She noted since that time, the murder of George Floyd took place and the COVID-19 pandemic hit the economy. Despite crime being down in the downtown community based on the 1st Precinct update, the perception is that it is unsafe, and she wants to reconcile this. How can the DMNA help change the perception? Both Moorhead and Ramos offered their thoughts on the 1st Precinct crime stats and how the correlate to the survey results.

In response to McCrea's inquiry about whether anyone had any questions, Tamburino stated as discussed in the pre-meeting earlier, he'd like to get the survey summary prepared by Schmid and Ramos posted to the Website ASAP, then

Tamburino moved and Gittleman seconded a motion to approve posting the Survey Summary Report on the DMNA Website. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.

McCrea asked the PSTF to develop a communications plan on how they plan to distribute the survey report and bring it back to the Board for approval; it meets again on March 15th but can meet sooner if the PSTF has something ready to go.

Moorhead replied the PSTF actually has a plan ready to go. They want the Board to post the survey report to the website, and to communicate the results to the HOA Advisory Group and the rental building contacts that helped distribute the survey to residents. They also would like to send the survey report to the Minneapolis City Council, Mayor Frey, Chief Arradondo, and media outlets. Moorhead and Schmid said they do not want to post the raw data, this information is important but they have summarized individual comments in the survey report.

After a lengthy discussion, Frazell offered a practical example of how to proceed with the survey results, i.e., they'll be posted on the website, released to the media and if follow up inquiries come in they'll be routed to Tom Schmid who will either answer or send them to one of his colleagues who he thinks is in a better position, and their response will be based up explaining the survey methodology and not about speaking on behalf of the DMNA. Several Board members indicated they're in agreement with his example.

McCrea wants to make sure the media does not sensationalize the information as WCCO did with the story that ran a week ago. She emphasized the importance of the DMNA not appearing as though it takes political positions, and that the PSTF have a communications plan in place that specifies who will talk to the press regarding the survey results.

Tamburino stated the DMNA has previously received guidance on how to handle talking to the press from Steve Gallagher, the DMNA's Neighborhood and Community Relations Specialist at the City, who said any Board member can talk to the press, but unless the Board has specifically designated them to offer the organization's official position on something, they must indicate they are giving their personal opinion.

Thereafter, the PSTF responded to questions from the community.

X. Strategic Planning Task Forces

A. Historic Sign Project. Walsh reported she has a growing list of volunteers interested in helping with this project, and asked if anyone else is interested, to please let Hantge know. The plan is to have an initial meeting during the month of March.

B. HOA Advisory Group. Rice reported the HOA Advisory Group heard the Public Safety Task Force's report on the Safety Survey, and an update from the 1st Precinct regarding the upcoming trial preparations, essentially the same information the Board heard tonight.

McCrea said they had about 30 people on that call, so their audience is growing.

XI. Next Board Meeting

Monday, March 15th at 5:45 p.m. via Zoom.

XII. Adjournment

There being no further business,

Gittleman moved and Sweet seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. McCrea called for discussion and the motion passed at 8:15 p.m.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2021

Chair

Secretary