

**Recap of East Downtown Council's Business Forum**  
**Thursday, September 19, 2013**  
**11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**  
**American Red Cross, 1201 West River Parkway**  
**Downtown East Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

- **Welcome and introductions.** EDC President Dan Collison introduced himself and welcomed the audience for coming out amid the storm and rain to attend the first Business Forum of the 2013-2014 season. He believes this will be one of the best years yet because of the incredible amount of momentum going on in the EDC district and the many conversations the board is engaged in that should tee up relevant forums throughout the rest of the year.

Dan also thanked Phil Hansen, CEO of the American Red Cross, for the use of his facility at a time when the EDC could no longer meet at Padilla Speer Beardsley due to its merger with CRT/tanaka. This merger has doubled PadillaCRT's size and added four regional offices.

Hansen advised that they are thrilled to be in the downtown community. Their current facility was built by Ryan Companies and completed in 2000 after they lost their previous facility in Loring Park (as depicted in a picture above the fireplace) in 1996 due to microbial infestation.

ARC's primary job is the alleviation of human suffering in the face of emergencies, e.g., nationwide the Boston Marathon bombing, the floods in Colorado, and Hurricane Sandy. Locally, on an annual basis they respond to about 481 disasters providing food, clothing and shelter. They are also the major emergency communications to military personnel and their families around the globe, primary supplier of blood and blood products in the U.S., primary provider of health and safety courses, such as CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and AED (automated external defibrillator) training, First Aid and business continuity of operations training. Seventy percent of the 60,000 people who take their Health & Safety Training come from the business community. Referencing the day's stormy weather, Hansen advised the audience they could download all their latest free weather and safety mobile apps. The next generation of CPR training will have a small pad you can place on the chest of a mannequin at your workplace to transmit data up to a system where an instructor will read out and give you a certificate without having to visit the facility. There is also a brilliant volunteer mobile application you can download to find out how you can volunteer for a major disaster. They have a 40 to 1 ratio of volunteers to paid staff so everything they do is predicated on volunteers and are always looking for more people.

Lastly, Hansen thanked the audience for attending and extended the use of the facility for future EDC events. A brochure of ARC's services was made available but for more detailed information visit <http://www.redcross.org/>.

Dan then quoted from *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations* by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner: "Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen." He grabbed that quote as an update to EDC's summer work to develop a strategic planning framework. It exemplifies how the EDC sees itself as a benefit to the audiences' organizations and to the approximately 180 identified businesses within the EDC district.

Dan acknowledged the 11 new members — Band Box, Bierbrauer Chiropractic, Friends of Triangle Park, Izzy's Ice Cream, J Selmer Law, Mill City Farmers Market, Minnesota High Tech Association, Minnesota Sports Facility Authority, Plumbers Union Local 15, Watson-Forsberg, Zen Box Izakaya — and welcomed them to the EDC. He advised that the EDC is all about turning its efforts back into catalytic good for their businesses.

Dan then reported on the strategic planning framework developed at its July 17th strategic planning session around EDC's four disciplines of work — Connection and Collaboration, Advocacy and

Resourcing, Leadership and Voice, Sound and Sustaining Organizational Structure — under which goals and tactics have been assigned and will be tracked for the next 5 years. The EDC has four working groups for accomplishing its goals: Strategy Committee, Business Forum Committee, Marketing Committee, and the entire Board of Directors. Dan acknowledged and thanked Daniel Gumnit, CEO of People Serving People who has a strong background in marketing, for his willingness to serve on the Marketing Committee and encouraged the audience to participate on any of these committees they feel their expertise is best suited.

Next, the audience introduced themselves and Dan announced that the National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC) would be partnering with First Covenant Church to run a resource center in the lobby of the tabernacle portion of their building as a way to catalyze minority contracting to hit some of the percentage goals for the \$1.5 billion worth of construction at the new stadium. The NAMC will also be joining the EDC.

By way of introduction of the featured speaker, Dan explained that Izzy's Ice Cream is not just your ordinary company because the owners, Lara Hammel and Jeff Sommers, are not your ordinary entrepreneurs. They are creative, thoughtful, risk takers and have a history of success. Dan highly recommends, besides eating their ice cream, visiting their website to appreciate the longer narrative and stated that it is wonderful to know that we have business owners who have a rich tapestry of narrative that they bring into the district. In 2005, Izzy's was given the designation by *Reader's Digest* of "Best Ice Cream Shop in the Country."

- ***Izzy's Ice Cream Overview.*** Jeff Sommers distributed his delectable salted caramel Izzy Pops then gave a brief history of his and Lara's background and that of their company. They hire a lot of young people (300 in 13 years) at a standard that could not have been achieved had Sommers not taught in Minneapolis Public Schools. Some of these young employees start at the age of 14; others start at 16 or 17. When they are with Izzy's, they like to have them for 3 years moving them through a continuum of growth. Building the new facility in downtown has, in part, this vision for what they are trying to accomplish to make them great workers and contributors to their organization by giving great customer service and making great ice cream.

Sommers indicated that he spoke with PadillaCRT yesterday about customer service elements that go back to marketing, i.e., a radio frequency ID system to sign up for flavors, an automatic email or tweet.

This new facility is largely built to provide a world-class work environment for their staff. They are building a professional kitchen that overlooks Gold Medal Park and a retail component that combined should allow them to make better ice cream more effectively and efficiently. They will be closer to all the restaurants they service and will get their product to market more easily. They are also closer to a better transportation network with 35W and I94 and other road connections. Although they haven't had a grand opening yet, they have had thousands of customers and he thanked those who have visited. They are about 5 weeks away from officially making ice cream in Minneapolis. For more detailed information visit <http://izzysicecream.com>.

- ***Conclusion.*** After an informative Q&A with Sommers, Dan thanked him for his presentation and commented that his model for operating is stunning 21st century thinking and wished him all the success.

Dan then announced the upcoming DMNA annual meeting on Tuesday, October 8th, 6 p.m. at Open Book. There will a 7th Ward update from Council Member Lisa Goodman, and a moderated panel of 3rd Ward candidates. The EDC, which is comprised of Elliot Park, Downtown East and the Mill District, will have three council members representing the area and will host a forum with the winners of those ward races. He also announced that next month's forum will be on Thursday, October 17th at the aloft Hotel and is

entitled "From Flat Parking Lots to Meaningful Density: the New Face of Community Planning and Economic Development for Minneapolis and Downtown East." The two components of this topic include Mayor Rybak who has been a huge cheerleader for this part of town and it would be great to have his perspective and advise about what we should do as a district as we head into the future beyond his leadership; and CPED's new Director of Long Range Planning, Kjersti Monson, and CPED's Principal City Planner, Beth Elliott, who both will be discussing the East Downtown Parking Lot Study. The EDC is on this march to turn these parking lots into meaningful development and CPED is the greatest advocate to catalyze it.

Lastly, Dan asked those who would be touring the facility to join up at 1100 South 2nd Street in 5 minutes at which Sommers described the features of the facility, its architect David Salmela, the construction schedule and the history of obtaining and financing the project. For more information visit <http://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/print-edition/2013/04/19/winner-izzys-ice-cream.html?page=all>.