

**News from Cam Gordon**  
**Council Member, Second Ward**  
**January, 2007**

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

**Condo Conversion Public Hearing.** The Condo Conversion ordinance, I have been working on for months, had a public hearing in January, and is going to the full Council Friday, February 9. At the hearing, a large number of people presented excellent testimony in favor of the ordinance amendments which are supported by the Minneapolis Affordable Housing Coalition. We also heard testimony in favor from condominium managers and owners, as well as opposition from several realtors. The committee was split 3 – 3 in recommending it, so it goes forward without recommendation. Council Members Schiff and Samuels joined me in supporting it and Council Members Johnson, Hofstede and Ostrow were opposed. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect condo buyers and address the loss of affordable housing to condo conversions. I now have two co-authors, CMs Remington and Schiff, who both spoke eloquently in favor of the proposed ordinance after the hearing. I will be trying this week to gain more support and, if needed, develop a compromise to address the concerns that have been raised. You can also find more information here: <http://www.hppinc.org/?q=condos> and on the 16<sup>th</sup> item of the Committee's agenda:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070209/PSRS20070131agenda.asp>

**Republican National Convention.** The Mayor has signed the contract to bring the Republican convention to Minneapolis in 2008. I have been concerned about whether free speech rights of residents and visitors will be violated, as they have in past conventions, so I created an internal work group to create a model for how the City can preserve the right to political speech and civic debate without disrupting community life during the Convention. The group includes the Mayor, up to two Council Members, the relevant department heads, and two representatives of civil liberties groups such as the ACLU and National Lawyers Guild. I also attempted to change the contract to ensure that the City Council at most and the Minneapolis Police Department, at least, would have a say in approving the Convention Security Plan, but my colleagues ultimately voted those proposals down. Without the opportunity in the contract for some City entity to review and approve the future agreements, I could not vote to sign off on it – CM Schiff and I were the two “no” votes. Still, it is important that free speech concerns have been voiced so early in this planning process – my hope is that Minneapolis can create a model for how a city can host a major party convention without taking on huge financial burdens while encouraging diverse political discourse and protecting rights of everyone.

**Antiwar Resolution.** I co-authored a resolution calling for the immediate cessation of the war in Iraq with my colleague Ralph Remington. I'm proud that we got this passed without a single no vote (though several CMs declined to vote).

**Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee.** The YVPSC was created this month. I will serve on it, along with the Mayor, Chief Dolan, Health Commissioner Musicant, Youth Coordinating Board Chair Judith Kahn, Shukri Adan and many other committed, deeply involved people. I believe this is an incredibly important step towards keeping our youth from becoming victims and perpetrators of violence, one of our City's most important goals.

**January Roundtable Recap.** The roundtable discussion at Saint Martin's Table on ending homelessness and decriminalizing poverty was quite successful. Thirty-three people attended and shared their hopes and ideas for how to transition people out of homelessness constructively and effectively. I believe the plan that the Council passed in December offers us a clear path to follow.

**Community Benefits Agreements.** I coordinated and lead a City Council Study Session on Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) with the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability on February

second. We heard from outside experts, city staff and from neighborhood group staff and activists about three case studies where CBAs and being developed. This helped improve my and my colleagues' understanding of this promising new tool to ensure that communities benefit from development projects.

**“Lurking” Ordinance.** I am moving forward with an effort to repeal the Minneapolis “lurking” ordinance. Minneapolis is one of only four cities in the US with “lurking” ordinances. Approximately 90% of arrests for lurking end in dismissal of charges, and approximately 90% of those arrested are people of color. The ordinance is very often used on people experiencing homelessness. It is expensive to enforce and produces little to no constructive effects. I am currently working with the Council on Crime and Justice to build a broad community coalition to push for this unnecessary law to be repealed, and I invite you to join us.

**University Neighborhood Impact Report.** I was delighted that the Council unanimously approved the draft Neighborhood Impact Report this month. I wholeheartedly support this report and its recommendations, have followed it closely, and have been pushing for this well before it was passed by the state legislature. I will continue to do what I can to take advantage of this unique opportunity to build a better partnership between the City, the University and the surrounding neighborhoods. It offers a way to address some of the most pressing concerns the neighborhoods are facing.

**Maximum Occupancy.** Partly to prepare for the necessary rental housing inspections that have grown out of the Impact Report, I am planning to introduce subject matter soon to make Minneapolis' two contradictory maximum occupancy ordinances consistent, understandable and fair. The two ordinances are the Housing Maintenance code 244.810, which is primarily concerned with health and safety of tenants, and the Zoning code 546.50, which is primarily concerned with density. I am planning to create a work group to help craft a solution – please contact my office if you are interested in participating.

**Community Engagement Report Input Opportunities.** There is still time to weigh in on the City's Community Engagement Report. Read the report on line at [http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/docs/CE\\_Report\\_final.pdf](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/docs/CE_Report_final.pdf), and send comments to [clara.perrin@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:clara.perrin@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) by February 8<sup>th</sup>. Either I or my Aide have attended all the public meetings, and they have helped me start to draft my response to the report and strategy for improving community involvement in decision making and strengthening neighborhood groups.

**E River Parkway/Mews Sound Wall.** My office has been involved with an effort to convince MNDOT to build a freeway sound wall to protect residents of East River Terrace and East River Mews from the noise generated by I94. We helped Mews residents connect to a U of M professor whose class will conduct sound level measurements this Spring. This will be a difficult fight, but I'm hopeful that if we're persistent enough we can finally get a sound wall built.

**Congratulations to Pi.** After an extremely positive public hearing earlier this month, the Public Safety & Regulatory Services committee approved the liquor license for the new restaurant and nightclub “Pi” with my support last month. This was approved by the full Council on Friday January 26.

**Recent Grants and a Land Sale.** The City, with support and help from the Currie Park Lofts project, has received \$341,341 in Met Council Livable Community Development Awards (LCDA) grants for infrastructure improvements in near the Coyle Center in Cedar Riverside. Longfellow Station has received \$400,000 in Hennepin County Environmental Remediation Grants and \$934,523 in LCDA. The new housing development project at the grain elevators near Van Cleve Park has received \$1,334,523 in LCDA for improvements to Southeast Como. The Living at Home/Block Nurse Programs for Southeast, Longfellow and Seward have received \$75,000 from

HUD. Lastly, the sale of a City parcel to K-Wok restaurant in Cedar Riverside has been approved.

**Take the Minneapolis Energy Challenge!** <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/energychallenge>.

**Openings on City Boards and Commissions.** There are openings on the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, the Minneapolis Private Industry/Workforce Council (PIWC), the Latino Advisory Committee to the Mayor and City Council, the Minneapolis Arts Commission, the Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (MTN), the Dinkytown Special Service District Advisory Board, the Franklin Ave East Special Service District Advisory Board, the Hennepin Theatre Special Services District Advisory Board, the Stadium Village Special Service District Advisory Board, the Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Governance Board, the Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee and the Pedestrian Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

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