



COLUMBIA PARK NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

August 2009



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Come On Out for National Night Out, Tuesday, August 4

- **3500 block of Spain Place, 5:00-9:00 p.m. - Potluck, share recipes, "green" literature, kids' games**
- **3500 block of 2 -1/2 Street NE, 6:30-8:00 p.m. - Potluck. Please bring lawn chairs.**

A Bridge Runs Through It . . .

On Thursday, July 23, a community meeting took place at RiverVillage East, 2919 Randolph St. NE—the latest of a number over the past year regarding the fate of the “fracture-critical” bridge that carries St. Anthony Parkway over the Burlington Northern – Santa Fe rail yards. Members of the Community Advisory Committee, Minneapolis Public Works staff, state Department of Transportation staff, state Representative Dianne Loeffler, city councilmember Paul Ostrow and interested residents heard and discussed the latest ideas and concerns.

At this point, there are four proposals involving the bridge: renovation of the existing bridge (including adding wider paths for pedestrians and bicyclists), and three replacement options—double-arch, double-arch/lattice and cable-stay designs. All options would involve construction of new piers and abutments.

There are many complicating factors—the current application for historic designation for the Grand Rounds parkway system, the national historic designation of the bridge itself, the segment of the parkway lying within an industrial zone, and, obviously, construction in the midst of a very busy rail yard. Plus, room for future passenger rail tracks must be included in the plan. Federal, state and local governments, and a major railroad, have many issues to sort out.

A big one, of course, is money. Attendees heard that this bridge is now the top bonding priority for the City of Minneapolis, and that state funding in these tough budgetary times will be closely scrutinized. Would the uncertainties inherent in the renovation choice rule that out? Would economics dictate the lowest-cost option?

The only piece of this puzzle that appears nearly certain at this point is that California Street will be realigned to intersect the parkway at a point slightly west of the current point. Main Street’s intersection is still under review.

The project is scheduled for 2011-12. The address of the Public Works department’s web page about the project is: [/www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/cip/anthony/index.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/cip/anthony/index.asp)

Councilmember Paul Ostrow’s web page about it is at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward1/stanthony-bridge.asp

Columbia Park Neighborhood Association

meetings are open to the public, and are held on the **third Monday** of the month at Columbia Manor, 3300 Central Avenue, beginning at 6:30 P.M.

Thanks to Eastside Food Coop for providing snacks.

Coming meeting dates:

August 17

September 21

October 19

Web site:

www.neighborhoodlink.com/minneapolis/colpark/main.html

E-mail

CPNA-NRP@yahoogroups.com

Get involved in your neighborhood - a little . . . or a little more.

What will you do this month, next month, for your neighborhood, your city?

Phase II NRP Program: Now Accepting Applications

The Columbia Park Neighborhood Association has partnered with Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation (GMHC) to administer our Phase II NRP home improvement low-interest loan program. Loan program information and applications are available at GMHC’s Housing Resource Center – Northeast, located at 909 Main Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413. The Housing Resource Center – Northeast can be reached by phone at (612) 378-7985.

General Election Tuesday, November 3, 2009

The 2009 Minneapolis Municipal Election will be conducted using Ranked Choice Voting. Conducting the 2009 election using Ranked Choice Voting means there is no Primary and all candidates appear on the November ballot.

Offices on the 2009 ballot

- * Mayor
- * Council Members – 13 Wards
- * Board of Estimate and Taxation – two At-Large seats
- * Park and Recreation Board – three At-Large and six District seats

Ranked Choice Voting - the Name

Although it has commonly been referred to as Instant Runoff Voting (abbreviated "IRV"), in the future it will be called "Ranked Choice Voting." The term "Ranked Choice" more accurately reflects the process voters will use to rank candidates in single and multi-seat offices. Also "Ranked Choice" does not promise "instant" results from the process.

What is Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) allows voters to rank multiple candidates in order of preference. In Minneapolis, Ranked Choice Voting combines the Primary and the General Election into one event. In 2009, voters may rank up to three candidates for each municipal office.

What offices are elected using Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked Choice Voting will be used for Minneapolis municipal offices: Mayor, City Council, Board of Estimate and Taxation, and Park and Recreation Board both At-Large and by District. This does not include Special School District Number 1 (often referred to as the Minneapolis School Board), county, state or federal offices.

How do voters use Ranked Choice Voting?

In 2009, Minneapolis voters may rank up to three candidates for single and multiple seat municipal

offices. Each ballot will have three columns. In each office, voters will mark the ballot from left to right, marking their first choice for each race in the first column. If voters wish to rank different second and third choices, they will mark them in the second and third columns on the ballot.

How will voters learn to vote using Ranked Choice Voting?

During the summer, an extensive voter education program will be implemented and continue through the Nov. 3 General Election. Anyone who is interested helping the public understand these voting changes can join the Ranked Choice Voting Issues Group. The RCV Issues Group will meet the third Thursday of every month (July 16, August 20, September 17, and October 15). The meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. in Room 132 in City Hall. For more information, contact rcv@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Voters will also be able to learn how to vote at the polling place on Election Day, where they'll find posters and visual aids that explain how to mark a ballot, instructions at the top of each ballot, and election judges who will help explain RCV and answer voters' questions.

See other election-related information at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections> or call 311. Updates on planning and implementation of ranked choice voting can be found at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections/rcv.asp>. Further information on how the 2009 election will work can be found at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections/elections-works.asp

Results Minneapolis

A new Web site is available that enables residents to monitor City performance in key service areas: public safety, education, neighborhood conditions, housing and economic development, resident health, and environment. Each measurement page has a chart, a link to the underlying data, a description of its importance, what is being done about it, and related links. Where possible, measurements have data not only at the City level, but also by other levels of geography and, in some cases, with a breakdown by race and ethnicity. Maps are used to highlight neighborhood data on several measures (e.g., graffiti incidents and fire response).

See for yourself at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/results.

Sidewalk Repair

By law (City Charter, Chapter 8, sections 12 and 13), the cost of the construction and repair of the public sidewalks in the City of Minneapolis is the responsibility of the property owner. The Sidewalk Inspections office oversees the construction and repair of public sidewalks.

When a property owner receives a sidewalk repair notice, he/she has two options:

1. Hire a properly bonded private sidewalk contractor to do the required repairs
2. Allow a city-hired contractor to repair the sidewalk, and have the City bill you for the cost of replacement

For further information, including a list of bonded sidewalk contractors, see the City web site at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sidewalks/repair.asp> or call 311.

Neighborhood Community and Engagement Commission

... was created to shape how the City engages its residents and works with neighborhood and community organizations as well as oversee programming details and funding for neighborhood revitalization work. In part, its mandate is to provide overall direction to the next phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and be primarily responsible for the review of neighborhood plans and recommended approval to the City Council.

It operates under the City Coordinator's Office (612) 673-3163; with 16 members—7 members appointed using the City's Open Appointment Process and a public hearing; 5 members appointed by the City Council of Minneapolis; and 2 members appointed by the Mayor of Minneapolis. 8 members selected through a process defined by the officially recognized neighborhood organizations. 1 member appointed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Members serve for two years (with a 3 – 2 year term limit).

For further information, see www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/neighborhood-community-engagement.asp

High-Tech Company Locates Headquarters In Columbia Park

Open Access Technology International, Inc. (OATI) is relocating its headquarters from Plymouth to the former Honeywell Research facility at 3660 Technology Drive (near 37th Avenue and the Camden Bridge). OATI currently employs 400 people, with plans to hire another 50 to 100 employees. Most of the employees are highly trained engineers and computer software development professionals. Many of the current employees are already Minneapolis residents who look forward to being able to bike to work, reduce their commuting time, and become better

Minneapolis Park Board Seeks To Put Independence In Voters' Hands

Taking an historic step in seeking total governmental independence, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board of Commissioners (MPRB) at its July 1 meeting unanimously approved a resolution to bring the decision to Minneapolis voters this November.

The resolution comes on the heels of yet another action by the Minneapolis Charter Commission that affects the fate and future of the park system. At its July 1 meeting, the Charter Commission voted in favor of a November referendum to eliminate the Park Board and two independent elected members from the Board of Estimate and Taxation and replace them with the entire Minneapolis City Council. The Park Board's resolution notes that such a change will give exclusive control of the Park Board's budget to the City Council. The resolution also affirms that the Park Board does not believe the City Council will protect and preserve park lands in light of the difficult financial circumstances the City regularly faces.

Earlier this year, several members of the Minneapolis City Council proposed a Charter amendment to eliminate the Park Board and have the parks overseen by the City Council. The proposal went to the Minneapolis Charter Commission in June for placement on the November ballot, but failed due in part to broad public support for the Park Board voiced during a series of public hearings.

acquainted with our community.

OATI is a smart-energy firm that uses highly sophisticated technology to manage the North American power grid. It is the largest provider of software services for gas and electrical energy industries. The software packages provide the scheduling, trading, transmission reservations, congestion management, and compliance monitoring related to the power grids throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

"This Board must commit to the challenge to be separate and independent. It will take hard work from each of us, but success ensures that our parks and recreation centers will not be lost for the sake of development or sacrificed in tough economic times, which will happen," said Tom Nordyke, Board President. "We have no choice but to seek independence. It's our responsibility to care for the parks and we are committed to this challenge," reaffirmed Mary Merrill-Anderson, Board Vice President.

Broad Public Support

A recent survey commissioned by the Minneapolis Parks Foundation and conducted by Decision Resources Ltd. found that 82 percent of the respondents decisively supported an independent Park Board compared to seven percent that opposed an independent Board.

The survey reported that the Park Board has established "not only a deep and broad reservoir of goodwill among Minneapolis residents, but also an optimism that this valuable asset will continue in the future to be governed well."

"The survey illustrates that the public supports the Park Board's mission that our parks be held in trust forever. We believe that the public response to seek total independence will be overwhelmingly in our favor," President Tom Nordyke said.

[text from www.minneapolis.parks.org]

NE Citizen Patrol

(NECP) has developed a multi-pronged approach to fighting crime and improving the Northeast neighborhoods. The organization needs support for and/or involvement in its activities. Anyone who is interested in helping is invited to become a volunteer.

The group meets weekly. Call (612) 788-8790 or email info@nepatrol.org. Individual schedules can be accommodated.

Columbia Park Neighborhood Association board:

Sue Bembenek and Mike Melman, co-presidents

Melody Devine, secretary

Liz Wielinski, treasurer

Dan Bembenek

Peter Doughty

Alyssa Perrault

Jen Pihoda

Staff

Kathy Buchanan, bookkeeper and community organizer 763-571-1230

Special thanks to those who help make this newsletter possible, especially Custom Business Forms for printing. Snacks at CPNA meetings are provided by Eastside Co-op—thank you!

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of all members of the Columbia Park Neighborhood Association (CPNA).

Let your ideas and concerns be heard! Contact the editor, Peter Doughty, c/o CPNA, P.O. Box 21593, Columbia Heights, MN 55421.

Neighborhood Notices at Lily's

Bridgett, proprietor of Lily's Coffee Shop (Central Avenue at 33rd Avenue), has agreed to provide a space for a box file which will contain some of the many valuable notices, including current city and neighborhood news, important events and any job opening announcements, received by the board. The information will be updated monthly.

Look for the box during your next visit.

The **Shoreham Area Advisory Committee** provides a forum for concerns about developments at Shoreham Yards, the rail complex that borders on Central Avenue between 28th Avenue and St. Anthony Parkway. Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Holland neighborhood office, 2516 Central Avenue.

For further information, visit www.shorehamyards.org.

Eat Local, America!

Eastside Food Co-op, at 2551 Central Avenue, along with the other ten Twin Cities food co-ops and dozens of others nationwide, challenges area residents to put their money where their mouths—and producers—are, and help stimulate local economic growth by taking the Eat Local, America! challenge August 1-31.

Those wishing to join simply sign a large poster at any of the participating Twin Cities and area co-ops, or register online at www.eatlocalamerica.coop to show their commitment to eat local food. Seasoned locavores are encouraged to commit to eating four out of five meals with local food—roughly 80 percent of their diets. Those who are just starting out are urged to begin by eating five meals a week made with local foods.

As part of this challenge, Eastside Food Co-op is hosting two events: Saturday, Aug. 15, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (sampling) and 5 - 7 p.m. (potluck) Saturday, Aug. 29, sundown - Eat Local Ramadan Feast