

**Draft Minutes from the
East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, January 5, 2017
North Central University, Chicago Hall Basement, 1400 Chicago Avenue South
Elliot Park Neighborhood**

Present: Carina Aleckson, Marc Berg, Elizabeth Campbell, John Campobasso, Chris Fleck, Phil Huebner, Brian Maupin, Paul Mellblom, Lynn Regnier, Carletta Sweet, Bert Winkel

Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge

Absent: Jackie Barrett, Tim Briggs, Daniel Gumnit, Jeff Hahn, Tom Hayes, Varun Kharbanda, Kelly Stenzel, Alex Tittle, Tim Tucker

Guests: Beth Shogren and Amanda Wigen, Green Minneapolis

I. Call to Order

President Paul Mellblom called the meeting to order at 11:33 a.m., thanked Chris Fleck, NCU's Director of Business Relations, for hosting and, in deference to the two guest speakers from The Commons, noted he was excited to see the *Star Tribune* refer to the new park as the East Town Commons.

II. Consideration of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted (CS/BW).

III. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included minutes from the December 1, 2016 Board meeting; Treasurer's report which included the F2016 Budget vs. Actual as of December 31, 2016, and the Wells Fargo bank statements for November 1-30, 2016 and December 1-31, 2016; Director of East Town Partnership / Executive Director of East Town Business Partnership's report for November 27 through December 31, 2016; and Executive Coordinator's report for 12-01-16 to 12-31-16 (CA/BW).

IV. Presentations

A. The Commons Update. Paul prefaced by saying as the potential heart of the district, he still considers The Commons the biggest opportunity to make East Town great and, as an organization, we need to have a heightened sense of awareness for creating the ingredients needed to make it a vital and healthy amenity.

Green Minneapolis Interim Executive Director Beth Shogren advised they are back to give an update and referenced recent press on what's been happening regarding their fundraising goals and what items have been scaled back, i.e., *KSTP News* (<http://kstp.com/news/downtown-east-commons-green-minneapolis-park-20-million-beth-shogren-fundraising-goal-us-bank-stadium/436111/>), *Star Tribune* (<http://www.startribune.com/downtown-east-commons-park-in-minneapolis-is-still-short-on-funds/409605115/>). She reiterated they are looking forward to engaging the ETBP and its constituents to help create programs and amenities that will be an asset to the community.

Amanda Wigen advised since they presented to the ETBP in October 2016, they have been engaging with many of the local stakeholders (e.g., EPNI, DMNA, MacPhail, Guthrie) to broaden the number of people who know about the park and to seek input on programming ideas.

In May 2016, Shogren and Wigen were brought on by the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District under an interim contract to operate The Commons. For the past 2 months, they have been wearing the hat of Green Minneapolis (the 501(c)(3) nonprofit conservancy formed by the Minneapolis Downtown Council to facilitate parks and greening in downtown), and expect the City Council to award Green Minneapolis a longer-term contract (see item 27 at <http://www.minneapolis.gov/meetings/wm/WCMSP-191960>) with the goal toward bringing together public and private donors to activate the downtown public realm through various projects. Long-term capital improvements are fundraising dependent and they know the park needs a restaurant, but getting through 2017 and the Super Bowl will give them more information about the park's use and what the community wants it to be.

The 2017 budget has funds for programming but they are limited so they are actively looking for cash or in-kind sponsors and philanthropic organizations interested in advancing literacy, education, health and wellness. A program currently in the works is The Great Northern (<https://www.thegreatnorthernfestival.com/>), a new winter festival by Eric Dayton of Askov Finlayson in partnership with Northern Spark and Andrew Zimmern's Food Works Inc., scheduled for Friday, January 27 through Sunday, February 5, 2017. TGN will umbrella the three signature winter events in Minneapolis and St. Paul: City of Lakes Loppet Ski Festival, the Saint Paul Winter Carnival, and the U.S. Pond Hockey Championships, and in 2018 it will align with Super Bowl LII generating more eyeballs and traffic on our district. Regarding other programming events, they hope to come forward in late April with a press release about the season's activities. There will be a presentation on The Commons at the ETBP's annual meeting in April 2017.

Thereafter, Shogren entertained questions from the audience during which she advised there are currently six temporary portable potties opened from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. In the summer months, there are handwashing facilities in the flushable units. Since portable potties are not sustainable long term, a park support building is in dire need.

B. The 2020 Partners Overview. Executive Director Dan Collison explained his role with the MDC is expanding with a new title called Director of Downtown Partnerships because of a new 1-year contract he has with 2020 Partners (<https://the2020partners.com/>) as its part-time Executive Director. This all came about as a result of the success of the ETBP, its collaborative relationship with the MDC, and the desire by 2020 Partners to work more intentionally with each organization on land use issues. Both East Town and the North Loop are the emerging districts in downtown with uniquely diverse land use and built environment issues and due to the changing dynamics within each area, the Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan (http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/planning/master-plans_downtown-east-north-loop_index) is considered out of date. Dan's role with the ETBP will remain the same, and this new responsibility will be incorporated into his Work Objectives Report. His role with 2020 Partners will be to help refine its annual agenda and connect with the North Loop neighborhood. He noted that Carletta has served as the DMNA's representative on 2020 Partners for many years [since when it was known as the 2010 Partners].

Dan then described the group's mission and noted it is not a business association, but rather an unincorporated public/private organization functioning as a partnership of its members who are comprised of large institutions and neighborhood associations within its boundary and governed by a steering committee.

This group has been influential in bringing about the transformation of the area by creating a strategic area approach for the ballpark and its environs that developed the Minnesota Twins/Target Field Stadium, multi-modal Minneapolis Transit Interchange/Target Field Station, and Southwest Light Rail Transit. This group had also advocated for having the Vikings stadium and the Major League Soccer field be built in its neighborhood.

Dan considers his work in East Town to be analogous to what he'll be doing in the West Loop (http://urban-works.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/UrbanWorks_WestLoopVision.pdf) for 2020 Partners. The area is adjacent to the North Loop and covers 206 acres, 30% of which is publicly owned, e.g.:

- Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (<http://www.hennepin.us/your-government/facilities/hennepin-energy-recovery-center>)
- Metro Transit
 - Blue Line Extension (<http://www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/bottineau-community-works>);

- Heywood Campus Bus Garage and Police Headquarters (https://the2020partners.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/2020-Mtg-Metro-Transit_2016-11-29.pdf);
- Royalston Green Line (<https://metro council.org/Transportation/Projects/Current-Projects/Southwest-LRT/Stations/Royalston-Farmers-Station.aspx?source=child>);
- Target Field Station (<https://www.metrotransit.org/target-field-station>).

And 70% privately owned and much of it is underutilized, the map of which Dan indicated resembled East Town 8 years ago. Therefore, the experience he has derived while serving on and then working for the ETBP will be easily transferable.

Paul noted he and Dan had lengthy conversations about this new role and assured the Board Dan will be cutting back his hours at First Covenant Church to allow him to pursue it and it will not impact the time spent for the ETBP or the MDC. He considers it a net positive for us as it relates to networking/building relationships and raising the profile of the ETBP with a greater audience.

V. Action Items

None were required at this meeting.

VI. Updates

A. Executive Director Monthly Progress Report. Dan reported on the:

1. *City of Minneapolis Small Business Navigator.* Last month the Board supported a petition advocating for a Minneapolis Business Navigator Program (with Elizabeth Campbell abstaining). Subsequently, the Ways & Means Budget Subcommittee established a small business support team of 3.0 FTE to directly help small businesses navigate City processes across the Enterprise, particularly in the Business Licensing division of CPED, Health and Regulatory Services (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/documents/agenda/wcmsp-190912.pdf>). Dan advised he was part of a press conference at City Hall and it was great to see this succeed.

Also read <http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-small-businesses-finally-will-get-help-navigating-city-regulatory-process/407147326/>.

2. *Revised 2017 Business Forum Schedule.* For the updated schedule, visit <http://easttownmpls.org/2016-2017-etbp-business-forum-series/> or read the January 2nd ETBP email. The brochure will be updated as a result of these changes.
3. *Minimum Wage Engagement.* This is clearly becoming part of the political platform as we head into the Mayoral and City Council election cycle. Dan believes City staff is showing its best effort to engage businesses more aggressively than it did when the paid time off and earned sick time ordinance process unfolded. The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce, MDC and business associations are holding listening sessions about it. Deputy City Coordinator Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/nuria-rivera-vandermyde-63184742>) has reached out to the ETBP to hold such a session at one of its business forums and proposed framing it as follows:
 - We've been charged with engaging stakeholders about a possible minimum wage policy.
 - We understand a minimum wage policy impacts people at an individual level, as a business and has an impact on us as a region were Minneapolis to move forward on something only affecting Minneapolis – what does that look like to you?
 - What considerations do you think staff/council should take a hard look at as it contemplates such a policy? Here envision conversation about tips and wages, business size, staggering or phasing implementation if something does pass, asking that the solution be state or regional instead, etc.

- The goal is to solicit genuine feedback and specific concerns/considerations we should be researching and thinking about before putting forth recommendations to council, knowing that council then will have to ponder staff recommendations and either move forward or not which means still a lot more opportunities to engage still exist. Someone from our team will be taking notes without attribution (so no “Company X said this...”) and we’ll be compiling that feedback into our presentation when we go back to council mid 2017.

Paul noted this is a great opportunity for the ETBP to facilitate the process of collecting feedback from its membership without being advocates for one way or the other. These listening sessions will lead up to a presentation of policy recommendations to the full City Council in mid May 2017. For the full community engagement plan and timeline, visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-187466.pdf>.

Once a date, time and location (First Covenant Church?) convenient with City staff has been established for the ETPB session, Dan will outreach to the Board for assistance in getting the word out and encouraging the membership to participate. Discussion ensued wherein it was suggested to provide links to/research on positions other institutions, industries with multiple locations, municipalities and legislators in Minnesota have taken on this issue.

B. *Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.* Carletta Sweet referenced her report included in the online board package for January.

C. *Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.* Lynn Regnier reported on the following projects:

- Kraus-Anderson Block Development. External changes have been made to The Elliot Hotel part of the project (e.g., the elimination of the rooftop terrace, building height, more glass windows) which were approved by the EPNI Board at its December meeting.
- The 50 micro-unit Aberdeen Apartments at 1321 5th Avenue South. The Planning Commission’s changes to the exterior were approved by the EPNI Board at its December meeting.
- Signage at HCMC Pocket Park at South 9th Street and Park Avenue. This project will go before the Building, Land Use and Housing Committee on January 19th regarding a discrepancy in signage approval. The 4’ x 8’ solid monument sign has been changed to a 10’ post to fit into the Historic District.
- First Covenant Church’s East Town Apartment. Dan advised they are in a circling pattern to secure bonding. U.S. Bank is ready to go but they are wrestling with all of the other nonprofits and people who are building affordable housing projects.

D. *Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District.* Dan advised the 2017 budget was approved: \$3,264,173 for MDC from membership fees, grants and sponsorships; and \$6,570,736 for MDID from tax assessments. The MDC has just over 300 members and things are going well; its membership and fee structure are obviously quite different than that of the ETBP but as his role expands it’s all about building value and leveraging partnerships. Priorities for 2017 include:

- 2025 Plan implementation
- Public safety
- Nicollet Mall
- Public realm
- Events and programming
- Implementation of MDID strategic plan
- Membership

- Organization.

VII. Committee Reports

- A. **Executive.** Paul commented the ETBP is very dependent on staff, i.e., Dan and Christie, who both have a get it done attitude which has been a huge benefit to the organization. As a consequence, the EC has been looking at being prepared for their eventual departure due to changing circumstances. The Succession Plan is in place, but we need to be thinking more strategically. Since the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan is at the end of its implementation, we will begin planning for the next one and attracting membership more robustly.

Regarding the Executive Director Performance Review, Paul has received feedback from 11 Board members and sent a synopsis of it over the holiday to the EC who subsequently approved it. Now he will sit down with Dan to discuss it and then report back to the entire Board.

- B. **Board Development.** Paul advised this committee will be meeting tomorrow and will focus on: filling the vacancy left by Hillary Hart who took an Executive Director position at Theatre Under the Stars in Houston (<http://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2016/12/06/179895/after-nearly-a-year-of-searching-tuts-has-a-new-leader/>); and April elections for one third of the Board whose seats are expiring (i.e., Berg, Campbell, Fleck, Kharbanda, Regnier, Sweet, Tucker).

- C. **Business Forum.** See above Revised 2017 Business Forum Schedule.

- D. **Membership, Marketing and Communication.** MMC Chair Chris Fleck referenced his report submitted in the January online Board package (<http://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/ETBP-Member-Report-12.26.pdf>) which is based on a spreadsheet Christie provided him. Now that we're past December, anyone who hasn't renewed has been dropped even though they may be in the renewing process and, as a result, membership has dropped to 70. Since May 1, 2016, there has been no change in the number of new members, i.e., 12, not including those grandfathered in from the prior year's promotion.

Then he reminded everyone the ETBP brand materials are available online (<http://easttownmpls.org/help-spread-the-east-town-brand/>) and he and Dan are willing to approach their marketing departments to review it. Dan announced that Leah Wong, VP of Events and Marketing at the MDC advised him there will be East Town banners on The Commons in 2017 after the football season.

Chris then distributed a 1-page description and list of prospective questions for the ETBP Membership Survey. He noted that the survey done in early 2016 is considered inapplicable since it related to the district branding process, thus he devised this one to reflect the internal and external goals taken from the strategic plan.

Dan advised the goal is to conduct this prior to the annual meeting to help set goals for the next season. Discussion ensued during which it was suggested adding questions about the business forums, happy hour events, and offering opportunities for business development and networking. Chris will work with Dan and Christie to determine the appropriate time to roll this out given the minimum wage engagement process.

Lastly, Chris welcomed new Board member Phil Huebner who is entertaining working on the MMC.

VIII. Closing Remarks

Paul noted the ETBP has a lot on its plate for 2017 and has the potential to make a really good impact on the district and bring bounty to its membership.

He commented on the closing of Macy's Department Store (formerly Marshall Fields and Dayton's) in downtown Minneapolis and how it is considered by some the end of an era and a change not being welcomed by many people. He wants us to be conscious of that fact and to respond to that change and grow the neighborhoods so all the people who have been living here do not feel pushed out; that people from all economic strata and small and larger institutions have a place here and we continue to advocate for them. Lastly, he thanked everyone for their continued participation on the ETBP.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m. (CS/ MB).