

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 3-6-07

**Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, March 13, 9:30-11:00am
SECIA Office, 837 15th Ave SE**

Items:

- 1) Library Merger meetings
- 2) Discussion at Saint Martin's Table
- 3) "Lurking" at Pipeline and in City Pages
- 4) Pedestrian/Bicyclist Survey
- 5) Northeast Diagonal Bike Trail
- 6) New French Bakery grants
- 7) Community Engagement update
- 8) Condo Conversion ordinance
- 9) Animal Protection Ordinance
- 10) New Fire Chief James Clack
- 11) 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 an upcoming meeting:

- 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> or <http://hclib.org/pub/info/futureoflibraries/Guiding%20Principles%20ADOPTED.htm>

- 2) Please join me at St. Martin's Table, 2001 Riverside Ave, Saturday, March 10, 10:00 – 11:30 AM, for a discussion sponsored by St. Martins Table's Weekend Events, about current and pending city issues and my role as the sole Green Party Council Member. Learn about the results of the 2006 Second Ward Survey, my accomplishments of 2006 and plans for 2007.

- 3) I will be speaking at a Minnesota Pipeline event sponsored by the Minneapolis Urban League, advocating the repeal of the "Lurking" ordinance. The event will take place on March 7th, 6-8pm, at the Urban League, 2100 Plymouth Ave N. Other speakers include Guy Gambill from the Council on Crime and Justice, and Cheryl Morgan-Spencer from the Urban League. Also, please see the recent City Pages article on "lurking" here: <http://citypages.com/databank/28/1369/article15168.asp>
- 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) The NE Diagonal Bike Trail has been given advance construction funding for 2007 Federal Aid. It will connect Minneapolis' trail system to Roseville's, paralleling New Brighton Blvd from Broadway to the City limit.
- 6) The New French Bakery project on Kasota will be given \$10 million bonds for rehabilitation of existing facility & construction of addition & equipping of the bakery operation.
- 7) The results of the Community Engagement Public Meetings and other input are now being analyzed by City and NRP staff, and will be transmitted to the Council and NRP Policy Board by mid-March. The full set of comments will be available on both the NRP and City websites. The NRP Policy Board will discuss the findings at its meeting of March 26th.
- 8) 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.
- 9) 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.
- 10) I will be supporting an ordinance that my colleague Ralph Remington will likely 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.
- 11) Last City Council Meeting, the Council unanimously appointed James Clack to serve as Fire Chief for a year, finishing the term of former Chief Bleskachek.
- 12) On Saturday, March 10, 10am-3pm, the 13th Annual South Mpls Housing Fair will be held at South High School, 3131 19th Ave S. More info can be found at www.housingfair.org.
- 13) The 3rd Annual Community Garden Spring Resource Fair will be held on Saturday, March 17th, 9am-2pm, at Augsburg College's Christiansen Center, 720 22nd Ave S. It will feature an expanded selection of workshops, resource booths and networking opportunities. It's an exciting location, as Augsburg will be the site of a new community garden starting next year.
- 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.