

News from Cam Gordon
Council Member, Second Ward
April 2007

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/>

Roundtable: Neighborhood Organizations and NRP: What now? What next? Please join me for a Roundtable Discussion Thursday, **May 24, 7–8:30 pm at Matthews Park**, 2318 28th Ave S. The City Council is taking a look at Neighborhood Organizations and the future of NRP. How can the City do a better job of supporting the work of neighborhood organizations? How can we help shape the future of citizen participation in city government and the future of neighborhood revitalization in Minneapolis?

Community Engagement, Neighborhood Organizations and NRP. On April 26, 2007 the Minneapolis City Council Committee of the Whole discussed recommendations regarding the Community Engagement Report and the public's feedback. The Council Committee directed staff to begin work on some recommendations and approved a work plan which identifies a timeline and next steps to improve the City's community engagement system, including its relationship with neighborhood organizations and with the future of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). You can download the City Coordinator's report, recommendations and work plan here <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070427/COW20070426agenda.asp#TopOfPage>

Bike/Walk to Work Day. Need to get in shape? Tired of being stuck in your car? Want to help the earth? The Twin Cities Bike/Walk to Work is a great first step! May is National Bike Month and on Friday, May 18, group rides and walks are being organized to downtown Minneapolis. If you live in Seward or Cooper, please join my Aide, Robin Garwood, for a ride that will leave at 7:20AM from the Birchwood Café. If you live in Prospect Park, please join your neighbors for a ride leaving the intersection of Franklin Avenue and East River Parkway at 7am. If you live in Southeast Como or Cedar Riverside, please volunteer to organize a ride! For more information, go here: www.tcbikewalktowork.org.

McMansions. There is a public hearing on Council Member Betsy Hodges' proposed ordinance to address "McMansions" on **Monday, May 7, at 4:30 PM** in the Council Chambers. The last public hearing was packed with opponents of the proposed ordinance, led by the Realtor's Association. It is extremely important that some Southeast residents attend this public hearing to counterbalance that opposition and make clear that this tool will not only help address McMansions in Southwest Minneapolis, but will help prevent small single family homes from being torn down and replaced with oversize de-facto "dorms."

May Day Parade. Please join me on **Sunday, May 6, 1-3pm** for the 33rd Annual May Day Parade and Celebration, put on by In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater (<http://www.hobt.org/>). This year's theme is "Somos Agua – We are Water." The parade starts at the corner of Bloomington Ave S and 25th St E, and finishes for the celebration in Powderhorn Park.

Fairview Expansion / WBCC Land Use Committee. The board of Fairview Hospital has approved building a new Children's Hospital on the site of a current parking lot. I'll be working to ensure community involvement and engagement in this development. The West Bank Community Coalition Land Use Committee will discuss this project in depth on **Tuesday, May 8, 6:30-8pm, at the Fairview University Medical Center, Brennan Center** (on the first floor of the main building).

Public Safety and Outreach Interns. My office will be hiring up to three interns to do outreach and organizing work on block clubs, crime & safety committees, and community events, including a "welcome to the neighborhood" event for new student renters this fall. Interns will work 10-20 hours per week, for a wage of \$12.09/hr. If you know anyone who might be interested, please have them contact my office.

Police Precinct Open Houses. Police Week runs from May 13-19, and the Minneapolis Police Department is inviting you to open houses at all Police Precincts. For Cedar Riverside, the 1st Precinct

open house will be on May 16, 19 4th St N, 11am-2pm. For Prospect Park and Southeast Como, the 2nd Precinct open house will be on May 14th, 1911 Central Ave NE, 11am-2pm. For Seward and Cooper, the 3rd Precinct open house will be on May 15th, at 3000 Minnehaha Ave S, 11am-2pm. I hope to see you there!

Traffic Calming Event. Congratulations to the Longfellow Community Council and Seward Neighborhood Group on an immensely successful traffic calming event on April 20th.

NE Diagonal Trail Groundbreaking. You are invited to a Groundbreaking for the new Northeast Diagonal Bike Trail, **Wednesday, May 9, 10AM at Stinson Blvd near Ridgeway Parkway.** When finished, the trail will stretch from New Brighton Blvd down Stinson to 18th, then on-street as a signed (not striped) route down to Elm.

Comprehensive Plan public meetings. Please join City leaders at a Community Forum to learn about the process and to discuss three themes that will shape the Minneapolis of the future: sustainability, heritage preservation and urban design. The last of three meetings will be **Thursday, May 17, 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Capri Theater, 2210 Oliver Ave. North (at Broadway).** For more information, please see: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning/comp_plan_update.asp. For a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the Minneapolis Plan and the process to update it, please go here: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning/docs/070330_CP_Update_FAQ.pdf.

Grand Rounds Citizens Advisory Committee. The Park Board plans to create a Citizens Advisory Committee to meet over the course of the next 12-15 months to develop recommendations about completing the last link of Grand Rounds Scenic Byway. The study area is bordered by 35 W on the west and north, the Mississippi River to the south and St. Paul to the east. Please let me know if you or anyone you know would be interested in participating.

Minneapolis Greenprint, the 2007 report on the ten environmental sustainability indicators, is now available. Go here to see it online: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/20070413GreenPrint.asp, or contact my office for a physical copy. The report on the rest of the Minneapolis sustainability indicators will be coming out this summer.

Civil Rights Director. Mayor Rybak has decided to nominate Michael Jordan to be the Minneapolis Civil Rights Director. I am undecided at this point as to whether I will support this nomination. While Mr. Jordan has a respectable resume and will bring strong managerial skills to the position, he has a history of working in law enforcement, both as Commissioner of Public Safety under Arne Carlson and as the spokesperson for the Saint Paul Police Department. As one of the chief functions of the Civil Rights Department is to hold the MPD accountable, I am concerned that his experience in law enforcement might not be appropriate. I would welcome any comments you might have.

Maximum Occupancy Work Group. The group I have set up to talk about possible reforms to the Minneapolis Maximum Occupancy codes has met four times. We have reviewed the current codes, laid out our goals for "ideal" maximum occupancy regulations and studied how Minneapolis has regulated occupancy in the past and other municipalities regulate it today. The consensus of the group was to move towards regulating the maximum number of adults, regardless of their "relatedness," who can share a dwelling unit based on the habitable square footage of the unit. I will also be putting together a package of other reforms to help deal with the concerns that I do not feel the current maximum occupancy code is effectively addressing, including: limitations on increasing the maximum occupancy of a unit by increasing its size; more regular inspection of all rental units; a system of rental license classifications, which would reward good landlords and direct more City resources to dealing with bad landlords; targeted grants and loans to increase homeownership in Southeast; clarifying and strengthening the definition of "impervious surface, to prevent yards from being effectively paved; and the creation and distribution of "welcome packets" to all new student residents.

Southeast Homeownership Work Group. I am initiating a Southeast Como Homeownership Working Group to explore strategies and identify resources to promote homeownership in the Como neighborhood.

An initial group will be meeting in the SECIA offices on May 21. The group includes Elizabeth Ryan and Mark Anderson from the City Community Planning and Economic Development staff, Jim Roth from the Minneapolis Consortium of Community Developers, Carol Lansing from the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation, Deanna Foster from Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Jan Morlock from the University as well as Katie Fournier and James De Sota from SECIA and Arvonne Fraser from Marcy Holms.

Bedlam Theater. Working with City staff, my office was able to help Bedlam Theater increase their maximum occupancy from 85 to 200 people for their opening show. Bedlam has now applied for a Class A Beer and Wine license. I supported their application, and it unanimously passed the Public Safety & Regulatory Services committee.

“Out of School Time.” On May 3, the Youth Coordinating Board will host an “Out of School Time” event for Ward 2 providers of youth programs at Luxton Park to discuss opportunities for youth in the ward and possible new initiatives for this summer and beyond.

Paint-a-Thon. The deadline to apply for the 2007 Greater Metropolitan Council of Churches Paint-A-Thon is May 11th. For an application, call 721-8687 x321, or email dpope@gmcc.org.

Wind Turbines. The wind turbine ordinance I sponsored passed the City Planning Commission by consent on Monday. It will now go through the Zoning & Planning Committee and finally to the full Council. This change will broaden the applicable uses of wind turbines in the City, a small step in the right direction. To see the proposed ordinance, go here: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/agendas/planning-commission/2007/docs/20070423_wind_ordinance.pdf

Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot (NTP) Program Grants. Minneapolis has been granted \$350,000 by MNDOT and \$75,000 from Blue Cross/Blue Shield for developing a citywide Pedestrian and Bicycle plan. We have also submitted an application for NTP funds to develop a “Bicycle Ambassador Program,” which will help us match experienced bike commuters with first-time riders. The goal of all of these programs is to increase the bicycling mode share.

Rain Barrels and Trees. The City of Minneapolis has had incredible success with our Rain Barrel and Tree Trust programs – all of the barrels and trees sold out in less than a month!

Franklin LRT Station Area Zoning Amendment. The Zoning & Planning committee will be considering an ordinance rezoning parcels in the vicinity of the Franklin LRT Station. You can find more information here: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/agendas/planning-commission/2007/docs/20070326_bzz_franklin_rezoning_maps.pdf.

Van Cleve Tax Increment Financing. The report on proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and redevelopment contract business terms for the Van Cleve project went to the City Council’s Community Development (CD) Committee this week. Some Committee members expressed concerns about using Tax Increment Financing for market-rate housing in a “non-impacted” neighborhood and the matter was passed forward without recommendation. I am convinced that this is a project worthy of TIF and will be working to address concerns and build support before the Council meeting a week from Friday. Support from the community might also be beneficial. You can get a copy of the CD report and its attachments here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070511/CD20070501agenda.asp>

City/County Solid Waste Transfer Station. On April 27th the City Council voted to move forward with efforts to create a City/County Solid Waste Management Facility at 620 Malcolm Ave SE. I worked to postpone this action for two weeks to allow for more community involvement. This first step authorizes City staff to negotiate, prepare, and execute the appropriate development, operating, and maintenance management agreements with Hennepin County for the proposed joint City/County Solid Waste Management Facility, and to acquire, through negotiation or condemnation, the property located at 620 Malcolm Av SE.

Eastside Neighborhood Services. I am working with the Park Board, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority and Eastside Neighborhood Services to find a way for ENS to keep doing their good work on behalf of Glenwood residents in Luxton Park.

River Mews Court. East River Mews residents' application to name the street within the development "River Mews Court" passed the City Planning Commission by consent.

Openings on City Boards and Commissions. There are openings on the Charter Commission, the Empowerment Zone Board, the Housing Board of Appeals, the Latino Advisory Committee, the Public Health Advisory Committee and the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

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