



Lyndale Neighborhood Association

3537 Nicollet Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55408

Phone: (612) 824-9402

Fax: (612) 824-6828

April 9, 2013

Neighborhood and Community Relations Department
City of Minneapolis
Crown Roller Mill Building, Room 450
105 5th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401

RE: Neighborhood Policy Plan Changes

To: NRP Commissioners

I would like to submit the following comments on the *Preparation and Processing of Neighborhood Policy Plans* and *Changing Approved Neighborhood Plans Policy* on behalf of the Lyndale Neighborhood Association's Board of Directors. The policies were approved at the April LNA Board Meeting.

Changing Approved Neighborhood Plans Policy

The following are LNA's comments on the Changing Approved Neighborhood Plans Policy:

- The language of "with populations representative of the neighborhood" should be moved from item 7 back to its original location under item B. While the intent of moving the language to its new place, in the draft document, makes sense as an intended purpose, it is likely to cause problems in practice. In its new location it would be easy for anyone to object to a change by invoking this provision and saying the outreach was not representative of the neighborhood's population.

It is unclear what the standard for populations representative of the neighborhood means in practice, does it mean ethnic populations, does it mean economic populations, does it mean people from different age groups, does it mean from different parts of the neighborhood, does it mean people with different sexual orientation, does it mean people who live in different types of housing. All of these are relevant ways that Lyndale discusses reaching out to our community members. Moving the language back to its original position helps to alleviate these concerns and will focus neighborhood's on reaching a wide range of their community members.

- The percentage in Item C should be reduced to 10 percent and the survey item in item D should be reduced to 50 percent. This change would create more realistic response rates, which may encourage more neighborhoods to use these methods.
- Under Item 8, the requests for submission should come from the Chair or designated representative.
- There should be an appeals process added for neighborhoods whose plan changes are rejected by the NCR Director. The appeals process should provide neighborhood organizations with the opportunity to appeal any rejection to the NRP Policy Board's next meeting after the rejection and should provide time for the neighborhood organization to present their proposal to the full NRP Policy Board. The NRP Policy Board's decision should be final. This will help make the process fair and provide a check against an NCR Director playing politics with a proposed change.

Preparation and Processing of Neighborhood Priority Plans

The following are LNA's comments regarding the proposed Preparation and Processing of Neighborhood Priority Plans. The primary comment regarding the proposed policy is it seems overly paternalistic towards neighborhoods, with NCR staff having an oversized role in the development of the plan and in managing the relationship between the neighborhoods and City staff. If the Neighborhood Priority Plans are ever to achieve their desired result of bringing City and Jurisdictional Departments together to work with neighborhood organizations, the onus of these relationships needs to be an equally shared responsibility between neighborhood organizations and department staff, with the NCR staff playing a more limited supporting role.

There are some positive aspects to the policy, such as asking departments to respond within a specified timeline and the inclusive list of public agencies being asked to comment on plans approved by neighborhoods. An element that is missing from the plans is what happens if the NRP Policy Board or City Council disagrees or rejects a Neighborhood Priority Plan. There should be room for neighborhood organizations to adopt things that are important to neighborhoods that the City Council disagrees with, but can still be a part of department's plans.

Thank you for your consideration of our input. If you would like to discuss any of the input further I can be reached at mark@lyndale.org / 612.824.9402 x 16.

Sincerely,



Mark Hinds
Executive Director