

East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA)
Minutes from the Semi-Annual Meeting
October 29, 2013
Grace-Trinity Community Church

40 East Isles residents and invited guests attended the meeting.

EIRA President Dan McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Green Team

Chair Betsy Allis reported on the successful Super Sale (September), demonstration raingarden project at 2871 Humboldt and bimonthly Green Film Series. The next event is “Growing Community Solar”, November 18, 7 pm at Grace-Trinity Community Church. The Green Team meets the 2nd Monday of the month, 7 pm at Grace.

NRP Committee

Coordinator Monica Smith shared information about ongoing programs for residents: Home Security Grants of up to \$250 for security upgrades and Home Improvement Loans of up to \$15K for exterior improvements and/or energy efficiency upgrades. Details are available at www.eastisles.org. The committee may recommend that the Home Improvement Loans be discontinued if community interest in the program doesn't increase. The NRP Committee meets on a quarterly bases.

Outreach and Nominations

Chair Linda Schutz outlined the main focus of this committee – to recruit candidates for the yearly election of EIRA Board of Directors. Committee members and current board members were introduced.

Parks & Open Space

Harvey Ettinger is the Chair of this new committee. “Parks” were identified as a neighborhood priority at EIRA's 2012 Fall meeting. The committee will initially focus on partnering with the Park Board and a landscape architect student for improvements to Smith Triangle; benches and landscaping on The Mall and the parkland adjacent to the new Walker Library; and Levin Triangle Park (implementing elements that were eliminated from the renovation plans). Committee members are needed. The meeting schedule has not yet been determined.

Social Committee

Chair Amy Sanborn reported on recent activities: 35 volunteers staffed a pop booth at the Art Fair, netting \$435 in profits for EIRA; and the very successful Ice Cream Social in August with special thanks to sponsors Isles Bun & Coffee, Kowalski's, Lakes Area Realty, and Peterssen/Keller Architecture. Upcoming events: Wine Tasting Fundraiser on October 30; Ice Skating Party (date to be determined); and City of Lakes Loppet (possibly staffing an aid station and/or participating in the snow carving contest).

Transportation Committee

Chair Candace Dow serves as EIRA's representative to the Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis Community Advisory Committee (for more information see “Lake Street/Midtown Greenway Transit Options” below).

A survey was distributed to meeting attendees to gather feedback about the effectiveness of various modes of transportation in East Isles.

The committee meets the third Tuesday of the month, 7 pm at Grace.

Zoning Committee

Coordinator Monica Smith reported on Zoning Committee activity in the past six months. The committee has been meeting with developers/architects of a proposed mixed-use development at Lake St and James Ave (1618 W Lake, 1620 W Lake and 2915 James) and following the dewatering issue at 1800 Lake. Two training sessions were held for committee members: a Uptown Small Area Plan primer and a Planning & Zoning overview. A new initiative is emerging to celebrate centennial structures in the neighborhood. The committee meets the third Tuesday of the month, 5pm at Grace.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Walker Library

Lois Lenroot-Ernt, Capital Projects Office, Hennepin County Library, and Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman provided an update on the new Walker Library. The construction is on schedule for opening in Spring 2014. Lenroot-Ernt thanked the neighborhood for patience during the construction process. The new library is a one-level 15,000 square foot space that will include a multi-purpose room, a small meeting room, study rooms and reading lounges. There will also be spaces for teens and children. Parking will be underground.

The County is working with the Park Board on developing ideas for the parkland adjacent to the library. They hope to identify a funding source for the parkland once the library opens.

Lake Street/Midtown Greenway Transit Options

Jill Hentges, Community Outreach, Metro Transit and Michael Mechtenberg, Transit Planner, Metro Transit presented information about the Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis. The analysis is an 18-month study to identify and analyze the costs, benefits and impacts of transit alternatives for Lake Street and/or the Greenway (between the proposed West Lake Station of Southwest LRT and Hiawatha LRT). The transit options or "modes" being studied: bus rapid transit (BRT) featuring fewer stops, off-board fare payment, enhanced shelters and signage; dedicated right-of-way for bus; streetcar and light rail transit.

After initial screening of criteria, the options have been narrowed to: BRT on Lake Street, double/single track rail on Greenway (vehicle type has not been identified – could be streetcar or LRT), and an option for both BRT on Lake Street with rail on Greenway.

The Greenway bike trail would remain (with some slight modifications) and co-exist with rail in the corridor.

Capital costs range from \$50 million BRT, \$190 million for rail and \$240 million for both.

The final Open Houses for public input on this transit study are from 6-8 pm on November 20 at Intermedia Arts, 2822 Lyndale Ave S *and* November 21 at Colin Powell Center, 2924 4th Ave S.

Technical information and community feedback will be presented to the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC will select the Locally Preferred Alternative in February 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.
Submitted by: Monica Smith, Recorder

Next EIRA Board of Directors meeting: Tuesday, November 12, 7 p.m. at Grace-Trinity Community Church, 1430 W. 28th St.