

**Minutes**  
**Community Development Committee**  
**November 15, 2016**

Attending: Ken Webb (Chair), Bob Hain, Ann Risch, Rick Musser, Cora Peterson, Nathan Van Wylen, Sheldon Mains (arrived late), Shaina Brassard (Seward Redesign), Brian Miller (Seward Redesign), Doug Wise (SNG Housing Coordinator).

The agenda was approved with the addition of allocation of NRP program income to the housing program. The October 11, 2016 Community Development Committee minutes were approved.

**Minnehaha/Hiawatha Greenway**

Cora Peterson with the Min Hi Line Coalition said they are a volunteer run group of neighborhoods, organizations and individuals dedicated envisioning and developing a distinct green space along the Minnehaha Hiawatha corridor. The Coalition is advocating for a visioning study along the Blue Line LRT from the Midtown Greenway to Minnehaha Parkway, between Minnehaha and Hiawatha Avenues. This freight rail corridor runs alongside several Minneapolis neighborhoods and offers a tremendous opportunity for a unique urban green space. The study will explore options for a distinct urban green space, utilizing previous historic research, small area plans, and community engagement. They are seeking support from the Seward neighborhood.

Brian Miller questioned whether another visioning study is needed. He felt that this information is contained in previous studies and that information should be used to move the project forward. He said someone needs to talk to the property owners to find out what their future plans are and see if there is an opportunity to purchase any of the land. Brian made the following motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group support the Min Hi Coalition in asking Hennepin County to revisit discussions with the land owners within the corridor to find out if there is an opportunity for acquisition of all or part of the property. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Some members of the committee said we should offer the Min Hi Coalition our general support without specifying what actions should be taken.

**Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) supports the efforts of the Min Hi Coalition to move the Minnehaha/Hiawatha Avenue greenway project forward.** Ken Webb moved and Rick Musser seconded. Motion passed.

**Bicycle Boulevard Improvements on 29th Avenue and 24th Street**

Doug Wise said the Public Works Department has completed the final plans for the bicycle boulevard improvements to be located on 29th Avenue and 24th Street. The plans will go to the City Council for final approval before the end of November. Construction is planned for next year. The plans currently include concrete traffic circles on 24<sup>th</sup> Street at 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Doug said a number of neighborhood residents would like them to be changed to planted traffic circles more akin to what's on 17th Avenue.

Doug said he asked the Public Works staff to attend the meeting and they declined saying they

were not seeking further input from the neighborhood. Doug said that Matthew Hendricks suggested some changes to the plans and Public Works staff said some of his changes were incorporated into the plans. We do not know what those changes are. Doug also said that he has heard that planting can be put in the traffic circles if the neighborhood agrees to maintain them. He said he does not have any information on what would be involved in accomplishing this.

**Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) should invite the new Director of Public Works to a Community Development Committee meeting to discuss the plans for bicycle boulevard improvements on 29th Avenue and 24th Street, and in particular the use of plantings within the improvements.** Rick Musser moved and Ken Webb seconded. Motion passed.

### **Redesign – I-94 Planning Process**

Shaina Brassard with Redesign said they are proposing to lead a planning process to address barriers to walkability and connectivity between the Seward and Cedar Riverside neighborhoods. Redesign would work with primary Cedar Riverside partners, the West Bank Business Association, SNG and SCCA. Redesign would like to leverage MNDOT's "Rethinking I-94" study to identify and advocate for improvements above and beyond MNDOT's property. The planning process would convene the community, Hennepin County and Minneapolis Public Works staff, elected officials and MNDOT. Brian Miller said they are currently seeking funding to support this effort.

The committee discussed a number of issues related to the bridges at 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Riverside Avenue and the pedestrian bridge. Issues included the 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Avenue S curve, no access from eastbound Franklin to I-94 east of 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the need to replace the pedestrian bridge. It was also mentioned that there is no access from westbound I-94 to northbound I-35W.

The committee discussed the lack of connectivity and disruption to the flow between Seward and Cedar Riverside. Rick Musser said the History Committee has information on the construction of I-94 and the disruption this caused to the neighborhoods. He said he would provide the information to Brian.

**Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) supports the process and will participate in the I-94 Planning Project proposed by Redesign.** Ken Webb moved and Rick Musser seconded. Motion passed.

### **Allocation of Housing Program Income**

Doug Wise handed out an information sheet on SNG's housing programs. He said there has been a lot of activity lately and there are enough applications in process now to use up all of the funds in the Revolving Loan and Interest Subsidy programs.

Doug said that as of the end of September there was \$16,038.44 of program income at CEE and \$19,427.72 of program income at the city for a total of \$35,466.16. Doug said there is also an additional \$19,646 in program income at the city. These funds were received as a partial payment of a loan to Koyi Sushi after the restaurant went out of business. At the time these

funds were left for possible future economic development activities. These funds could be used for the loan programs.

The information sheet recommended that the funds be allocated as follows:

Revolving Loan Fund - \$15,066.92, Interest Subsidy Program - \$2,300.00, Emergency Loan Fund - \$0 - Administrative Funds - \$3,099.24, Housing Coordinator - \$15,000.00, Total - \$35,466.16.

It also recommended that if the additional \$19,646 in program income is allocated to the loan programs, \$2,000 should go to the interest reduction program and the remainder to the revolving loan fund.

**Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) will allocate the \$35,466.16 in program income from the Revolving Loan Fund, plus the \$19,646 returned from the Koyi Sushi loan, to the SNG housing program.** Brian Miller moved and Bob Hain seconded. Motion passed.

The committee did not make a recommendation on how much should be allocated to each program.

#### **Report from Brian Miller, Seward Redesign**

Brian said Seward Commons Phase III still does not have the financing to start construction because the city is not willing to provide tax increment financing. He said because they are not able to start construction this year, they will lose \$300,000 in State DEED financing. They previously lost \$300,000 on the Snelling Avenue part of the project because the city did not start construction on time. He said they are still working on a possibility for the financing of Phase III.

Brian said construction on the Seward Towers project is ahead of schedule and will be completed at the end of the year.

#### **Report from Doug Wise, SNG Housing Coordinator**

Doug said he has tried to contact the Ethiopian Church to invite them to the meeting without success. He asked if anyone has contact information to please forward it to him.

Doug said a couple years ago, SNG and the Milwaukee Avenue Homeowners Association requested that stop signs be changed at 22nd Street on 21st, 22nd and 23rd Avenues so that the traffic on the Avenues would have a stop sign at 22nd Street. All three of these intersections are "Tee" intersections with 22nd Street closed one direction past the intersection. This request was due to the increased bike and pedestrian traffic on 22nd Street since access to the Hiawatha LRT trail was opened at 22nd Street, combined with the relatively fast traffic on those Avenues (especially 21st Avenue). Doug said he finally heard back from Public Works that they are not going to switch the stop signs.

**Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) will send a letter to the new Director of Public Works and Council Member Warsame explaining the rationale for switching the stop signs on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street at 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenues and stating the switching of these stop sign was a condition of SNG's approval of the changes to the**

**Cedar/Minnehaha/Franklin Avenue intersection.** Sheldon Mains moved and Ken Webb seconded. Motion passed.

**Other Business**

Sheldon Mains said the County and the city have agreed on what each is going to pay for on the Cedar/Minnehaha/Franklin intersection project. He said the project is scheduled to go out for bids in February.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40.