

East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA)
Minutes from the EIRA Board of Directors Meeting
February 1, 2011
Grace-Trinity Community Church

Board members present: Jane Schommer (President), Al Rodriguez (Treasurer), Tina Frontera (Secretary), Rosita Acosta, Ginna Portman Amis, Sue Durfee, Harvey Ettinger, and Rose Matthys.

East Isles residents and invited guests were also in attendance.

EIRA President Jane Schommer called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Announcements

Jane Schommer announced that EIRA Board elections are on the horizon and we are seeking new Board members. If you are interested in serving on the Board or know someone who may be interested, please contact Jane at president@eastisles.org [by February 28, 2011].

EIRA received a check for \$1,352 from the October Wine Tasting Fundraiser. This check was for EIRA's share of tickets sold at the door.

Flooding in East Isles

Guest speakers: Lisa Cerney, Director of Surface Water & Sewers, City of Minneapolis and Kelly Moriarity, Principle Professional Engineer, City of Minneapolis

Lisa Cerney and Kelly Moriarity were invited to the meeting to discuss flooding concerns within the neighborhood. Lisa and Kelly work to manage the storm water systems within the city. Minneapolis has 508 miles of pipe and 30 miles of deep tunnels. Minneapolis experienced a large rain event in 1997 that caused flooding throughout the city. A comprehensive 1997 Flood Report was conducted. The report contained a list of area that need attention. The list changes as project get added and others are removed when repairs are completed. There are currently 65 locations on the list. Three locations in East Isles are on the list:

- 22nd Street and Emerson was added in 2000
- Humboldt and the Greenway was added in 2004
- Alley behind Hennepin at 25 ½ Street was added in 2010

In 2010, there were two rain events that caused substantial flooding in East Isles. On June 25, two and one-half inches of rain fell within a two-hour period. On August 10, three inches of rain fell within two hours. When such large amount of rain falls within a short period of time, the system can't handle the water and causes flooding.

Concerned residents in attendance provide reports and photographs of damage to homes and vehicles. They also reported flooding problems at The Bridge's new building with water coming in the main level and flooding the lower level.

The city has done a preliminary analysis on the areas in East Isles.

- Alley behind Hennepin at 25 ½ Street: work to reduce the flow to 25 ½ Street by directing the water to the drains on Hennepin. Also, work with homeowners to reduce run off.
- 22nd and Emerson: The pipes at the location were installed in 1915 and 1938. The city is looking at replacing these with larger pipes. Preliminary cost estimates are between \$2-4 million. More detailed analysis is needed.
- Humboldt and the Greenway: the 15” pipe dates to 1935 and drains from Humboldt to the Mall. If the Mall pipe is sufficient, they could replace the pipe along Humboldt for \$400,000-700,000.

Minneapolis has a city-wide Flood Mitigation Capital Program. The process involves prioritizing and ranking needed improvements, identifying funding sources, and implementing improvements based on each project’s ranking. Project will be reviewed by the Capital Long-Range Improvements Committee (CLIC). CLIC consists of residents (appointed by the Mayor and each Council Member) who make recommendations to the City Council and Mayor on capital improvement projects.

Next steps: Continue to report flooding problems including date, time, and water levels. Photos are also extremely helpful. The city needs this information to track the problem and to identify the proper solution. Report problems sending an email to: Minneapolis311@ci.minneapolis.mn.us and please copy Council Member Meg Tuthill (Meg.Tuthill@ci.minneapolis.mn.us). Meg’s office is keeping records of all the flooding and has been very proactive in working with city staff on solutions. Lisa and Kelly will be in communication with the neighborhood on issue. There are no improvements slated for East Isles in 2011. The earliest possibility may be 2012.

Nonconforming Use Certificate

Carla Rohwedder requested support from the EIRA Board regarding her home at 1521 27th Street West. Carla purchased the 4-unit home in 1969. Carla has lived in the home and rent the three apartments upstairs during the past 40+ years. Inspectors have been to her home over the many years. Minor problems have been identified and promptly corrected. In November 2010, an inspector visited and did not indicate any concerns. One week later (on December 1st) the tenants all received eviction letters stating that they needed to vacate the property within 30 days. The building is (and always was) zoned as R2 (meaning it can not have more than two units). Carla is out of compliance even though the property was four units when she purchased the home. She is requesting a Nonconforming Use Certificate from the city to continue to operate as she has in the past. Another option would be to ask for a zoning change from R2 to R3 (to accommodate the four-units). Carla has hired a lawyer to help her evaluate the options. The EIRA Board unanimously voted to support Carla in her effort to obtain either the Nonconforming Use Certificate or the zoning change. Meg Tuthill will support Carla with her request.

Lake of the Isles Renovation Project Report

Harvey Ettinger provided this report. In the mid-1990's Lake of the Isles experienced severe flooding. The superintendent of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board initiated an improvement plan that included shoreline stabilization, replacing walking and biking paths and replacing dead and dying trees. A Citizen Advisory Council was formed to review the process. A master plan was put in place and the renovation began in 2001. In 2009 the project was considered completed. Concerned residents from the four neighborhoods that border the lake formed a joint committee to review the entire project and identified a number of areas of concern (including turf problems, height of shoreline planting, poor maintenance of shrub bed, and inconsistent styles of lighting poles around the lake). These concerns along with committee recommendations are outlined in a 12-page report. The Board voted (unanimously) to support the joint committee report. The report will be submitted to the new superintendent next month. Meg Tuthill encouraged Harvey to share the report with Lowry Hill East and ask for their support as well.

Zoning Change Request

Chuck Hanson, owner of property at 2653-55 Hennepin Avenue (in Lowry Hill East) since 1987, is requesting support for a zoning change at this property. The current tenants include PC Doodle and Uptown Tailor & Cleaners. Uptown Tailor & Cleaners will be exiting their lease as of February 28, 2011. Chuck has interest from a new tenant, an independent tobacco store. The building is currently zoned C1, a tobacco store would require a zoning change to C2. Chuck will be attending the board meeting of Lowry Hill East next week. The EIRA Board declined to vote on the zoning change in deference to the decision by the board of Lowry Hill East (LHENA). Chuck was invited to return to the EIRA Board after meeting with LHENA.

Meg Tuthill, Ward 10 Councilmember, City of Minneapolis

- Meg thanked the residents who attending tonight's meeting regarding flooding concerns.
- Minneapolis Police 5th precinct has a new commander. Inspector Matt Clark has replaced Inspector Eddie Frizell who is leaving for a tour of duty in Iraq.
- The City Council is considering allowing mobile food vendors to expand to other parts of the city (beyond just downtown). Please let Meg know your opinion. Meg is not taking the lead on this issue because she is focusing on traffic and noise.
- The City of Lake Loppet is Feb 5-6. Meg encouraged residents to enjoy the event, including the Luminary Loppet on Saturday evening.
- The next Meet with Meg is Tuesday, February 8th from noon-1 p.m. at the 5th Precinct.
- The city has 13 vacant lots available to rent for community gardens. Contact Homegrown Minneapolis at 612-673-2597.

NRP report, Monica Smith, East Isles NRP Coordinator

Monica provided the following information:

- The date for the Community Energy Services workshop has been set: Thursday, March 10th at Grace-Trinity Community Church. Monica passed out fliers and asked all Board Members to commit to speak with two or three neighbors about

the program. Information about the program was published in the January issue of the *Hill and Lake Press* and is on the website (www.eastisles.org). The McKnight Foundation is offering grants to the top 10 neighborhoods with the highest participation rate of eligible households. The prizes range from \$2,500 for 10th place to \$5,000 for the 1st place. We need the Board's help in promoting the program.

- Minneapolis Park and Recreation is looking for locations for the 2011 Earth Day Clean Up on Saturday, April 16th. The Board is in support of having a location in East Isles. We will need a volunteer to be the site coordinator.
- Monica worked with the web master to make a number of updates to our website. Please contact Monica if you have suggestions or edits to the site and she will coordinate with the web master.
- The NRP Steering Committee has two people interested in joining the group. According to our Participation Agreement with NRP, the EIRA Board is required to vote on the approval of new members. The Board unanimously approved the addition of residents Dan McLaughlin and Nate Maschke to the NRP Steering Committee. Monica mentioned that the minutes from the NRP Steering Committee meetings are posted on the new NRP page of our website.
- The next meeting of the Steering Committee is Tuesday, February 8th, 7 p.m. at Grace-Trinity Community Church.
- The Steering Committee's goal is to present a draft of our Phase II plan to the EIRA Board at the March meeting. We have been advised to plan for the full allocation of funds pending a decision on the City Council's recent action to restrict funding to 50%.
- NRP Policy Board is exploring a lawsuit against the city of Minneapolis. The lawsuit would need to be initiated by the neighborhoods and NRP funds cannot be used for this purpose. A meeting is being held tonight to gauge interest.
- EIRA will receive about \$20,000 in 2011 from the Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) department to fund community engagement, administration and staff. An application with Board approval needs to be submitted to be eligible for the funding. The agenda was too full to review the application at tonight's meeting. A draft of the application will be sent to Board Members for review prior to the March meeting. The March meeting will include time for discussion and a vote on the application. Interested residents can ask to be included in the process.

Bylaws Committee

Tina Frontera reported that the Bylaws Committee has met several times. They are in the process of updating the bylaws to comply with the new NCR guidelines for funding through the City of Minneapolis relating to membership and dues as well as other operational concerns. Tina emailed the proposed edits to EIRA Board member a few days ago.

Main edits under review are:

- Article II, Membership: To eliminate dues requirements and replacing with a way to track members without dues. Members must still be residents. Additionally, the

committee debated changing the current one vote per household to one vote per person. The language was left “as is” for further Board consideration.

- Article V, Board of Directors: The allowance of electronic voting of minutes and a policy for other voting electronically if needed.
- Article VI, Committees: Tina reported that the group debated whether non-residents should be allowed to serve on committees. The language was left “as is” with the additional provision that the NRP Steering Committee allows non-resident business owners to serve on that committee.
- Article VII, Compensation Reimbursement, updated to allow for paying contractors.
- Article IV, Officers: Change regarding timing of electing officers.

Due to a full meeting agenda, the Board did not feel they had adequate time to discuss the edits to bylaws. The committee would like the Members to approve the changes to the bylaws at the April meeting. The Board needs to vote on the recommended changes and allow time to notify members of the recommended changes prior to the April vote. A special meeting of the EIRA Board of Directors has been called for Monday, February 7, 5:30 p.m. at Grace-Trinity Community Church. The Board will need a quorum to hold a vote at this meeting.

Electronic voting of meeting minutes

The Board unanimously voted to approve electronic voting for this evening’s meeting minutes to meet the publication deadline of the *Hill and Lake Press*.

Crime and Safety Committee Report

Al Rodriguez reported that the Minneapolis Police will be holding a burglary prevention workshop on Wednesday, March 23rd, 6-8:30 p.m. at Temple Israel (Minda Hall).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Submitted by: Monica Smith, Recorder, and Tina Frontera, Secretary

Addendum

A special meeting of the EIRA Board of Directors was held Monday, February 7th at 5:30 p.m. at Duplex Restaurant (Grace’s meeting rooms were unavailable). Nine members of the EIRA Board were present as well as members of the bylaws committee. The purpose of the meeting was to continue the discussion from the February 1st Board meeting regarding recommended changes to the bylaws. The Board voted unanimously to approve the recommended bylaws changes. Next step: the recommended bylaws changes will be presented at the Annual Member Meeting in April for approved by EIRA members