

**East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association
Board Meeting Minutes
April 1, 2009, Lyndale Farmstead Park, 7:00 pm**

Board members in attendance: Andrea Breen, Dean Carlson, Howard Dallin, Pam Meier, Matt Perry, Patty Selly, Bruce Wadman, Roger Worm,

Board members not in attendance: Staven Bruce, Michael Dietrich, James Thorson

Others in attendance: Ben Hecker (aide to CM Hodges, Ward 13), Emily Winter (EHFNA coordinator), Sid Monroe (resident), David Weingartner (resident), Donovan and Rama Hart (residents), Jenny Taplin, (resident), Julia Paulson Mullin (Tangletown resident), Jake Weyer (SWJ), Matt Filner (Ward 10 CM Candidate), Meg Tuthill, (Ward 10 CM Candidate).

1. Announcements:

EHFNA is hosting the Earth Day clean up at Lake Harriet near Bandshell area: Sat., April 18 from 9:30 - 12:00 noon.

Introductions

2. Council report: Ben Hecker, aide to CM Betsy Hodges.

Council member Betsy Hodges is at MPRB meeting tonight.

- 1) MPS issue: CM Hodges is being briefed on the issue and gathering input. Next Tuesday, MPS board member Chris Stewart is coming to give a presentation at the Intergovernmental relations committee meeting. Stream on web or cable next Tuesday.
- 2) Closed pension funds. There are three closed pension funds from 1978 and 1980 which cover city employees. As employees get older, we start to see back load. Not enough current employees are paying in to cover costs of retirees. All three are invested in stock market -experienced losses. If nothing changes, expect the pension levy to grow roughly \$3 million to \$40 million next year. There is a bill at the legislature to merge this bill with another. Current proposal is \$23 million for 23 years. Residents are urged to call state legislators, governor's office, park board, etc. to support our pension efforts.
- 3) Local Government Aide (LGA). We were unallotted 13 million last year. Expecting another cut for 2010 budget - possibly \$35 million. Ongoing cuts. LGA - bad term for what program is. Gives impression state is subsidizing the city that cannot fund itself. Minneapolis sends close to \$400 million to the state including \$74 million in property tax. Get back \$55 million if go as planned. Need to get back enough for our core services...public safety system...We are trying to minimize any cuts.

Bruce Wadman asked what percentage of city revenue is local government aid. Ben Hecker stated the entire budget \$1.4 billion - most locked up in fee funded enterprise funds. LGA is about 8% of total city revenue but about 20% of General Fund revenues.

Dean Carlson asked about status of Lyndale Ave Reconstruction. Ben Hecker passed to Matt Perry who has been very involved in the process. 50th Street to the creek will be started at the end of April and done in mid-May - a 25 working day schedule. 38th to 31st beginning on west side of Lyndale starting April 6. Already doing preliminary work.

3. MPS School Choice Community Forum

M. Perry reviewed the purpose of this opportunity to gather information from residents regarding this issue.

David Weingartner, East Harriet resident. He heard more about the topic from a parent in Kingfield and since that time he has been involved in going to meetings. Context surrounding

students leaving district is what is creating financial problems. It is not limited to only one group, but it is shocking the number that are leaving. Specifically, from the District presentation, North High is projected to go from 2000 students to 200 over a short time frame. When students leave the district they take revenue with them but leave behind the infrastructure (schools, district staff, teachers, etc). This is incredibly costly and is why we are facing issues today. White enrollment down 21%, Hispanic is up, Asian American down 61%, but smaller number of students, Native American down 26%, small number. East Harriet and Kingfield students are bused to 31 different schools. Three options have been discussed by MPS. He feels this proposal has pitted two parts of the neighborhood against each other. School board and district has said there are three goals: choice, diversity and equity and talked about sustainability quite a bit. District looking for city-wide goals. How to develop a school system from a community standpoint. East Harriet solutions will be different from other neighborhoods. There have been three solutions discussed in East Harriet: 1) all go to Lyndale School (community program); 2) split between Lyndale and Burroughs (community programs); and 3) convert Barton into a community school for the neighborhood. A possible fourth idea: create a combined campus - Barton and Lyndale as a K-8 community school with a lower and upper campus. The school board is concerned about another "Lake Harriet" - 98+ white, upper income. Lyndale is very diverse. East Harriet and Kingfield neighborhoods include 18 - 20% people of color. Weingartner is advocating for a position: that Lyndale and Barton be combined as a community school with Lyndale a K-2 and Barton a 3 - 8. He feels it would reach the district goals of diversity and relieve stress on Burroughs and Lake Harriet. He believes this plan would ultimately increase diversity in at least five schools. The district claims Lyndale can hold 650 which is the max enrollment building has had and was considered cramped. Current enrollment is just under 400 students. 80% of Lyndale neighborhood families (D5) choose a school other than Lyndale community school. Magnet schools should not be in communities with a strong demand for a community school He cited the importance of a community school and doesn't feel there is a cost savings to move kids into Lyndale.

Rama Hart, East Harriet resident. Moved here from another state for the livability - an urban area with walkability, diversity, community, and more. She said the community is already very divisive because our kids go to so many different schools. What does this community need to be healthy? Her son is at Burroughs. She likes the diversity of our neighborhood from the lakes to the interstate. She doesn't want to see the F2 area sliced up. School board members have stated that magnets are intended to draw people to an area that is not already in demand (ie: in city where there are not many kids, etc). Priorities are Community and Diversity.

Donovan Hart, East Harriet resident. Donovan supported what Rama and David had said. He wrote and submitted to the board a well structured resolution. He said that usually schools and government don't interact much. They communicate/fight over scarce resources...but they have many shared priorities.

Julia Paulson Mullin, Tangletown resident, former East Harriet resident and board president. She has three kids at Barton. She now lives in Tangletown but used to live in East Harriet. She looked back to when she went through school choice. Julia had two primary things to say: 1) the open magnet school at Barton is a really great school. It draws from a big area of the city. People in East Harriet and Kingfield want to have that choice. It is pretty diverse compared to other schools in Southwest. Barton draws diversity from other areas. She is concerned that this is bringing uncertainty to something that is already here and successful. It is not guaranteed that it can be replicated somewhere else. 2) This is an opportunity to create another community school in this part of the city. Burroughs is drawing people from here and we have the opportunity to create this new program as we wish: what we want to see, district paid band, Mpls Kids day care, etc. Kingfield, East Harriet, Tangletown, Burroughs, etc can work together to create this new place. Hoping that is the direction this will go. Julia believes Barton is an asset to the East Harriet neighborhood. She hopes we can build on this asset and

create another one by having a successful and desirable community school program in the area as well.

4. MPS School Choice Issues (Board Discussion)

Andrea Breen, East Harriet resident and EHFNA board member. She has three children at Barton. Andrea provided a brief overview of the history of the MPS system of choice and discussed what it means to be an “open area” with no community school designated. The district has allowed families to pick two community schools and one magnet school as a guarantee. This has been a temporary solution for the problem. School and district boundaries have not been redrawn in 25 years. 25 years ago, there were not enough kids in this area to warrant a designated community school. 10 years ago, MPS wanted to leave this area open as “filler” for other schools. There is a \$25-50 million deficit in MPS in the next two years. They expect to close three elementary schools, change the magnet system to create less magnet options and zone the city differently for magnets. The district is likely to centralize some magnets and have some magnets in zoned areas of the city. The district feels it needs to provide some choice because private schools are a choice and parents want choice. 2010 plans will include the district redrawing boundaries. It is easy to get very focused on our own area, but the district is looking at the bigger picture. From 20-30+ percent of MPS students will be displaced in 2010 (about 10,000 students). There are many opinions in East Harriet. The district is trying to look at this as a city issue, not a neighborhood issue.

Matt Perry encouraged board members to become informed if not already. He suggested they ask questions of people who have kids in school...go to the MPS website...engage their neighbors. If they don't know about this issue, they should go to the MPS site and learn more. This affects all of us and is a community issue. We have a responsibility to understand it.

Bruce Wadman said the PES committee will need to move its monthly meeting up as the next meeting would normally be on Mon., April 27 which is too close to the district deadline for input. The meeting will move to the middle of April to take proposals, suggestions, etc.

5) RoseFest Planning (P. Meier)

The date for RoseFest is Sat., July 18, 2009!

The goal this year is refinement of the event. We are trying to get more residents involved in the planning. Last year it was mostly the board and they were overtaxed. A kick-off meeting is being planned. Asks of board: no one on vacation Sat., July 18th. Every board member should plan to be a volunteer that day for 2-3 hours - roles to be determined. Members should plan to help at EHFNA table. Board members should also be available on Fri., July 17 for set up and then to come back at the end to tear down and leave the park cleaner than we found it. We will again be seeking volunteers to hang door hangers promoting the event the weekend of June 27-28. We will also place signs in businesses again. We will scale back on some of the offerings but keep prices the same as in 2008. To sign up as a team lead...call or email Pam.

6) Park report - A. Lynch

Summer program now online (as of April 1). Registration starts April 18. Park is getting ready for soccer and summer programs.

7) Committee Reports

Housing, Zoning& Business Committee (HZB) - R. Worm

1) Request for Proposal - CEE sent a quote/bid which was virtually the same as the one we are doing under Phase 1.

2) Roger Worm discussed the matching grant program for area businesses available through NEHBA and the Great Streets Business Façade Program. 50,000 is available for façade improvement. There are five nodes in the NEHBA business district that are eligible. Two are in

East Harriet. (36th & Bryant and 46th & Bryant). EHFNA already has an ongoing business façade improvement program whose funds have dwindled. The BHZ Committee suggests adding this as an incentive to those nodes - (1:1 at 36/Bryant and 1:2 at 46/Bryant). There are 34 businesses in the neighborhood and 28 storefronts. Roger has visited 25. Recently, the Great Streets program expanded to nine eligible nodes. The BHZ Committee wishes to revitalize our East Harriet Business Façade program and offer a 33% match. The Committee unanimously approved this plan. It will follow the same guidelines of the Great Streets Façade Program to make it simple. Roger got estimates - came up to \$60,000 (?) which is \$20,000 from our program. Unanimously approved. 36th & Bryant would move from a 1:3 match to a 1:2 now. The BHZ will be asking the board to do an electronic vote on this as time will be tight.

3) Rental Survey project - we have finalized a candidate. Matt Perry is working on contract. The first step is to demography the neighborhood. How many duplexes do we have? rentals? associations? etc.

Parks Environment & Schools Committee Report (PES) - B. Wadman

1) Earth Day Clean up is on Sat., April 18 from 9:30 - 12:00 noon. EHFNA will have a table to sign up, pick up garbage bags, gloves, etc.

2) Lake Harriet Concessions changes. It was moving very quickly and East Harriet was instrumental in getting the MPRB to slow down and create the CAC. East Harriet was allowed on representative on that committee. Donovan Hart submitted an application and was approved. He has a background in environmental engineering, architectural design, park usage - a qualified candidate. The CAC will be a three-month process.

Community Building Committee Report - P. Meier

1) East Harriet Sale-O-Rama is on Sat., May 30. Application available online and due May 20.

Crime Safety Transportation & Noise - M. Perry

Kevin Larson, committee chair, was not able to attend the meeting and Matt Perry gave a short report.

Matt Perry also mentioned that the first mtg of NCEC is April 28, 2009.

One half of the Council is appointed. The other half will be selected by neighborhood organizations through a process yet to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Minutes submitted by:

Emily Winter
EHFNA Coordinator

Minutes approved by:

Matt Perry
EHFNA Chair