

## **Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Cedar Riverside, 3-21-07**

**Cam's next Cedar Riverside Office Hours:  
Tuesday April 3, 9:30-11:00am  
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

**Items:**

- 1) Dining Out for Life
- 2) Project Lookout wins Building Block Award
- 3) Library merger
- 4) Taxicab licenses
- 5) Meeting with U
- 6) Meeting with Augsburg
- 7) Somali Cultural Center on 4<sup>th</sup> St
- 8) Spray Paint ordinance
- 9) Bike/Ped questionnaire
- 10) Rain Barrels
- 11) Tree Trust
- 12) Window Replacement Loan Fund
- 13) Wind Turbines
- 14) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please join me for lunch at the Cliquot Club, 2929 East 25<sup>th</sup> St, on Thursday, April 26, 2007. A percentage of the proceeds of your meal will go to benefit all the services for HIV-infected individuals offered by the Aliveness Project. For more information, please go to <http://www.aliveness.org/>.
- 2) I was honored to present a 2006 Building Blocks Award to the Cedars Project Lookout Group, a group of 16 Somali-speaking elders who patrol Cedar Riverside. I congratulate Mohamed Awed, Issa Ali, Abdi Mohamed and Mohamed Farah for their success, including limiting alcohol consumption, fights and assaults in Cedar Riverside. Good work!
- 3) I was one of two Council Members who voted against the proposed merger of the Minneapolis and Hennepin County library systems. To be clear, I am not convinced that this is absolutely the wrong idea. However, I do believe that the community has not been adequately consulted, given the immensity of the idea. The majorities on the Council and Library Board have voted to give half a billion dollars in assets (in land, facilities and direct transfer of funds) to Hennepin County over the next decades, while surrendering our ownership and control. They have voted to very significantly change the Charter outside of the normal Charter amendment process (either a unanimous vote of the Council or a majority approval from Minneapolis voters in a referendum), by asking the Legislature to change our constitution without the consent of residents. I am also very concerned that the representation Minneapolis residents have on the Library Board will be lost, and it will become more difficult to hold anyone accountable for the performance of the library system.
- 4) I am very pleased to have voted in the Public Safety & Regulatory Services committee to remove the old requirement that Minneapolis taxi drivers be US citizens or aliens admitted for permanent residence, or have otherwise obtained work authorization from the Federal Government. This action will come before the full Council next Friday.
- 5) I helped facilitate a meeting between Cedar Riverside residents, business owners, and folks from the University to talk about the West Bank station location. I believe the meeting had some positive results: the U has said they are open to studying a range of options, from the current Blegen Hall location to putting the station right at Cedar.

- 6) I met with representatives of Augsburg College, Fairview Hospital and the University of Minnesota about building better relationships and collaborations between the neighborhood and these large institutions to provide better safety, homeownership opportunities and transportation in Cedar Riverside. We will be setting up a follow-up meeting and be sure to invite representatives of the WBCC.
- 7) I have been actively involved in trying to solve the problems faced by the Somali Cultural Center on 4<sup>th</sup> St, which stem from the three-way negotiations between Fine Associates, Sherman Associates and Crablex over access easements into Riverside Plaza. The good news is that they are no longer facing imminent eviction from their space. I hope that the three parties (with guidance from the City) can come to an amicable resolution of the access issues without jeopardizing Fine Associates' project, Riverside Plaza's access or the future of the Cultural Center.
- 8) I supported Council Member Schiff's ordinance changes, which respond to the needs of hardware stores while better regulating and controlling the sale of spray paint, paint sticks and broad-tip markers to minors in our ongoing effort to fight graffiti. These materials must either be under continuous supervision or inaccessible to the public. In addition, a \$42,000 grant from the National Council on Prevention of Delinquency will be used to conduct one-time checks on establishments selling spray paint, similar to our tobacco compliance program. It is my hope that these tightened regulations will help decrease vandalism by reducing young people's access to graffiti materials.
- 9) The Department of Public works held a **Pedestrian/Bicyclist Open House** last month. 125 attendees filled out surveys on problems and possible improvements to the current Minneapolis ped/bike system. If you're interested in filling out a survey online, please go here: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=196693372440>
- 10) The City has received a \$100K grant from the EPA to provide 2,000 rain barrels at a reduced cost of \$45 (or half of standard retail price) to Mpls residents. Starting in late March, you can order one either online at [www.thereusecenter.com/rainbarrels.html](http://www.thereusecenter.com/rainbarrels.html) or over the phone at 612-724-2608.
- 11) I've brought fliers for Tree Trust, the nonprofit that Minneapolis works with to plant trees on private land. If you're interested in greening your city by planting a tree, or know anyone else who might be, please take a flier and contact them early this Spring.
- 12) Lead paint on windows of old houses is the primary source of lead poisoning. To deal with this problem, the Minneapolis/Hennepin County Lead Task Force (which I co-chair with CM Glidden and Commissioner Dorfman) has drafted a proposal to the State to create a revolving loan fund to replace all windows in pre-1950s homes. I testified at the Legislature on this topic this week, and I urge you to call your legislators and encourage them to support the bill, SF1015, authored by Linda Higgins. One positive side effect of this program, once created, is that it will help improve the energy efficiency of older Minnesota homes.
- 13) Planning staff are finishing a draft ordinance change to allow broader use of Wind Energy Conversion Systems in Minneapolis. I hope to shepherd these commonsense reforms through the Council process early this year.
- 14) 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, the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board and the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).