

**DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**  
**Minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting on Monday, September 19, 2022**  
**Via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/czWWw9uY2t2t5mlllI4zdlQeYRH6gQptRrp6VzmI9Et00cfBpWhVWcFqJN4F2Hps.hxQLMbFF5TOReZkZf>

**I. Call to Order**

President Pamela McCrea called the Board meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

Other Board members in attendance were:

Jim Bishop  
Andrew Gittleman, Vice President  
Abby Larson  
Laurie Rice  
Carletta Sweet, Secretary  
Joe Tamburino  
Dianne Walsh, Treasurer

Executive Director Christie Rock Hantge was also present.

Zoom guests in attendance included:

Victoria Balko, City of Minneapolis, NCR Department  
Ariah Fine, City of Minneapolis, NCR Department  
Brody Honkanen, IncredibleBank  
Ryan SanCartier, Ward 3 Policy Aide  
Linda Willette, Zenith Condominiums

**II. Consideration of Agenda**

*Gittleman moved and Bishop seconded a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

**III. Neighborhood and Community Relations Neighborhood Representation Survey**

Victoria Balko, Neighborhood Support Specialist at the Minneapolis NCR Department (<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/what-we-do/staff/>), explained she came to conduct the bi-annual voluntary Board Representation Survey that they've been conducting since 2014. However, due to civil unrest they couldn't conduct it in 2020 and are now resuming it. Balko then placed the link to the survey into the Zoom Chat box and asked the Board to take a few minutes to complete. The survey collects demographic information about the body of volunteers serving as Board members of neighborhood organizations funded by the City of Minneapolis. All data received will be aggregated and available to the public; however no individual identities nor any other characteristic that could uniquely identify an individual will be ascertainable.

For more information about the Board Representation Survey, visit

<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/neighborhood-programs/neighborhood-board--representation--surveys/>; and the Equitable Engagement Fund application due on October 15th, visit <https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/departments/ncr/neighborhood-programs/neighborhoods-2020/#d.en.193528>.

Several Board members and staff conveyed to Balko that based upon the amount of outreach that's been done and the budget that's available, it is challenging to recruit renters and BIPOC but we'll continue to do our good work as best we can.

#### **IV. Ward 3 Update**

In the absence of Council Member Michael Rainville, Ward 3 Policy Aide Ryan SanCartier gave the following update:

- Rainville is working collaboratively with MPD 1st Precinct Inspector Bill Peterson, District 4 Park Commissioner Elizabeth Shaffer, and Park Police on a recent stabbing near the Stone Arch Bridge (<https://www.startribune.com/boy-stabbed-at-stone-arch-bridge/600208105/>; <https://kstp.com/kstp-news/top-news/boy-stabbed-at-stone-arch-bridge-saturday/>). He's also planning a meeting at RiverWest Condominiums to discuss public safety issues with the residents.
- No parking signs were just installed along both sides of South 2nd Street fronting Gold Medal Park; and he'll continue to work with the Gold Medal Conservancy and the Guthrie Theater on other issues to improve safety.
- Mayor Frey has submitted his 2023 Budget to the City Council for review (<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/mayor/speeches/2023-24-recommended-budget-address/>). Public hearings will take place in November (<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/government/budget/2023-2024-budget-hearings/>).
- Rainville attended the MPD swearing in ceremony for 19 new police officers. Also, Ward 6 CM Jamal Osman brought the new Community Safety Commissioner Dr. Cedric Alexander to Cedar-Riverside and got 20 individuals to sign up to become MPD officers, a long process and the largest one instance of recruitment he's seen in the last 5 years.

Then during Q&A, SanCartier discussed:

- The budgetary goal for new recruits (<https://www.minnpost.com/public-safety/2022/09/a-snapshot-of-mayor-jacob-freys-proposed-police-budget/>, <https://www.fox9.com/news/frey-seeks-eight-extra-mpd-classes-over-two-years-to-counter-departure-wave/>);
- The process for hiring the new Chief of Police (<https://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-to-hire-its-next-police-chief-heres-what-we-know-about-the-search-and-whats-next/600207789/>) and an announcement should be made by the end of September/beginning of October; and
- The piloting this past weekend of a Downtown Entertainment District for pedestrians only between Hennepin to 2nd Avenue South and between South 6th and 3rd Streets to highlight and attract tourism and local residents, and it was logistically successful. It wasn't promoted in case it went wrong.

**V. Oaklands on 9th MNHS Grant Update**

Because Elizabeth Vandam was unable to attend tonight’s meeting, McCrea submitted the following report she received from her via email:

*It is with much appreciation to the DMNA that I can report that there is now a handsome bronze marker on the historic Oakland Apartment building, 215 South 9th Street. The grant project was recently officially closed. Thanks to your support and funding from the Legacy Grant program, this marker is the first in downtown Minneapolis of its kind, a stand-alone marker sharing the Oakland's history and its preservation worthiness. It is worth noting that a Minneapolis city statute from the 1930s was challenged and successfully changed to allow this marker to be erected, standing alone on the building exterior. (Please understand that it is not the first plaque or marker on a Minneapolis building, but the first stand-alone marker of its kind.)*

*It is not an understatement to state that you can be very proud of the part the DMNA has played in assisting the erection this fine marker for all to enjoy. Readers of the marker will appreciate that the DMNA is supportive of historic preservation as you are noted in the marker text. It is my hope that you will all have an opportunity at your convenience to see this marker in person. My best to all and thank you again.*

*A special thank you to Christie who gave generously and cheerfully of her time, always available to help me along the way. If I can be of research assistance with your building marker project, please don't hesitate to call on me.*

Hantge noted she and Vandam have completed and submitted all required paperwork to the Minnesota Historical Society. Vandam also sent a check to cover the DMNA’s fiscal agent fee.

To see the bronze marker, visit <https://www.facebook.com/oaklandson9th>.

**VI. Consent Agenda**

*Gittleman moved and Rice seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda which included the August 22nd Board meeting minutes; the F2022 Budget vs. Actual for the period ending August 31, 2022; and the Neighborhood Coordinator / Finance Coordinator staff report for August (Invoice #092). McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

**VII. Land Use Committee Report**

In the absence of LUC Chair Kevin Frazell, Board Liaison Rice reported on the following three projects presented at the September 6th meeting:

**A. Cambria Hotel Minneapolis Downtown On Sale Liquor License with Sunday Sales Application** presented by General Manager Matthew Gurnsey

(<https://www.linkedin.com/in/matthewgurnsey/>). This soon to be completed 120-key project at 1020 Hawthorne Avenue (<https://www.choicehotels.com/minnesota/minneapolis/cambria-hotels/mn206>) shares walls with the similar Fairfield Inn & Suites Minneapolis Downtown at 1028 Hawthorne Avenue

(<https://www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/mspfd-fairfield-inn-and-suites-minneapolis-downtown/overview/>). As with all other Cambrias, it has a small bar and restaurant that targets hotel guests and because of its proximity to the Hennepin Theater District they're also open to catering to the performing arts crowd. Because they're still under construction, he displayed stock photos of other Cambrias with similar bars to what they'll have. The Cambria brand is designed to offer guests a local experience, so they've brought in someone who vets alcoholic beverages that are specific to Minneapolis. That morning he and his wife were brainstorming about what to call the bar and restaurant area and she suggested "Minne" bar, so he's rooting for that. He would personally like to have the bar close by 11 p.m. The targeted opening date is October 26th.

The LUC approved a motion to provide a LOS for the Cambria Hotel liquor license application.

- B. Hotel Indigo Minneapolis Downtown On Sale Liquor License with Sunday Sales, Limited Live Entertainment Application** presented by Laura Boyd, President at Alcohol Compliance Services (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/laura-boyd-a3460b149/>), and Neil Densmore, President at Great Lakes Management Group (<https://www.glmghotels.com/about-us/management-team;> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/ndensmore/>).

In November 2021, GLMG purchased the former Crowne Plaza Northstar at 618 Second Avenue South (<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2021/11/30/hotel-indigo-to-replace-downtown-crowne-plaza.html>; <https://www.startribune.com/downtown-minneapolis-crowne-plaza-property-sold-will-become-boutique-hotel/600123354/?refresh=true>) and is renovating it into a 218-key Hotel Indigo (<https://www.ihg.com/hotelindigo/hotels/us/en/minneapolis/mspdg/hoteldetail>). It will have all new mechanical systems, plumbing, flooring, up-to-date amenities, and an expanded main level café, bar, lounge, and dining areas (<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2022/05/27/bartmann-group-star-bar-bistro-hotel-indigo.html>), and they'll offer small musical ensembles, vocalists, DJs but no dancing. The entire hotel project is over 140,000 square feet, levels 2 through 6 is the parking structure, and levels 7 through 17 is the hotel, and they are looking to place a small patio adjacent to the southside of the hotel with 4 tables and 16 chairs. If all goes well, they're looking at a mid-December opening.

This will be GLMG's 12th property and the Hotel Indigos in Kansas City and Madison Downtown have similar bar setups. Their hotels are the top 5% of the brand and many were in the top 10 award winning hotels; they take pride in keeping them clean and managed well.

The LUC approved a motion to provide a LOS for the Hotel Indigo liquor license application.

- C. Hennepin County Federal Plaza Building Conversion Site Plan Review and Variances Application** presented by Julie Welle Ayres, Housing Development and Finance Director at Hennepin County (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/julia-welle-ayres-082695/>), Andrea Hammel Wollak, Principal at hw<sup>2</sup> design (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrea-hammel-wollak-aia-leed-ap-bd-c-4601224/>), Jessica Ruzzicone, Owner and Consulting Architect at Jessica Ruzzicone Architectural Design and Drafting (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jessica-ruzzicone/>), and Marion Greene, Hennepin County

District 3 Commissioner (<https://www.hennepin.us/your-government/leadership/3rd-district>).

Ayres stated the goal is to convert the former LuMinn Hotel at 219 South 4th Street into 55 units of permanent independent housing affordable to adults with incomes below 30% of the AMI and be open to tenants before the end of 2022. As background, on March 17, 2020, Hennepin County started leasing hotels across the county to help seniors and people with medical complications exit congregate shelters and have their own room to limit the transmission of COVID 19 (<https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Hennepin-County-H2H-Case-Study-8-04-21.pdf>). It was one of the most successful efforts in the country. In addition, they launched the Homeless to Housing program (<https://www.hennepin.us/homeless-to-housing>; <https://finance-commerce.com/2022/04/hennepin-county-oks-5m-to-convert-hotels-into-affordable-housing/>) to assign people experiencing homelessness to housing case managers and they were successfully able to house all those who were placed in hotels.

In mid-2020, they realized leasing hotels was expensive, so they wanted to buy them instead, specifically on assets that could serve county residents after the pandemic, and they identified the LuMinn Hotel at 219 South 4th Street in downtown Minneapolis as one of those assets (<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2021/01/26/hennepin-county-luminn-covid-shelter-homeless.html>). They consider it one of their big strategic acquisitions from late 2020. Since then, they've kept their COVID-19 rates low.

Wollak provided an overview of the history and site plan for the project. It was built in 1914 and when the previous owner engaged them it had been empty of a while. Prior to then it had been Chiron Charter School (<https://www.publicschoolreview.com/chiron-charter-school-profile>) in the basement and next 3 floors, and a law firm on floors 4 and 5. It was a challenging floor plan to convert to a hotel; construction began in 2015 and kitchens were initially put in for those who travel for long periods of time and are dissatisfied with eating out. They are seeking two variances to allow: (1) units to maintain kitchenettes and bathrooms but remain under 350 sq. ft.; and (2) the storage of 55 bikes in the basement which is accessible by elevator. The City requires a Site Plan Review for a project that converts a building from one use to another.

Some of the many questions posed by the LUC included whether pets were allowed and if so whether there would be an on-site pet relief area; whether there were plans to convert the first floor lounge space into housing units; whether they have hired an onsite property manager; what are the safety and accountability rules for residents. They plan to allow pets, and they will explore options for pet relief; there are no plans to convert the lounge space into housing units at this time; there is currently an RFP out for an experienced nonprofit property manager, Hennepin County is hoping to secure the property manager in the next 6 weeks; there will be background checks done on all residents and there will be building rules.

The LUC approved a motion supporting the two variance applications and the Site Plan Review to convert the Federal Plaza Building from a hotel to independent housing, contingent upon Hennepin County keeping the lounge space on the first floor permanently intact and not convert

it into housing units in the future, and the LUC be given the opportunity to meet with the experienced nonprofit property manager selected prior to the building opening to residents.

Because of substantial discussion that ensued regarding the Hennepin County Federal Plaza Housing Conversion project, the Board decided to consider the two letters of support for the liquor license applications separately.

*Rice moved and Tamburino seconded a motion to approve the letters of support for the two liquor license applications. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed.*

Then after even further discussion about the Hennepin County Federal Plaza Housing Conversion project,

*Tamburino moved and Gittleman seconded a motion to deny approval of the LOS for the Hennepin County Federal Plaza Project. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed with Larson opposing.*

**D. Additional LUC Project: Bimosedaa Affordable Housing Project.** Randy Manthey announced after a year's delay since Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative made a presentation about this project in the former Rockler Fur Building at 16 North 4th Street (<https://www.beaconinterfaith.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Bimosedaa-Final-DN.pdf>; <https://lms.minneapolismn.gov/File/2022-00781>; <https://ms-my.facebook.com/beaconinterfaith/videos/inside-look-at-bimosedaa/909996526262634/>), construction is underway and once completed the LUC has been invited to tour.

The next LUC meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 4, 2022.

## **VIII. President's Report**

McCrea reported on the following:

**A. Mill District Community Policing Initiative.** McCrea noted this bike patrol program will conclude at the end of September. The final report will be published and they'll send it with thank you notes to the donors. They currently have \$28,454 and an additional \$6,000 in checks to be collected from the mailbox (\$500 from the Bridgewater, \$500 from the Stonebridge, \$5,000 from the Eleven) and they won't be spending all of that. She's spoken to the Bridgewater and they've been averaging an incident per week. Since the barriers and bike patrol started, there have been no incidences, so that speaks highly for one building. She'll get a handle on other buildings at tomorrow night's HOA meeting. The MPD wants to know if we want to continue this as an off-duty officer project after September, and her recommendation is not to because winter is coming, barriers are going up on October 31st, save the money for next year, and especially because it's hard to raise money.

**B. Public Safety Committee.** Gittleman advised at a former Board meeting he said he would take the lead in forming this committee that would work under the direction of the DMNA. He's

done that and now they have a 7-person committee: 2 are from businesses, and 5 are homeowners from the DMNA area. Bishop will continue to serve as the Board Liaison and Gittleman will be involved in some way TBD. They have a draft charter that was sent to the committee for input and then it'll come to the Board for approval. Their first organizational meeting will be the week after next and they'll be gearing up for 2023 and what the initiatives will be. Hantge cautioned him about limiting the number of participants on the committee.

## **IX. Committee Reports**

- A. Historic Signage.** Walsh advised they've completed 19 new building histories – 17 for downtown and 2 for the Mill District – and a number of them are with the owners for review, and the remainder have been submitted to Hantge today. She's also working through the three Northstar Center buildings and those owners are reviewing the information. The anticipated prototype date is October which will have to receive approval and then they'll have the signs made. They're on target to finish this year; the hope is to install all the new signage in November. There's a third year of funding so they'll complete the project in 2023. .

Peter Zenner is working on a video of the new buildings that will hopefully be ready in time to show at the 2022 Annual Meeting on October 24th. If anyone wants to participate, let her know because it's incredibly rewarding.

- B. HOA Advisory Group.** McCrea advised at their last Zoom meeting they came up with several ideas, e.g., at tomorrow's meeting, September 20th at River Towers, Board Presidents can bring their Treasurer to discuss capital budgets, operating budgets, how to do reserves, special assessments, etc. There won't be a guest speaker, just dialogue for people who want to be a better Board member.

## **X. New / Old / Other Business**

**Annual Meeting.** McCrea reminded all that it's scheduled for Monday, October 24th, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at The Depot and elections to the Board will take place. Board members who are up for re-election should let Hantge know if they intend to run again. Hantge has been promoting the meeting via the weekly e-newsletter, Facebook page, Website, and she'll share the event flyer with the HOA Advisory Group. Larson and Gittleman are also promoting via their networks. The agenda includes summary of the DMNA accomplishments, updates from Council Member Rainville and MPD 1st Precinct Inspector Bill Peterson, and the 2022 DMNA Volunteer of the Year award will be given, so submit our nominations soon. McCrea will be ordering the awards. Walsh will bring some prototypes for the historic signage project to display if they're ready. McCrea will contact the Mill City Singers for entertainment. For more details, visit the DMNA Website:

<https://www.thedmna.org/dmna-2022-annual-meeting-is-monday-october-24-at-the-depot-from-6-pm-to-8-pm/>.

## **XI. Adjournment**



There being no further business,

*Sweet moved and Rice seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. McCrea called for discussion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.*

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary