

CARAG
Calhoun Area Residents Action Group
Monthly Neighborhood Meeting Minutes
16 June 2009

DRAFT: Subject to Approval at the August 2009 CARAG Meeting

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

Agenda:

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. Motion, Seconded to approve the agenda after adding a report from the Midtown Coalition and discussion of the MPS Changing Schools Option initiative. Agenda approved.

Council Member Remington: was unable to attend.

Midtown Greenway Coalition: Josh Tollkan

CARAG representative Tollkan stated that the Coalition participates in City land use planning efforts. He said the Coalition is considering a draft resolution that would change its position on LRT and the Greenway, taking no position on LRT alignment but noting that some member neighborhoods support LRT in the Greenway and that a city study found that a streetcar may not be viable. ~~— While it does not take a position regarding a specific LRT alignment, it looks to local neighborhood organizations to provide input on this issue.—~~ The ~~—draft resolution—~~ Midtown Greenway Coalition supports a cross-town streetcar link (Midtown connection) of the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit line with the future Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit line. ~~The Coalition has taken a resolution that acknowledges some neighborhoods' support for LRT alignment through the Greenway, however, streetcar may not be the most viable transit option.—~~

Community Input and Announcements: Aaron Rubenstein

- Rubenstein announced that the annual CARAG Garden Tour will be take place this coming week. ~~Times and assembly points are: Saturday, June 20, 10 a.m. at Gigi's Cafe (36th Street and Bryant Avenue); Monday, June 22, 6:30 p.m. at Bryant Square Park; Wednesday, June 24, 6:30 p.m. at Dunn Brothers Coffee (34th Street and Hennepin Avenue).—~~
- Bryant Square Park Concerts are scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m.
- Darlington, representing the Uptown Association (UA), reported that Day 3 of the Great River Energy Bicycle Festival held in Uptown on June 12 was well-received by the community. Neighborhood feedback included comments on the lack of food available at outdoor locations and requests to increase advance publicity of the event for next year.
- Lyndale Avenue reconstruction project: pavement of the west side of Lyndale Avenue will be completed and these lanes will be reopened by July 7.
- Controversy regarding the Park Board's approach to re-pavement of the parking lot at the southeast corner of Lake Calhoun concerns whether it is a simple maintenance project or a project of greater scale requiring citizen participation and approval.

Minutes

Motion, Seconded to approve CARAG meeting minutes for May. Motion approved with deletion of sentence stating that Matthes would provide the CARAG Board with copies of "hold harmless" agreements entered into by other city neighborhoods for similar events. The following statement was substituted: During the discussion of the vendor contracts, Matthes was requested to send to the Uptown Market sample information from websites showing hold harmless agreements that other entities used with art fair/market vendors.

Treasurer's Report: Scott Engel

- Engel reported that the monthly a bank statement had yet not been received as of this meeting so a treasurer's report had not been prepared.

- Proceeds from the CARAG Super Sale funds will go into the CARAG Operations account. A total of \$570 was collected from 57 sale participants, who paid \$10 each.
- Advance ticket sales for the 27th Annual Hennepin Lake Community Wine Tasting netted approximately \$1200, monies which will benefit CARAG directly. Over 500 people attended the event. Proceeds from ticket sales at the door will be split among nine neighborhoods, yielding additional funds for CARAG. The event was sponsored by Hennepin-Lake Liquors and new sponsors, Cowboy Slim's, Stella's Fish Café and Great Clips. Feedback from attendees praised the selection of wines, however, ~~it~~ many noted that no food was provided. CARAG extends its thanks to the sponsors and all of its volunteers, especially Pam Price.
- Engel suggested that discussion of CARAG's Multi-year Financial Plan might be considered at a Special Meeting of the CARAG Board. Motion, Seconded to cancel July's CARAG neighborhood meeting and convene a Special Meeting of the CARAG Board to discuss the Plan. Motion approved. This meeting will be open to the public, venue to be announced.

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

Bode reported that the UNN Balance Sheet shows assets of \$5,038.97 and liabilities (accounts payable) of \$1,275.37, with equity totaling \$3,763.60 as of June 16, 2009. Net profit from the June issue of UNN totaled \$121.54. Previous years' revenues continue to help cover operating losses; efforts are ongoing to increase UNN revenue. To raise visibility, UNN manned a table at the recent Hennepin Lake Community Wine Tasting. CARAG reiterated its support for the success of UNN. Motion, Seconded for request of a detailed financial plan from the UNN Managing Board to be submitted by August 13, which addresses the financial health of UNN and provides an implementation schedule toward the goal of restoring UNN profitability. Motion approved.

Uptown Market: Brendan Jordan

- The first Uptown Market (UM) event will be held on Sunday, June 21, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fifty-six vendors will participate in this inaugural event, which puts the UM in the black even without additional merchandizing efforts. The UM will provide a formal update at the August CARAG meeting. CARAG has provided \$500 toward start-up costs for the Uptown Market. The Market needs volunteers for three shifts: 9:30 – 11:15 a.m. for set-up; 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.; and 4:30 – 6 p.m. for clean-up and tear-down.
- Motion, Seconded for CARAG to approve Megan Gamble as the eighth member of the UM Board. Motion approved.
- As stated previously, Matthes forwarded to the UM Board information from websites regarding "hold harmless" agreements entered into by other entities with art fair/market vendors. CARAG ~~had~~ requested that language regarding a "hold harmless" agreement be added to the UM vendor contract.
- Jordan distributed copies of the Uptown Market Volunteer Guidelines and will email the Uptown Market Vendor Contract to the CARAG Board for review.

Zoning Committee Report: Aaron Rubenstein

- Rubenstein noted that a liquor license being sought by the gas station located at ~~289~~th Street and Lyndale Avenue has been discussed at recent LHENA and Whittier neighborhood meetings.
- A proposal has been advanced for redevelopment of the Rainbow Foods parcel (LHENA neighborhood), which would entail construction of a new building to occupy the entire site. As proposed, construction would include a 3-story building providing two levels of parking, ~~and~~ shops at street level, ~~and with~~ Rainbow Foods located on the third level. Rubenstein attended the LHENA meeting at which the matter was discussed and raised concerns to the developer about the project's design. City approvals will follow in August or September.
In connection with the proposal, Rainbow ~~might sell or give~~ intends to convey back to the City ~~property bordering~~ 29th Street between Emerson and Dupont ~~Aa~~ Avenues. Jordan raised concerns about the Uptown Market's location in connection with the proposed redevelopment project; those present recommended that CARAG formally express its concerns regarding the matter.
- In a matter related to the redevelopment of the Rainbow Foods site, Jill Bode raised the issue of planting trees on the concrete median at the "break on Lake" at Dupont Avenue and Lake Street.

- Verson noted that a Subway sandwich shop is slated to open in the former Maytag Store at 28th Street and Lyndale Avenue.
- Plans for construction at the northeast corner of Knox Avenue and Lake Street have been modified to include erection of a 5-story building of 45 ~~to~~ ~~and~~ 560 feet in height. Motion, Seconded to maintain CARAG's opposition to the project and amend the language in its letter drafted in support of the Uptown Small Area Plan (USAP) and its policies concerning development on this site to reflect the change in the height of proposed construction. Motion approved.

NRP Update: Scott Engel

Engel distributed a letter received from the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation (GMHC) regarding a multi-unit property located at 3421 Hennepin Avenue in connection with CARAG's "4+ Unit" Loan Program (rental property improvement program). One unit at this location is valued at 121%, which exceeds ~~CARAG's the~~ 110% loan-to-value ~~maximum requirement based on Hennepin County market value~~. GMHC sought CARAG's input as to whether it should deny the application or whether CARAG would be willing to override standard guidelines in order to allow GMHC to approve the application. Motion, Seconded for CARAG to waive ~~standard requirements, the 110% requirement to allow this application,~~ with ~~each other such~~ requests to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Motion approved.

Community Engagement Committee: Scott Schiefelbein

- Mark Hillyer reported that Mark Hinds of the Lyndale neighborhood has been chosen to represent District 6 on the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC).
- Schiefelbein reported that ~~some of~~ the goals of the CE Committee are to encourage increased attendance at CARAG's Annual Meeting in September and to increase participation of CARAG residents at neighborhood events, particularly those residing beyond the northeast quadrant of CARAG.

Uptown Association (UA) Update: John Darlington

Darlington reported that the Uptown Association has received a \$23,750 grant from the Great Streets – Neighborhood Business District Program to further activities related to 'branding' and development of marketing materials (brochures, website, banners) to promote Uptown businesses. Darlington distributed a page depicting the proposed new logo, which is designed around the letters 'UA,' and several possible taglines. The CARAG Board expressed preference for design of a logo that incorporates the word 'Uptown', rather than 'UA'.

Executive Coordinator's Report: Scott Engel

Engel reported on his activities of the past month, which included working on the CARAG Super Sale, kickoff of the Bryant Square Park Concert Series, the Hennepin Lake Community Wine Tasting event, and the upcoming CARAG Garden Tour. He continues to maintain the CARAG website and send out CARAG E-Updates. Engel noted that CARAG's email list has grown to include 260 names, which reflects significant progress toward his goal of building membership to 300 names this year. He also noted that the CARAG website received 650 hits in May, its greatest number to date.

Changing Schools Option plan – Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS): Jeff Forester

Forester discussed the Changing Schools Option in connection with the concept of "community schools", with emphasis on creating a community school for the F2 neighborhood. Discussion concerned CARAG's drafting a letter in support of 'Changing Schools' recommendations. Motion, Seconded for CARAG to write a letter to the School Board encouraging it to support the District by careful review of all proposals. Motion approved. Forester will email a draft letter for review by the CARAG Board.

Adjourn

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

Minutes recorded and submitted by Maren Nowicki