

**Draft Minutes from the
East Downtown Council Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, September 4, 2014
Valspar Applied Science and Technology Center, 1101 South 3rd Street
Downtown East Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

Present: Jackie Barrett, John Campobasso, Daniel Gumnit, Tom Hayes, Varun Kharbanda, Brian Maupin, Paul Mellblom, Lynn Regnier, Carletta Sweet, Bert Winkel
Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge
Absent: Jeff Anderson, Tim Briggs, Carl Runck, Tim Tucker
Guests: Steve Cramer, James Scott

I. Call to Order and Introductions

President Paul Mellblom called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m. and introduced guest Steve Cramer, president and CEO of the Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District. Paul explained that Cramer came to introduce himself to the organization given recent developments between the two organizations. Board members then introduced themselves.

II. MDC Introduction by Steve Cramer

Cramer advised that the MDC is excited by this strategic partnership the McKnight Foundation grant made possible to work closely with the EDC. The goals that the MDC has articulated through the *Intersections 2025 Plan* (<http://www.downtownmpls.com/page/show/423275-2025-plan>) have a particular relevance to the geography of the EDC that has its boots on the ground. As such, it made perfect sense to come together and chart a course through the grant to explore how to work more effectively to impact development of this area and see how both organizations can relate to each other on an ongoing basis.

The story he often tells about this side of downtown was relayed to him by Collin Barr of Ryan Companies and chair of the MDC/DID who is also serving as the design-builder for the St. Paul Saints in the Lowertown neighborhood of St. Paul. This role brings Barr into frequent contact with Mayor Chris Coleman who has been quoted as saying that when he drives into Minneapolis from St. Paul and enters into east downtown with all the building cranes it looks like Shanghai. That comment has profound implications for the east side of downtown as it is experiencing unprecedented growth with so many important institutions growing and fueling the economy of this region and the state as well as for what is now being called The Commons and how it will relate to the surrounding community and new developments. It's great to have this relation with the EDC, but Cramer doesn't know where this will go on the organizational side. However, several people around the EDC table have made an extra commitment to spend time with him, Dan and MAP for Nonprofits to think this through.

Dan advised that Cramer had reached out to him and opened up the dialogue a month before he began at the MDC as a result of conversations Dan had with Betsy Buckley who was serving as the interim president and CEO. Dan believes Cramer has done a fantastic job of immediately ramping up and bridging to the EDC.

Paul, who ventured to speak on behalf of the EDC board and the greater business community of the EDC, also thanked Cramer because he is helping the EDC find better ways to holistically serve its constituents — all those who live, work and recreate within the district.

III. Consideration of Agenda

Approved as submitted and displayed on screen (CS/BW).

IV. Resignation of Board Member James Scott

James advised that since he's no longer employed at the Guthrie Theater he is resigning from the EDC and wished everyone the best.

Since the EDC is all about furthering business, Paul suggested to James that if anyone could be of service to him to please ask. The board is eager to serve as a reference and help make appropriate connections because he has been a valuable contributor during his tenure on the board. James assured everyone that he would forward his resume to Dan once it has been updated. Everyone then thanked him for his service.

V. Consideration of Consent Agenda

Approved as submitted which included the minutes from July 17, 2014; treasurer's report for July and August 2014;

VI. Presentations

- **Water Works, a RiverFirst Priority Project**

Dan displayed the St. Anthony Falls Historic District map and Water Works final design elements page and explained that he is presenting this project because this MPRB-owned site is within the EDC's district and that the Central Riverfront Community Advisory Committee on which Carletta serves endorsed key design recommendations brought before it on July 8, 2014. The CAC has also given the Minneapolis Parks Foundation the green light to proceed on the final design elements. To read the design recommendations visit www.mplsparcsfoundation.org and click on Water Works under Projects. This is a major asset that is about to be transformed and is important for attracting both residents and businesses to the area.

I. Action Items

- **Consideration of Expenditure for Directors and Officers Insurance.** Christie explained that she had recommended to the EDC a while ago to acquire DOI as it is important for a small nonprofit to have it. At this point no money has been spent but she is soliciting proposals from the Johnson Midwest Agency. Until the EDC submits an application she will not have a final amount and needs the board's approval to move forward. A motion to authorize Christie to acquire DOI was approved (CS/DG).

I. Updates

- **MAP Board Leadership Development and MDC/EDC Partnership.** Dan reported that Gordon Goodwin from MAP for Nonprofits facilitated a MDC/EDC structural alignment working group meeting on August 19th at which the model for how nonprofits typically realign was discussed (reference The Realignment Spectrum chart in Dan's board package). Those in attendance from the EDC included Dan, Daniel, Paul and Carletta. Those in attendance from the MDC included John Campobasso, Steve Cramer, and Al Swintek. Dan described the various levels of the spectrum with Collaboration as the least form of cooperation up through Merger/Acquisition being the most with full integration. He would argue that the EDC is already Administrative Consolidation, Joint Programming and Program Transfer on the spectrum given his new ED role, however, most importantly is how the EDC sees itself. The next meeting will occur in early October.

- **Park (a/k/a The Commons) Committee.** Dan, who was unable to attend the August 14th meeting, reported that Kjersti Monson, CPED Director of Long Range Planning, has asked him to serve on a Selection Committee that will, along with a Technical Advisory Committee, narrow down the list of design teams responding to the RFP.

Dan also reported that the MDC/MDID has already put into motion the establishment of a private/public greening and park conservancy. The executive committee voted to allocate \$50,000 to create a new branch of its organization that could operate, program and fundraise for all public spaces downtown. They will probably recruit a staff position this fall and David Wilson is working behind the scenes on potential leaders to the tune of \$250,000.

Carletta, who has attended meetings as well as Lynn, advised that the August 14th meeting was where it was announced that the MPRB had passed Resolution 2014-259 removing itself from the development, maintenance or operation of the "Downtown East Urban Park" and despite this fact the City, due to time constraints, would move forward with the RFP that would specify two construction cycles (i.e., opening day park and ultimate park).

Dan stated that if he got the press correct, the MPRB pulled out because it doesn't consider this a public park because so many days are already committed to corporate groups, it will be used for events that are not all public, and because it does not fit its model, structure and funding. Further, he believes that because of the lawsuits regarding what the City can and cannot own and what the MPRB can and cannot do, they are looking for the right vocabulary, hence the new title "The Commons."

After further discussion, Paul recommended quickly forming an ad hoc park committee with Dan as the lead so that the EDC plays an active role in the process and is ready to apply community pressure through op-eds in the paper and mobilization of its membership. Dan said he would be pleased to do so, particularly if the EDC needed to take a stand, because it is so politically charged, so many necks on the line, and so many interests at stake that whatever the EDC says needs to be mitigated by all things considered. When he knows more information he'll proceed.

Lynn asked that this ad hoc park committee meet with EPNI's BLUH committee because their community has been concerned about The Commons' impact and who's going to be able to use it. Volunteers who agreed to sit on the ad hoc park committee with Dan included Daniel, Brian, Lynn and Carletta.

- **DMNA.** Adding to the update submitted in advance of the board meeting, Carletta reported that the next DMNA board meeting would be held that evening beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Cargill Room of Mill City Museum. In addition to a 3rd Ward update by Council Member Jacob Frey, there would be three Community Development Committee presentations: a variance application to allow for a pet day care facility at Centre Village; permanent expansion of premises application to add patio space in back and a sidewalk café along South 3rd Street for Rick's Cabaret; and call for study to redesign the intersection of North 3rd Street / 2nd Avenue South / I-394 entrance ramp due to the numerous pedestrian and vehicular collisions.

Carletta then announced that DMNA's annual meeting would be on Tuesday, October 21st at The Depot Minneapolis beginning at 6:30 p.m. and encouraged members to attend and vote for her since she'll be running for reelection.

- **EPNI.** Lynn asked the board to reference her update submitted in advance of the board meeting and commented that thanks to Bert and others who worked on the tailgating task force, they have successfully negotiated family-friendly with no alcohol tailgating in Elliot Park.
 - **MDC.** Dan reported on the following:
 - **Mayo Clinic Square.** The Mayo Clinic Sport Medicine Center redevelopment project at 600 Hennepin Avenue on the site formerly known as Block E is underway and will consist of 20,000 square feet of the latest in sports medicine technology, treatment options and performance training equipment.
 - **U of MN Streetscape Lab 2014.** This is a pilot program fostering design engagement within an urban setting. This summer courses went off-campus to build and test prototypes for pop-up spaces and street furnishings in downtown Minneapolis. After refining them with feedback from the MDID's tactical urbanism task force and its partners, the students used the city streets as a lab to field-test their designs.
- Dan advised that these are the things the EDC would want to advocate for as it works on streetscaping, placemaking and public realm for the whole of downtown.

I. Committee Reports

- **Business Forum Development.** Dan reminded the board that this committee meets bi-monthly and will meet this month just prior to the September 18th business forum to refine and promote the remainder of this season as well as the next. There is a great line up and a tremendous amount of work goes into producing these events.
- **Membership, Marketing and Communication.** Dan commented that this is going to be a fun group. Chris Fleck from North Central University and Joshua Clark from Hyatt Place really brought some enthusiasm and fresh ideas. At the first bi-monthly meeting on August 21st, looking at the total committee structure was discussed and branding in the district was a key point of consideration because the EDC has been talking about applying for PadillaCRT bro bono work for 2015. The committee's sense was the EDC doesn't know how it fits into the MDC yet and it already has a pretty strong brand that is working right now so just emphasize recruitment, continue to engage members and find out what they want. The actual visualization of the brand already exists, the words are there, and the brochure and website are attracting people. There are

enough pieces to communicate who we are so rather than pursuing PadillaCRT to focus on personal invitations, promoting the forums, recruiting and getting folks active and engaged instead. Then in a year from now if we need to look at the brand piece we could do so.

Dan then he referenced a comment elicited at the first 2025 Plan East Downtown Development Committee Task Force listening session held on July 17th, i.e., brand emerges and you grab it; if you just try to throw it down before it's there you'll have something that won't work so well.

Tom said there were a lot of voices at that listening session. There's a lot going on, it's really dynamic and it's organic because of that. He didn't come out of it thinking we had to stretch to brand the district. It's got to percolate a little more.

Daniel commented that there are some things we know we don't want to be, i.e., Stadium District, so we have to be super vigilant so that if we see any of that emerging anywhere we're all over it.

Brian believes we have a timeline because the district needs to be branded by 2016.

Dan noted that that is not what CPED is saying because the leading names are Downtown East or East Downtown and no other names have been batted around. Hiring PadillaCRT will give us what we need and the EDDCTF will be working on this and there will be spinouts of other groups.

Paul stated that what could be helpful is for PadillaCRT tell us what to watch out for that may be brewing that we wouldn't normally think or be concerned about, and are there specific people who aren't involved that should be. They do this for a living and could be advisors to us rather than designers of something.

Christie stated that based on all the conversations we've had over the last 2 years, she feels the EDC is taking a huge step back from wanting to take the lead on defining what the district is because for a long time it was worried about allowing other groups define who it is. Further, she thinks it is worthwhile if we want to strongly advocate for the East Downtown as what this district is going to be, it wouldn't hurt to have a conversation about what a marketing plan would look like and have it ready for when the new stadium and LRT open and posed the question wouldn't the EDC want to be able to go to the Met Council and say we want the LRT to be the East Downtown Station and the design to look like this and have it be consistent throughout the district.

Further discussion ensued concerning branding and the timing to do it. Thereafter, Paul recommended that the EDC move forward with submitting a brand design proposal to PadillaCRT, for Dan to reach out to Lynn Casey for strategic advice on how to get ahead of this process, and for Dan to will follow up with the Met Council regarding the LRT station branding process.

Board Development. Paul advised this committee meets quarterly and that Lynn and Bert put together an annual calendar to keep us on task and to know what's happening throughout the year. He'll send the draft out for review and suggestions. Christie also posted it on the website and will forward a link. The next consideration will be to fill James Scott's vacancy.

Strategy. Paul advised that at the first monthly committee meeting held on September 2nd, comprised of Lynn, Bert, Daniel, Dan and himself, a couple strategic objectives were considered: the MDC/EDC structural alignment working group meeting held on August 19th and the SWOT analysis. Also, the committee agreed that it would not serve the membership to merge with the MDC and that took a big question off the table. There may be some advantages, but it would under-serve the smaller organizations that are the biggest basis of EDC's membership. As we look at the coming year, the prime question of how do we better serve our constituency was discussed. There are three overarching ways that the EDC has and will continue to do so:

1. *Pursue financial and organizational self-sufficiency.* We know that a merger with the MDC will not serve the EDC membership well, so we must work to become self-sufficient, evolve board governance capacity and diversity, and refine and develop the EDC brand.
2. *Better develop and define the value proposition.* Look beyond the end of the construction boom to determine how to bring value to the neighborhood in the long term by: being a connector between businesses and broader City interests; convening groups and individuals to serve the needs of our constituents; being thought leaders; cheering lead initiatives and ideas that lead to the betterment of the

neighborhood; facilitating, organizing and supporting big ideas; leveraging transit improvements; and strengthening ties and connectivity to the U of MN and other academic institutions.

3. *Define relationship with the MDC to be mutually beneficial to both agencies.* Continue to provide geographic leadership; pursue strategic alignment and collaboration; enact common agendas; seek enhancement of green space and advocate for public realm improvements.

Paul advised that this will become the EDC's internal strategic framework for the year and he will send it out to the board for further feedback.

Dan stated that the piece that is of prime importance is his salary, or staff in general, and that changes the model of how the EDC tries to be self-sustaining and why the MDC would invest in the shared staff model. Part of that discussion is related to the idea that may be the workable model for the long term, i.e., come up with an annual contract, define annual objectives, and define how to work for both organizations such that if the MDC steps away from foundation and grant support, it can justify making up the difference in his salary between what the EDC can afford and remain in its trajectory without changing its model. An important quotient of whether the EDC has to change its model or fee structure and how aggressive it is to become self-sufficient is related to professional staff and would mean that it is always a multi-fund source and annual conservation.

Thereafter, Paul thanked Jackie for hosting and encouraged other board members to host future board meetings at their respective places of business.

I. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m. (CS/DG).