

**Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Annual Meeting**  
**Thursday, April 19, 2018, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**  
**Best Western Normandy Inn, 405 South 8th Street**  
**Downtown West Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

- **Welcome and Announcements**

Paul Mellblom, President of the East Town Business Partnership, called the ETBP's annual meeting to order at 12:02 p.m., welcomed the audience and gave a brief overview of the agenda.

Dan Collison, Executive Director of the ETBP, thanked the audience for attending and acknowledged special guest Ward 3 Council Member Steve Fletcher who he advised will be a presenter at the May 17th business forum.

Fletcher explained he's 90 days into his job and learning a lot about what's happening in the 10+ neighborhoods he represents. He encouraged everyone who needs help in navigating the City to call his office at 612-673-2203. He and his two staff members, David Zaffran, Senior Policy Aide, and Laura Dorle, Policy Associate (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward3/ward3-staff>), are available to assist in any way they can and encouraged the audience to build relationships with them as they are trying to get to know people, help the City run well, and support small businesses and residents.

Collison advised Ward 6 Council Member Abdi Warsame who was unable to attend extended his greetings. Then he asked the audience to introduce themselves, after which he introduced the event sponsor.

- **Sponsor Spotlight**

Michael Dwyer, Director of Sales and Marketing at NRG Energy, explained District Energy [the production of steam, hot water or chilled water at a central plant then piping it underground to individual buildings for space heating, domestic hot water heating and air conditioning] in Minneapolis was established in 1926 by Baker Properties to serve 10 downtown buildings around what is now known as the Baker Center. In 1967, IDS Properties purchased the Baker Properties DE system and in 1972, as part of the IDS Center construction and in joint venture with Minnegasco, they began what is now known as the Minneapolis Energy Center to serve it and adjoining properties.

Subsequently, MEC was owned by a limited partnership formed by Dain Bosworth and as capital needs increased and tax benefits decreased they sold it to Xcel Energy who purchased it for its Non-regulated Group in order to go into areas particularly outside of the U.S. where they could build power plants and not be regulated by government entities. Most power companies that took that course went broke, including Xcel who filed for bankruptcy. Once out of bankruptcy, Xcel's Non-regulated Group was transformed into NRG which now serves nearly every major building downtown including the office towers, condominiums, apartments, hotels, convention centers, and stadiums. It is a large enterprise and all together it is over 130 blocks of area, 43 million feet of which are heated and 22 million feet are cooled.

Advantages to having district energy include lower capital costs, its environmentally sound, energy efficient, comfortable for building occupants, flexible, and reliable. Over the 46-year history they have looked at how often the system is down for unplanned work and the reliability factor is 99.9999%. This reliability includes this past winter when they heated U.S. Bank Stadium and kept it comfortably warm for the Super Bowl.

In January alone the production from the Energy Center was 245 million pounds of energy, a lot of steam produced by the central plant at South 8th Street and 4th Avenue South plus seven satellite plants around downtown. In addition to the Energy Center, they operate Hennepin County Energy Center at 616 10th Avenue South and the [University of Minnesota Medical Center] Fairview campus

across the river.

NRG enjoys being connected with the ETBP, and Dwyer as a resident of Elliot Park is particularly excited about this dynamic and growing area.

- **Acknowledgements and Announcements**

Collison thanked Dwyer and NRG for their ongoing support and sponsorship of this event and acknowledged the following businesses who have become new ETBP members over the past several months:

- Allodium Investment Consultants
- Avison Young
- Delta Dental
- Mill City Farmers Market
- 9th Street Historic Brownstones
- SMG
- Surfacequest

And the platinum sponsors who make investment in staffing and program initiatives possible:

- Allied Parking
- CenterPoint Energy
- Clear Channel Outdoor
- Community Housing Development Corporation
- Delta Dental
- ESG Architects
- Hennepin Healthcare
- House of Charity
- Kraus-Anderson
- Minnesota Vikings
- NRG Energy
- Padilla
- People Serving People
- Thrivent Financial
- U.S. Bank
- Valspar now Sherman-Williams
- Wells Fargo

Collison then announced activities sponsored by or occurring in the neighborhoods of:

- *Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.*
  - He thanked Executive Director Vanessa Haight for her new leadership of EPNI;
  - Green Team kickoff on Tuesday, April 10th, 4:30-5:30 p.m., at the Elliot Park Recreation Center;
  - Neighborhood Spring Cleanup on Saturday, April 28th, 10 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at Elliot Park;
  - MN Adult & Teen & Challenge's Minneapolis Gala with special guest P.J. Fleck on Friday, May 4th, 5:30-9:00 p.m., at the Hilton Minneapolis (<https://www.facebook.com/events/314670849045103/>); and
  - Building, Land Use and Housing meeting this evening, 6:00-7:30 p.m., at Elliot Park Recreation Center. For tonight's agenda or information about other meetings and events, visit <http://elliottparkneighborhood.org/>.

- *Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association*
  - Mill City Farmers Market opening day on Saturday, May 5th, 8 a.m.-1:00 p.m., at Chicago Avenue and 2nd Street, continuing on subsequent Saturdays through October; and the new Tuesday Night Market, 4:00-8:00 p.m., at The Commons, June through September (<https://millcityfarmersmarket.org/>).
  - For information about Board and Land Use Committee meetings and other events, visit <http://thedmna.org/>.
- *North Loop Neighborhood Association*
  - Food Truck Fair on Sunday, May 6th, 3:00-7:00 p.m., Heritage Landing Courtyard (<https://northloop.org/event/north-loop-food-truck-fair/>).
- *Minneapolis Downtown Council*
  - Explore Downtown Living on Saturday, May 19th, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (<https://www.exploredtliving.com/>).

Lastly, Collison announced that if anyone needs help in navigating the City with their business questions, to contact the Minneapolis Small Business Team at <https://business.minneapolismn.gov/contact> or call them at 612-673-2499 (BIZZ).

- **2017-2018 Season in Review**

Executive Coordinator Christie Hantge advised she's been with the ETBP since 2012 and one of her responsibilities is to help plan and coordinate the monthly business forums. They are a lot of fun but stressful the day of keeping track of the count of attendees and handling walk-ins. She appreciates the audience's patience and encouraged them to RSVP as soon as they receive her monthly invitation. Hantge thanked the Normandy Inn staff who have been very accommodating and then provided an overview of the 2017-2018 business forum season:

- May 18th: *Women in Business*, a joint forum with the Minneapolis Downtown Council at St. Olaf Catholic Church, featuring Becky Roloff, President of St. Catherine's University;
- June 15th: *The Business Case for Regional Equitable Development* at Ryan Companies' Millwright Building headquarters, featuring former Mayor Betsy Hodges and Shauen Pearce-Lassiter, Director of the Center Cities Competitiveness Initiative;
- September 21st: *The Nicollet Mall Project*, a joint forum with the MDC and the Economic Development Association of Minnesota at the Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant, featuring David Wright, Chair of the Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee, Don Elwood, Director of Transportation, and Lisa Middag, Director of Nicollet Activation;
- October 19th: *Getting Around in East Town Now and for the Next 25 Years* at the new Radisson RED Minneapolis, featuring leadership from Metro Transit, Transit for Livable Communities, Move Minneapolis, and Our Streets Minneapolis;
- November 16th: *Super Bowl 52: Let's Get This Party Started!* at the Guthrie Theater, featuring Alex Tittle, VP of Corporate Affairs and Business Connect, Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee, and Kyle Chank, VP of Operations and Logistics;
- December 19th: *Innovative Business Models + Startups*, a joint forum with the MDC at Day Block Event Center, featuring panelists Jeff Hahn, CEO of Internet Exposure, Mary Rick, CEO of the Impact Hub MSP/FINNovation Lab, Zach Robins, Co-founder of MNvest, and John Stavig, MN Cup, Program Director of Gary S. Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship, U of MN Carlson School of Management;
- January 18th: *Helping Businesses Lead on Energy Efficiencies, Waste and Pollution Reduction* at the Guthrie Theater, featuring Heather Worthington, the City's Director of Long Range Planning, and Patrick Hanlon, the City's Director of Environmental Programs;

- February 15th: *Destination Transformation 2030: Tourism Master Plan* at Meet Minneapolis, featuring Melvin Tennant, Meet Minneapolis President and CEO; and
- March 15th: *A First Look at HCMC's New Clinic and Specialty Center*, a joint forum with the MDC at the Hennepin Healthcare Clinic & Specialty Center, featuring Dr. Jon Pryor.

Hantge commented that if the audience hasn't had the opportunity to attend these business forums they could find a summary of them prepared by Board member Carletta Sweet on the ETBP's website.

Then she thanked the audience for attending – attendance to these business forums has grown substantially over the past few years – and the Normandy Inn again for hosting as well as the other venues visited over the past 12 months. She asked if there are other businesses or organizations who would like to host going forward to please let her or Collison know.

Lastly, she announced that the final two business forums of the 2017-2018 season will be on May 17th at the new Wells Fargo headquarters, and on June 21st at the FINNnovation Lab which will be a joint forum with the MDC.

Collison remarked that Hantge is a unique gift to the ETBP and that multiple downtown neighborhoods extend a lot of love and gratitude to her. He personally thanked Hantge for her leadership deeply behind the scenes as that is what keeps the organization going.

- **2018-2019 Season Overview**

- **Development.** Collison stated the ETBP has a partnership with the MDC that connects it to the entire Downtown District business community and all the neighborhoods interwoven therein. Part of the ETBP's work in this partnership is being able to emphasize holistic development that builds an inclusive downtown and benefits everyone.

There are two digital bookshelves related to development: one that captures the regular meetings, presentations, development news and resources of the East Town Development Group (<http://www.easttowndevelopment.com/>); and one that captures the opportunity sites, news and resources of the Park & Portland Project (<http://www.parkportlandprojectmpls.com/>). As we continue to emphasize and cast vision for development, the three goals from the Park & Portland Project – (1) increase residential development, (2) strengthen Park and Portland as corridors, (3) expand and improve the public realm – plus our brand essence to be a vibrant, multifaceted and connected community are what help us to be a district that spotlights two important neighborhoods, i.e., Downtown East which includes the Mill District, and Elliot Park, the historic residential neighborhood. As Downtown East rose through the 1990s and 2000s we are now connected with all of this investment in the middle which becomes the East Town narrative.

- **Business Forums.** Collison provided an overview of the 1-page 2018-2019 Business Forum Series handout entitled *Advancing an East Town Vision for Holistic Growth* listing a wide range of topics beginning in September 2018 through June 2019, and the updated brochure left at the audience's seats. He advised because the ETBP is a small budget organization, i.e., \$60,000 annually including grants, in order to keep the organization going there's a slight increase in membership levels which has not been done in several years. He encouraged the audience to spread this information around and help recruit new members.

He explained it has been an amazing journey over the 9 years he's been a part of ETBP; we see ourselves as a key connector and convener.

- **Board Directors Election**

Mellblom explained at the beginning of 2015 the Bylaws were amended to stagger the terms of the new

total number of directors of 21 so that each year only 7 would be up for reelection; at that time straws were drawn to determine who would serve 1-year, 2-year and 3-year terms. In 2017 the Bylaws were amended once again to clarify that anyone filling the remaining term of an unexpired term was eligible to serve two consecutive 3-year terms before having to rotate off for 1 year. Since this is the last year for 7 directors elected under the 2015 amendment to the Bylaws to be eligible to serve another 3-year term and all 7 expressed interest in continuing to serve, Mellblom proposed reelecting the slate of nominees to a 3-year term. He also asked for additional nominees. There being no additional nominees, the slate of nominees – Carina Aleckson, Jackie Barrett, John Campobasso, Daniel Gumnit, Jeff Hahn, Phil Huebner, Paul Mellblom – were unanimously reelected to the ETBP Board of Directors (MB/CS).

Mellblom added that because there will be 7 directors who will be terming off in 2019, he encouraged those interested in serving and helping the ETBP to grow to please contact him, Collison or Hantge; the Board Development Committee will be working on recruitment over the months leading up to the next annual meeting.

- **Overview of Strategic Framework Implementation**

Mellblom explained the ETBP began updating its 5-year (2013-2017) strategic framework at a retreat on July 11, 2017 to think about the next set of goals to create a great district, involve stakeholders, and keep it going over the next 5 years.

Beginning with our mission – “*serves as an advocate for the Downtown East and Elliot Park business community, promoting a safe, productive business environment and communication between business and civic leaders*” – and working with the four key areas of strategic focus within the previous strategic framework still considered important to reaffirm or establish new goals – “*Connection and Collaboration, Advocacy and Resourcing, Leadership and Voice, Sound and Sustaining Organization Structure*” – the following has been accomplished since the last annual meeting:

- Through our shared staff relationship with the MDC, have combined efforts to:
  - Launch *Inclusive Downtown Diversity Think Tank*, in partnership with the MDC, YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities and 2020 Partners (<https://www.huntersage.com/in-the-news-content/2018/3/24/equity-innovation-center-hosts-first-inclusion-think-tank>); and
  - Launch *Vacant Storefronts and Pop-up Businesses* pilot program (<http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-downtown-council-explores-pop-ups-pilot-for-vacant-retail-space/477783653/>).
- Through mandated seats on the ETBP Board, continuing to strengthen collaborative relationships with the DMNA and EPNI to better understand community needs.
- Championing and cheerleading, especially Collison, for our unique East Town assets.
- To ensure the long-term organizational capacity and financial stability:
  - Taking appropriate measures to grow membership and revenue; and
  - Beginning to discuss succession planning for staff; the ETBP would be at a loss if both the Executive Director and Executive Coordinator were to leave.

Lastly, Mellblom summarized what’s next for the ETBP over the next couple years, e.g.:

- Being relevant to our membership is the most important;
- Become recognized as a thought leader for district stakeholders;
- Provide an aggregate view of all the happenings and emerging developments transforming the neighborhoods within the district; and



➤ Network to strengthen existing and build new relationships with all who care about the area.

- **The Theater of Public Policy**

Collison explained to have a little fun at our annual meeting we recruited t2p2 (<http://t2p2.net/>). Reading information taken from their website, he advised co-founders “Tane Danger and Brandon Boat are longtime friends and Gustavus Adolphus College alums. As double agents, they spend their days as civic do-gooders, making the world a better place. By night, they produce improv shows, making the world more fun for all.”

Collison further noted that we’ve had t2p2 before [April 16, 2015], they’re a success around town and we’re pleased to have them back.

Danger first asked the audience to fill the strips of paper on their table with lines of dialogue, e.g., things you regularly hear around and about East Town or things you are sick of hearing around and about East Town, for use later in the show. Then he and his cast launched an improvisational sketch based on the annual meeting’s theme, i.e., *A Big, Bold North, Booming East Town Extraaaaaavaganza!* inspired by conversations the cast had with the audience prior to the beginning of the meeting, e.g.: “You’re here at my soiree, but you didn’t RSVP, which means reserve spot very please”; “Minnesotans like good weather, good schools and above average parking.”

Thereafter, the cast collected the strips of paper from the audience. Danger asked “what’s the next big place in East Town” to which “Finnegans” was the response, and “who’s going to be hanging out there” to which “everybody and the Vikings” was the response. The cast then launched another improvisational sketch based on the responses just received and dialogue written on the strips.

Lastly, Danger thanked the ETBP for having them and passed around an email list for those interested in having them at their event.

- **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

Collison thanked the Minnesota Vikings ticket sales team in the audience for providing a football signed by Bud Grant. Then he announced the winner of the drawing: Mike Wall from Clear Channel.

Mellblom then thanked the following: the audience for attending; t2p2 for its performance; Mike Noble and the Normandy Inn for hosting; Executive Director Collison and Executive Coordinate Hantge for their dedication, hard work and another great year; and the membership for its support and participation. He asked everyone to think about how they can help make this the best place to live, work and recreate in Minneapolis.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m. (Carletta Sweet/Kathleen Anderson)