



City of Minneapolis – Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy

12th Ward Update

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Street Lighting Utility Fee Rejected

Last fall the city held a series of community meetings to discuss a staff proposal for a new monthly utility fee to pay for decorative lighting citywide. Council member Colvin Roy spoke out early against the utility fee. “With all of the taxes and fees we have levied in this city over the last eight years, I am not going to add another one for something that is nice but not necessary.” 12th ward residents who voiced an opinion concurred, it was not a priority item for them.

One resident at the Nokomis Community Center meeting pointed out the wooden pole in front her home had stood for 40 years and is still serviceable while the “new” lights installed on the Cedar Avenue bridge during the 1980’s are already rusted; another observed that she had never seen graffiti on a wood pole. Both had identified that on-going maintenance would be higher cost than wood poles. Some residents didn’t want to be forced to have the new lights on their block, whether or not they had to pay for them. And the prospect of paying a utility fee for up to 30 years before seeing a change on their block did not seem fair.

The TPW Committee has been working to finalize a lighting policy. Last Tuesday a new staff recommendation included a monthly fee of \$2 and a mandate that lights be installed whenever a road was re-constructed. Sandy Colvin Roy brought in a substitute to eliminate the utility fee and won final approval by the City Council at the February 29th meeting. **There will NOT be a utility fee for lighting.**

And residents will have a choice. Citizens who do NOT want the new decorative lighting when their street is reconstructed can use a petition process to “opt out”. For those who do want to get the newer lighting without waiting for their street to be reconstructed, they will have a clear path to request them through a streamlined petition process.



2008 Adopted Budget Property Tax Breakdown for Home valued at \$225,500

Police.....	\$267.86
Park.....	\$215.52
All Other City departments... le, Attorney, Clerk, Finance, CPED	\$255.17
Library incl. referendum.....	\$121.15
Pensions.....	\$100.66
Capital & debt service.....	\$105.14
Fire	\$117.52
Public Works.....	\$69.00
Other independent boards.....	\$40.98
TOTAL of City portion.....	\$1,263.00

Your property tax dollars go to several levels of government. Minneapolis typically receives about 43%, Hennepin County receives 25% and the School District 28%. The other 4% is split between the Metro Mosquito Control, Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, the Mpls. Institute of Arts, Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority and the School Board referendum. The chart and graph above illustrate where the city’s portion of your taxes are spent.

EVENTS & SPECIAL MEETINGS

Longfellow Crime & Safety Forum

Tues, **March 4th**, 6:30 p.m., Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Ave S; Shun Tilman, MPD's Crime Prevention Specialist, will be on hand to respond to questions & concerns.

South Minneapolis Housing Fair

Sat, **March 8th**, 10 a.m.—3 p.m. South High School, 3131 19th Avenue South. 2008's theme is Safe Homes/Safe Neighborhoods. Keynote seminar - Home Security: Learn the 4 D's—Deter, Deny, Delay & Detect, held 11 a.m.—12:15 p.m., lead by MPD's Crime Prevention Specialist, Karen Notsch.

MPS Area B Parent Advisory Council

Thurs, **Mar 20**, 6:30-8:00 pm, Mpls American Indian Center, 1530 E. Franklin Ave.

All parents and community members are invited to join **BPAC monthly meetings**. BPAC works to improve Area B schools, including Dowling, Hiawatha, Longfellow, Northrop, Sanford, South and Roosevelt. For more info, contact Community Liaison Kristin Berg Thompson at kbergthompson@gmail.com.

Sat, **March 9th**—Spring ahead! Daylight Savings Time starts today, so remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before you go to bed.

RiverLake Greenway Planning

Tues **March 25th** SENA Transportation Action Group SENA Office 1830 E 42nd St. 6:30 p.m.

Thurs **March 6th** LCC Environment & Transportation Cmte 7-9 p.m. Hiawatha School Park 4305 E 42nd St.

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGS.

SENA Board www.stanish-ericsson.org

LCC Board www.longfellow.org

NENA Board www.nokomiseast.org

OPEN APPOINTMENTS

Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Bd of Commissioners

Applications are due Friday, March 21st. Visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/index.asp

No Artificial Turf at De LaSalle

De LaSalle high school asked the City to allow their use of artificial turf on their new ball field to be built on Nicollet Island because the Park Board wanted it to provide much more useable time for kids in their programs in the summer. The Heritage Preservation Commission denied the request on historic grounds. Their ruling was appealed but the appeal was withdrawn, so the Council acted to deny the appeal because it was withdrawn (the usual action when an application is withdrawn.)

The question of whether or not artificial turf should be used transcends the historic question in this case. It involves questions of athletes' health and possible water quality degradation due to the ground up tires used as a base, whether it would increase in the Combined Sewer Overflow problem we already face, and implications seen in other cities for an increase in the urban heat island effect. I received a lot of information in the last few weeks and had little time to investigate it, but many of the sources seemed credible.

A recent New York Times article was sent to us on the artificial turf moratorium that NY city is considering. Apparently the newer artificial turf has been used a lot out east and with some experience, questions are being raised. I think that the city should seek a scientific study on the topic before the next request arises.

Adopt a Vacant House for Safety

12th Ward neighborhoods have fewer foreclosures than other parts of the city but we do have more vacant homes than a year ago and empty homes can pose safety challenges. The City of Minneapolis is taking comprehensive measures but there are many things that residents can do, on their own or as part of a block club.

>If you spot people trespassing or breaking the law on a vacant property, call 911. Do not confront them on your own.

>If you see a vacant home or building that's open to trespass, or if you observe anything on the property that could be a health or safety issue, call 311 to report it.

>Check from time to time to make sure doors and windows of a vacant property are closed so it's not open to trespass. If it is, report it to 311.

>It's okay to maintain the public space, such as sidewalks and alleys, around vacant properties. You can shovel snow, rake leaves and pick up or remove flyers and litter without notifying the property's owner. However, do NOT climb on a building, enter a building without written consent from the property owner.

If your block has a property with an ongoing problem, contact your crime prevention specialist. They can work with you to resolve a variety of issues.

For crime prevention specialist information and contact information, go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/outreach.