

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 10-22-07

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

Items:

- 1) I-35W Bridge
- 2) Central Corridor
- 3) NRP
- 4) University / Hubbard lot
- 5) Library Consolidation meeting
- 6) SEED Committee
- 7) Doran Dinkydome Project
- 8) 2008 Budget
- 9) Transportation Public Meeting
- 10) Requiring Produce in Grocery Stores
- 11) Organic Composting
- 12) Non-Motorized Transportation Grants
- 13) Street Furniture
- 14) New City Logo
- 15) Facsimile Firearms
- 16) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Council has passed a resolution approving the Highway Project Review Package submitted by MnDOT for the reconstruction of the I-35W Bridge. The Council also passed a resolution urging MnDOT to arrange for the presence of an Independent Construction Safety Officer on-site at all times during the reconstruction of the bridge.
- 2) The Met Council has set a timeline for seeking public input through the first quarter of 2008 on proposed features of the Central Corridor LRT Project. Getting feedback by next spring is necessary to give consultants time to consider them in their preliminary engineering work that must be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration in less than a year. Key issues (see Issues Matrix here: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/BAC/BACIssuesMatrixSept202007.pdf>) will be considered at the Community and Business Advisory Committees and go to the Central Corridor Management Committee, which advises the full Metropolitan Council. The Met Council will have the final say on the decisions. Meeting schedules for all of these bodies are posted at www.centralcorridor.org. Outreach coordinators will be holding special meetings and contacting stakeholders for each of these issues.
- 3) Last week, the Council took two small but significant steps forward in our effort to make decisions about the present and future of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and public support for neighborhood organizations. The first step we took was to help assure the promised 70% level of funding for the remainder of NRP Phase II. The second step was to create a task force consisting of Council President Johnson, Vice President Lilligren, CMs Hodges and Ostrow, a Mayoral representative and the NRP Director, to frame options and proposed actions by December, establishing a City position on:
 1. A proposed administrative structure to support community engagement activities;
 2. Expectations of services community or neighborhood organizations would provide through citizen participation contracts; and
 3. Extending or not a formal program of using discretionary funds for community-initiated projects.

I am very hopeful that these efforts, although small steps in and of themselves, will help us grapple with the challenging issues involved in the future of NRP and supporting our neighborhood organizations. I continue to support giving City (and hopefully other jurisdictions') funds to neighborhoods for both administrative support and discretionary investment.

- 4) The University has delayed its purchase of the lot behind Hubbard. Their construction of the planned parking lot cannot start until spring, which gives the City and the University time to resolve some outstanding issues, including some of the specifics of the storm water remediation plan for the planned parking lot and possibly the larger question of the City's Zoning Code's authority over off-campus University projects.
- 5) The Council and Library Board will meet jointly on November 7 at 6pm at the Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, to discuss the merger of the Minneapolis Public Library and the Hennepin County Library systems.

- 6) One of the action items from the meeting I set up between PPERRIA folks and CPED Director Mike Christensen was to work to bring the Southeast Economic Development (SEED) committee into a more cohesive relationship with PPERRIA and the Zoning Committee specifically. I'm working with Prospect Park SEED members, the Zoning Committee and SEED staff Jim Forsyth and Jen Jordan to find ways to bring these groups closer together.
- 7) Local developer Doran Companies is pursuing purchase of the Dinkydome and the buildings to the north, for a proposed multi-storey student housing development, which would incorporate and refurbish the Dinkydome. I welcome PPERRIA's comments on this proposal.
- 8) The Mayor has presented his proposed 2008 budget, which includes a tax increase of 8% and calls for funding 18 additional police officers, spending more on public safety technology, community prosecutors, Restorative Justice programs, ex-offender re-entry support, gang graffiti prevention, a Juvenile Curfew-Truancy Resource Center in City Hall, the new "You(th) Are Here" circulator buses and four more 911 operators. The budget also supports targeted funding to help implement the (soon to finished) youth violence prevention plan, promote renewable energy, improved commercial corridors, more stable housing, job training, bridge repair and rehab, improved water and the implementation of several transportation initiatives. For more details visit: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2008recommended/>
- 9) The City is hosting public meetings to discuss the City's draft Ten-Year Transportation Plan and its Streetcar Feasibility Study. The public will have an opportunity to provide feedback on plan recommendations and to discuss key transportation issues facing Minneapolis. The last meeting will be on **October 24, 6:30-8:30 pm, at the Van Cleve Recreation Center**. For more information, go to the City website: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us.
- 10) At my urging, the PS&RS committee voted to send proposed amendments to our grocery store licensing ordinance back to Regulatory Services staff. The committee directed them to work with staff from Health and Family Support and outside food policy experts like the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, to ensure that all licensed grocery stores have an adequate stock of fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods.
- 11) The Council has authorized the Solid Waste & Recycling department to develop a pilot program to collect source-separated organic materials from Linden Hills residents and, hopefully, schools. The City will be applying for Hennepin County grants to support this pilot program. The goal is to learn lessons that could help the City build a citywide organics composting program, to divert a large portion of our waste away from the garbage burner and into reuse.
- 12) The City has received a grant for more than \$5.7 Million to work on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements, and a \$900,000 grant to fund three years of a bicycle and pedestrian Ambassador program, to help connect more experienced riders and walkers with people who are not currently walking or biking but want to start. The City has also hired a consultant to complete the Citywide Pedestrian Master Plan.
- 13) City is seeking public input into improving public amenities along city sidewalks. This is part of the City's Coordinated Street Furniture Program that seeks to coordinate the design of selected street furniture elements for improved appearance and quality and enhance pedestrian circulation and safety. A request for proposals (RFP) to prospective vendors is planned for release in November 2007. The RFP will result in a long-term contract between a vendor and the City, in which the City will receive street furniture, maintenance, and revenue in exchange for advertising space on the street furniture. For more information, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/street-furniture/.
- 14) The Council has approved a process to research and develop a new brand identity for the City, including a new logo. This plan must come back to Council for approval, will require no additional money, and should be finished to coincide with the Minneapolis Sesquicentennial.
- 15) With my support, the Council has passed an ordinance defining, and regulating the carrying and possession of "facsimile firearms." This will help improve public safety by taking the restrictions that already exist on real guns and placing those same restrictions on gun replicas that closely match the real thing. According to the new ordinance, carrying or having a facsimile firearm in a public place is prohibited. Facsimile firearms must be transported in the same way as real firearms, secured in a closed container and locked in the trunk of a vehicle.
- 16) There are openings on the Minneapolis Arts Commission (closes 11/9/2007), Housing Board of Appeals (10/26/2007), and Latino Advisory Committee to the Mayor and City Council (11/16/2007). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.