

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 2-26-07

Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
Pratt School, Tuesday March 20, 9:30-11am

Items:

- 1) Library Merger meetings
- 2) Discussion at Saint Martin's Table
- 3) Neighborhood Policing plans
- 4) Pedestrian/Bicyclist Survey
- 5) University Citgo
- 6) Condo Conversion ordinance
- 7) Antiwar resolution
- 8) Comprehensive Plan Review
- 9) Community Benefits Agreements Study Session
- 10) Big 10 Conference
- 11) Circus Reform
- 12) Southeast Seniors Grants
- 13) New Fire Chief James Clack
- 14) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Two library advisory groups are wrapping up their deliberations on a possible merger of the Minneapolis and Hennepin County library systems. Representatives of the City, Library Board and County will discuss why a merger is being considered and what changes a unified system might bring at a series of upcoming meetings:

- Thursday, March 1, 7 - 8:30 pm, Walker Library, 2880 Hennepin Ave
- Saturday, March 3, 10 - 11:30 am, North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave N
- Monday, March 5, 6:30 - 8 pm, Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall
- Thursday, March 8, 7 - 8:30 pm, Nokomis Library, 5100 34th Ave S

This is a very serious decision that will have long term consequences for our city for generations to come. It is essential that questions and concerns about this proposal be brought up quickly. There appears to be strong support for this idea from the County Board, the City Council and Mayor and the Library Board. Though no Council committee has formally reviewed the work of the advisory groups so far, there is growing support for turning the Minneapolis system over to the County. I have concerns that we, as a community and as a Council, are not taking the necessary time to study, consider and discuss alternatives. If turning our public libraries over to the County is the alternative that will be chosen, I think that it is very important that we make certain that the people of Minneapolis get the best deal possible in the transaction. This may mean that more discussion and creative thinking is required, and that a rush to agreement is unwise. If you care about the library system and have ideas or concerns about this, please get involved. For more information, please go here: <http://www.mplib.org/shapemplsfuture.asp>

- 2) Please join me for a discussion at Saint Martin's Table on Saturday, March 10 at 10:00 AM, about current and pending city issues and my role as the sole Green Party Council Member.

- 3) As part of our growing effort to create a model community policing system, the Minneapolis Police Department is preparing "Neighborhood Policing Plans" for every neighborhood. Please contact your Crime Prevention Specialist Carol Oosterhuis at 673-2874 or carol.oosterhuis@ci.minneapolis.mn.us for more information.

- 4) The Department of Public works held a Pedestrian/Bicyclist Open House last week. 125 attendees filled out surveys on problems and possible improvements to the current Minneapolis ped/bike system. If you're interested in filling out a survey online, please go here:
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=196693372440>
- 5) Clay and Mia Lambert's Citgo project at 2700 University Ave was given unanimous support by the Council last Friday. I managed to convince my colleagues to support the Lamberts' preferred version of the 'conditions' in every particular (including the contentious lighting plan) except for one minor compromise: the height of the proposed sign at University and 27th will be reduced by six inches.
- 6) The Condo Conversion ordinance I sponsored failed on a 7-6 vote. I am disappointed that the Council missed our chance to gather better data on condo conversions, protect condo buyers and preserve affordable housing in Minneapolis. I hope that the extremely close vote in the Council has made the Realtor's Association more open to talking to affordable housing advocates than they have been in the past.
- 7) I co-authored a resolution calling for the immediate cessation of the war in Iraq with my colleague Ralph Remington. I'm proud that we got this passed without a single no vote (though several CMs declined to vote).
- 8) There will be a public outreach and engagement process starting in late March on the upcoming review and rewrite of the City's Comprehensive Plan, *the Minneapolis Plan*. I will give you more details when I have them.
- 9) I coordinated and led a City Council Study Session on Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) with the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability on February second. We heard from outside experts, city staff and from neighborhood group staff and activists about three case studies where CBAs are being developed. This helped improve my and my colleagues' understanding of this promising new tool to ensure that communities benefit from development projects.
- 10) I attended a conference in Chicago of Big 10 Universities on Community/University Relations, with CM Hofstede and University staff. Representatives from all the Big 10 schools discussed how to create better relationships with their surrounding neighborhoods throughout the five-hour meeting. Some interesting new ideas emerged, and I'll be floating some of them to City staff and the U over the next months.
- 11) I will be supporting an ordinance that my colleague Ralph Remington will introduce soon, prohibiting circuses from bringing wild animals such as elephants and tigers into Minneapolis. The purpose of this ordinance is to protect human and animal health and safety.
- 12) Southeast Seniors Living at Home block nurse programs have received \$75,000 in HUD Community Development Block Grants. I'm glad we're able to continue supporting this outstanding program.
- 13) Last Friday, the Council unanimously appointed James Clack to serve as Fire Chief for a year, finishing the term of former Chief Bleskachek.
- 14) There are openings on the Charter Commission, the Empowerment Zone Board, the Housing Board of Appeals, the Latino Advisory Committee, the Public Health Advisory Committee, the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board and the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.