

**East Isles Residents' Association (EIRA)**  
Minutes from the EIRA Board of Directors Meeting  
November 9, 2010  
Grace-Trinity Community Church

Board members present: Mark Lofstrom (President), Jane Schommer (Vice President), Al Al Rodriguez (Treasurer), Tina Frontera (Secretary), Sue Durfee, Harvey Ettinger, Rose Matthys, and Michael T'Kach

East Isles residents and invited guests were also in attendance.

EIRA President Mark Lofstrom called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

**Announcements**

Mark Lofstrom made the following announcements:

- A committee will be formed to revise the existing bylaws to comply with the requirements for the new neighborhood funding from the City in 2011 (NCR). Please let Mark know if you are interested in serving on this committee.
- The next meeting of the Zoning and Land Use committee will be Monday, November 22nd at 5:30 p.m. at Grace-Trinity Community Church. The committee will be meeting with Carol Lansing regarding US Bank renovation of a storefront in the 2400 block of Hennepin Avenue.

**Treasurer's Report**

EIRA Treasurer Al Rodriguez gave a financial update. The CD expired so those dollars were rolled into the savings account.

We received two payments from NRP: a reimbursement for expenses of \$4,908.60 and an advance on our Phase II planning contract for \$6,250.

Bank totals as of 11-9-10 are:

Checking	\$2,767.05
Savings	\$10,035.88
NRP Checking	\$13,581.00

**Zoning and Land Use Committee**

Mark Lofstrom reported that EIRA's Zoning and Land Use Committee opposed the design for the proposed CB2 store at Calhoun Square (corner of 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Hennepin Avenue). CARAG also opposed the design. The issue is that the design violates the Uptown Small Area Plan in a number of ways (including that it is only a one-floor building though the plan designs the first floor to have in excess of more than one floor in footage height—24 feet). The City's Planning Commission postponed their decision on the development, and asked CB2 to re-present at the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Social Committee**

Amy Sanborn, Chair of the Social committee could not attend the meeting. Mark presented on her behalf.

- The Wine Tasting fundraiser was a big success. EIRA sold 44 advance tickets (totaling \$1,100). In addition to advance ticket revenue, EIRA will receive a portion of the ticket sales at the door. That amount is not yet known. The Board will be thanking the sponsors by placing an ad in the December issue of the *Hill and Lake Press*. The Board will also be asked to send personal thank you notes to the sponsors.
- The date for the Ice Skating Party has been tentatively set for Sunday, January 23, 2011, with a back up date of January 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **NRP report, Monica Smith, East Isles NRP Coordinator**

A survey was mailed in late September to all East Isles neighbors seeking feedback for Phase II funding. The survey data is being compiled and will be available later this week. The Steering Committee will begin analyzing the data at its next meeting, Tuesday, November 16 at 7:00 p.m. at Grace-Trinity Community Church.

If you are interested in serving on the Steering Committee or a sub-committee, please contact Monica Smith at [nrp@eastisles.com](mailto:nrp@eastisles.com).

### **Meg Tuthill, Ward 10 Councilmember, City of Minneapolis**

Street sweeping has begun in Minneapolis so please watch for the No Parking signs and plan accordingly.

There will be a public comment period regarding the City budget during the City Council's meeting with the Board of Estimate and Taxation on November 18, beginning at 6:05 p.m. in Room 317 City Hall.

Friends of the Walker Library are holding a book sale on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Most of the books will be sold for \$1 or less. Book donations are being accepted.

An ordinance change will affect Golden Leaf Tobacco in Uptown. The ordinance will clarify the definition of “sampling” in establishments.

Meg reported that the *Bumpy* sculpture is on public land (James Avenue and East Lake of the Isles Parkway). A permit was not secured so the owner must remove the sculpture by November 17<sup>th</sup>.

The next Meet with Meg will be Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 12-1 p.m. at the 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct, 3101 Nicollet Avenue. Bring your own lunch; Meg provides beverages and dessert.

If you would like to sign up to receive Meg's e-newsletter, please send an e-mail request to [Meg.Tuthill@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Meg.Tuthill@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

### **Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County Commissioner**

- Gail invited people to volunteer at Project Homeless Connect. This is a one-day event for homeless people to access a variety of resources (employment, medical, etc.). Project Homeless Connect will be held Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Register to volunteer at [www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org](http://www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org).
- Walker Library Update: The County used a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to create the community vision for the new library. That vision was used in the architect selection process. Vincent James Associates has been chosen as the architect. The budget is \$12 million for the new library to be built on the existing site in 2012. Everyone is invited to participate with the CAC as the design process begins. Meet the architects at the next meeting of the CAC, Thursday, November 18 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the Walker Library meeting room.

The majority of the meeting was dedicated to proposed changes to the Midtown Greenway.

### **Midtown Greenway Background**

Gail Dorfman gave some background information on the Midtown Greenway. The Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) purchased the land in 1993 with the intention of using the land for transit. The Midtown Greenway was created in 2000; it is 5.5 miles long and is the busiest bikeway in the state of Minnesota, carrying more average daily traffic than 85% of Minneapolis city streets. Minneapolis ranks first in the nation in bike commuting (recently overtaking Portland, Oregon). The Greenway is a national model for transit, supporting preservation of public spaces and encourages development around the corridor. The next step in the process is to add a streetcar line to the corridor. The streetcar would connect the SW Light Rail near Whole Foods on the west side and the Hiawatha Light Rail on the east side. The estimated capital cost would be \$87-115 million with an annual operating cost of \$4 million. The Met Council has taken the leadership role in pursuing federal dollars for the streetcar project.

### **Minneapolis Public Works, Steve Mosing and Shaun Murphy**

Steve Mosing is a Traffic Operations Engineer for the City of Minneapolis. Steve presented a plan by the City to make changes to the Midtown Greenway to comply with a new citywide policy for intersections. In 2009, Public Works created a policy to make intersections in the City more consistent and safer for all modes of travel. They have a capital budget to make enhancements to five crossings per year. This year, they would like to make enhancements to the Greenway. Three of those crossings would be in East Isles (James, Irving, and Humboldt Avenues). Public Works did a traffic study at these crossings. There are equal numbers of bicycle user traffic and vehicle traffic at the Irving and Humboldt crossings. On James Avenue, there are significantly more trail users

(bicycles and others with metal are measured on the trail; not included are pedestrians and in-line skaters) than vehicle traffic.

Public Works recommendations are:

- Remove the stop sign for trail users at James (bicycles would not have to stop at this intersection).
- Make enhancements to the crossings at Irving and Humboldt Avenues. They recommend keeping the stop signs for both trail users and vehicles. They would like to add 3-way plaques under the stop signs for all users. They will also be improving sight lines (setting back the fencing and tree trimming) and improving lighting and adding “zebra” crosswalks. They will also move the vehicle stop sign closer to the Greenway.
- They would like these changes to go into effect in 2010 but do not want to proceed if the neighborhood is against the plan.

**Midtown Greenway Coalition, Tim Springer, Executive Director, and Michael T’Kach, EIRA Board member and Midtown Greenway Coalition Board Member**

The Midtown Greenway Coalition is a non-profit organization with the mission to “empower communities to develop, improve, protect, and enjoy the Midtown Greenway as a green urban pathway to improve people’s lives”.

Tim gave some background on the Coalition including their fight to prevent Xcel Energy from building above-ground high voltage power lines. A judge recently agreed with the Coalition that the power lines should be buried instead of above-ground. That recommendation will now go to Public Utilities Commission for a ruling.

The Midtown Coalition has 136 volunteer Train Watch riders who ride the Greenway in groups after dark to help ensure a safer Greenway.

The Coalition supports the proposed streetcar line on the Greenway if it is designed properly.

The Coalition is interested in opening a dialog with East Isles about the proposed changes to the Greenway. The Coalition supports the removal of the stop signs but wants to hear from the community. They support studying the issue further before making a decision or perhaps having a test period prior during implementation of the final changes.

Tim and Michael made it clear that they want feedback from East Isles and would like to partner with the neighborhood on the proposed changes.

**Minneapolis Policy, Chelsea Adams, Crime Prevention Specialist, and Tony Diaz, Sector Lieutenant**

Chelsea passed out a Pocket Guide to Minnesota Bicycle Laws as well as Share the Road tips.

Lieutenant Diaz reported that the Greenway is safer with the volunteer Trail Watch riders. The police had reports of near-accidents at the Humboldt crossing of the Greenway. Officers patrolled the area and issued citations for trail riders who ran the Greenway stop sign. Meg reported that her office often receives comments and concerns related to the Greenway, as potential incidents are rarely seen as 911 affairs since they are often of fairly brief duration and are often past occurrences.

Beat officers on bicycles do patrol the Greenway. The mounted patrol could be used on the Greenway upon request.

A concern was raised about graffiti on the Greenway. Please report graffiti by calling 311 to file a report. Ask for a case number. If the graffiti isn't removed within 10 days, please contact Meg Tuthill's office with the case number.

Overall, crime is down 4.5% year-to-date in East Isles.

### **Neighborhood response**

Residents are concerned about safety at the crossings. Pedestrians crossing the Greenway are also a big concern for many people. One problem is bikers riding at high speeds through this busy area. Suggestions included signage or lights to alert the bikers to the at-grade crossing to keep everyone safe. Others worried about the wait time for vehicles if the trail stop signs are removed.

### **EIRA business**

Final EIRA business included the following item.

- The Board unanimously approved expenses up to \$200 for the Ice Skating party.
- The Board unanimously approved completing an application to have East Isles participate in the Community Energy Services (CES) program. The approval included supporting the program in monetary (up to \$1,000 of NRP funds for marketing) as well as non-monetary ways (outreach, door knocking, providing a neighborhood contact person, etc.).
- The Board unanimously approved voting on the November meeting minutes electronically so they can be submitted to the *Hill and Lake Press* for publication.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

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