

East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA)
Minutes from the EIRA Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting
December 6, 2011
Grace-Trinity Community Church

Board members present: Al Rodriguez (Treasurer), Ginna Portman Amis, Sue Durfee, Vaughn Emerson, Tina Frontera, Ramon Ramirez Quintero, Linda Schutz, and Joe Sinnott.

Treasurer Al Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Meg Tuthill, Ward 10 Council Member, City of Minneapolis report:

- The City has agreed to add a 4-way stop at the intersection of 24th St and Fremont Ave. The traffic counts don't warrant a 4-way stop but the City agreed that this is a difficult intersection.
- A special yard waste collection was added for December 7-9. All yard waste needs to be out by 6 a.m. on December 7.
- There are a variety of ways to learn about Snow Emergencies. Check out the options on City's webpage: www.minneapolismn.gov/snow or call 612-348-SNOW.
- The final public hearing on the 2012 budget will be December 14 6:05 p.m. at City Hall. To be considered, comments need to be submitted now.
- There will be no "Meet with Meg" in December.
- Police Chief Dolan had budget surplus, he will re-hire nine laid-off officers and retain the Crime Prevention Specialists.
- A board member gave CM Tuthill a copy of a City of Golden Valley recreational fire permit indicating rules permit holders must abide by in that community.
- There will be a change to the route for the 2012 City of Lake Loppet. The track will come down Lake Street (not The Mall as in previous years). The City approved this new route.
- Board members expressed concern about 2012 property tax increases. Minneapolis and the Park Board each had zero levy. The increase was from the county and caused by a change in state law regarding homestead credits. CM Tuthill suggested calling the City Assessor's office to have your property tax reevaluated.

Gary Schiff, Ward 9 Council Member, City of Minneapolis presented his proposal to eliminate the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application for residential property with five to nine units.

Currently, new residential property with 5-9 units requires a Site Plan and a CUP. The Site Plan is a set of requirements specifying standards for building materials, access, landscaping, etc. The CUP is a tool to add conditions to a permit. CUP is not a tool that can be used to deny an application. It allows for conditions placed on the use, but it doesn't stop the use. Since the use of a residential building is housing, CM Schiff can't

identify any conditions that are not already required in the Site Plan. He feels that the CUP is a duplicative regulation that doesn't add substantive value to the review process.

In the past decade, 44 new developments with 5-9 units were reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public hearing. If this proposal passes, 39 of those projects would still have required neighborhood notice and public hearing because they had some other issue.

This proposal is for new residential developments (5-9 units) only. The CUP will remain in place for commercial use and for height requirements in the Shoreland Overlay District.

In response to a board member's concern about neighborhoods losing ability to provide feedback on development, CM Schiff stated that eliminating the CUP does not eliminate neighborhood notification. Developments with 5-9 units are required to comply with Site Plan review rules. If the Site Plan rules are not met or the development is requesting rezoning or a variance, a public hearing will be required.

The questions were asked: who is opposing this proposal? CM Schiff stated that it is not being opposed. Staff feels that the CUP application does not have any weight behind it. Eliminating the CUP will allow staff to work smarter and focus on the more important Site Plan. State law limits the amount of time that government can review applications to 60 days. If a city does not rule on an application within 60 days, the developers get whatever they request. Eliminating this type of CUP will help streamline processes.

Another proposed change for greater communication with the public: the Weekly Planning Applications Report will be available to anyone upon request.

Open Forum

Advanced planning for the April 2012 EIRA Board elections was discussed. A nominations committee will be formed to recruit new board members. Monica Smith will send an email to current board members to gauge interest for another term.

The recent Lake Area Crime and Safety meeting included details of recent arrests. Home burglaries have declined since these arrests.

REPORTS

EIRA Zoning Committee

Co-Chair Steve Havig gave an update of the Zoning Committee's November meeting. The committee met at Smith Triangle to discuss a potential request to move the Thomas Lowry statue to Lowry Park. The committee is taking it under advisement until a formal proposal is offered. The committee discussed ideas for new development at 2700 Hennepin Ave. The committee chairs receive and monitor the Weekly Planning Applications Report. The Uptown Theater will be undergoing renovation. No new

information to report about the vacant property on the 2800 block of Lake of the Isles Parkway.

Treasurer's Report, Al Rodriguez

Treasurer Al Rodriguez provided the Treasurer's Report. Donations continue to come in for membership. EIRA raised \$700 for advance ticket sales for the Wine Tasting fundraiser.

NRP Report

Monica Smith reviewed the proposed guidelines for the East Isles home improvement loan program. The loan pool is \$70,000. Loans of \$3,500 – 7,000 will be available for 1-4 unit properties in East Isles for energy efficiency upgrades (3.75% fixed rate) and for exterior improvements (4% fixed rate). Maximum loan term will be five years. The program will be announced to residents to accommodate a two-month application period. Applications will be due on March 30 (tentative date). If more applications are received that can be funded, a lottery will take place to award the funds. If a lottery is not required, applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Projects may not begin until the loan has been approved and closed. As the loans are repaid, the neighborhood can choose to revolve the money by continuing to offer loans, or use the funding for another NRP strategy. The board voted unanimously to approve the proposed guidelines and move forward with the contract.

Smith also provided a report on expenses to date for the Community Participation Program. The board unanimously approved shifting funds within categories to better align with actual expenses and to apply the same percentages to the additional \$10,000 the neighborhood will receive for the period of Jan-June 2012.

Green Team

Monica Smith provided a report from the newly formed Green Team. The team has had three meetings and will be focusing on engaging residents in learning about and adopting sustainable practices related to energy conservation, recycling and composting, and rain gardens. The board unanimously approved a motion to implement a contract for \$6,600 so the Green Team may begin their work.

The Green Team will help promote another Community Energy Services workshop (January 21st at Jefferson School), is investigating promoting organics composting for apartment buildings and is researching building a demonstration rain garden.

One board member suggested that the Green Team also work on air quality including consideration of and support for CM Tuthill's proposed permit process for recreational fires. Smith Triangle was mentioned as a potential site for the rain garden if it fits the requirements or other landscaping improvements.

The Green Team is hosting a screening of a green film “No Impact Man” on January 16th at Grace Trinity Community Church. A discussion will follow the film. The board unanimously approved spending of up to \$45 for refreshments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by: Monica Smith, Recorder