

Harrison Neighborhood Association

March 7, 2012

c/o City Clerks Office
Room 304 City Hall
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Redistricting Group Members:

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication on this complicated and incredibly important process. The March 6 Draft Ward Maps posted on the City of Minneapolis website represent very positive progress. We understand that this map is not final. Therefore we want to impress upon you a few points.

1. **Keep Harrison Whole!** Harrison is a small community and splitting the neighborhood in half would dilute the voting power of the community. It also would result in precinct changes moving Harrison delegates to other precincts. The consequence is that delegates from Harrison would lose their place and not be seated. This would be another level of disenfranchisement on top of losing their ability to secure representation of their choice. **Thank you for keeping Harrison whole.**
2. **Harrison should remain in Ward 5!** Residents want a fair opportunity to elect a representative of choice and ensure that issues affecting them would be addressed. Federal Law requires that racial and language minorities have a fair opportunity to elect representatives of their choice. **Thank you for keeping Harrison in the 5th Ward.**
3. **Ensure Northside Representation of Northside Opportunity!** Contiguous land with similar zoning should be in the same Ward. The March 6 Draft Ward Map is a significant improvement returning the Harrison business community back to the 5th Ward. It also includes the contiguous land of the Minneapolis Impound Lot that is only accessible through Harrison and North Minneapolis. This is a significant and fair improvement. The Ward 5 Line should be extended down further to include all similarly zoned land (commercial/office/residential).

Explanations:

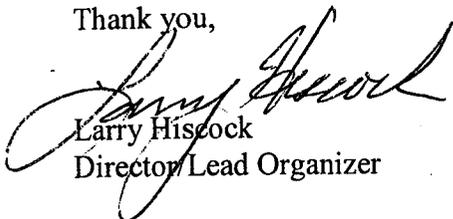
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- a. Residential and job producing areas in Bassett Creek Valley should be in the 5th Ward because the residential and business areas share a common history and zoning with North Minneapolis and are directly connected to one another. The lands are not directly accessible to Bryn Mawr or 7th Ward residents because of a 40 acre green space buffer.
- b. City requests for public funding connects the commercial and residential areas in Bassett Creek Valley to 5th Ward demographics. Specifically:
 - i. All of Bassett Creek Valley was included in the North Minneapolis Empowerment Zone with the explicit purpose of benefiting North Minneapolis.
 - ii. City of Minneapolis funding requests must demonstrate need. North Minneapolis homicide rates have been used in grants along with economic disparities to secure predevelopment dollars in Bassett Creek Valley. Linking future employment with the North Minneapolis is also referenced as a reason. Based on the grants we have read, there has been no reference to Bryn Mawr demographics or Ward 7 demographics.
 - iii. Ward 5 disparities are used to secure public financing, but current Ward lines deny 5th Ward voters direct and fair representation on lands contiguous to their ward.
 - iv. Including the contiguous lands in 5th Ward would be a minor line change that would be population neutral.
 - v. This request does not violate the intent of the neighborhood boundary principle. The purpose of aligning Ward lines with neighborhood boundaries is to avoid splitting communities, diluting voting capacity, and/or undermining community cohesion. Connecting Northside opportunity to Northside representation has not impact on the voting capacity, residential boundaries or social cohesion of any neighborhood in 7th Ward.

Redistricting is a complicated process. We must focus on the outcomes associated with changing Ward lines. There have been concerns about concentrating poverty in Ward 5. The solution is keep 5th Ward communities united with opportunity areas like Bassett Creek Valley.

Thank you,



Larry Hiscock
Director/Lead Organizer