



**Request for City Council Committee Action  
from City Council Member Paul Ostrow**

Date: August 9, 2007  
 To: Zoning and Planning Committee  
 Honorable Gary Schiff, Chair

**Subject: Resolution reorganizing the Committee on Urban Environment (CUE)**

**Recommendations:**

That the City Council adopt the attached Resolution amending the 1968 Council action and subsequent related Council actions establishing or guiding the Committee on Urban Environment, including:

- 1) Establish the number of CUE members to be 17, with 14 appointed or reappointed by the City Council by a majority vote of the City Council, and 3 appointed or reappointed by the Mayor
- 2) Appoint the 17 members to CUE for a one-year term, ending August 25, 2008, and allowing CUE to continue to use its current City phone number (612-673-3014) and to have a mail drop in Room 210 City Hall through August 25, 2008; and
- 3) Dissolve CUE's status as a Committee established by the City of Minneapolis as of August 25, 2008.

Prepared by: Paul Ostrow, City Council Member/ HEE Committee Member  
 (612-673-2201)

Approved by: Paul Ostrow, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward City Council Member

Presenters in Committee: Paul Ostrow, City Council Member/HEE Committee Member  
 Joyce Vincent, prior CUE appointee  
 John Uban, acting chair of CUE

Appointee Name and Category if any	Appointed by Mayor or Council	Ward Home=H Work=W	Term Number of years	Term Beginning/ Ending	Name, Expiration Date Complete only if replacing or fulfilling the term of another member.
Lori Anderson	Council	9 (H)	1	8/25/07 - 8/25/08	
Barbara Bliss	Council	1 (H)	1	8/25/07- 8/25/08	
Stephanie Boraas	Council	12 (H)	1	8/25/07- 8/25/08	
Stephanie Brody	Council	7 (H)	1	8/25/07- 8/25/08	
Susan Diesel	Council	8 (H)	1	8/25/07- 8/25/08	

Ginny Coyle	Council	7 (W)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Gayle Gallagher	Council	8 (H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Pat Gill	Council	1 (H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Ed Juda	Council	7 (H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Meleah Maynard	Council	13 (H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Susan Nelson	Council	3 (W)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Julie Ollila	Council	11(H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Pamela Silver	Council	9 (H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Cheryllyne Vaz	Council	12(H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
Joyce Vincent	Mayor	3 (H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
<b>Re-Appointments Name and Category if any</b>	<b>Appointed by Mayor or Council</b>	<b>Ward Home=H Work=W</b>	<b>Term Number of years</b>	<b>Term Beginning/ Ending</b>	
Phill Lindsay	Mayor	10(H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	
John Uban	Mayor	13(H)	1	8/25/07-8/25/08	

**Background Information:**

On February 9, 1968, the Minneapolis City Council established a Committee (that was eventually titled the Committee on Urban Environment – CUE), the purpose of which was to “encourage the preservation and development of the natural and man-made beauty, historic landmarks, aesthetics, cultural and other assets, and the use and enjoyment of fine art objects which improve the quality of the environment and contribute to the livability of the City by rendering aid, advise and assistance to the City Council, Mayor, Planning Commission, and other Officers, Boards and Commissions of the City, as well as to the general public.”

CUE’s original membership was comprised of 27 members, including 9 appointments by the City Council President, 8 appointments by the Mayor, two City Council members, the Mayor or designee, and representatives from the Metropolitan Council, the City Planning Commission, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, the Library Board, the School Board, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.

The 1968 Council action set forth the following 11 duties:

1. Stimulate citizen participation in anti-litter, clean-up, fix-up, and paint-up campaign, annual community awards, annual tree-planting program, and other programs related to beautification and better civic design.
2. Stimulate investments and use of fine art objects in public and private spaces.

3. Support the highest design standards in all public and private improvements.
4. Stimulate and marshal citizen support for the preservation of historic landmarks and places of unique interest within the City.
5. Upon request, advise the City Council and the Boards, Commissions, and officials of the City and private enterprise with respect to plans and actions which could affect or involve the purposes for which the Committee is established.
6. Recommend action to the City Council and to the Boards, Commissions, and officials of the City to the purposes for which the Committee is established.
7. Sponsor such meetings, institutes, forums, and other education programs as will lead to a clear understanding of and improvement in the areas of its concern.
8. Make studies and investigations which will provide a basis of research and fact for the Committee's programs and policies.
9. Publish and distribute such factual material as it may deem necessary.
10. Keep proper records of its proceedings and comply with budgeting and established City procedures relating to finances and accounting thereof.
11. Make reports of its activities to the City Council annual or as often as needed.

Subsequent Council actions on December 6, 1977, December 30, 1988, and July 28, 1989 made minor amendments to membership, the appointment process, and the duties of CUE, and moved the responsibility to provide staff support for CUE from the City Coordinator to the Planning Department, which provided office space, equipment, supplies, and administrative assistance.

Other City boards and commissions now exist that carry out many of the duties specified in the 1968 Council action: Heritage Preservation Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and the Minneapolis Arts Commission. These boards and commissions, in addition to the Planning Commission, are supported by CPED/Planning staff. The CPED/Planning Division provided support until late 2003, when budget constraints ended administrative support for CUE. In addition, CUE vacated its office space in CPED/Planning offices in January 2004.

On March 11, 2005, the City Council adopted a Resolution that further amended the 1968 Council action with respect to CUE. The Council formally recognized that the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Commission, Arts Commission, and Heritage Preservation Commission have taken on many of the duties originally assigned to CUE in the 1968 Council action. The 2005 Resolution amended the charge to CUE as to be as follows: "The purpose of the Committee on Urban Environment shall be to celebrate our natural and built environment, cultural assets, parks and open spaces, and neighborhood projects and programs, which improve the quality of the environment and contribute to the livability of the City and to provide education and support for these efforts," and deleted the eleven specific duties set forth in the Council action of February 9, 1968. In addition, the Council action encouraged City officers and employees to cooperate with CUE to accomplish its purpose, directed staff to amend pertinent ordinances to delete references to CUE, and asked CUE to include representation by the American Institute of Architects and the University Design Center in its membership.

Since the 2005 Resolution, no designated city department has been providing administrative support to CUE, although the Planning Division has allowed CUE to receive U.S. mail at its office in Room 210 City Hall.

Friends of CUE is a Minnesota non-profit organization with 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status. Volunteers who serve on committees of Friends of CUE have overseen and administered the Blooming Boulevards program and the annual Minneapolis Arbor Day celebration for several years. In addition, the Minneapolis Blooms Committee of Friends of CUE has sought and received grants to hold many educational workshops on rain gardens in 2005 and 2006.

In December 2006, acting CUE chair John Uban wrote a letter to all CUE board members informing them about ongoing activities of the Friends of CUE committees and asking them if they wished to continue on the CUE board. Only John Uban, Phill Lindsay, and Joyce Vincent said that they wanted to remain on the CUE board. The City Clerk's office has published notice of CUE vacancies, as well. Volunteers who have been overseeing the Minneapolis Blooms (fka Blooming Boulevards) Program the past two years have now applied to be on the CUE board.

The Bylaws of Friends of CUE (the non-profit organization) provide that its boards of directors shall be comprised of the CUE board appointees. Because CUE no longer has a functioning board (because their terms have expired and the City Council has not appointed replacements), Friends of CUE is effectively stopped from operating properly. Minneapolis Blooms/Metro Blooms, a recently formed non-profit that is administering educational rain garden workshops and promoting the blooming boulevard program and annual awards celebration. Metro Blooms is interested in merging with Friends of CUE to carry on the mission of CUE. The current board members of Metro Blooms have applied to be on the CUE board pending CUE's dissolution and to help CUE transition into an independent entity.

**Recommendations:**

- Establish the number of CUE members to be 17, with 14 appointed or reappointed by the City Council by a majority vote of the Council, and 3 appointed or reappointed by the Mayor;
- Appoint the 17 members to CUE for a one-year term, ending August 25, 2008, and allow CUE to continue to use its current City phone number (612-673-3014) and to have a mail drop in Room 210 City Hall through August 25, 2008; and
- Dissolve CUE's status as a Committee established by the City of Minneapolis as of August 25, 2008.