

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Cedar Riverside, 3-19-08

**Cam's next Cedar Riverside Office Hours:
Tuesday April 1, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

Items:

- 1) April Roundtable: Free Speech and the Convention
- 2) NRP
- 3) WBCC and NRP
- 4) Bina Encroachment
- 5) Riverside Plaza
- 6) Brian Coyle Center
- 7) West Bank School of Music
- 8) Climate Change Grants Available
- 9) Maximum Occupancy
- 10) Produce in Grocery Stores
- 11) Ranked Choice Voting
- 12) Target Center Green Roof
- 13) Rental License Inspection Program
- 14) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please join me for my April roundtable discussion on free speech during the Republican convention, **Monday, April 14 7-9PM, Augsburg College, Christiansen center, East Commons**. On April 23, the Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee will hold a public hearing on the City's free speech policies. I have consistently advocated a voluntary registration process that protesters could use to get City resources and services for their events. I've just as forcefully opposed any attempt to create a mandatory permit process that would enable police officers to arrest anyone taking part in a free speech event without a permit. Come hear more about this and other Convention-related policy discussions, and share your ideas and concerns.
- 2) Working with my colleague Scott Benson, I successfully convinced my colleagues to support a resolution calling for an extension of the pre-1979 tax increment financing districts in the Minneapolis Common Project that have been used to fund the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. If this passes the full Council on Friday, staff will be directed to work with the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners, the Minneapolis Legislative delegation, and other partners in neighborhood revitalization efforts to develop a bill to extend the pre-1979 tax districts to: (1) \$100 million to allow the City to fund the administrative and programmatic needs of a neighborhood revitalization program that includes support for neighborhood organizations and neighborhood-directed action plans after 2009 in the City of Minneapolis); (2) \$100 million to fund repayment of the Target Center bonds and the capital improvements necessary for Target Center to remain a first class facility as required by contract; and (3) Provide continuing support for discretionary development investments by the City of Minneapolis, and if Hennepin County decides to participate in the funding of a future neighborhood revitalization program, provide funding support to County investments that benefit the County and City.
- 3) Last month, I convened a meeting of leaders for the WBCC and the Cedar Riverside NRP steering Committee. I have offered to help leaders of both organizations facilitate an ongoing work group, provided it is supported by the two boards. The purpose of the work group would be to find a path that will both build the Coalition's capacity and facilitate moving ahead with successful and full implementation of the neighborhood's NRP Action Plan.
 - 4) On Friday, the Council will vote on a City staff proposal to sell the sliver of the Dania Hall site onto which Bina Partners encroached. The total that will be paid, according the terms staff will be recommended, is \$75,502. I reluctantly support this, because we have succeeded in negotiating a larger settlement that includes \$25,000 to be used specifically for redevelopment of the Dania site. Now that the Small Area Plan is finished, I think it may be in the best interests of the neighborhood to get some activity in the building that has been vacant for far too long and, more importantly, for the community to be able to move forward with a Dania site redevelopment without waiting for a long drawn-out legal process to wind its way through the courts.
 - 5) The Council has approved key terms of a settlement that will resolve a small part of the ongoing legal dispute among Fine Associates, Sherman Associates and Crablex, Inc, regarding access issues for Riverside Plaza and the Currie Park Flats redevelopment.

- 6) The Park Board is discussing the possible sale of the Brian Coyle Center to Pillsbury United Communities at its Committee of the Whole meeting tonight. To see a Park Board staff report on this topic, please see here: <http://www.minneapolisparks.org/documents/meetings/agendas/uploaded03--19-08cow.pdf>. I am committed to make sure that this decision is informed by a good public input process.
- 7) I have heard that the West Bank School of Music has won their lawsuit against a nearby property owner, paving the way for the City to sell the building to the school this summer.
- 8) I encourage the WBCC to participate in the 2008 Climate Change Grants, which focus on motivating businesses and residents to take immediate actions to reduce their climate change impacts. There are two grant amounts available, \$1,500 or \$10,000 with no match required. Application deadline: 4:00 pm on Thursday March 20. For an application and more information, go to: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sustainability/ClimateChangeGrants_home.asp
- 9) On March 21, I will introduce an ordinance to change the maximum occupancy regulations in Minneapolis. My goal is threefold: 1) to make maximum occupancy regulations fairer, by treating all adults the same, regardless of their "relatedness;" 2) to address discrepancies between the zoning and housing safety codes; and 3) to tie the number of occupants in a dwelling unit to the size of the unit. My hope is to create consistent, more effectively enforceable and fairer standards that focus on maintaining healthy, safe housing for Minneapolis residents.
- 10) The Council passed an amendment to our regulations of grocery stores that included a requirement I have been fighting hard for: that all grocery stores in Minneapolis will have at least five varieties of fresh produce. This seemingly obvious regulation (which my office has heard, surprisingly, is extremely uncommon in other cities) will help increase access to fresh, healthy foods for all Minneapolitans. It will also help the City get a handle on some of the worst convenience stores in neighborhoods.
- 11) Council Member Glidden will be introducing an ordinance establishing vote counting rules and procedures for Ranked Choice Voting elections this Friday. Last week, I successfully pushed for a Request for Proposals for election equipment and/or services that will allow Minneapolis to implement Ranked Choice Voting in 2009.
- 12) The Council has decided to go out for bids on constructing what could be the second largest green roof in the country, on top of the Target Center. I made the motion in committee to focus only on options that included green roof components. We will receive these bids back this fall.
- 13) The Council has passed an ordinance requiring an initial housing inspection of every rental unit that changes ownership or transitions to rental from homeownership, and charging a fee for these inspections. The conversion fee is \$1,000. This action accomplishes a number of important goals: 1) it ensures that every newly converted rental unit is up to code, protecting tenant safety; 2) it gives a financial disincentive to convert a homesteaded property to rental, helping to slow the rate of conversion.
- 14) There are openings on the Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board (closes 3/31/2008), Latino Advisory Committee, (3/28/2008), Minneapolis Planning Commission (3/28/08), Public Health Advisory Committee (3/28/2008), Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners (3/21/2008), Rental Dwelling License Board of Appeals (3/28/2008), Zoning Board of Adjustment (3/28/2008) To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.