



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 2-22-10

**Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:  
Pratt School, April 20, 9:30-11am**

### Items:

- 1) Prospect Park Historic Preservation
- 2) I-94 Sound Walls
- 3) Energy Efficiency in Legislative Agenda
- 4) Solar Rebates.
- 5) Great Streets Support in Ward 2
- 6) River Terrace Water Line
- 7) Social Host Ordinance
- 8) Police Chief Reappointment
- 9) Homegrown Minneapolis
- 10) Emerald Ash Borer in Minneapolis
- 11) Tea House Restaurant.
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) has voted to extend interim historic protections in the proposed Prospect Park historic district for another six months. I was disappointed in this decision, which was made despite clear opposition from the neighborhood. I am concerned that the interim protections and disagreement between the neighborhood's guidelines and the staff's interpretation of the Secretary of Interior's guidelines have contributed to a situation in which I believe it is extremely likely that the neighborhood would vote to not have historic designation, if that vote is held in the next six months. There is also a very interesting opportunity to explore creating a "conservation district" ordinance, that could give neighborhoods a wider range of options for adopting historic protections that meet their needs. I know that the Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association has appealed the HPC's decision to the City Council and plan to advocate for supporting the appeal and preserve the options for historic designation of some kind for Prospect Park in the future. The Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission will be conducting a walking tour (starting at 4:30) followed by a meeting, Tuesday, March 23, in the neighborhood at United Methodist Church. After the tour they will discuss and analyze the Hess Roise Historic Consultant's completed a draft local designation form for the proposed Prospect Park Historic District.
- 2) As a result of the permanently added lane to I-94 the Department of Transportation will be building a sound wall along the whole length of East River Terrace, something residents have been requesting for decades. Unfortunately, the East River Mews development is not proposed as a site for sound walls. My office is working with Mews residents, Minneapolis Public Works staff and MNDOT to explore options that will allow us to get that sound wall built as well, potentially including allowing the residents of the Mews to voluntarily assess themselves for part of the costs.
- 3) The Council has voted to update our legislative agenda to include support for legislation that allows local governments to create tax assessment systems to help property owners to make energy efficiency and renewable energy investments. This would allow us to use the "Berkeley Model" of helping homeowners who can't afford to pay cash for these sorts of environmentally-friendly improvements. In the long run, it will decrease the energy use in the City, increase property values, and help people spend less on their energy bills. I have been advocating for such a system for years, and I'm glad to see the Council finally taking a position in favor of it.

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact Matt Bower at (612) 673-2188 or [Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

If you want help translating this call – Hmong– Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2188;

Spanish – Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2188;

Somali – Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

- 4) The State's Office of Energy Security is offering rebates of up to **\$10,000** on solar electric and solar hot water system installations. For applications, go to [www.energy.mn.gov](http://www.energy.mn.gov) and type "solar electric rebate" or "solar hot water rebate" in the website's search engine. Also, Xcel Energy has launched a Solar Rewards program, to help customers afford solar panel installations on their homes or businesses. For conditions and other details of the program, go to [xcelenergy.com/solar](http://xcelenergy.com/solar), and select "Minnesota" from the drop-down list on the left. You can also request information by sending an e-mail message to [SolarProgramMN@xcelenergy.com](mailto:SolarProgramMN@xcelenergy.com). By installing a solar energy system in your home, you'll save money on your monthly utility bills and also help reduce your environmental footprint by using fewer resources. In addition, you could be eligible for a 30-percent federal tax credit. For more information on the tax credit, go to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov).
- 5) The City's Great Streets façade improvement grant program is funding several organizations in the Second Ward, including the West Bank Business Association, and Seward Redesign's work on both Franklin Avenue in Seward and University Avenue in Prospect Park. I'm a strong supporter of this partnership between the City and our small business districts, and look forward to seeing the improvements in these important commercial areas.
- 6) Responding to a series of water main breaks this winter on East River Terrace I convened a meeting with City staff and residents to discuss this. We learned that East River Terrace is now on the top of the list of streets that need major repair or replacement work. Options include complete replacement and a liner placed inside the current pipe. Neither solution will cost residents anything as the funding comes from the Water Fund. I will be working to find secure funding for the liner and it is being recommended by staff and is more likely to get funded and done sooner.
- 7) The "Social Host" ordinance I authored passed the Council unanimously. My office is working the U and other to inform residents of this new law.
- 8) Despite the fact that I voted against the reappointment of Police Chief Tim Dolan, his reappointed was approved on an 8-5 vote by the Council. I based my decision on the "Safe City Resolution" that the Council passed when we first appointed Chief Dolan in 2006, which lays out an accountability framework for the Chief. My office did a thorough analysis of the ten performance measures included in that resolution, and found that on five of the measures the Chief's performance was either unsatisfactory or unacceptably poor. These include his handling of citizen complaints sustained by the Civilian Review Authority, the continuing lawsuits against the City for police misconduct and other police-related issues, and the Department's pattern of unresponsiveness to the Council. You can read the full analysis here: [www.secondward.blogspot.com](http://www.secondward.blogspot.com). There are also positive things to report on the Chief and I can appreciate why a majority of my colleagues supported him and now that he has been reappointed I look forward to working with him to improve safety in the city and to improve community relations, community policing and police accountability.
- 9) The Homegrown Minneapolis initiative continues to move forward. There will be a report to the Public Safety and Health committee on March 24<sup>th</sup>, on the progress we've made on implementing the Homegrown recommendations. There are also a number of related events coming up, including a Jams and Jellies workshop put on by the University of Minnesota Extension on March 30<sup>th</sup> from 1-4:30pm in Rogers, MN. The registration fee is \$25. For more information, visit the Homegrown Minneapolis website at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp).
- 10) Unfortunately, Emerald Ash Borer has been found in Minneapolis, in Tower Hill Park in the Prospect Park neighborhood. In response, the Park Board's Forestry Division will begin removing trees with the infestation, and an intensified search of all ash trees in the surrounding area will begin. This infestation is a major problem for our tree canopy, because approximately 20 percent of the tree canopy in Minneapolis consists of ash trees. My policy aide is the Council's new appointee to the Tree Advisory Committee, and Ward 1 Council Member Kevin Reich's policy aide Shannon McDonough is the alternate. They will help us to coordinate between the City and the Park Board on this emerging challenge. Please continue to restrict the movement of firewood as much as possible, to help slow the spread of this infestation, and if you have an ash tree on your boulevard or private property that you would be willing to have removed so that a different species of tree could be planted, please call 311.
- 11) The Tea House restaurant and concerned Prospect Park residents were able to come to a consensus set of conditions on the new restaurant's liquor license. I am hopeful that they will allow the restaurant to be successful and address the community's concerns about the proliferation of liquor-serving establishments along University Avenue.
- 12) There are openings on the Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (4/2), Heritage Preservation Commission (closes 4/2), Latino Advisory Committee (closes 4/2), Pedestrian Advisory Committee (closes 4/2), Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled), Senior Citizens Advisory Committee and Workforce Council (closes 4/2). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).