

Minutes (Approved)
Community Development Committee
February 13, 2018

Attending: Ken Webb (Chair), Alexis Troschinetz, Sheldon Mains, Dan Handeen, Crystal Myslajek, Nathan Ellingson, Sophia Manolis, Matthew Hendricks, Winston Cavert, Brian Miller (Seward Redesign), Doug Wise (SNG Housing Coordinator).

The January 9, 2017 Community Development Committee minutes were approved.

Midtown Greenway - Wayfinding and Public Space Improvements

Crystal Myslajek, manager of the Midtown Community Works program, said the program began in 1995 to partner with other agencies and organizations to develop the Midtown Greenway. Crystal said 2018 will be the final year for the program. Last summer the County Board approved a budget, which includes some funding for wayfinding (such as map kiosks, signage, vertical cues, etc.) and public space improvements (such as plazas, seating, lighting, etc.) at key sites on and around the Midtown Greenway. Crystal said they will soon make a decision on the locations and improvements to be constructed. They are currently seeking community input on sites.

Nathan Ellingson with Hennepin County said the County received a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grant to fund major safety improvements to Midtown Greenway crossings at James Avenue, Irving Avenue, Humboldt Avenue, 5th Avenue, 28th Street, Hiawatha Avenue, and Minnehaha Avenue. Nathan said the County will begin design work in 2019 and install the improvements in 2020. Crystal said she met with Doug Wise and Kerry Cashman with SNG and they asked if a permanent closing at 29th Avenue and safety improvements to the 26th, 27th, and 30th Avenue crossings could be done concurrently with the HSIP projects. Crystal said the HSIP funding can only be used for the seven intersections and they have no other funding at this time.

There was discussion about safety at the 26th Avenue crossing. There is confusion as to whether bikes or cars have the right-of-way. Some cars will stop for bikes and others will not. The width of the street is also an issue because if a car stops for a bicyclist, the car behind it could go around it and not see the bicyclist. The committee suggested that the bike lanes approaching the crossing, where parking is not permitted could be made a separated bikeway with plastic bollards. A median in the center of the street similar to 28th Street would also be helpful.

There was also discussion about the 30th Avenue crossing. Because of the hill going up to the crossing, cars often don't see the bicyclists coming until they are right on top of them.

Minneapolis Youth Climate Resolution

Sophia Manolis, a student at South High School, said a group of Minneapolis youth from South, Southwest, Roosevelt, Washburn, and Patrick Henry high schools are working to improve the renewable energy standard in Minneapolis. Sophia passed out a draft resolution they will be presenting to the City Council. The resolution expresses the commitment of the City Council to protect the children and grandchildren of this community from the risks of climate destruction by taking a leadership role in renewable energy. The resolution directs the city to create a plan to

reach 100% renewable electricity by 2030 or sooner, including 25% of the electricity generated from within the city limits. The resolution would also create two seats for Minneapolis high school students on the city's Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC).

The committee members said they supported the efforts of the students and the goals outlined in the resolution. Sophia said they have a petition online supporting their efforts that has over 100 signatures on it. They also have an endorsement form for organizations. The committee asked Doug Wise to make information on the petition available in the SNG newsletter and E-democracy. Sophia said they will be making a presentation to a city council committee on March 9th at 9:00 a.m. and invited committee members to attend.

Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) supports the efforts of the Minneapolis youth working to improve renewable energy in Minneapolis and endorses the resolution they will present to the City Council. Sheldon Mains moved and Ken Webb seconded.

Motion passed.

Seward Commons Redevelopment Strategy

Brian Miller with Seward Redesign handed out a brochure on Seward Commons Phase III. Phase III will consist of 121 market rate apartments. Schafer Richardson is the only co-developer interested in the project. The project is not feasible without Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and to date the city has not been willing to consider it for this project. Redesign is going back to the city to request TIF again and is hopeful that with new members on the city council, they will have more success this time around. Brian asked if SNG could reaffirm its support for TIF on Phase III and support extending the TIF District authorization to Phases IV and V.

Brian also discussed the Gateway Project on the corner of 22nd Street and Minnehaha Avenue. They have a new tenant moving into the former Cycles for Change space and will be making some improvements to the building. They are also planning to remove the split-level building on the corner and replace it with a public plaza.

Motion: The Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) supports the development strategy for the Seward Commons Redevelopment, specifically:

- **Support for the redevelopment of the Gateway parcels at 22nd and Minnehaha;**
- **Support for the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) application for the Phase III rental housing project; and,**
- **Extension of the TIF District authorization to Phases IV and V.**

Winston Cavert moved and Ken Webb seconded. Motion passed. Brian Miller abstained.

Report from Brian Miller, Seward Redesign

Brian said that Scott Shaffer just had a baby and is out on leave, but said he could give an update on the I-94 Reconnecting Neighborhoods project. Brian said the Riverside Avenue Bridge over I-94 has been deemed to need structural work in 2020 or 2021, and this might necessitate the replacement of the bridge. If the bridge is replaced, MnDOT will likely replace the 25th Avenue Bridge as part of the same project. Improvement of pedestrian and bicycle access across the 25th Avenue Bridge is a priority for the I-94 Reconnecting Neighborhoods project.

Brian said replacement of the pedestrian/bicycle bridge near 22nd Avenue is another priority. They are pushing to have MnDOT look at the possibility of lowering the grades on I-94. This would make a replacement bridge much better and provide easier access for pedestrians and bicycles.

Brian said they are also working with the Hennepin County to try and close the gap in the bikeway system along Cedar Avenue between 20th Avenue and the Hiawatha LRT Trail.

Other Business

Alexis Troschinetz said that the Park Board Meadow considering changing the name of Riverside Park to Annie Young Riverside Park and Lower Riverside Park to Annie Young Meadow. Annie just recently died after serving 28 years as a member of the Park Board. The Park Board will be setting up a hearing. The Park Board would like SNG's help with promoting the public comment opportunity.

Some members of the committee felt this item could be handled at the Board level because it wasn't actual development, just a name change. It was also suggested that the Park Board rename only one property instead of two.

Ken Webb announced that he was starting his own business called Home Proud Handiworks. He said that he has gotten a very positive response so far and if business takes off he may need to give up chairing the Community Development Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47.