



## **CEDAR ISLES DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES, May 11, 2011**

The annual meeting was held at the Jones-Harrison Residence. Board Members in attendance: Chair Art Higinbotham, Vice-Chair Glenna Case, Treasurer Ed Bell, Judy Berge, Ed Ferlauto, Ryan Fox, Stephen Goltry, Gail Lee, David Shirley and Craig Westgate.

Board Chair Art Higinbotham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **Ward 7 Council Member Lisa Goodman's Report**

Council Member Goodman began by thanking Art Higinbotham for his service as CIDNA Board Chair as well as many other boards and commissions in Minneapolis.

The next Lunch with Lisa is May 25 at the University of St. Thomas.

The state legislature is considering drastic cuts in Local Government Aid to Minneapolis. The City is working with the legislature to shift the closed pension funds to the larger state pension funds.

The City of Minneapolis recently completed a resident satisfaction survey. The results are used for strategic planning and to write the City's business plan. The survey results can be found on the City's website. Noted results:

- A majority of residents continue to rate Minneapolis and their neighborhoods as "good" or "very good" places to live.
- Top responses for biggest challenge facing Minneapolis: 1. Education (35%), 2. Public safety, 3. Public infrastructure, 4. Taxes.

Council Member Goodman answered questions about Southwest Light Rail Transit. With the change in leadership in government, she questions the certainty of the project. Concerns may be directed to the planners: Amanda Arnold at the City and Adele Hall at the County.

Chair Higinbotham thanked CM Goodman for supporting CIDNA by fighting planned upzoning in the neighborhood.

### **University of Minnesota Capstone Project**

Jeff Peltola, West Calhoun Neighborhood Council introduced the project. Peltola and Ed Terhaar mentored four U of M Civil Engineering students in completing a traffic assessment of Lake Street and Excelsior Boulevard and adjacent intersections. Three of the students (Tim Nelson, Josh Potter and Joshua Rohde) presented their report.

Four intersections were studied: Lake and Excelsior, Lake and W. Calhoun Parkway, Market Plaza and Lake and Market Plaza and Excelsior. In addition, two trail systems (for bikes and pedestrians) and density add congestion to the area.

The students analyzed existing data, conducted extensive traffic counts and took digital video of the area. Since the traffic counts were taken in mid-winter, they increased their counts to replicate summer traffic patterns. Three of the four intersections were rated as failing in level of service.

Problems identified:

- High levels of traffic congestion during peak hours
- High crash rate within area (including one bicycle fatality)
- Need for improved pedestrian and bicycle safety

The students identified the following short-term solutions:

- Repaint pavement markings to improve safety
- Install pedestrian countdown timers on signals at crosswalks
- Eliminate pedestrian crossing at Lake and Excelsior (reroute pedestrians one block to safer crossing points)
- Optimize traffic signal timing
- Improve signage
- Install emergency vehicle sensors at all intersections

The short-term suggestions are encouraged for their effectiveness and low costs.

Long-term solutions were identified with the recommendation of an underpass at Lake and Excelsior intersection and a bike/pedestrian bridge across Lake Street to separate them from vehicle traffic.

Jeff Peltola encouraged the neighborhood to work together and with the City to set priorities for changes.

Chair Higinbotham thanked the students for their work on the study and presentation.

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

Commissioner Dorfman addressed concerns about Southwest Light Rail Transit. Location of freight rail has been at issue recently. Three different consultants have studied the option of co-locating freight and LRT along the Kenilworth corridor. The consultants agreed that freight and LRT should not be combined. St. Louis Park is fighting the relocation of freight through its city.

Commissioner Dorfman stated that the Kenilworth route for LRT was approved by six cities, the Hennepin County Board and the Met Council based on the assumption that freight would be relocated. St. Louis Park can ask for a wish list regarding safety and mitigation for freight relocation.

The federal government has had the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for eight months. A release date has not been set. Once the document is released, there will be a 45-day comment period. The document will be widely distributed and the County will host open houses for public comment.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has approved the Central Corridor. The Southwest LRT is the next Minnesota project in line for FTA approval.

Commissioner Dorman noted that the County is building a new Walker Library next year.

**Jeremy Hanson, Chief of Staff for Mayor R.T. Rybak**

Mayor Rybak's top priorities are jobs and economic development. The City is focusing on investing in work force and connecting transit to economic development.

Mayor Rybak is working with St. Paul and other cities in the area to have a regional focus to compete with other cities in the US and abroad.

The mayor has been working with the state legislature to lower property taxes for residents. The increase in property taxes from 2010 to 2011 is due to a closed pension fund. Senator Dibble co-authored legislation to merge the city's closed pension fund into the state's fund. The mayor feels that proposed legislation to reverse the City's decision regarding NRP funding violates local control.

A new Vikings stadium is not the most important issue for the mayor, but he does believe that a world-class city needs world-class amenities (which includes professional sports teams). The mayor's proposal stadium plan includes reductions to property tax by reducing debt on the City owned Target Center.

**State Representative Marion Greene**

Minneapolis is feeling under attack at the state legislature with cuts to education and health care. Minneapolis provides more money to the state (in sales and property tax) than it receives back in LGA. The legislature is expected to drastically cut LGA to Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth. One bright spot is that Early Childhood Education seems to have support from both parties.

Rep. Greene voted against the bill to reinstate funding to NRP in a house committee. She stated that she was deeply conflicted about the vote. She praised NRP for the wonderful history of leveraging money to make improvements. However, she feels the City needs to manage its own budget without the state being involved (local control issue).

Rep. Greene is opposed to public financing for a new stadium.

**BUSINESS MEETING PORTION OF AGENDA**

**Approval of minutes**

Chair Higinbotham routed copies of the meeting minutes from last year's annual meeting. The minutes were approved.

**Election of Board Members**

Glenna Case will not be seeking re-election.

Art Higinbotham recommended that the following existing board members be approved to continue their service on the CIDNA Board: Ed Bell, Judy Berge, Ed Ferlauto, Art Higinbotham, Ryan Fox, Stephen Goltry, Gail Lee, David Shirley and Craig Westgate. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

Chair Higinbotham asked for nominations from the floor for new board members. There were no nominations.

The officers will be elected at the next board meeting. Art Higinbotham will not continue as Chair.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Ed Bell reported the following:

- Remaining NRP Phase I funds: \$88,000
- \$15,143 in checking account
- \$261,000 is full allocation of NRP funds (if restricted to 50%: \$130,500)
- Checks have been written to 24 households for reimbursement for the Community Energy Services co-pay.

### **Metropolitan Council: Forcemain Sewer Project**

Board Member Ryan Fox is the neighborhood liaison for this project. Ryan introduced Adam Gordon and Tim O'Donnell from the Met Council to present the project.

The project title is: Hopkins System Improvements, Phase I Work and involves a regional sewers system encompassing Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Minneapolis.

The Met Council is expediting the Minneapolis portion because of internal corrosion of the pipe. They are installing redundant forcemain in suspect areas and relining the remaining sections. The Met Council will also be doing the street restoration.

The construction schedule is: October 2011-June 2012: Dean Parkway to E. Calhoun Parkway; April –October 2012: France Avenue to Dean Parkway; and 2013: E. Calhoun Parkway to Irving at 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

A public presentation will be held in July.

Ryan Fox is CIDNA's liaison for this project. Residents can contact him with questions or concerns.

### **NRP Report, Gail Lee**

Gail Lee provided an overview of the work of the NRP Committee:

- Phase II planning began more than one year ago with monthly meetings. The plan has gone through the necessary approval process (neighborhood, NRP and City Council).
- Bills to return frozen funds to NRP have passed committees in the House and Senate. Floor vote is expected soon.
- CIDNA has \$88,000 in Phase I funds remaining and \$261,000 for Phase II (if full allocation is allowed, if restricted to 50%: \$130,500).

Gail provided updates on the following initiatives.

Housing: Provide a loan through Non-Profits Assistance Fund for affordable housing project. When the loan is repaid, the funds will be available for other projects in CIDNA.

Gail introduced Monica Smith, the new Coordinator for the neighborhood to talk about Community Energy Services (CES). The CES program offers low-cost, no-cost way to save money and energy in homes. CIDNA held our workshop on April 12. Thirty households have participated to date. Eight additional workshops are offered in other neighborhoods between now and July. The workshop is followed by a home visit from

two energy professionals who evaluate your home and install energy saving equipment for a co-pay of \$30. CIDNA is refunding the co-pay for the first 100 households who participate making the program completely free for CIDNA residents. McKnight Foundation is offering grants (up to \$5,000) to the neighborhoods with the highest participation rates. Residents are encouraged to participate and help CIDNA win grant money.

Community Building: Gail returned to speak about communication efforts (new e-newsletter) and social events such as Earth Day, the Fall Festival and Wine Tasting fundraiser in October.

Safety: Contact Ryan Fox (through [info@cidna.org](mailto:info@cidna.org)) with concerns and ideas for a new sidewalk on Sunset for a better pedestrian connection from Chowen to Cedar Lake Parkway.

A burglary prevention workshop will be held at Jones-Harrison on Tuesday, May 24, at 6:30 p.m. Residents are encouraged to attend. A block leader social will be held at Kenwood Park on Thursday, June 16 at 6 p.m. Anyone interested in getting involved is welcome.

Environmental: The committee hopes to make improvements to Cedar Lake South Beach but the Park Board wants to wait to see how LRT may impact this area.

Gail invited Cher Simer to speak about Park Siding Park. Cher and her group of volunteer gardeners have planted and maintained four large gardens at the park since the mid-90's. Cher is looking for more volunteers to help with the weeding and watering throughout the summer. Volunteers are also needed for the spring clean up on Saturday, May 21 beginning at 9 a.m. Any help is appreciated.

Implementation: Monica Smith has been hired to help implement Phase II.

Gail also gave an update on new neighborhood funding through the City's NCR department. CIDNA applied for and will receive \$14,000 in funding for 2011. The funding is for administration and community engagement (not programs). The City has not yet committed to this program beyond this year.

The NRP Committee welcomes additional volunteers. The committee meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. All are welcome.

### **LRT Report**

Chair Higinbotham stated that he thinks the SW LRT is at a stand still due to the debate of freight location and the delay in the DEIS. He also questions whether the federal government will approve another big project for Minnesota (after recently approving the Central Corridor project).

Ed Ferlauto reported that the Transportation Committee has attended numerous meeting concerning LRT and have been involved with the following:

- The charrette conducted by the Cedar Lake Park Association suggest building a trench under Cedar Lake Parkway and suggestions from other sources, CIDNA and Calhoun Isles Association, include a "cut and cover" tunnel in the narrower portion between Calhoun Isles Condos and Cedar Lake Shores Townhomes.

- Resolutions were adopted by the board regarding the Station Area Planning Document:
  - Noise and vibration concerns in the area of the track closest to housing
  - Better pedestrian access to the station from the west and the north
  - Insist that freight be relocated from the corridor
- A stakeholders group (comprised of members from CIDNA, West Calhoun Neighborhood Council, and the business communities of Calhoun Village and Calhoun Commons) sponsored the Capstone Project reported on earlier this evening.
- The CIDNA Board approved a joint resolution from the four neighborhoods surrounding the Kenilworth route.
- The purpose of the DEIS is to provide full and open evaluation of the potential environmental impacts of the LRT. It will be important to study the document and to submit comments within the 45-day period.

Ed concluded by saying that the SW LRT is projected to open in 2017 and estimated to carry 24,000 riders per day by the year 2030. Capital costs in 2015 dollars are estimated at \$86 million - \$1.4 billion. Trains will operate 20 hours a day/7 days a week.

### **Wrap up**

Chair Higinbotham gave a special thanks to Cher Simer and the Park Siding garden volunteers and to Judy Berge for her work with the Fall Festival. Glenna Case also thanked the NRP Committee of Ed Bell, Steve Goltry, Gail Lee and Claire Ruebeck for their hard work and great progress on NRP.

Ed Bell presented a thank you gift to Art Higinbotham for his service as Board Chair.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

### **Next meeting**

The next meeting of the CIDNA Board will be Wednesday, June 8, 6:30 p.m. at Jones-Harrison.

--Submitted by Monica Smith