

CARAG  
Calhoun Area Residents Action Group  
**Monthly Neighborhood Meeting Minutes**  
**20 JANUARY 2009**  
*Approved at the February 2009 CARAG Meeting*

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

**Agenda:**

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. Motion, Seconded to approve the agenda as submitted. Approved.

**MnCoSA: Jay Lindgren**

Lindgren spoke about Minnesota Circles of Support and Accountability (MnCoSA), a restorative justice project to be implemented in Hennepin, Ramsey and Olmsted counties. This joint project between Amicus and the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) seeks volunteers to undergo 30 hours of training, after which groups of 4-7 Circle members will be formed. The Circle will meet with the Core Member (sex offender) 4-6 times prior to release with the aim of providing intensive support and establishing accountability. Follow-up will continue once the Core Member is released from prison. Aaron suggested that Lindgren submit an article about MnCoSA to both the Uptown Neighborhood News and the Southwest Journal.

**Great River Energy Bicycle Festival: Thatcher Imboden**

Imboden was joined by Mark Dillon (Spectator Experience) and Stephen Eisenmenger (Volunteer and CARAG resident). A 5-day bicycle race is scheduled for June 11-15 featuring men's, women's and children's races. In previous years, the event has been held in downtown St. Paul (Day 1), Cannon Falls (Day 2), downtown Minneapolis (Day 3), Mankato (Day 4) and Stillwater (Day 5). Due to road construction in downtown Minneapolis, it is proposed that the Day 3 race on June 12 be moved to Uptown. Race organizers are seeking the support of the Uptown neighborhoods. Proceeds will benefit the hospice at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. A map of the proposed route was distributed, which led to discussion about the impact of temporary street closures. Motion, Seconded to approve the concept. Motion approved. Thatcher can be contacted with comments, questions and concerns at [thatcher@ackerberg.com](mailto:thatcher@ackerberg.com).

**Minutes**

Motion, Seconded to approve November's CARAG meeting minutes. The minutes were approved with minor modifications: references to Uptown Business Association were changed to Uptown Association and Uptown Neighborhood News Committee was changed to Uptown Neighborhood News Managing Board.

Motion, Seconded to approve December's BOD Retreat minutes. Minutes approved with references amended to read Uptown Association and Uptown Neighborhood News Managing Board and re-wording of a sentence to clarify that there was further discussion about areas of committee work that should be limited to Board members only.

**Treasurer's Report: Anna Matthes**

The CARAG Operations Account Financial Report for November showed a checking account balance of \$14,230.24 and asset accounts valued at \$7,841.94 to total \$22,072.18 for the month. December's Financial Report shows a checking account balance of \$13,312.62 with asset accounts valued at \$7,852.20 to total \$21,164.82 as of December 31. Quarterly Expenses totaled \$1,368.89. Aaron questioned an expenditure of \$133.87 attributed to Materials/Equipment/Supplies, which represents 67 percent of the funds budgeted annually for this category. Scott E explained that this expense was incurred with the purchase of a large quantity of 9x12 envelopes imprinted with the CARAG logo. It was also pointed out that quarterly Personnel expenses amounted to 32 percent of the funds budgeted in this category. Scott explained that while most quarters have two payrolls per month, the third quarter included a month with three payrolls.

Matthes suggested that \$3,000 from the checking account be used to purchase a 12-month CD so that CARAG would have four CDs in asset accounts. She outlined a plan in which over time the three existing CDs would

be converted to 12-month CDs with maturity dates staggered for quarterly renewal. Motion, Seconded for permission to withdraw \$3000 from the CARAG checking account to purchase a 12-month CD and to initiate efforts to convert its three existing CDs to 12-month CDs with staggered maturity dates. Motion approved.

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

Bode discussed the Budget FY2009 for Uptown Neighborhood News, which was approved by the UNN Managing Board in December. A year-end balance of \$138.88 is projected for FY2009. Bode sought a motion for the CARAG Board to approve this budget. Motion, Seconded to approve the Budget for FY2009. Motion approved. Bode also requested that the Board approve another check-signer to bring the total to three. Motion, Seconded to approve Elizabeth Walke as a check-signer. Motion approved. Bode stated that the UNN Balance Sheet shows assets and liabilities totaling \$5,281.92 as of January 20, 2009.

### **Zoning Committee: Aaron Rubenstein**

Rubenstein recognized Jacob Toledo, who gave an update on Cowboy Slim's, a new restaurant going into the former Campiello space. A liquor license has already been approved by the City Council and the restaurant is slated to open in mid-February. Toledo distributed sample menus, emphasizing that Cowboy Slim's is a "restaurant with a saloon feel" that will feature "comfort food". Those present expressed concerns about the off-street parking spaces and the \$9 parking fee. Toledo stated that the restaurant is allotted 37 spaces in the lot located just behind the building and that they (the restaurant owners) have no control over the fee established for parking in this lot. Toledo was also questioned about the type of patron Cowboy Slim's will attract; he stated that their target group is 25 years of age and older and that they hope to bring in families as well.

Rubenstein announced that a meeting of the Zoning Committee is scheduled for January 29 at 7 p.m. It was agreed that Rubenstein will email Zoning Committee members about scheduled meetings and provide an update to the full CARAG Board at the monthly meeting.

Zoning Committee updates include:

- Owners seeking a variance for a 5-unit dwelling at 3533 Girard Avenue. No pending action.
- City's proposed waiver of 45-day notification period to expedite acquisition of foreclosed or blighted properties. No update.
- The City approved the proposed revisions to city-wide parking standards on January 9. None of the suggestions expressed in the CARAG Zoning Committee's Statement on the Proposed Revisions to Off-Street Parking Requirements were adopted.
- A liquor license application has been submitted for a restaurant going into the La Bodega space.
- Lyn-Lake Small Area Plan meeting was held on December 18. A draft of the plan document will be shared at a final community meeting in February. Then the document will be distributed for a public comment period of 45 days leading up to adoption of the plan by the City Planning Commission and City Council later this spring.

To be discussed at the Zoning Committee meeting on January 29:

- Neighborhood concerns about new lighting in the Calhoun Square Parking Ramp.
- Two-story retail structure to occupy site of Uptown Bar parking lot; Uptown Bar seeking parking variance.
- Seven-story apartment building proposed at Knox Avenue and Lake Street; concerns that the proposed structure exceeds building height permitted within the Shoreland Overlay District (SOD).

### **NRP Update: Scott Engel**

Engel reported:

- NRP Plan Modification. The CARAG NRP Action Plan Spending Summary as of December 31 shows that funds remain in several numbered strategies. Proposed changes were discussed at the November CARAG meeting. Engel sought a motion to transfer remaining funds from one of two strategies, 1.2 Old House Seminars or 20.1 CARAG Arts Committee, to 16.1 CARAG Livability Committee. Pamela suggested combining the small amounts that remain in other strategies for transfer to the Livability Committee instead of transferring the funds from the Arts Committee. Motion, Seconded to approve an NRP Plan Modification to move remaining funds in the amount of \$1946.26 from the CARAG Arts Committee to the Livability Committee. Motion carried.

- In September the City Council approved creation of a 16-member Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC). Eight residents have been appointed to the Commission by the City Council. The Council has scheduled a meeting for February 21 to gather neighborhood input to determine the mechanism by which eight neighborhood residents will be selected to serve on the Commission. Motion, Seconded to approve CARAG's participation and send a representative to the meeting. Approved. Mark Hillyer will represent CARAG at the meeting.

**Transportation Committee: Brendan Jordan**

Jordan stated that there were no action items to report. At the CARAG Board Retreat in December it was decided to expand the scope of the Transportation Committee to include energy issues; it is now called the Transportation and Energy Committee. This committee is responsible for monitoring transportation projects that impact the neighborhood, such as the pending reconstruction of Lyndale Avenue between 31st and 38th Streets, bus stop reconstruction at Bryant Square Park and the stoplight test currently underway at the intersections of Dupont and Emerson Avenues with 31st Street. They will continue to pursue issues regarding the Southwest LRT Alignment. The committee also intends to explore opportunities for the community to reduce energy costs, improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Transportation and Energy Committee's next meeting will be held on February 14.

**CARAG Committee Policy: Aaron Rubenstein**

Rubenstein briefly reviewed the CARAG Committee Policy, noting the addition of the Community Engagement Committee and newly-renamed Transportation and Energy Committee. It was noted that the Crime and Safety (C & S) Committee is no longer listed as a standing committee. Discussion followed regarding that committee's connection with the MPD Fifth Precinct; Tommy Thompson and Lt. John Kelly regularly attended meetings of the Crime and Safety Committee. It was suggested that they continue to provide reports and solicit direct neighborhood feedback at the CARAG monthly meeting. Oversight of the Stroll Patrol, formerly under the C & S Committee, will move to the Community Engagement Committee. Motion, Seconded and Approved.

Motion, Seconded to revise the proposed CARAG Organizational Chart (part of the proposed Committee Policy) to reflect a direct progression, placing the CARAG neighborhood membership at the top, followed by the CARAG Board, which is followed by the Executive Committee. All other committees are positioned directly below the Executive Committee in a linear fashion; oversight of the Personnel Committee to be offset so it is directly answerable to the CARAG Board. Motion passed to approve the CARAG Committee policy, to include elimination of the Crime and Safety Committee and these modifications to the CARAG Organizational Chart.

**Uptown Association: John Darlington**

Darlington reported:

- Uptown Association approved its budget for 2009
- Approved a concept for the proposed construction of an apartment building at Knox Avenue and Lake Street
- Discussed the convergence of Richfield Road with biking and walking paths at the southeast end of Lake Calhoun near the archery range. The Park Board will begin rehabilitation of the area in June. There will be opportunity for community review.

**Board Retreat Follow Up: Aaron Rubenstein**

Rubenstein briefly summarized meeting minutes from the CARAG Board Retreat in December. An Executive Coordinator's report will appear on the agenda for CARAG monthly meetings in the future. The report's format will be established by the Personnel Committee. Rubenstein noted that committee assignments have been made and the task is to now move forward on issues that the Board has identified as priorities.

**Community Input and Announcements: Aaron Rubenstein**

Pamela announced that she has accepted a job in Chicago, thereby tending her resignation from the CARAG Board effective after the February meeting.

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