

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park, East River Road Neighborhood, 10-23-06

Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
Pratt School, Tuesday November 14, 9:30-11am

Items:

- 1) IRV Roundtable Reminder: 10-26-06
- 2) Minneapolis Energy Challenge
- 3) Chief Dolan
- 4) Safe City Resolution
- 5) Civilian Review Authority reforms
- 6) Rental Licenses
- 7) Arsenic ordinance
- 8) Library Funding
- 9) Big Stone II Resolution
- 10) Taxi Cap
- 11) Openings on Boards and Commissions
- 12) Reminder

- 1) A reminder: as one of my ongoing series of roundtable discussions, I will be hosting a conversation about Ranked Choice Voting (also known as IRV) at Matthews Park on October 26th, 7-9pm.
- 2) The **Minneapolis Energy Challenge** is underway. Prospect Park is currently coming in 33rd. We can do better! Go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/energychallenge to take the challenge, or attend the Energy Fair tomorrow at **Jenny Lind Elementary School**, 5025 Bryant Ave N, from 6:15–9pm.
- 3) Last Friday, The City Council voted to confirm Mayor Rybak's nomination of Tim Dolan as Minneapolis's new Chief of Police. He will serve a three year term beginning in January. Initially I had concerns about his commitment to community policing, ending racial profiling and dealing effectively with police misconduct. But working with the Mayor, other City Council Members and through discussions with the chief, these were addressed to my satisfaction and, in the end, I voted for Chief Dolan's appointment. I look forward to working with him to prevent youth violence, improve police community relations, build an effect system of community-centered policing and make this a safer City for everyone.
- 4) With Council Members Glidden and Hodges, I helped craft a Safe City Resolution outlining the Council's expectation for the leadership of the Minneapolis Police Department. It incorporates many of the issues we raised in a memo to Mayor Rybak that has been discussed in the local media. Specifically, it requires the Chief to commit to a goal of 100% MPD discipline for CRA sustained complaints and report back to the Council on the actual level, diversify the force, work to end racial profiling, use more than just crime rate data to discuss the Department's progress, complete the Federal Mediation Agreement, and create a real community policing model for the City. This resolution passed the Council unanimously, sending a clear signal to Chief Dolan that these are policymakers' expectations, and the standards by which his performance will be judged.

- 5) The recommendations of the Civilian Review Authority Work Group that I helped form passed the Council unanimously last Friday. In my opinion, every one of these recommendations strengthens civilian oversight of the Police Department and empowers the CRA. I consider this a major victory for police accountability and reform in Minneapolis.
- 6) The rental license ordinance I authored passed the Council unanimously. I am optimistic that this will be an important tool that Housing Inspections can use to more effectively address some of the illegal activities of absentee landlords, and keep our neighborhoods livable.
- 7) The arsenic right-to-know ordinance that I authored passed the Council unanimously. The new law requires landlords within the South Minneapolis arsenic contamination site to inform their prospective and current tenants about the level of contamination the EPA has found in their soil and home sellers to disclose known soil contamination to home buyers citywide. I will be working with City staff, rental housing associations and environmental organizations to see that it is enforced.
- 8) I have been working with fellow Council Members and Library Trustees to find a way to keep Southeast Library open. We have identified additional funding that we can fight to allocate to libraries for 2007, and we have asked that the Board delay deciding to close the libraries until we have had a chance to get them these funds.
- 9) I was lead author of a resolution that passed the Council unanimously on October 6th, opposing the proposed Big Stone II coal plant. This plant, if built, will send its particulates and mercury towards Minneapolis and more than offset all of the carbon emission reductions we hope to make over the next fifteen years. I delivered the resolution to the Public Utilities Commission last Monday, and I hope that they will listen to the people of Minneapolis and deny the permits that will make this project possible.
- 10) I supported lifting the cap on taxi licenses in Minneapolis before the last Council meeting, partly because I have heard from members of the Somali, and other immigrant communities that they would like to be able to operate cab companies. However, I could not in good conscience vote for the final ordinance amendment, because not enough effort was made to make lifting the cap easier on current drivers, many of whom are East African immigrants, and because the Council moved to dramatically weaken the fuel efficiency standards I had fought to include. The one piece of good news is that the Council accepted my proposal to make all new licenses granted by the City non-transferable, to prevent the huge increases in license cost (more than \$20,000) that we have seen in the past.
- 11) There are openings on the Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC), the Latino Advisory Committee and the Empowerment Zone Board of Governance. CEAC provides advice to the Council and to City Staff on environment policy, and is chaired by Prospect Park resident Dean Abrahamson.

For more information on these three openings or for applications, call 612-673-3358 or visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/>.

- 12) Remember to vote November 7th!