

**East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA)**  
Minutes from the EIRA Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting  
July 9, 2013  
Bridge for Youth

Board members present: Dan McLaughlin (President), Vaughn Emerson (Vice President), Antone Melton-Meaux (Secretary), Candace Dow, Nicole Engel-Nitz, Donna Jansen, Michael Rossini and Linda Schutz. Alternate Rosita Acosta and other East Isles residents and guests were also present.

EIRA President Dan McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**Guest Speakers: Dylan Kesti, Campaign Coordinator, Minneapolis Energy Options and Laura McCarten, Regional Vice President, NSP-Minnesota**

Minneapolis's 20-year franchise agreements with Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy expire on December 31, 2014. By state law, cities must use their current energy utilities unless they receive authorization via a ballot initiative proposed by city council to form a city-owned energy utility. The City Council has two public hearing to consider authorizing the establishment of municipal utilities, hearings are August 1, 10 am to consider a municipal electrical utility and 10:30 am to consider a municipal gas utility. Location: City Council Committee of the Whole meeting, Room 317 at City Hall.

The City Council authorized \$250,000 for an energy pathway study with results due in January 2014.

Minneapolis Energy Options (MEO) is a coalition of 30 local organizations working on advancing clean, affordable, reliable and local energy by advocating for a ballot initiative to explore options, including forming a municipal utility. One in seven Americans are served by a municipal utility. MEO is also seeking a comprehensive feasibility study to research all the option for the city's future including pricing and energy goals.

Laura McCarten, representing Xcel Energy reported that the state sets energy policy and Xcel is on track to meet a mandate of producing 30% its power from renewable source by 2020 and to continue its energy conservation efforts. Fifty percent of Xcel's energy production is carbon free. Xcel balances reliable, safe, affordable and clean energy. McCarten said renewing the utility franchise is a separate matter from creating a municipal utility. McCarten stated that if the initiative is on the Nov. 2013 ballot and the city decides to move forward with a municipal utility, another separate public vote is not required for the city to authorize the bonding required to buy the electric and gas infrastructure.

Questions/concerns were raised:

- Dealing with emergency situations (disasters)? According to a New York Times article cited by Kesti, on a national average, municipal utilities get lights on faster (which McCarten disputed).
- Municipal utilities don't have the economies of scale of the larger utilities or big reserves to handle disasters. Kesti responded that the feasibility study would evaluate options.
- What is cost of purchasing the energy infrastructure? Why issue municipal bonds to buy old aging utility infrastructure? McCarten replied that the cost isn't known but estimated the costs to be in the billions for the electrical infrastructure. Kesti stated that the feasibility study could determine costs.
- What is the definition of renewable? MEO defines what they mean by renewable on their website.
- Minnesota has many municipal utilities but all are in smaller towns and cities, not on the scale of Minneapolis. Other commercial enterprises may want bonding authority.
- Any example of success on the scale of Minneapolis? Kesti reported that Sacramento, CA is larger than Minneapolis and has a municipal utility with a goal of 90% renewable by 2050.

- What type of energy jobs would be created? Kesti stated that good union jobs would be created to improve the aging power grid for clean energy. McCarten reported that Xcel employs 2,500 people in Minneapolis.

The board did not take any action, questions remain, discussion continued to its next meeting.

#### **Leslie Foreman, Policy Aide to Council Member Meg Tuthill, Ward 10**

- An arrest was made in the July 3<sup>rd</sup> hit and run that killed a bicyclist (28<sup>th</sup> and Pleasant).
- Avoid a parking ticket by following rules: no parking 20' from an intersection corner, 30' from stop sign or signal and 5' from alley or driveway. 31<sup>st</sup> Street was repaved between Hennepin and Nicollet and will include a pilot project of six painted bump-outs.
- The Pedestrian Advisory Committee is prioritizing streets in need of better pedestrian access.
- The City is seeking Voter Ambassadors to help with the 2013 election.
- The Uptown Art Fair is having a time capsule ceremony on July 20, 1-3 pm on The Mall.
- Meet with Meg has moved to the second Monday of the month, 6-7 pm at Bryant Square Park (31<sup>st</sup> and Bryant).

#### **REPORTS**

The Treasurer's Report was distributed.

#### **Smith Triangle Subcommittee**

Dan McLaughlin will supervise a student from the U of M Landscape Architecture to work on ideas for Smith Triangle. The Park Board will also be involved with the student project and will add Smith Triangle to the 2014 project list.

#### **Amy Sanborn, Social Committee**

- Volunteers are needed for the Ice Cream Social – Thursday, August 15 at Levin Triangle Park and Uptown Art Fair pop booth and zero waste. Contact Amy at [events@eastisles.org](mailto:events@eastisles.org) to volunteer for a shift.
- The Wine Tasting Fundraiser will be October 30.

#### **Jill Waite, Zoning Committee**

The June 18 Zoning Committee meeting included a primer on the Uptown Small Area Plan. Next meeting is July 16, 5 pm at Grace-Trinity Community Church, 1430 W 28<sup>th</sup> Street. Peterssen/Keller Architecture will present preliminary plans for a proposed new four-story mixed-use building on the northeast corner of Lake and James (1618 W. Lake St., 1620 W. Lake St., and 2915 James Ave. S). The Uptown Opportunity Task Force will also present to the committee.

#### **Linda Schutz, Outreach & Nominations (O&N) Committee**

The EIRA Board approved the seven recommendations of the O&N Committee put forth in its 2013 report.

#### **Candace Dow, Transportation Committee**

- The August committee meeting will be rescheduled so it does not conflict with National Night Out. No date set yet.
- Metropolitan Council and Minnesota Department of Transportation Regional Bicycle System Master Study workshop, July 11, 6:30 pm at St Louis Park Rec Center.
- Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis Community Advisory Committee's next meeting is August 20, 7:00 pm, location to be announced.

**Betsy Allis, Green Team**

- Green Film “The Story of Stuff” on July 15, 7 pm at Grace-Trinity Community Church.
- Super Sale is September 7
- Raingarden project is almost complete, a celebration is being planned for September 28
- Zero Waste Uptown is reworking the scope of their \$12,000 grant. More information will be available at the August EIRA Board meeting.

**Monica Smith, Staff Report**

- The EIRA Board approved funding for an Ice Cream Social ad in the Hill & Lake Press.
- The City approved the East Isles Neighborhood Priority Plan.
- Suggestions for topics for the October Members Meeting are welcome.
- Sen Dibble and Rep Hornstein are holding a Town Hall Meeting on July 11, 6 pm at Linden Hills Rec Center.

**Board Review**

- Committees have had issues with reaching quorum to conduct business. The Zoning Committee will discuss solutions at their next meeting to bring back to the EIRA Board.
- The Bridge for Youth is applying for an Emergency Services Grant from the City of Minneapolis and requires approval from the neighborhood organization. Some services are being refocused and the Emergency Shelter Program will move from 2200 Emerson Ave to the mail facility at 1111 W 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. The EIRA Board voted to support the grant application.
- EIRA needs to reapply for tax status with the IRS. Pros and cons of 501(c)(3) vs. 501(c)(4) will be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Submitted by: Monica Smith, Recorder

Next EIRA Board of Directors meeting: Tuesday, August 13, 7 p.m. at The Bridge for Youth, 1111 W 22<sup>nd</sup> St.