



Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 2-16-11

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday, February 1st, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

Cam Gordon
City Council Member
Second Ward

350 South 5th Street - Room 301M
Minneapolis MN 55415

Office 612-673-2202
Fax 612-673-3250
Cell 612-296-0579

Email: cam.gordon@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/

Items:

- 1) 620-624 20th Ave S
- 2) Neighborhood Funding Work Group
- 3) Solar Energy Systems
- 4) New Stormwater Regulations
- 5) Central Corridor Lawsuit
- 6) Mobile Food Vending
- 7) Community Gardeners Sought
- 8) Pro-Gun Bills at Legislature
- 9) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Community Planning and Economic Development department released a Request for Proposals for the purchase and construction of housing on the City-owned lots at 620-624 20th Ave S. last month. Two proposals were submitted, one from the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation for a 4 unit development and one from the West Bank Community Development Corporation for a 2 unit development. The neighborhood organization will have the opportunity soon to review and make recommendations about the proposals. I remain optimistic that we will see construction of new housing at the site this spring or summer.
- 2) The Council has formed a neighborhood funding work group to facilitate decision making relating to the actions the Council will need to take on neighborhood funding this year. This work group includes the Council President and Vice President, the chairs of the Ways and Means/Budget Committee and the Intergovernmental Relations Committee, as well as a Mayoral representative, the City Coordinator, the Neighborhood and Community Relations Director, the Finance Director, the Communications Director and the Intergovernmental Relations Director. The Work Group's charge is to frame options and proposed actions for consideration by the Committee of the Whole and Ways & Means Committee relative to the 2011 Budget action that froze Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) spending. I would have preferred that the meetings of this group be open to the public and included representation from the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission and the NRP Policy Board.
- 3) The Council is considering changes to our zoning code that would add regulations to Solar Energy Systems. I successfully moved to postpone this amendment for two weeks at the Zoning and Planning Committee in order to get more time to gather input on the proposed standards. The proposal would provide greater clarity for City staff as well as solar installers and property owners; set standards for building-mounted and freestanding (i.e., ground-mounted) systems; clarify that solar access easements may be purchased from nearby property owners, consistent with state statute, and; require that the City Planning Commission, when evaluating new development projects, consider whether requests for increased allowable building height would result in shadowing of existing solar energy systems. I am generally supportive of these changes and very supportive of making solar energy more viable for homes and businesses, but want to make sure these changes help, and do not hinder, more use of solar energy in Minneapolis.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

- 4) The Council has a new ordinance intended to better regulate stormwater, including snow melt, to help prevent it from damaging adjacent properties. The proposal would establish clear drainage standards for construction activity and grading, snow melt from snow storage, sump pumps and downspouts and create penalties including administrative citations, assessments, license revocation and stop work orders. This proposal, which I support, centralizes accountability for enforcement within Regulatory Services.
- 5) On January 26th, Judge Donovan ruled on a federal civil rights complaint filed by a group led by the NAACP's St. Paul branch, several other groups, neighborhood activists, and small businesses accusing the Met Council and the federal government of ignoring the history of previous adverse impacts on the African-American Rondo neighborhood and the adverse impacts the project's construction would have on area businesses. The Judge found that the Environmental Impact Statement inadequately addressed the loss of business revenues as an adverse impact of the construction of the CCLRT, but denied plaintiffs' request for an order to stop the CCLRT Project. For more see news articles at http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2011/01/27/central-corridor-rondo-lawsuit/http://www.twincities.com/ci_17218499?nclick_check=1
- 6) My office is setting up a work group to discuss whether to expand the City's mobile vending ordinance should cover the West Bank. Let me know if you would like to see this opportunity opened up to your commercial corridors, and to give input on the following questions:
 - Should mobile vending be allowed only on sidewalks and in commercial parking lots, or in on-street parking spaces as well?
 - Should mobile vending be allowed adjacent to residential uses, or only commercially or institutionally zoned lots?
 - Should there be a limit on the number of mobile vendors allowed per commercial parking lot?
 - Should mobile vending be allowed near events?
 - Should there be a limit on the proximity of mobile vendors to other sidewalk uses, such as sidewalk cafes?
 - What limits should be put in place on hours of operation for mobile vendors?
 - Should mobile vendors be required to be open a certain number of days per year (as they are in downtown)?
- 7) The City has 13 vacant lots available for qualifying groups to lease for community gardens. These City-owned lots were selected because they are not appropriate for development. This means that they will remain available for years of gardening even as the economy changes and redevelopment picks up. The Community Garden Pilot Program began in 2010 with 18 lots. Last year five of the lots were leased to community groups. Experienced community garden groups may be eligible for three- to five-year leases, while groups gardening for the first time will start with one-year leases. A qualifying group will be a not-for-profit or a group with a not-for-profit sponsor. The garden will need to have liability insurance. Applicants should be ready to discuss the layout of the community garden, how it will be managed and how it will engage and benefit the community. For more information on the Homegrown Minneapolis Community Gardens Pilot Program, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp or call (612) 673-2597.
- 8) A number of new pro-gun bills are being brought forward in the state legislature. One bill, known as "shoot first" would allow people to shoot anyone they don't know if they set foot on your property and eliminate the "rule of retreat" that means if a person can safely walk away from a situation, they are not entitled to kill someone just because they seem threatening. It would also allow the killing of anyone in a public place who seems "threatening." A second bill would prohibit state colleges and universities - including the University of Minnesota, located in the Second Ward - from banning concealed guns on campus. Some law makers are also trying to push through a Minnesota Constitutional amendment to "keep, bear and use arms" and a house committee recently approved an amendment that would completely repeal the law that established Minnesota's background check system. I believe that these proposals are moving us in the wrong direction and will put residents, visitors and police in greater danger. Last week I successfully passed a motion adding opposition to these items to the City's legislative agenda at the committee level. I expect this to pass the full Council next Friday. To learn more form a group also opposed to these efforts see <http://www.endgunviolence.com/>
- 9) There are openings on the Charter Commission, Animal Care & Control Advisory Board, Minneapolis Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC), Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Latino Advisory Committee, Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Minneapolis Planning Commission, Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC), Advisory Group for Minneapolis Redistricting 2011-2012 of the Minneapolis Charter Commission, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, Thinc.GreenMSP Steering Committee, Minneapolis Workforce Council, Minneapolis Zoning Board of Adjustment, To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.