

PPERRIA News – January 2009

Newsletter of the Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association



PPERRIA Board/Membership Meeting

Monday, January 26th

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Prospect Park United Methodist Church
Corner of Orlin and Malcolm Avenues S.E.

Come early for treats and talk – 6:30 to 7:00 pm.

If you have special needs requiring accommodation, contact
Joyce Barta at bartajm@yahoo.com or 378-9268
We will make every attempt to meet that need

INSIDE:

	Page
Notes from the President.....	2
Minutes of the November meeting.....	3
Streetcars' Demise.....	4
Staff report.....	6
Neighborhood Calendar	6
Lists of Committees.....	6
FYI.....	Back page

PLAN AHEAD

A **Bylaw Amendment** requiring all PPERRIA board members to reside within the PPERRIA neighborhood will be considered at the **February** meeting.

.....*Dean Lund*

The proposed Amendment to Article IV (Board of Directors and Officers), Section A (Board of Directors), of the PPERRIA Bylaws would insert the following sentence at the end of the first paragraph:

“All Directors must reside within the boundaries of PPERRIA.”

**The February meeting will be February 23, 2009, 7:00 pm
at the Prospect Park United Methodist Church**

Notes from the President:

Happy New Year! I hope you're enjoying this old-fashioned Minnesota winter (minus 10 as I write).

The past year has been a busy one for our neighborhood, and a busy one for yours truly. While trying to provide leadership for PPERRIA, I have been immersed in the work of the University District Partnership Alliance. The Alliance is currently preparing a report to the Minnesota Legislature on its accomplishments in 2008.

The record is impressive. Members of the Steering Committee, the work teams and the task forces – over 80 volunteers in all – provided leadership through their commitment to the work of the Alliance. The list of accomplishments includes: 1) significant steps to increase homeownership in the District, 2) new programs for neighborhood-student liaisons, 3) stepped-up enforcement of property maintenance and rental licenses, 4) a comprehensive review of parking, zoning and regulatory issues, and 5) substantial progress toward the development of a University District Master Plan.

We have raised a mutual awareness of the neighboring communities surrounding the University of Minnesota, and we have a better, more productive working relationship with the City than we have seen in recent years. We're also getting the attention of the University, as a stakeholder, for the well being of our neighborhoods.

For example, the Alliance is developing a growing recognition of the unique assets in the District and coordinated planning for off-campus student housing. The Campus Master Plan is being updated by considering the campus as integral to its urban environment. The Alliance is also identifying common goals that move the District toward green, sustainable development as a guiding principle. Developers and public agencies are recognizing the Alliance as a significant factor, a go-to group for addressing challenges and opportunities. They're now working with the Alliance to shape the design of projects – both currently underway and in the

planning stage – and to collaborate in identifying other development opportunities.

An early indicator of the success of this partnership will be the developments in the Motley area, where the University and Fairview Hospital plan to build a major medical center.

Historically, the University recognized a “Regent's boundary” along Oak Street as the eastern extent of the Minneapolis campus. It was breached by the Oak Street parking ramp. Since then, the Motley neighborhood saw the development of private dormitories, and the University took of much of the remaining private property east of Oak Street.

The area south of Fulton Street, an older residential area of Prospect Park, was the site of the Motley Elementary School (that our children attended). When the school was demolished in the 1980s, a residential development, Dartmouth Place, was built on the site with the hope that it would become the nucleus of a residential revitalization of Ontario and Erie Streets. Investment in this neighborhood has been largely stifled however by uncertainties engendered by expansion of the University into the Motley neighborhood. While Dartmouth Place remains successful, and a positive addition to the neighborhood, the residential community between Fulton Street and the East River Boulevard has not improved and is in danger of being lost as a viable residential area.

Recently the City Council rejected a proposal for a student housing complex on Ontario Street, in part because it was seen as moving the neighborhood in a direction that would work against the goals of the Alliance. Now, we (PPERRIA and the Alliance) are hoping to join the University in improving the prospects for the residential viability of the Motley area. Planning efforts, both in PPERRIA and in the evolving District Alliance, are aimed at attracting more residential diversity to this neighborhood.

We'll have to see how viable this concept is. But the promise of collaborative, transparent efforts in working with current and future residents is a good start. Stay tuned.

.....Dick Poppele

PPERRIA Membership and Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, November 24, 2008, 7 p.m., Prospect Park United Methodist Church

President Dick Poppele called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. following a social gathering.

President Poppele welcomed visitors and new members. He introduced Chad Koppes, the new pastor for PPUMC.

1. The amended agenda was approved on motion of Bob Kael.
2. The October minutes were amended and approved on motion of Karen Murdock.
3. **Planning Committee Master Plan Report.** President Poppele explained that the Planning Committee had been meeting frequently since July, and has attempted to create a comprehensive plan of what the neighborhood should look like in the future. Given the estimated growth of population in the area of 25%, contemplated growth of the SEMI area with estimated thousands of new jobs, and increased density.

Poppele introduced the Planning Committee Chairman, Dick Gilyard, who pointed out the maps and visual aids scattered around the room, and stated that the neighborhood needed to create its own vision of its future. His goal for the evening was to identify a series of concepts identifying values and features in a plan that could help guide market forces to develop in the future. The group will be working with the University Alliance in its planning for the areas surrounding the University. Members of the Committee presented different aspects of the work of the Committee.

Jim Tierney and Tamara Johnson described the vision and mission of the group: a proactive plan for development aligned with surrounding neighborhoods and the University and which promotes a vital, sustainable and respectful community which continues to promote the diversity and variety that characterizes Prospect Park in ways that build cohesion, community, and environmental and economic sustainability. They laid out guiding principles, and plans for managing growth.

Karen Murdock described the many defining characteristics of the neighborhood. Christina Larson proposed that for a vital community, a centralized business community or urban village was needed, which Prospect Park lacks.

John Wicks pointed out the many transportation corridors in the community, and John DeWitt explained the concept of complete streets that balance vehicular, bicycle, mass transit and pedestrian needs.

John Kari distributed comment sheets and invited the members to describe what they liked about the concepts presented, what could be improved, and to give people a platform to share their own ideas.

Gilyard stated that the goal was to come up with a comprehensive, flexible plan to show developers in the next six months.

4. **CURA Grant:** Jerry Stein reported that PPERRIA had received a \$10,000 Center for Urban and Regional Affairs grant in conjunction with the Center for Media Arts to develop a project that catalogs and identifies learning venues and opportunities in the Southeast community.

5. **Luxton Social Services:** Jean Emmons announced that there was a major funding problem at Luxton Park. East Side Neighborhood Services (ESNS) has been housed at Luxton for 35 years. The Minneapolis Public Housing Authority announced that it would no longer pay the Park Board rent for space at Luxton. The problem has been brewing for several years and solved with stopgap funds from Hennepin County. A permanent solution is needed. PPERRIA will send another letter in support of ESNS.

(concluded next page)

6. Zoning Committee: Florence Littman reported that the Planning Commission had rejected the University Physicians signage proposal (that PPERRIA had opposed) as well as the requested waiver of the building moratorium for a mini-dorm on Ontario Street. Florence and Karen Murdock are reviewing single family homes that are zoned R4 that are potential sites for mini-dorms to determine if down-zoning can be accomplished. She reported that 40 people from the Motley area had attended a meeting about the proposed ambulatory care center that the University proposes. Campus Pizza has applied for a full liquor license. A hearing will be held on November 25.

7. Livability Committee: Joe Ring reported that the Franklin traffic study needed to be incorporated in the 106 Review Process. In that case the neighborhood would know in advance what it could do about parking issues that may develop after the introduction of light rail on University Avenue.

8. Membership Committee: Julie Wallace noted that PPERRIA membership was down from previous years and suggested that members talk to their neighbors and urge them to join.

9. NRP Policy Board Elector: Peter La Sha announced that Jeff Strand and Debbie Evans had been elected to the NRP Policy Board.

10. Staff Report: is in the October Newsletter.

A motion to adjourn was made by David Preus. Passed without votes.

Respectfully submitted,

Betts Zerby, Secretary

Richard Poppele, President

THE DEMISE OF THE TWIN CITIES' STREETCAR SYSTEM

By John De Witt, chair of PPERRIA's Transit Committee

“The Green-Ossanna group took only five years to reduce to scrap metal what had taken the Lowry group over fifty years to build: one of the finest street railway systems in America”

.....Russ Olson – *The Electric Railways of Minnesota*

Background

The years soon after World War II were especially challenging for transit systems across the country, Twin City Lines included. Rider ship peaked in the 1920s and began declining with increasing competition from the automobile. During the depression, little money was available for expansion, or even maintenance. When WWII began, the Twin Cities' newest streetcars were already 24 years old. Rider ship exploded during the war but with shortages of labor and materials, little maintenance took place. When the war ended, our streetcar system needed massive investments in equipment and in

(continued next page)

rehabilitation of its physical plant. Meanwhile, America's love affair with the car had rekindled and transit rider ship was plummeting.

Twin City Lines rider ship shows how this played out:

1922 – 226 million (nearly three times today's rider ship)

1940 – 104 million (the depression takes its toll)

1946 – 201 million (WWII shortages and rationing limited driving)

1953 – 95 million (America's love affair with the car resumes)

For comparison, rider ship in 2008 was about 88 million – in a region three times larger than in 1953.

Another problem was that most streetcar lines ran down the middle of the street. When a streetcar stopped and the doors were opened, no cars could pass on the right side. This allowed passengers to make it to and from the sidewalk safely. Imagine the impact on the growing traffic on University Avenue when streetcars as often as every three minutes were stopping every block. One advantage the "modern, progressive" buses offered was that they got out of the way of all that traffic when they stopped for passengers.

An old transit adage states that it's cheaper to run an empty bus than an empty train, and it's cheaper to run a full train than a full bus. As rider ship dropped, there were more and more empty trains/streetcars and buses.

National City Lines (NCL)

Whether NCL conspired to destroy all the streetcar systems in the country is still being debated today. It was bankrolled by General Motors, Standard Oil, and Firestone Tire & Rubber. NCL made a practice of buying up struggling transit systems and replacing all the streetcars with buses. But in some cities (St. Louis, for example) streetcar lines survived until 1966 under NCL ownership. A court case in Los Angeles found the three companies – GM, Standard and Firestone – guilty, and fined them one dollar. Some argue that NCL was simply aggressively pursuing business opportunities as they were presented. We do know that NCL, with one exception, played no role in the scrapping of the Twin Cities' streetcar system. We did it to ourselves, thank you.

Twin City Lines (TCL) Management – Strouse, Green and Ossanna

D.J. Strouse was president of TCL from 1936 to 1949. Under his leadership profits were plowed back into the company. He believed strongly in streetcars and began a modernization campaign with the purchase of 141 new PCC streetcars in the late 1940s.

Charles Green was a Wall Street financier who owned some TCL stock. He demanded that TCL start paying dividends, and waged a proxy fight in 1949 to gain control. Once in charge, he slashed service and maintenance, and was determined to have an all-bus system by 1958. His legal counsel was a local lawyer Fred Ossanna, who had connections to the local mob.

.....***THE DEMISE OF THE TWIN CITIES' STREETCAR SYSTEM will be concluded next month***

Staff report for December 2008 and January 2009 (combined)

Supported PPERRIA activities, NRP I, and NRP II			
Contractors' services:	Hours billed	Total expense	% of total Budget
11/07/08 to 01/07/09	34.25	\$ 822.00	0.4 %
10/18/95 to 11/07/08	11,047.51	\$193,739.15	96.1 %
10/18/95 to 01/07/09	11,081.76	\$194,561.15	96.5 %

Total revised PPERRIA NRP Phase 1 budget for independent contractor services = \$201,661.45. \$8513.15 remains.

Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood Calendar

To include items in the PPERRIA calendar, contact Joyce Barta at bartajm@yahoo.com or 378-9268 by **Thursday, Feb 5th**.

Date and Time	Event and Location	Whom to contact
Tuesday, January 20 7:00 pm	(Tentative) Zoning & Planning Committee meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church.	Florence Littman 331-2970
Monday, January 26 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PPERRIA Board of Directors & Membership Meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church. Come at 6:30 for refreshments and conversation.	Dick Poppele 378-9242
Wednesday, January 28 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Garden Club meeting. Call for information.	Kent Petterson 332-1821 Mary Alice Kopf 379-7436
Saturday, February 7 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Fire and Ice Festival at Luxton Park. A family winter event with horse-drawn hayrides, skating and a bonfire.	Choua Thao 370-4925
Wednesday, February 4 7:30 pm	Luxton Park Council meeting at Luxton Park.	Jim Widder 331-6129
Monday, February 9 noon - 1:30 pm	JOY Potluck at Pratt. Call for information.	Roberta Mark 331-6621 Luxton Park 370-4925
Monday, February 9 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PPERRIA Executive Committee meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church.	Dick Poppele 378-9242
Wednesday, February 11 5:00 pm	Glendale Resident Organization (GRO) meeting at 92 St. Mary's Ave.	Latrisha Collins 342-1952
Thursday, February 19 7:00 - 8:30 pm	Pratt Council meeting at Pratt.	Mary Alice Kopf 379-7436 Pratt Office 668-1122
Monday, February 23 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PPERRIA Board of Directors & Membership Meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church. Come at 6:30 for refreshments and conversation.	Dick Poppele 378-9242
Tuesday, February 24 7:00 pm	(Tentative) Zoning & Planning Committee meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church.	Florence Littman 331-2970
Wednesday, February 25 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Garden Club meeting. Call for information.	Kent Petterson 332-1821 Mary Alice Kopf 379-7436

PPERRIA Standing Committees and Chairs

4 th Street	Julie Wallace	jwallace3@comcast.net	378-9429
Education & Human Services	Susan Larson-Fleming	flemings@usfamily.net	331-8819
Executive	Dick Poppele	dick@umn.edu	378-9242
Finance	Tony Garmers	tggarmers@msn.com	378-2656
Housing	Roger Kiemele	kiemele@earthlink.net	331-5106
Livability (Subcommittees listed below, designated by *)	Joe Ring	jring@visi.com	379-4587
*Community Events	Gratia Reynolds	grandmagratia@yahoo.com	331-5312
*Community and River Gorge Cleanup	Tom Kilton	tom@tomkilton.com	339-3064
*Environment	Dean Abrahamson	deanabra@umn.edu	623-9449
*History Project	Betts Zerby	ejzerby@yahoo.com	379-8095
*Landscape, Garden Club	Mary Alice Kopf	mollisk@earthlink.net	379-7436
*Landscape Subcommittee: Tree Health Project	Paula Denman	pjdenman@mn.rr.com	338-1871
Membership	Julie Wallace	jwallace3@comcast.net	378-9429
Personnel	Susan Larson-Fleming	flemings@usfamily.net	331-8819
Planning	Dick Gilyard	rgilyard.architect@earthlink.net	362-8995
Transit	John DeWitt	jdewitt@comcast.net	338-1871
Zoning & Land Use	Florence Littman Phil Anderson	littm005@umn.edu phil.ann.anderson@gmail.com	331-2970

Other PPERRIA Committees and Task Forces

By-laws Task Force	Paul Zerby	pgzerby@yahoo.com	379-8095
Nominating Committee	Formed each February, as per PPERRIA Bylaws		

The following are not PPERRIA Committees, but they have PPERRIA representatives:

Stadium Area Advisory Group (SAAG)	Dean Abrahamson, Florence Littman
Southeast Minneapolis Committee on Learning (SEMCOL)	Susan Larson Fleming, David Galle, Scott Johnson, Susan Gottlieb
Southeast Minneapolis Industrial Committee (SEMI)	Dean Lund, Julie Wallace, John Kari
District Councils Collaborative (DCC)	Phil Anderson
University District Partnership Alliance	Dick Poppele, Dick Gilyard

Prospect Park East River
Road Improvement
Association, Inc.
66 SE Malcolm Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612/331-2970 (voice mail)

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Minneapolis, MN
Permit No. 2993



FYI:

Some background on an agenda item for the January board meeting.....Florence Littman

University District Zoning and Planning Regulatory Review Process Summary

In Fall 2008, the University District Zoning and Planning Regulatory Review (ZPRR) process began, under the aegis of the University Alliance. The Alliance was formed to facilitate, initiate, or manage projects with the University, City, or other public or private entities with the intent of maintaining the district as a viable place for study, research and living.

ZPRR was formed to address land use and development concerns facing neighborhoods in the University District area: Cedar Riverside, Marcy Holmes, Prospect Park, Southeast Como, and University. And, to create a coordinated response to issues such as parking, occupancy, design standards, zoning and inspections. The focus is on how the City can improve its regulatory processes.

Timeline: Discussions begun in August 2008 will culminate in a final plan to be adopted by the City and the District and implemented by July 2009.

*We're on the Web!
See us at:*

www.pperr.org