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Citizens for a Loring Park Community
Livability Committee
Wednesday, November 18, 2009
6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Loring Park Community Center

Attendance: Paul Haston (MN Aids Project), Robert Hansen (Loring 100), Dot Belstler (Twin Cities Pride), Jana Metge (CLPC Coordinator), Dick Sandberg (1201 Yale Place), Jan Sandberg (1201 Yale Place), Aaron Speigel (MCTC, WAY), Charles Rinerson (MCTC, WAY), Jim Daly (Booth Manor), Cathy Strobel (MN Aids Project), Renee Allen (CPS, Minneapolis Police), Pete Christianson (Music Box Theater), Neil Carlson (Summit House), Lt. Robert Goodsell (Minneapolis Park Police), Mike Addy (Greenway Gables)

I. 6:30-6:45 PM - Call to Order

Bob Hansen led introductions of those in attendance.

Approved the agenda by consensus

Approved the minutes of the October 21, 2009 Livability meeting amended to correct Curt Properties to Kirt Properties and delete section on follow-up "Lights Out" meeting. (Motion Jim Daly, second Richard Sandberg) Motion passed

Announcements and Reports

- **Community Sing-Along** –Dec. 15th - 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Loring Park Community Center
- **Court Watch** – Dec. 4th - 10:00-11:30 AM Central Library 2nd floor
- **Traffic Calming Task Force Meeting is:** Monday, December 14th, - 5:30-6:30 p.m. @ Loring Office building/Room 207 – 430 Oak Grove.
- **Minneapolis Community & Technical College (MCTC) Open House** for the new Science Building – Fri., Nov. 20th – 3:00 p.m.-13th & Hennepin. RSVP by Nov. 1st to Karen at #612-659-6319 or Karen.oliver@minneapolis.edu
- **Master Plan Steering Committee** – Meeting date changed to Mon., Nov. 30th-6:30-8:30 p.m.
- **CLPC Holiday Party & Curry Dinner** –“The Mansion on the Hill” – 228 Clifton - Thursday, Dec. 3rd, 2009 – 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- Kieran’s Irish Pub is offering a **Thanksgiving meal** from 2 p.m.-5 p.m. Those interested need a ticket. Call Jana for more information.
- Circulated the Restorative Justice newsletter.
- **Personal Safety Workshop** (25 attendees) at World Mission Prayer League on the hill. The event is being evaluated.
- Circulated **Handbook of the Streets**, \$5.
- **Light Up Loring** – Wednesday, Dec. 9th at Loring Park from 6:00-8:00 p.m.; Tree Lighting at 6:10 p.m. – Refreshments, Music, Carriage Rides.
- **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!** CLPC Fundraiser will be Thurs., Feb. 11th @ The Woman’s Club from 6-9:00; tickets (\$50) available at CLPC – 612-874-9002!!
- **Monthly Court Watch Sheets** are now available on the Downtown Improvement District website.

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- **1st Precinct Action Alert meeting for volunteers receiving action alerts**, Wednesday, December 2, 6 p.m., 1st Precinct Community Room, 19 N. 4th Street. Parking in pay lots, and meters on every block around the precinct.

II. 6:35-6:50 p.m. – Needle Exchange – Paul Haston & Cathy Strobel, Minnesota Aids Project

Cathy will provide an update on Syringe Exchange Services. Following the closing of Access Works, Minnesota Aids Project decided to pick up these needed services and clients. They offer syringe exchange, HIV testing, connection to HIV care, chemical health assessments, support groups, etc. They will answer any questions about the philosophy of harm reduction and why syringe exchange is an important interventions for injecting drug users. They have also found partner sites to offer these services within the Loring Park Neighborhood.

Cathy has known Jana for a few years and they discussed the closure of AccessWorks, a storefront exchange program. Needle exchange is not well-funded and it is illegal to use federal money for the work and syringes. They are using an unbranded ambulance as a mobile service. (See ATTACHMENT #1 for a list of these sites.) They park the van and remain in a location for a period of time and also make some deliveries. Cathy distributed a list of all services for drug users (See ATTACHMENT #2). They are trying to get certain folks to serve as contacts and network with others. They are also working with several drug/alcohol treatment centers because of the link between those uses. The program provides considerable educational information and there is also a new crystal meth program. A staff person can do the Rule 25 chemical health assessments for those living with HIV. Cathy described the philosophy of treating folks who have problems without requiring that they be sober. One example is the Anishinabe Wakiagun center in Phillips.

Discussion:

Question about a specific drug – suboxone - that helps users to stop using. Some consider it superior to methadone.

Cathy asked if committee members had suggestions about locations for a needle exchange site.

The van has been at St. Mark's once a week and some neighbors have noticed. Cathy emphasized that they try to be discreet.

Needle disposal is expensive. They are packed up for a vendor in Iowa. They have not been successful in getting legislative changes to better facilitate disposal. Even legal users (diabetics) can have difficulty disposing of used syringes.

They have also identified pharmacies that will provide a limited number of syringes to users.

Cathy expressed willingness to work with the community especially if there are concerns about the work.

III. 6:50 – 7:15 p.m. W.A.Y. – Aaron Speigel & Charles Rinerson

W.A.Y. – Wellness Advocates for You is a grassroots group organized by Aaron and Charles, both MCTC students. This collaborative group is working on holistic, wellness opportunities for MCTC and the greater community

They have worked on developing a health clinic over the past two years. The clinic opened yesterday (see brochure in ATTACHMENT #3) for students. In the next few years MCTC will be opening a new student union. Aaron & Charles are interested in the community's interest in a broader community clinic. Other activities under the "Healthy Places, Healthy People" umbrella fall under WAY.

Aaron and Charles would like to know what the community need is.

Clinic hours and staff? There is a Physician's Assistant and RN on site from 8 a.m. to noon, 1 – 4 p.m.

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Does Boynton treat symptoms or causes? Both, but focus more on symptoms for now. They like Boynton because of their history with students and its nonprofit status.

Community need – Charles and Aaron held a meeting with Loring Way a while ago but would like more feedback. Booth Manor may be a fit because of location but it is a different focus – low income senior citizens. Jim Daly will pursue it.

Concern that a clinic could be another hidden resource at MCTC. Currently, the neighborhood is not taking advantage of hidden resources such as the library and entertainment.

One committee member does not frequent clinics, but could use Memorial Blood Center services. There are blood services offered several times a year at MCTC and non-students can donate.

One of the programs that Cathy Strobel supervises has worked with Boynton Health to provide screening/assessment services and may be able to work with the MCTC site.

There is a web site at <http://www.mctcway.org/>. They have an oversight group but right now that would not include community members. In contrast, they want a community representative to participate in the Helland Center expansion. In their opinion, MCTC has a habit of starting projects and then informing the neighborhood which is a problem. The Board has designated Becky Gullickson. Jim Daly may be interested. There is a barber school that offers very inexpensive hair cuts.

Neil suggested that they speak with someone from Wellness Resources.

The population of homeless students is in the hundreds and nearly overwhelming for the staff person who works with them. The meeting was held at MCTC recently to address student homelessness. There were over 75 in attendance including 12 MCTC Professors, Commissioner Gail Dorfman's office, Housing agency reps including St. Stephens Outreach, Plymouth Church Foundation, AEON, Community Justice Project, Issiah, Mt. Olive Neighborhood Ministries, The Jeremiah Project, the Basilica, and Youthlink. There were over 30 students also present and engaged. The group heard stories about the struggle of homelessness and being a student from four students who are living with homelessness.

IV. 7:15-7:30 p.m. – Lt. Robert Goodsell, Minneapolis Park Police

Learn about the Minneapolis Park Police – why they are a separate entity from the Minneapolis Police and what they do for our Parks and our City.

Lt. Goodsell is with the uniformed patrol for the Park Police with similar duties to those of Lt. Matt Clark. He has a family history with the Park Police. He is overall supervisor of everyone in uniform (sworn officers and park patrol agents). The Park Police also use CAPRS and the same radio frequencies as MPD—there are other similarities also. There are also differences – the Park Police are not a 911 reactive department going from call-to-call. Instead they are more proactive working with kids and park staff. They instituted a bike patrol program in Loring Park this summer (working with Diane Moe). Key bike hours were noon to 8:00 p.m. Park patrol agents are part time hires, perhaps law enforcement students, who enforce Park Board ordinances. They generally don't make traffic stops; more parking enforcement, dog off leash, walking path violations.

Discussion:

The Park Police lost the \$1 million dollar school board contract last year and some officers migrated to the MPD. The loss of the contract came with little notice.

They handled 9,200 calls in the parks and helped City officers on about 4,000 calls. The City covers the very late night/early morning. He does not think there is any duplication of services – except possibly at the highest administrative level. They are able to pursue some cases, like bicycle theft, that MPD doesn't have the time to pursue. They also do thousands of background checks.

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Their officers also had nearly 200,000 contacts with citizens in the Parks. 28,000 staff contacts with Park Buildings. Nearly 1,600 building checks. These are the factors that separate the Park Police from City Police.

How about patrolling some of the bike trails such as Cedar Lake? They use motorcycles and bike cops on trails, more in summer. They also work seven golf courses. 6,400 acres of parkland total. They work with agencies other than Minneapolis such as Golden Valley and Three Rivers Park District. The horse patrol went away due to cost. They may take over dog park enforcement.

If he witnesses someone running a red light, he will write a ticket. They typically write citations on parkways but also over 1,800 on public streets.

They have picked up traffic violations on 15th and Willow.

In response to a question about crosswalk violations, he noted that the law requires that the pedestrian must be in crosswalk and not on the curb if a ticket is to be written. He noted the use of small orange flags in Salt Lake City. He would be happy to return to discuss crosswalk issues.

In response to a question about wine in the park during music and movies or at other parks. He said they try to follow the spirit of the law. Such drinking becomes a problem if there are littering or behavior problems which do not occur during movies in the park.

V. 7:30-7:45 p.m. –Loring Park Safety Discussion -- Renee Allen, MPD Crime Prevention Specialist -- 612-673-5163 or renee.allen@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Renee Allen joins us as our new Community Crime Prevention Specialist. Renee will introduce herself and highlight her experiences and history with Safety efforts. There have been several issues in and around the neighborhood which have caused residents to call into CLPC with concern. Renee will talk about the Safety Survey which was distributed in Oct., and tactics proposed to increase police visibility and community connections. We will also review any hotspot areas and strategies in place and review and crime trends.

Renee started as community organizer and has been in policing for many years, with MPD for 15 years. She was a sworn officer with the Transit Police for a short time.

Renee reviewed the results of the recent Loring Neighborhood survey. The 127 responses represent about a 5 percent return. The survey was intended to measure residents' perception of safety in the neighborhood -- 74% felt moderately safe, 18% very safe. Respondents said that the neighborhood and park felt least safe during the evening hours (91-90%). More than half felt that panhandling and similar livability crimes were a problem. Respondents were more likely to want more bike officers than other policing changes. Almost 80 percent said that the police were doing well in their jobs. There were many comments on how to improve public safety – mostly to increase presence especially during evening hours. Most comments were about the park not the community. Almost all who were victims or witnessed a crime said that they called 911 and waited for officer.

Discussion:

Internal issues concerning how low level crimes are dealt with by 911 needs to be worked on.

Lt. Clark is looking at sharing a beat to increase presence (possibly the new beat at Cedar-Riverside). Doug Dubay is still the daytime beat officer in the neighborhood.

There was a meeting today about the camera issue. The Downtown Improvement District (DID) fusion center can't monitor cameras in our neighborhood because it is outside the DID. MPD is looking at ways to have technology help with this. There will be a December 1 meeting to explore options.

Theft from motor vehicle is up in the neighborhood and thieves are mostly attracted by electronics. Also increase in bike thefts in condos. They are meeting with Olson Company about the planter across from the Basilica. They are working on several options to address the roadside

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panhandling.

Jana reminded the County Public Safety Committee meeting on Thursday afternoon from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. on the 24th floor. There are several conflicting proposals.

VI. 7:45-8:00 p.m. – “Lights Out” in Loring Park – Mike Addy

Last month there was discussion about lights being out for extended periods of time, especially on LaSalle. Following the Livability meeting, Mike and Jana met with representatives from Xcel Energy, City of Minneapolis/Public Works and Don Stickney/311-City of Minneapolis. Mike will report on this meeting and outcomes from this meeting.

The biggest issues are: 1) the lack of a feedback loop between 311 and Xcel, 2) the fact that Public Works ‘closes’ streetlight repair orders when they are written even though the lights have not yet been repaired (or won’t for several years as in the case of the two ‘sheared off’ lights near the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church), 3) disagreements between Excel and Public Works as to which lights each is responsible to repair and 4) lack of reporting of and followup on ‘lights out’ by residents and police entities. Followup actions for each of the above were discussed.

Residents are giving up on reporting when lights are not fixed in a few weeks. Could the police make a note of the item and report lights out?

Neil reported that three lights removed when the sidewalks were worked on near the Oak Grove Office Building were patched over.

Jana reported that there will be a ceremony with children from Jeremiah and Emerson in connection with planting the new Post Office trees this spring. See a recent article about Mike’s work at <http://www.downtownjournal.com/index.php?&story=14681&page=65&category=92>

Adjourned 8:40 p.m.

Future Meeting topics: Outreach and Community Events; Restorative Justice & Downtown 100 - Develop Scope of Service for use of NRP Phase II dollars.