Ron Schlatter, Seward - District 3

1. How have your life, work and cultural experiences prepared you to be a neighborhood representative on NRP Policy Board?

I have lived in the Seward neighborhood since 1986. My wife and I raised our two children here, where they both attended Anne Sullivan Communication Center and South High School. Before that, we were members of the Seward Chldcare Cooperative, where I participated as a parent member, and was part of the small group that initiated and oversaw the two stages of renovation which created the space that exists today. Once our two children started school, I began my 22-year career as a science teacher, the majority of that time teaching in a school that I helped start. One of the founding principles of Crosswinds School, a public school in the East Metro Integration District, was to build a community of diverse learners from urban, suburban and rural communities. We attracted students from ten east metro school districts, creating a supportive learning environment for students with very different cultural and social backgrounds. It was extremely challenging and, working with these students and their families, was my most rewarding teaching experience.

2. How have you participated in your neighborhood organization?

I was elected to the Board of Directors of the Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) in August, 2021, where I have served as Treasurer and Executive Committee member. I also currently serve as the SNG-designated representative on the Seward Towers Corporation Board of Directors, which, with its partner management company, control the two large, affordable residential towers in our neighborhood. A large part of the residential community living in the Towers are East African immigrants. This part of our neighborhood adds a wealth of diverse cultural experience, and SNG appreciates their presence and works to overcome barriers which might limit their sense of inclusion while respecting their needs and choices.

3. Describe why you want to serve on the NRP Policy Board.

One part of the Seward neighborhood's recent history I find very interesting is the period of urban renewal which was active during the 1980's when we moved to the neighborhood. Much of that neighborhood transformation was made possible by money available through the NRP and the active engagement of neighborhoods and neighborhood organizations in planning how money could be best used to meet needs they identified. That phase of NRP is done; plans from neighborhoods have been approved and, except for money being earned by investments made in those plans, no new money is added. However, over $25 million of NRP funds remain unspent. That money, being held by the city for over a decade on behalf of neighborhoods, has not been used for several reasons. I want to understand those reasons and see if the NRP Policy Board can recommend, and perhaps facilitate, ways neighborhoods can put that money to use.

As a member of the Policy Board, I will advocate for increased funding for neighborhoods, simplifying funding programs, providing greater oversight of NCR, and protecting NRP funds.

4. How do you plan to maintain a relationship with the neighborhoods you would represent if elected?

- Meet with neighborhood organizations in my District on a regular basis
- Use communication channels in each neighborhood that each neighborhood organization has developed and found effective for gathering responses and inviting participation.
- Looks for ways to facilitate communication between District 3 neighborhood leaders to share their experiences and history of accomplishments accessing NRP funding, and plans for using and strategies for accessing their remaining NRP money.

5. How do you plan to engage with underrepresented groups within your district if elected?

I have reached out to the neighborhood organization staff and boards in District 3 to inform them about the Policy Board and encourage them to search for candidates to serve as a neighborhood representative. Contact was by email and phone, which was moderately successful. Responses I did get reinforced my understanding that, in general, neighborhood organizations have been stretched to the limit of their capacity to maintain, let alone expand, connection with their neighborhood generally, and with underrepresented groups in particular. I trust that there are many examples of good work being done through neighborhood organizations to engage their community. I will ask to be included in the strategies that work for them.

6. Please list any community-based organization(s) that you are currently involved in.

Seward Neighborhood Group
Seward Towers Corporation Board of Directors
Unity Church-Unitarian, St. Paul

7. Please list all your current paid and unpaid affiliations.

Teachers Retirement Association - Minnesota
St. Paul Teachers Retirement Association
contributions to various service and advocacy organizations

By signing this form, you waive your right to raise money, conduct phone banks, and produce campaign literature of any kind for the purposes of getting elected to the NRP Policy Board.

Signature	Ron Schlatter
Date	1/27/2024