

CARAG
Calhoun Area Residents Action Group
Monthly Neighborhood Meeting Minutes
18 NOVEMBER 2008
Approved at the January 2009 CARAG Meeting

Board Members Attending: Anna Matthes, Maren Nowicki, Aaron Rubenstein (President), Pamela Taylor, Scott Schiefelbein and Howard Verson
Absent: John Darlington, Jeff Forester, Brendan Jordan

Agenda:

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. with the introduction of two new CARAG Board members, Maren Nowicki and Pamela Taylor. John Darlington and Jeff Forester, who were not present, are also newly-elected to the Board. Motion, Seconded to approve the agenda as submitted. It was noted that an Executive Coordinator's Report did not appear as an agenda item. Further discussion was tabled until the Board Retreat in December. Agenda approved as submitted.

MnCoSA Pilot Project: Philip AuClaire

AuClaire spoke about a restorative justice pilot project to implement Minnesota Circles of Support and Accountability (MnCoSA) in Hennepin, Ramsey and Olmsted counties. The joint project between Amicus and the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) seeks volunteers, who will undergo training to provide intensive support and accountability to sex offenders following their release from prison.

City Council Member's Update and Discussion: CM Ralph Remington

- Remington discussed the proposed city regulation of newspaper boxes. A public hearing will be held on December 4 with a final Council vote to be taken on December 12.
- He spoke about the proposed route alignments for the Southwest Corridor LRT. Remington favors a route that serves the Uptown area via rail transit along the Midtown Greenway. The Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority expects to arrive at a preliminary decision on the LRT route by the end of the first quarter in 2009.
- Remington was asked whether bicycle lanes will remain on Marquette and Second Avenues once construction is completed; he will look into the matter.
- The CARAG Zoning Committee will send Remington a final version of its statement on the city's proposed revisions to off-street parking requirements in advance of the meeting of the Council Committee on Zoning and Planning scheduled for December 18. The matter will go before the full Council on December 30.
- Remington announced that Cowboy Slim's will go into the space formerly occupied by Campiello. The restaurant will serve alcohol and bar food. An opening date has not yet been determined. Representatives for Cowboy Slim's have met with the LHENA community and it is expected that they will meet with CARAG as well.

Bicycle Ice Race: Bruce Cochran

Cochran briefly described a proposed bicycle ice race to be held during the Loppet in January. The event would be sponsored by the Uptown Association.

Minutes

Motion, Seconded to approve October's CARAG meeting minutes. The minutes were approved after striking a portion of the statement regarding the nay vote cast against approval of September's Special BOD Meeting minutes.

Treasurer's Report: Anna Matthes

The October CARAG Operations Account Financial Report shows a checking account balance of \$14,504.49; asset accounts are valued at \$7,187.20 for an overall total of \$21,691.69 as of October 31. Matthes

suggested that some funds from the checking account be transferred to a CD. Discussion was tabled until the CARAG meeting in January.

Uptown Neighborhood News (UNN) Treasurer's Report: Jill Bode

Bode presented the UNN Balance Sheet. The balance in the UNN checking account as of November 18 is \$4,201.34. Total assets and liability come to \$8,423.60. Elizabeth Walke's name was placed in nomination for a position on the UNN Managing Board; nomination seconded and accepted. Anna Matthes accepted nomination at CARAG's October meeting. Matthes and Walke were elected to the UNN Board by acclamation.

Zoning Committee: Aaron Rubenstein

Rubenstein reported:

- Owners of a property located at 3533 Girard are seeking a variance for a 5-unit dwelling currently licensed for just 4 units.
- To expedite the acquisition of foreclosed or blighted properties, the City has proposed waiver of a 45-day notification period. Neighborhoods would retain the right to review the disposition of properties acquired by the City and neighborhood approval of the waiver could be retracted at any time. Motion, Seconded to approve the waiver. Motion failed. Rubenstein will seek more information on the proposal.
- NorthMarq Real Estate Services will assume management and leasing for Calhoun Square subsequent to the closure of Capital Growth Madison Marquette's Twin Cities office. The change in management will not affect redevelopment plans.
- In response to the City's proposed revisions to city-wide parking requirements, the CARAG Zoning Committee drafted its Statement on the Proposed Revisions to Off-Street Parking Requirements, which was adopted by the committee on November 17. CARAG supports the overall proposal, however the neighborhood believes the significant reduction in off-street parking requirements for restaurants will adversely impact surrounding neighborhoods. The City's proposal also includes the addition of a defined eastern boundary for the Lake and Hennepin area and has proposed Dupont Avenue as this boundary. CARAG believes Bryant Avenue should be designated as the eastern boundary in order to be consistent with boundaries of the Uptown Small Area Plan. Rubenstein provided statistics to illustrate that parking variances granted to several restaurants in the Uptown Area have resulted in an average reduction of 76% in the number of required parking slots as defined by existing standards. Motion, Seconded to approve CARAG's Statement with inclusion of these statistics and the addition of a statement that expresses CARAG's hope that the City will grant fewer variances as a result of reducing its parking standards. Motion approved.

NRP Update: Scott Engel

Engel reported:

- The CARAG NRP Action Plan Spending Summary as of 9/30/08 shows that funds remain in several numbered strategies: Old House Seminars, Rental Property Improvement Program, Exterior Residential Improvement Program, Neighborhood Bus Stops, Commercial Corridor Design Loans, Front Porch and Low Level Lighting, Public Landscaping Projects, Arts Opportunity and Office and Staff Support. Engel provided a brief update on each of these strategies.
- Engel discussed a proposed NRP plan modification whereby NRP funds from Old House Seminars would be transferred to the CARAG Livability Committee. A 30-day notice period is required, which is to be followed by neighborhood discussion and vote at the next neighborhood meeting. Motion, Seconded to approve the plan modification with the stipulation that other proposals be considered for discussion and vote at January's CARAG meeting. Approved.
- The 2009 CARAG Event Calendar includes 11 proposed event dates. Motion, Seconded to approve the Event Calendar. The motion to approve was passed; two nay votes were cast (Pamela Taylor and Howard Verson).
- In September the City Council approved creation of a 16-member Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission. Eight residents will be selected by city neighborhood organizations to serve on the Commission, one representative will be appointed by the Park Board and the remaining members will be appointed to the Commission by the City Council. A meeting will be held at Walker

Library at 10 a.m. on December 6 to consider the means by which neighborhood residents may be selected to serve on the Commission.

Transportation Committee: Scott Schiefelbein

Schiefelbein reported:

Brendan Jordan has attempted to contact Don Sobania at the Department of Public Works in regard to the issue of traffic signals at the 3100 block of Dupont and Emerson Avenues, but has received no response to date.

Uptown Association Update: Bill Morton

Morton reported:

- A broken water pipe recently caused flooding at the offices of the Uptown Association.
- Due to lack of funds, the Special Services District and Uptown Association will not put up holiday lighting this year.
- Morton attended a recent Lyn-Lake Association meeting at which possible development of the parcel located at the northeast corner of 31st Street and Lyndale Avenue was discussed; proposed development could include a 1-storey commercial building and 2-storey apartment building.
- The Uptown Association wants to encourage Uptown neighborhoods' involvement in planning for the Great River Bike Race to be held June 9.

Board Retreat: Aaron Rubenstein

Rubenstein identified four decisions to be made concerning the Board retreat scheduled for December 13: input for the proposed agenda, whether a facilitator is needed and source of funds to pay for this service, a location for the retreat and whether food should be provided. After brief discussion, the Board agreed that a facilitator was not needed for this first meeting. However, the Board will consider engagement of a facilitator for a possible follow-up meeting. In order to best utilize the time allotted for the retreat, Board members will review documents in advance and come prepared to discuss. The retreat location is tentatively scheduled for the Common Roots Café; coffee and bagels will be provided by CARAG.

Community Input and Announcements: Aaron Rubenstein

None.

Adjourn

Motion, Seconded to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. Approved.