



City of Minneapolis — Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy

12th Ward Update

Sign up for the monthly Update by sending an e-mail to sandra.colvin.roy@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE CITY'S STREET LIGHT PROPOSAL

Recently a street lighting proposal has been presented to the City Council and to the community in a series of meetings that would, over 30 years time, remove the wood poles along streets (not alleys) and replace them with a more decorative fixture with lamps that meet new lighting standards for safety and efficiency. The price tag is estimated at \$16 million per year and it would be raised through a fee/tax on each property every year (estimates of \$9.50 to \$13.50/month.) This changes how we pay for light in this city and dramatically raises the cost. Here's the history:

In the late 1990's, the City allowed citizens to petition for additional lighting near their homes on shorter, decorative poles. You can see them along Park and Portland Avenues. Some thought the lights would provide a safer environment and some thought they were better looking. The lights were paid for through an assessment on the adjoining property and volunteers had to gather approval from a majority of their neighbors (at least 65%). After problems with the petition process, primarily that some neighborhoods took so long to gather signatures that many people had moved when it came time for project approval and some people felt they had not been given full information, the City temporarily stopped installation of these lights.

The petition process was streamlined, with better information for all signers and a shorter deadline for producing the needed number of signatures. During this time a national lighting expert in south Minneapolis suggested we should look at why we provide light and how well our lights meet that goal, rather than continuing to just measure the output. The City engaged in a scientific study to identify a new lighting standard, one based on things like how well the police would be able to see the front doors of homes (safety) and how little light would be wasted (to keep night skies dark and save electricity.) The study found that less light that does not cause glare into the eyes of drivers and police can actually provide a safer environment than the decorative lights. Some Council want the new lights everywhere in the city, not just where citizens feel that they could afford them, and staff was directed to develop a proposal for new street lighting across the City.

I believe this proposal is way too expensive. It would raise almost as much as an 8% property tax increase and people in Minneapolis are already paying that each year. The city is struggling to provide many things these days. Lighting doesn't come to the top of the list for me, for a huge new commitment from tax payers. The new lights could still be installed where residents want them, using petitions.

I would like to know what you think. ~Sandy

DOMESTIC ABUSE NOT DECREASING

In 2006, the City of Minneapolis received 19,937 domestic-related 911 emergency calls. City attorneys have been successful in increasing the conviction rates in domestic violence cases but the rate of occurrence is, sadly, not declining. Minneapolis is taking new steps to combat this violence by increasing awareness of the problem and launching new initiatives to reduce violence in the City's homes. As part of increasing awareness the Council adopted a resolution I authored to observe October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I took the opportunity to thank the members of our dedicated Domestic Abuse Prosecution team whose constant work has improved the justice system from within, from police work through the court process, and led to improved results for the victims.

Library Merger Public Hearing

Earlier this week, the County Board directed staff to begin the merger of the Hennepin County and Minneapolis Public Library systems. Initial actions include assessing and transferring property, contracts and city library employees to the county; addressing financial obligations; adopting a certificate of local approval; and beginning the open appointment process for four additional library board members.

A joint public hearing of the City Council and Minneapolis Library Board will be held at the Downtown library on November 8th from 6 to 8 p.m. for obtaining input on the merger. Each city body must take a final vote subsequent to this hearing in order to approve the merger.

EVENTS & SPECIAL MEETINGS

School Building ReUse

Sat, Oct 13, 10:00-12:00am, Howe, Cooper and Morris Park schools, at Anne Sullivan, 3100 E. 28th St.

Tues, Oct 23, 6:30-8:30pm, Howe Community School, at Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Ave. S.

Sat, Oct 27, 10:00-12:00am, Cooper Elementary School, at Longfellow Park, 3435 – 36th Ave S.

Tues, Oct 30, 6:30-8:30pm, Morris Park Elementary School, at Morris Park, 5531 – 39th Ave S.

Thurs, Nov 1, 6:30-8:30pm, Cooper Elementary School, at Longfellow Park, 3435 – 36th Ave S.

Sat, Nov 3, 10:00-12:00am, Howe Community School, at Longfellow Park, 3435 – 36th Ave S.

Sat, Nov 3, 1:30-3:30pm, Morris Park Elementary School, at Morris Park, 5531 – 39th Ave S.

Transportation Plan Meetings

Wed, Oct 10, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Communication Workers of America, 3521 E. Lake St.

Wed, Oct 17, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Lake Nokomis Recreation Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Parkway

Community Engagement

Wed, Oct 17, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Nokomis Park Recreation Center gymnasium, 2401 E. Minnehaha Parkway

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

LCC Board Meeting - Thurs., Oct 18, 7- 9 p.m.
For more information, visit www.longfellow.org

NENA Board Meeting - Thurs., Oct 25, 7p.m.
For more information, visit www.nokomiseast.org

SENA Board Meeting –Mon, Oct 8, 7- 8:30 pm.
For more information, visit www.standish-ericsson.org.

SCHOOL BUILDING REUSE

Meetings will be held to discuss the re-use of four schools that have been closed: Cooper, Howe, Morris Park, and Northrup. The first meeting will be held on October 13th for all four sites and will be open to all members of the community. In addition, individual meetings will give residents living near or within the closed school an opportunity to meet and discuss specific re-use options. For each school, there will be a weeknight meeting and a Saturday meeting to accommodate community members' schedules.

MINNEAPOLIS' TRANSPORTATION FUTURE

Eight community meetings across the City will be held in October to discuss *Access Minneapolis*, the City's transportation action plan for the next ten years that includes everything from streets and sidewalks to streetcars. *Access Minneapolis* was created to identify steps that the City and its partner agencies (Metro Transit, Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, Minnesota Department of Transportation) should take within the next ten years to improve the current transportation system to accommodate continued growth. While the action plan is based on a long-term (2030) view of transportation needs, it focuses on actions to be taken throughout the City in the next ten years, recognizing that this timeframe is subject to the availability of funds. The October meetings will discuss the Citywide action plan, which includes different designs for streets, based on the differing traffic purposes and activities that take place along them. The Streetcar Feasibility Study, which recommends a long-range streetcar system will also be previewed and discussed. Meetings are listed at left.

IMPROVING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

After three months of work, Minneapolis' Community Engagement Task Force unanimously approved a preliminary report with seven core principles of community engagement. More than two dozen recommendations related to these principles, and types of organizations that could be eligible to receive city resources for activities related to engaging the community, are also included in the report. The draft report will be presented for public comment at a series of community forums. The task force will incorporate this input into its final report which will then be presented to the Minneapolis City Council and Mayor in mid-November. The goal of all this work is to broaden opportunities for the community to be engaged with the City, to expand beyond geographic-based groups to also encompass other community organizations such as business associations, cultural communities, and advocacy groups. A full copy of the draft Community Engagement Task Force report is posted on the City's Web site at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/communityengagement.asp.

STAFFING CHANGE IN THE 12TH WARD OFFICE

Say Goodbye and Good Luck TO BRETTE HJELLE WHO LEAVES THE 12TH WARD OFFICE FOR A POSITION AS INTERAGENCY COORDINATOR FOR MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC WORKS. **SAY HELLO** TO KAREN HARDER WHO COMES TO US WITH EXTENSIVE BACKGROUND IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, REGULATION, AND CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT.