

Minutes

Prospect Park East River Road NRP - 2 Steering Committee Meeting of May 16, 2005 at Luxton Park

The meeting was called to order by Steve Cross, co-chair of the Steering Committee, at 7:35 pm in the multi-purpose room at Luxton Park Community Center. There were 10 people present. (See attached sign in sheet and item 8.) Dick Poppele was out of town. Steve said that he and Dick had decided, after getting some e-mail feedback from as many committee members as possible, to hold the neighborhood meeting on Wed, June 29 at 7 pm at Luxton Park. He asked if anyone present objected to that plan and there were no objections. An ad is set to appear in the next SE Angle. He hoped that the final proposed action plan would be ready to post on the website in two weeks, but must be there no later than mid-June. The plan for this meeting is to spend an hour going through the draft action plan and then the draft document which is intended to be mailed to every address in the neighborhood. The mailer would not contain the full text of the proposed action plan but would list programs and dollar amounts allocated to each. Copies of both are attached.

Jerry Stein was present and noted that at the last neighborhood meeting the dollar amounts did not add up to the total available. Since there appeared to be money available, he asked if he could present another proposal. He provided copies (attached) and summarized as follows: Five years ago PPERRIA gave \$5,000 to help start SEMCOL, South East Minneapolis Council on Learning. He noted that these were not NRP funds. Marcy Holmes and Como neighborhoods also contributed and other funds were raised from foundations, bringing the total to \$35,000. These funds were primarily used to hire a neighborhood education worker to help parents and children connect with the schools and their education. The intention is to help parents connect with opportunities to finish high school or get other training and to help children succeed in school. There are outside funds available for science camp tuition, the family math program and other programs, but there is a need to help families connect with these opportunities. This proposal asks for \$5,000 from Prospect Park's NRP funds to continue funding the education worker. **A question was asked whether this was the same program as the one that received \$15,000 from Prospect Park's NRP Phase 1 funding and the answer was yes.** There was a site visit recently and the involved schools are happy with the program. Most of the effort goes into Glendale families, mostly at Pratt School, but some at Tuttle. SEMCOL hopes to leverage the funds it receives to raise additional funds. There was some discussion on whether a match could be required and whether the \$5,000 should be limited to Prospect Park and Glendale, but it was decided not to do that since 89% of the worker's time is already spent in the neighborhood.

The committee began going through the draft action plan point by point. For dollar amounts, see page three of the proposed mailer.

Education and Human Services:

It was suggested to spit this into two sections.

Education:

Betts Zerby wrote another draft of the Education section (attached) and her version was adopted with the exception of the last paragraph, Resources, for which the old version was retained.

The proposal for \$58,000 for transition funding for Pratt School falls under this section. In the last meeting, there was discussion about the difficulty of getting money to Pratt in time for the coming school year and it was noted that if there were no guaranteed funding, the district would not budget for the staff. Pratt Council was working on the issue. Betts reported in this meeting that since the school district's budget process for next year was well underway and the Prospect Park action plan was not complete, there was no way to guarantee that NRP funds would be available for the next school year. Therefore, Pratt Council sent a letter to the district guaranteeing the money for the first semester. The intention is that if this proposal is included in an approved action plan, NRP funds would be used to reimburse Pratt Council and to fund the transition for the rest of the 2005-2006 school year and the following. Pratt's principal told the district that NRP money would not be available until the end of the year. This was fine with the district, even though it was made clear that approval of this proposal is not guaranteed. If the action plan is approved in June, it could go to the NRP Policy Board and the PPERRIA Board in July and then to the City Council in August. The earliest that a check could be cut is in September.

There was some discussion about trying for Early Access funds for Pratt or simply sending through the Action Plan. It was decided that it would be prudent to do both, since a delay somewhere in the process for any part of the plan would delay the Pratt funding, and a delay would jeopardize Pratt. Steve cross said that the Early Access process, if needed, will require another 30 day notice period and another neighborhood meeting.

Jerry Stein's proposal for \$5,000 for SEMCOL would also fall under this section (see item 2).

Human Services:

There were no objections to the language in this section. There was discussion on the dollar amount but it was decided to leave it at \$12,000.

Livability:

This is a “catch all” category, intended to include any other proposals that may come up. There was discussion as to whether to delete Strategy 4, traffic management, but it was decided to keep it in the plan as an unfunded item. There are plans for extensive development in the area which may make traffic management a necessity. Leaving the item in the plan tells the city that it is a concern to the neighborhood and leaves open the possibility of a program if proves necessary.

There was discussion on how much money would be needed for the neighborhood bulletin board proposal, and whether was feasible. There was some doubt as to whether someone could be found to maintain them if they were built and also if the neighbors near the proposed locations would want them there. It is possible that neighborhood businesses such as Cupcake and the e-mail list are sufficient. It was decided to leave it in the proposed plan, since it seems arbitrary to take it out. Whether it is carried out or not will depend on the money and who will follow through.

The dollar amount for Livability was changed to \$12,800.

Administration:

This section has not yet been written because Steve is waiting for information. The dollar amount assigned thus far is simply the amount left after the other program amounts are subtracted from the total.

There was a question about the PPERRIA funds release process, whether is has veto power or is simply there to make sure everyone is informed. It was noted that PPERRIA is under contract with NRP to implement the action plan and has responsibility to work out the details of the proposals. One benefit to having this process is that since needs change as time goes on, PPERRIA must re-think a little before spending the money.

Housing:

There have been major changes in this section since the draft considered at the last meeting. The section on Motley was taken out since Motley residents can apply to the proposed programs, as can all other residents. A section on grants or forgivable loans was added for the residents with the lowest incomes, to keep their housing affordable.

It is intended that the committee will devote another meeting to the details of this section. There are four housing proposals in the draft plan: Loans, Grants (forgivable loans), Historic District and SWIM.

Loans - details of the proposed program were mentioned.

Grants – This is a new attempt at affordable housing. It would be available to the lowest income people and would be forgivable after five years. A question was asked whether there are people in the neighborhood who would qualify. If the funds are not expended, they could be put into the loan program. No match requirement was written in and a question was asked whether there would be too much incentive for people to ask for the highest allowable amount, thus reducing the number of people who would benefit. At \$7500 each, the proposed \$30,000 would go to only four properties. It was noted that those who would qualify under the income guidelines may not be able to supply sweat equity or a dollar match. Sweat equity is difficult to quantify. Don Snyder and Barb Lickness will be invited to come to the next meeting to look at the housing proposals.

SWIM – This program is written specifically for Somalis. At least one person thought this was discriminatory and felt the program should be extended to other refugee communities. It was noted that this program is targeted to the specific cultural difficulties Somalis have in home ownership due to their nomadic traditions. It was stated that the Somali community got money from NRP 1 and that it was needed due to a “bungled” grant proposal. Somalis make up over half the population in Glendale, and SE Asians another 25%.

Affordable Housing - Steve Ficker and Andy Mickel pointed out that Steve had submitted a proposal to generate affordable housing and stated that in NRP 1 the city and the neighborhood had done a poor job in generating affordable housing. The committee had looked at that proposal but had set it aside, since it said specifically its intention is to “generate” affordable housing and the funds available in NRP2 for this neighborhood are not sufficient to build more than one unit. Steve said his intention was not necessarily to build new affordable housing but perhaps to make some existing housing affordable. He said that at the Kick-off meeting, Kris Hammes (who at that time worked at Luxton Park) said he would submit a proposal. He did not, however, submit a housing proposal. It was noted that the intention of the grant proposal is to help low income residents keep up their properties and keep them affordable.

It was decided to work out these issues at the next meeting, with Barb Lickness (NRP) and Don Snyder (city finance) available for input. A meeting was proposed for Tuesday, May 31. The regular steering committee meetings are the

1st and 3rd Mondays of each month and this would be an additional meeting, necessary due to the upcoming neighborhood meeting in June.

The next item of discussion was the proposed mailer. Steve Cross prepared a draft mailer to go to every residence in the neighborhood. It is a four page document containing a meeting announcement and agenda, results of the dot-mocracy, proposed handling of motions and amendments, and proposed procedural rules. It was noted that it would be expensive and perhaps a postcard could be used instead. The Action Plan will be made available online and at several neighborhood locations. Joyce's phone number may be added for people to call for a copy.

The procedure for the neighborhood meeting was discussed. A vote would be taken on the draft action plan and any amendments. Someone could move to split it into sections and vote on them separately. New proposals may be brought to the meeting, if copies are provided. If a new proposal falls within the general scope of the proposed action plan, it could be approved at that meeting. If it is substantially different, another 30 day notice would have to be given and another neighborhood meeting held to vote on it. The neighborhood must vote to adopt a draft action plan written by the steering committee. It is possible that the steering committee would have to write more than one draft before it is approved.

Steve will revise the mailer based on the discussion.

There was one correction to the minutes, and the minutes were approved as corrected.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 31 at 7:30 pm. The purpose will be to complete the housing section of the draft action plan. There will be another meeting the following week on Monday, June 6. The purpose will be to finalize any remaining details, including Jerry's proposal and the Admin section.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

The meeting attendees were:

Kari Simonson
Dean Lund
Joe Ring
Betts Zerby
Andy Mickel
Mary Alice Kopf
Steve Cross
Joyce Barta

Jerry Stein
Steve Ficker

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