

Second Ward October 2014 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

Council Member, Second Ward

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/council/ward2>

Fall Street Cleaning. Fall street cleaning is underway. Please beware that parking is prohibited on streets when they are being cleaned and cars can be ticketed and towed. City staff posted the first streets on Monday October 20, for sweeping (and enforcement) that began on Tuesday, October 21. Over the next month or so, please watch for signs and use “Street Lookup” at http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping/streetsweep_streetsweeplookup to see the sweeping schedule online and when your street is scheduled for cleaning.

New Franchise and Energy Partnership Agreements. The Council has approved the franchise and Clean Energy Partnership agreements with our energy utilities, Xcel and CenterPoint. This Partnership is a way for the utilities to make good on their commitments to help the City – and the people of Minneapolis – realize our Energy Vision and reach our aggressive goals on climate, environmental justice, renewable energy and more. I view this as a major step forward, but this is only an opportunity. In the next year, as the Partnership gets underway, I will be working hard to make sure it fulfills its promise. www.midwestenergynews.com/2014/10/17/minneapolis-utility-fight-ends-with-unique-clean-energy-deal/

Conservation Districts. The conservation district ordinance intended to allow property owners to organize to better conserve physical aspects of highly valued areas of the city was unanimously approved by the Council this month. This is a new tool that is like a historic district but much more flexible. It allows people within unique, significant areas to adopt guidelines that will conserve the characteristics that make those places special. Thanks to several of my colleagues – especially Council Member Lisa Peterson Bender – we went to great lengths to ensure that all Conservation Districts are in keeping with our broader goals to help our city grow and evolve. Many people in the Prospect Park neighborhood deserve great credit for this accomplishment, especially residents Joe Ring and Bob Roscoe. We also couldn't have done this without a fantastic staff team, led by Dr. John Smoley. I look forward to seeing how the first proposed conservation districts work.

Conservation District Presentation. The Conservation District ordinance will be the topic of a Preserve Minneapolis discussion on **Wednesday, October 29**, 8am-9am at the Mill City Museum, ADM Conference Room. There people can learn about conservation districts, through a panel discussion featuring John Smoley, senior planner for the department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED), and two Second Ward Prospect Park residents, Joe Ring and Bob Roscoe. Joe and Bob are members of the neighborhood committee whose study of conservation districts helped inspire this effort.

Grocery Store Standards. My proposed ordinance requiring a greater amount of healthy food in licensed grocery stores was unanimously approved by the Health Environment and Community Engagement Committee on October 20. These new food standards are based on, but more flexible than, the Women, Infants and Children program standards. The requirements will apply to more types of stores (including dollar stores, pharmacies and department stores, which are all currently exempt), as long as they accept food assistance. You can read more here: <http://www.startribune.com/lifestyle/health/278135071.html>

DOJ Report on Police. At the request of the Minneapolis Police Department the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Diagnostic Center recently conducted an assessment of the MPD's

officer oversight and discipline process. They presented preliminary findings in October some of their recommendations include improving our Police Conduct Review process, better defining coaching, building better community relations and re-establishing and Early Warning (of Intervention) System to identify and intervene early when officers shows signs of risk for misconduct. I am very interested in pursuing these recommendations and look forward to a final report and presentation to the Council in the next month or two.

Policing Forum. Mayor Hodges and Police Chief Harteau will host a public forum on public safety, police accountability, and public trust on Thursday, **October 30**, 6:30-8pm, Brian Coyle Center, 420 15th Ave S.

Nicotine Vapor Devices. I am proposing to amend Minneapolis' ordinances to strengthen city regulations around so called "e-cigarettes," which distribute nicotine (and other chemicals) by using electricity and vapor. My intent is to extend the State Clean Indoor Air Act to e-cigarettes. This would prohibit their use in all places in Minneapolis where smoking is prohibited by state law. The public hearing for this ordinance has been set for **November 17th**, at 1:30pm in Council Chambers. There is an informative video about this issue here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-LAsTQ4wdc&list=UUket7tl3m0r1ScDTuUSREuw>

Budget Hearings. The City of Minneapolis has scheduled two public comment hearings on the proposed 2015 property tax levy and budget: **November 18** at 6:05pm and **December 10** at 6:05pm both in Room 317 of City Hall. From now to December 7 the Ways and Means Budget Committee will review each department's budgets (agendas can be found at www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/budget). On December 2 and 4, 1 – 4pm the Ways and Means Budget Subcommittee will consider amendments to the Mayor's proposed budget and on **December 10**, after the hearing at 6:05 p.m. the City Council is scheduled to take the final vote on the 2015 budget.

Future of Neighborhood Funding. As part of our budget process this year we have learned that the funding source used to support neighborhood organizations is bringing in more revenue than anticipated. The Mayor has proposed using some of this increase to provide an additional neighborhood specialist; to provide a roughly 2% increase in funding to the Community Participation Program (CPP); to fund two positions in the communications department; and to use \$250,000 of it for redevelopment of the upper harbor terminal. The funding source, called the Consolidated Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing District, has historically provided funds for both the Target Center and for our neighborhood revitalization. When we last amended our plan for the funds in 2011 we were clear that half the funds would go for Target debt relief and half for neighborhood revitalization purposes. The approved plan states *"At the time this TIF Plan was drafted it was anticipated that neighborhood revitalization purposes may include 1) a Neighborhood Investment Fund, providing support directly to neighborhood organizations and their funding priorities; 2) a Community Innovation Fund, which will be a competitive fund given directly to neighborhoods to support City priorities; and 3) the administrative costs of the City's Neighborhood and Community Relations Department that are related to neighborhood revitalization purposes."* In October Council Member Andrew Johnson and I presented on this issue to the Longfellow Community Council Annual Meeting and I plan to put the matter on the Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee for discussion on **November 17**. We will also be discussing current funds held by neighborhoods on **November 3**. Both meetings will occur at 1:30pm.

Public Art Funding. I am concerned that the standard, historical level of funding for public art has not been included as part of this year's proposed budget. I will be working with my colleagues to ensure that we have adequate funding for public art as part of the Council's budget approval process. I believe that a policy of

setting aside 1 to 2 percent of our capital budget for public art is wise, and this has been the City's practice for many years.

Public Housing. I have received a letter from the Minneapolis Highrise Representative Council concerned about the level of support the proposed budget has for the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA). I take these concerns seriously. In 2010 there was significant federal investment as part of a "stimulus" package and prior to that MPHA relied on a special tax levy, which has not been provided since 2010. One goal I have for this year's budget is to start a discussion about giving the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority its own levy authority. The MPHA had this authority in the past, and I believe that it may be time for this power to be reinstated, given the ongoing gridlock at the federal level. I am very supportive of the Mayor's proposed funding for new family-size public housing units in this year's budget, which will be maintained

New Internal Audit Director. Will Tetsell began as the City's new internal audit director in October. After being without an internal auditor since late 2013, I am very glad to see this position filled. Since the beginning of 2014, the Internal Audit Committee has reviewed of the City's internal audit function and changed the City's internal audit function to include a wider scope of work. Besides financial audits, internal audit staff will conduct program audits. Prior to joining the City Tetsell was manager of health care assurance at Target Corporation, manager of finance assurance at Target, an internal auditor at Lawson Software, Gap, AAA – California State Automobile Association and Deloitte & Touche. He also holds Master of Accounting degree from the University of Southern California. Improvements to internal audit function

Cradle to K Cabinet to Issue Report. Mayor Hodges has announced that her Cradle to K Cabinet is working on a report due to come out in January which will outline policy, legislative, and collaboration recommendations for 2015. The Cabinet has identified the following three objectives: "that all children receive a Healthy Start rich with early experience to prepare them for successful early education and literacy; all children will be stably housed; and all children will have continuous access to high quality child development programming."

New Sister City in Somalia. In October the Council approved formal recognition of Bosaso, Somlia as a sister city. This occurred after extensive review, dating back to July, when the City received a proposal from Minnesota Friends of Bosaso to establish a sister city relationship between Bosaso and Minneapolis. The proposal includes a letter from Mayor Hassan Abdalle Hassan of Bosaso expressing his support and letters of support from government officials, both in Puntland and Minnesota, local businesses, and community organizations. A review committee met with members of Minnesota Friends of Bosaso on September 23, 2014 for a presentation and discussion of the proposal. The proposal was reviewed based on the process and criteria for sister city relationships adopted July 17, 1998 and revised October 2, 2009.

Ebola Preparedness. Our City Health department has been involved in efforts to be prepared for Ebola on several levels. They have consulted with the Minnesota Department of Health, Hennepin County Medical Center, 911, Police and Fire to modify protocols and to make sure that responders have sufficient protective equipment. They have had a number of planning conversations with our partners in Hennepin County Public Health to assure that our isolation and quarantine procedures are up to date and to discuss how we would arrange for clean-up in settings where a person has been ill with Ebola. They have also participated in several conference calls for local public health agencies with the national Center for Disease Control. Fairview Riverside hospital is one of four hospitals in the Twin Cities region where any individuals who may have Ebola will be taken.

Nicollet Mall. Six proposals were received in response to our Request for Proposals from companies interested in provided construction services for the Nicollet Mall reconstruction. After evaluations, interviews and a staff recommendation, the Transportation and Public works committee approved selecting SEH as the firm to contract with for management and construction for an amount not to exceed \$2,400,000. This contract will include pre-construction services, beginning with the review of the project design to date, cost estimating and advising on-site logistics, staging, and the sequencing of the construction work.

Promoting Equity Through and Around Improved Transit Service. The Council has received a report from staff about our efforts, working with the community and the Met Council, to improve the equity impacts of transit investments. This work was spurred by the Southwest LRT project, and especially by the Southwest stations in north Minneapolis. To read the report, go here:
<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-132070.pdf>.

Walking Routes for Youth. Great new and informative safe routes to school maps were released this month during Walk to School Day events on October 8. They are available in four languages: English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong. Digital versions can be found at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/saferoutes> and a mobile version lets users track their current location on the map via smartphone. All versions of the map are free of charge. The map was developed over the past two years with input from parents, students, school staff, city staff, Hedberg Maps Inc. and members of many of the city's neighborhood organizations. For more information you can visit www.walkingschoolbus.org and sss.mpls.k12.mn.us/sr2s. The routes are meant to encourage students and families to walk to schools, parks, libraries and other neighborhood destinations. The routes can also serve as a planning tool for allocating school pedestrian enhancement dollars.

One-Sort Recycling Program Update. This month the council received a report on the results of the first year of our new one-sort recycling system. In the first year of our citywide one-sort recycling, crews collected **6,434 more** tons of recycling than when the city still used the older multi-sort process. Trash collected over the same periods went **down** by 13,511 tons. The increase in recycling brings the city's overall residential recycling rate up to **25 percent** from 18 percent before one-sort started. Still this was lower than the 30 percent we hoped to see. Our goal is to double the amount of recyclables collected from 18,000 tons in 2012 to 36,000 tons. We also learned that the one-sort recycling allows for simpler, more efficient processes. For instance, all of the garbage and recycling collection vehicles are the same make and model so purchasing is simpler, fewer spare parts are needed. The number of recycling routes has been cut in half from 24 to 12, Total workers compensation claims have been reduced by more than 62 percent from 2012 to 2013. Residents who want an extra recycling cart don't have to pay for it, and 879 households have an extra recycling cart. For more information about one-sort recycling in Minneapolis, visit www.minneapolismn.gov/onesort.

Water Works Award. Minneapolis Water Treatment and Distribution Services is among nine public drinking water systems in the nation to receive the Sustainable Water Utility Management Award from the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies. This is the first year the association has presented the award, which recognizes water utilities that have made a commitment to management that achieves a balance of innovative and successful efforts in economic, social and environmental endeavors. Minneapolis was recognized for incorporating strategies and financial procedures such as requiring the water division to maintain a minimum cash balance equal to approximately three months of operating expenses to keep cash flow available and implementing a five-year capital improvement program that details each construction project, its estimated cost and the source of funding. The association also noted the addition of a fixed rate in utility billing that helps stabilize revenues from fluctuations in water use due to weather and the declining

water demand by customers. Minneapolis was also recognized for encouraging its customers to use water wisely and being engaged in other environmental stewardship initiatives, including sustainable design in capital projects, efficient vehicles, collaboration on source water protection, supporting urban farms and community gardens, promoting the value of drinking water and reducing the use of disposable water bottles.

Yard Waste Pick up Ending. Your garbage day in the week of November 17 is the last 2014 collection for leaves, brush and other yard trimmings. Yard waste must be in compostable bags or unbagged in a reusable container at least 26 inches high with sturdy handles. Yard waste is not allowed in City-provided containers and should be out next to your garbage cart by 6 a.m. For info see www.minneapolismn.gov/solid-waste. If you have questions about leaf and brush pickup you can also call 673-2917 between 8am and 4:30pm Also, please don't rake leaves into the street; it's against the law and harms our lakes, creeks and river.

Vote November 4 or Sooner. Election Day in Tuesday November 4th and polls will be open from 7 am to 8 pm. You can find your sample ballot, polling place and more at <http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/>. Even though Election Day is officially November 4, from now until then all voters in Minneapolis can cast their no-excuse absentee ballots in person at City Hall. This is the first year voters in Minnesota are not required to provide a specific reason for voting absentee. That means all voters now have the option to vote absentee either by mail or in person prior to Election Day. Last month the Council voted to extend the in-person absentee ballot hours available at City Hall, 350 5th Street South. So from now until Election Day, the hours for in-person absentee voting in City Hall are: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday-Friday, through Oct. 31; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays; Noon to 5 p.m. Sundays; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday Nov. 3. As always, voters can also do absentee voting at home.

Two Questions on the Ballot. In this election, Minneapolis voters are being asked to decide on two different ballot questions. The first will ask whether voters support raising the filing fees for candidates for municipal office, from \$20 for every race to \$500 for the office of Mayor, \$250 for the office of Council Member, \$100 for the office Board of Estimate and Taxation and \$100 for the office of Park and Recreation Commission and, as an alternative to payment of a filing fee, allow a candidate to submit a petition of voter signatures as provided in state law. The second will ask whether voters support doing away with the requirement that restaurants in areas with limited commercial zoning receive no more than 30% of their revenues from alcohol sales. The Council has already scrapped the ordinance that prohibited restaurants in more commercial areas from making more than 40% of their revenue from alcohol sales. Along with this change, the Council also adopted a new set of rules that allow the City to prevent and address problems at restaurants that serve alcohol.

Homegrown Heroes Award. The Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council will honor recipients of the Homegrown Heroes Award at its annual open house **December 3**. Make your nominations now for community partners who help expand the community's ability to grow, process, distribute, eat and compost more healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods. Any community member or organization is eligible to receive a Homegrown Heroes Award. Fill out a nomination form by Oct. 31. Find more information at www.minneapolismn.gov/homegrown.

Southeast Library. The last of three public meeting set this fall will be held in October to discuss a new Southeast Library, and to hear more about the learning and information needs of the Cedar-Riverside, Southeast Como, Marcy-Holmes, and Prospect Park neighborhoods. The meetings will be held on **Thursday, October 30**, 7-9pm, at Luxton Recreation Center, 112 St. Mary's Ave SE.

Parking in the University District. This Council unanimously approved my ordinance that will reduce and improve parking requirements in the neighborhoods around the University – Prospect Park, Southeast Como, Marcy Holmes and the West Bank. Developers will no longer face a disincentive to build smaller units (one bedrooms and studios), and buildings in defined transit station areas will only have to provide about 1/3 of a parking space per bedroom. I want to thank the University District Alliance and City staff for all of their work to make this positive change possible.

Racist Football Team Name. The City Attorney informed a Council Committee October 22nd that the City would be unlikely to succeed in a lawsuit intent on prohibiting the use of the Washington DC football team's name, "R*skins," in Minneapolis. This was in response to a motion I made directing the attorney's office to research and offer a legal opinion on whether the City has the legal authority to enforce a ban on the use of the name as well as a ban on the use of the image worn by the Washington D.C. professional football team while playing at the stadium operated by the University of Minnesota. You can find her report here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-132776.pdf>. In response to this Council Member Yang and I made a joint statement that said in part, "The advice we have received from the City Attorney's Office is that in this specific case, we have no jurisdiction over speech on property owned by the University of Minnesota because it is a state, not a municipal entity, according to Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights v. University of Minnesota (Minnesota Court of Appeals, Oct. 30, 1984). The Court said explicitly in that case, 'civil rights problems are not confined to a metropolitan area but, rather, are a statewide problem, [and therefore] Minneapolis' powers to regulate civil rights must be narrowly construed.' Since our civil rights laws do not expressly assert that we have jurisdiction over state bodies, we cannot enforce our civil rights laws against hate speech at the University stadium. We agree that the continued use of a racial slur as the name of the Washington, D.C. football team is reprehensible and injurious to Indigenous People—especially children—and we agree that the name should be changed immediately. Unfortunately, under these circumstances, the City of Minneapolis does not have the authority to enact and enforce such a ban. We will continue to speak out against the Washington, DC team name in our capacity as community leaders. Racial slurs are not welcome in Minneapolis, and do not meet community standards. The name should be changed."

Protecting Children and Families. The City has received \$3.4 million from a U.S. Housing and Urban Development grant to rid 280 low-income homes of lead-based paint and other hazards. The City will focus these funds on the homes of children under 6 who have already become lead poisoned. Lead is a problem because in small children it can cause, learning disabilities and behavioral disorders such as aggression, impulsive behavior and hyperactivity. Lead can also cause miscarriages. Besides \$3 million for lead-based paint hazard control, the grant includes \$400,000 in Healthy Homes intervention funds. Homes participating in this grant will be evaluated for health and safety hazards, and hazards will be repaired. In the past, the "Healthy Home" hazards most often identified were lack of smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors, missing handrails, roof leaks, plumbing leaks, electric hazards and deteriorated stairs. Minneapolis is one of 39 local and state government agencies and research institutions awarded more than \$112 million in these HUD grants.

Creative City Road Map. The City is leading a planning process to think more strategically about how its arts and creative assets can best contribute to the local and regional economy and improve Minneapolis' quality of life. We would like to hear from you about your participation in Minneapolis arts and culture. You can take a survey by November 21 either online or by downloading a PDF (<http://www.creativeminneapolis.org/tell-us-what-you-think/>). Results from this survey will inform the Creative City Road Map, a plan for Minneapolis arts and culture for the next 10 years. Watch

www.creativeminneapolis.org for updates and more information about the process and events and what Minneapolitans are saying and thinking about how the arts and creative activities connect to their lives.

Wells Fargo Contract. The Ways and Means committee has voted to recommend that Wells Fargo be awarded a 3 year contract to provide financial service for the City. While I would like to see more of these services provided by smaller banks and credit unions and am very interested in exploring the possibility of establishing a municipal bank, I will likely support this when it comes to the full Council for a vote on Friday. Wells Fargo clearly offered the most affordable and comprehensive response to our Request for Proposals (RFP). I was also glad to see that the committee directed staff to work with Wells Fargo to develop a mutually beneficial framework of community reinvestment principles and goals consistent with the Responsible Banking Ordinance and to develop a framework for community benefits to be included in a future RFP for some additional financial services not included in this contract.

Finances Online. The Ways and Means Committee has also recommended approving contracting with OpenGov.com (www.opengov.com) to make our financial information available and accessible in an open format. If approved by the Council it will still take up to six weeks for the information to be posted.

MPCA Open House on TCE. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is sponsoring an open house Tuesday, **October 28**, from 5:30-7pm at Van Cleve Recreation Center about a variety of soil and groundwater cleanup methods. Residents were notified in fall 2013 that trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination in the soil gas presented a potential health concern in a portion of the Southeast Como neighborhood. Residents and property owners in the area can learn more about potential ground cleanup options for trichloroethylene contamination and ask the experts questions. More information about the open house and an update on the Southeast Hennepin Avenue vapor project is attached. More information about trichloroethylene is on the Minnesota Department of Health website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/hazardous/topics/tce.html>.

Augsburg Fairview College Fair. There will be a Native American College Fair for youth on Thursday, **November 6th**, 5-8pm. The Fair is free and open to the public and targeted to having students, families and other community members. Although the name is Native American College Fair all students and families are encouraged to attend to learn more about their post-secondary education options. Attendees will speak with representatives from a variety of post-secondary institutions, job training and community programs, and learn about college life, courses, and admission & financial aid requirements. For more information visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/1450077115252019/>.

Robberies Down in U of M Area. The number of robberies on and around the University of Minnesota campus this fall appears to be lower than last year and the semester average. From September through November, university police reported seven robberies including one on campus. During the high-profile crime spike during the fall of last year, 26 robberies occurred on and off campus. This is great news and I commend all the organizations and individuals who have been working hard to improve safety including our own Second Precinct, the U of M police and the U District Alliance.

Special Service Districts. The Council is has approved amendments to the services and service charges for Special Service Districts, including Dinkytown and Stadium Village. For more information, go here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-131861.pdf>.

Good Neighbor Fund. There will be a community information meeting about the 2015 Good Neighbor Fund/Vikings Partnership Fund on Wednesday, **October 29**, 5-6pm, at the Van Cleve Park Community Center

Multi-Purpose Room, 901 15th Ave SE. The meeting will give an opportunity to ask questions about the consideration of projects in 2015. There will be a brief presentation about applying for grants in 2015, with members of the Fund Management Committee, including representatives of the MN Vikings; to be followed by questions, answers, discussion. Light refreshments will be available. If you are considering submitting a proposal for 2015 funding, please consider attending the information meeting. Questions are welcome via email to gnfund@umn.edu; or to Jan Morlock, at (612) 624-8318 or Peg Wolff at (612) 624-6504. The Call for Applications for the 2015 grant cycle will go out prior to the community information meeting.

Vacation of old 22nd Street. Staff and the neighborhood group are recommending that the Planning Commission approve the requested vacation of the now unnecessary remnant of 22nd St E near Cedar Avenue, which was freed up by the 22nd St E road project and Seward Commons development.

CART Ambulance. Staff and the neighborhood group are recommending that the Planning Commission approve the conditional use permit and site plan review for an ambulance service in the existing building at 2501 Minnehaha Ave. The curb cut along 25th Street will be shifted to the east to align with the parking lot and the landscaping will be extended along E 25th St. There will also be improvements to landscaping along Minnehaha.

Seward Cooperative Creamery. The Planning Commission has approved the land use applications filed by the Seward Coop for the old Cooperative Creamery building at 26th Ave S and E Franklin. This included a variance to allow the "Limited Production and Processing" use to exceed 1,200 square feet of gross floor area. I continue to believe that we should change this zoning code standard. Businesses that want to do food production and processing are welcome on our commercial corridors, and this is an unnecessary impediment.

Peppers and Fries. A new restaurant at 39th Ave S and E Lake Street Called Peppers and Fires has applied to operate a full service restaurant with outdoor patio seating and serving all alcoholic beverages. After a public hearing in the community, staff has recommended approval of the license with food being available during all hours of operation with no reduced menu available, background music in the interior of the premises without any outdoor speakers. If approved by the Council as recommended, it will be open Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Monday to Thursday 11:00 a.m to 12:00 a.m., Friday 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., and Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., but the restaurant will be allowed to be open until 2 am. The outdoor area will be open Sunday through Saturday from store opening to 10:00 p.m.

Walgreens. The Planning Commission has approved a new 15,780 square foot Walgreens retail store with drive-through pharmacy on the 3101 block of East Lake Street. The Planning Commission required that Walgreens plant additional shrubs, and incorporate screening at least 3 feet high and at least 60% opaque along the southern edge of the property (near residents).

Hampton Inn and Suites. The Planning Commission has approved a new Hampton Inn at 2812 University Ave SE. This will be a new, five-story hotel with 117 rooms. This action included a rezoning from C2 to C3A, a conditional use permit for height, and a set of variances that mostly came from the unique position of the parcel (with University on one side and Williams St SE on the other).

Vacant Rainbow Site on 27th near Lake St.. I have reached out to the owners of this site and learned that they are just starting to explore the potential re-uses for it. They first want to analyze the market and better understand what is feasible. They have had some inquiries and it is my understanding that they may look at potential retailers who could use anywhere from 20,000 to 70,000 sq. ft., but also have not ruled out a total

re-development of the store and parking lot areas that could include a mix of uses, including housing and retail. I am working to set up a meeting with some of their team and am encouraging them to reach out to community stakeholders and neighborhood associations as well.

Affordable Housing Funds for Prospect North. I was glad to see that one of the seven projects recommended to receive Livable Communities grants at a recent Met Council Community Development meeting included one in the Prospect Park North area at the old habitat for Humanity headquarters site at 3001 45th St. SE.. If approved by the full met Council in November, the nonprofit developer, Aeon, will receive \$1,445,000 in a Transit-Oriented Development grant to go towards purchasing the property. Aeon hopes to open a 65 unit affordable housing apartment in 2017. It will be considered affordable to those making 60 percent or less of the metro-median income and may be tailored to seniors, families with children or both.

Rising Cedar Award. Congratulations to Touchstone Mental Health, and their partners, Seward Redesign and Project for Pride in Living, for recently being given a Minnesota Brownfields ReScape Community Impact Award for their Rising Cedar Apartments in Seward at 2312 Snelling Ave. Minnesota Brownfields Awards program recognizes exemplary redevelopment projects statewide, featuring the transformation of abandoned or underutilized sites using innovative solutions to significant environmental issues. For more information visit <http://mnbrownfields.org/case-studies/rising-cedar/>

Openings on Boards and Commissions. Applications are now being accepted for the Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Arts Commission, Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC), Family Housing Fund (McKnight), Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC), Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights, Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board, Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (MTN), Minneapolis Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Commission, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC), Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, and the Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee. Visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information.

Open Office Hours in the Ward. I hold open "Office Hours" in the ward every Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11:00 am. Please feel free to call the office at 673-2202 to reserve some time or just stop by for a visit.

- First Thursdays at the Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Avenue;
- Second Thursdays at Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE;
- Third Thursdays at Pratt School, 66 Malcolm Avenue SE ;
- Fourth Thursdays at Blue Moon Coffee Café, 3822 E Lake St.