

**Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Business Forum**  
**Thursday, May 17, 2018, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**  
**Wells Fargo Headquarters, 550 South 4th Street, Crews and Wetzel Room**  
**Downtown East Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

- **Welcome, Introductions and Announcements**

Paul Mellbloom, President of the East Town Business Partnership and Principal at MSR Design, welcomed the audience to the May business forum and thanked Wells Fargo for hosting. Then he drew attention to the literature placed on their tables – the 2018-2019 Business Forum Series and the two-fold brochure with membership information – to take with them and pass along to colleagues for consideration.

The ETBP believes, as an organization that collaborates with the two neighborhood associations, The Commons, all the businesses and residents within East Town, collectively we can make this the best neighborhood in Minneapolis. As a consequence, the ETBP is offering two opportunities for organizations to promote and showcase their businesses: (1) as the Presenting Sponsor for a business forum; and (2) as one up to three Exhibitor Tables at a business forum. For more information, contact Membership, Marketing and Communication Chair Chris Fleck at [info@easttownmpls.org](mailto:info@easttownmpls.org).

The audience was asked to introduce themselves, after which Dan Collison, Executive Director of the ETBP, welcomed new member, Firefighters for Healing (<http://firefightersforhealing.org/>) that has deep connections to Hennepin Healthcare, and acknowledged House of Charity, the event's Exhibitor Table, and encouraged everyone to stop by and learn about their expansion plans.

He thanked the ETBP's 78 members and extended a personal gratitude to the following 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

He also gave a special thanks to Kraus-Anderson for the printing of the materials then announced the following events and/or programs:

- *Thursday, June 21st, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* Celebrating the Opening of the Kraus Anderson Block at the FINNovation Lab/Impact Hub MSP. This is the final business forum of the 2017-2018 season which is tracked with the school year.
- *Thursday, May 17th, 5:30-8:00 p.m.:* Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan (<https://minneapolis2040.com/>) open house at Dayton YMCA at Gaviidae Common, 651 Nicollet

Avenue.

- *Saturday, May 19th, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.:* Explore Downtown Living, a free event to tour the various properties in downtown Minneapolis (<https://www.exploredtliving.com/>).
- *Wednesday, May 23rd, 4:00-7:00 p.m.:* Doing Business with the City of Minneapolis, a free event covering a range of topics, including an overview of the basics of doing business with the City, at 1011 W. Broadway Avenue, Suite 105 (<http://news.minneapolismn.gov/2018/05/21/civil-rights-department-hosting-event-share-tips-business-city/>).
- *Thursday, May 24th, 5:30-6:30 p.m.:* 2018 X-Games Downtown Community Outreach Meeting at Edition Apartment Residences. Representatives from the X-Games will provide an update on the upcoming 2018 X-Games scheduled to take place at US Bank Stadium and The Commons on July 19-22.
- *June events sponsored by Cynthia Froid Group*
  - *Tuesday, June 5th, 4:00-8:00 p.m.:* Mill City Farmers Market Night Market Opening Night at The Commons
  - *Wednesday, June 13th, 6:00-7:00 p.m.:* State of the Downtown Minneapolis Real Estate Market at Mill City Museum
  - *Wednesday, June 27th, 4:00-6:00 p.m.:* CFG's Annual Izzy's Ice Cream Social at Gold Medal Park
- *June 14th, 4:30-6:00 p.m.:* ETBP Happy Hour Networking with featured speaker Kevin Warren, Chief Operating Officer, Minnesota Vikings at McKinney Roe (<https://easttownmpls.org/event/etbp-happy-hour-networking-event/>).
- *Neighborhood events*
  - Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association: For Board and Land Use Committee meetings, visit <https://www.thedmna.org/>.
  - Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc: For Livability, and Building, Land Use & Housing meetings, visit <http://elliottparkneighborhood.org/>.
- *City's new Minneapolis Business Portal* (<https://business.minneapolismn.gov/>) is designed to connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to the information and resources needed to plan, launch and grow a business. The City's Innovation Team developed this portal; it is the new front door to obtaining information from the City.
- *East Town name and brand.* As a cheerleader for this side of town, Collison is trying to rearticulate the incredible opportunity to be a vibrant, multifaceted and connected district that promotes the Elliot Park and Downtown East/Mill District neighborhoods. He is inviting the leadership to cast vision and allow space for some ambiguity noting that Minneapolis is traditionally a city of neighborhoods, yet we have wards that transcend neighborhoods, state representatives that transcend neighborhoods, sometimes business districts that transcend neighborhoods (e.g., Uptown), and ideas that float over and above and give everyone a sense of place. Then gave a high-five to Sherman Associates, as they are launching the East End, for promoting the East Town brand and played their 1-minute promotional video.

If curious about the East End project, the 2025 Plan East Town-North Loop Development Work Group is hosting a land use meeting on Tuesday, June 5th, 9:00-10:00 a.m. at the new East End project as well as 205 Park Avenue project that is underway. If interested, RSVP to Collison.

- **Thoughts from Ward 3 Council Member**

CM Steve Fletcher thanked Collison for inviting him and stated he continues to be a curmudgeon on the East Town name but is thrilled to see the kind of civic engagement happening here. He believes it's important for people to get together and think about the place where they do business and live; he'll keep showing up and continue to talk about the name. [Ward 1 CM] Kevin Reich also takes exception to anyone on this side of the river calling anything east.

There is so much good stuff happening here, e.g.:

- The Commons and all the people that are using it.
- Kept his promise and won the war on snow by May, but know it's coming again. Having important conversations about how to do snow removal better and as we've created these great walkable, bikeable neighborhoods, people are starting to have much higher expectations. Right now we plow for cars first, which is good but if you're a pedestrian who talks to work it's almost impossible to get through corners where snow has piled up for almost 3 days. The conversation is ongoing, but he sees some progress.
- If you go back and watch, they had their Economic Development Committee meeting this week. It became a running joke about how many new business licenses approved in Ward 3 because when CM Goodman called on the Ward to make the motion for approving a new license, Fletcher was repeated constantly.
- He's excited about us getting a Trader Joe's, and a new retailer Faribault Woolen Mill is moving next to Northern Coffeeworks at Washington Avenue and 11th Avenue.
- There's a lot of good work being done at the new Minneapolis Business Portal. There's a core team we've tried to empower to be flexible and nimble and help people through the approval process, access to capital and get things moving. He's seeing some good positive stories to start being able to tell. If we know small businesses that are trying to make things happen, please make sure you get them to that portal or have them call his office (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward3/index.htm>).
- This Ward is the steward of the Mississippi River and the Stone Arch Bridge is an important part of this place and is endangered in being defunded. If anyone has any clout at the legislature, now is the right time to be calling; there's going to be a rally tomorrow on the bridge to draw press attention. Hopefully, we can get funding back into the bonding bill to get it repaired. About the rest of riverfront activities he'll leave to the presenters.

- **The Commons 2018 Summer Programming**

Beth Shogren, Executive Director of Green Minneapolis, announced there will be a Coffee with CM Fletcher on Wednesday, June 6th, 5:00-6:00 p.m. at The Commons. Fletcher clarified he holds these gatherings on a monthly basis at different venues in Ward 3.

Shogren advised her colleague, Amanda Wigen, Director of Programming & Events who is largely responsible for the programming we'll hear about, was unable to attend. While using a slide presentation (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018-05-17-ETBP-Meeting-Commons-Programming.pdf>), she began with an overview of what transpired in 2017, and described their priorities for 2018, which is to have more events and people as well as to highlight The Commons as a place where anyone can come and have a good time, e.g.:

- They will again be the site for the Creative City Challenge (<http://news.minneapolismn.gov/2018/03/16/carry-homes-wins-2018-creative-city-challenge/>).
- Northern Spark is a 2-night festival on Friday, June 15th and Saturday, June 16th, 9:02 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. versus the dusk to dawn art experience (<https://2018.northernspark.org/>).
- Minnesota Sinfonia is on Tuesday, June 12th, a designated BYOB and picnic event (<https://www.mnsinfonia.org/2018-summer-concerts>).

- Ending the season with the Minnesota Orchestra (<http://www.minnesotaorchestra.org/>) on Tuesday, September 25th. Both this and the previous event coincide with the Mill City Farmers Market Night Market for which they are seeking sponsors.
- Will again have four sessions of movies; have a new partnership with the MSP Film Society. Titles have yet to be announced but will feature all blockbusters. All are BYOB. This year trying to do a project with the Cedar Riverside Teen Tech Center and commissioning some short films from the youth along the theme of modern Minneapolis.

For more information about the date and time of a multitude of activities or to schedule your own corporate event and the opportunity to win a \$50 gift card by sharing an idea, visit <https://www.commonsmpls.com/activities>.

- **Water Works + Lock and Dam**

Collison introduced Bruce Chamberlain, Minneapolis Parks Fellow; Kjersti Monson, CEO and Director of Civic Studio|Duval Companies; and Janette Law, Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships at the Minneapolis Parks Foundation, by reading a brief biography on each.

Law explained the MPF's mission is to transform human life by aligning philanthropic investment and community vision around parks and public space. They're an independent, privately-funded nonprofit that helps envision and execute transformative parks. There are four areas of focus:

1. *Vision.* Bring the best new ideas from around the world to the Twin Cities for inspiration and aspiration and one of the ways is via the Next Generation of Parks™ lecture series (<https://mplsparksfoundation.org/projects/lecture-series/>).
2. *Collaboration.* Agenda is shaped in collaboration with communities through Minneapolis and are responsive to ideas that come from those who have a passion for the parks and see a project or need they feel they can help fulfill.
3. *Acceleration.* Help build momentum to help get projects get done. Chamberlain is a key part of that; his role with implementation and partnership with the MPRB helps ensure some of these visionary projects will be completed in a reasonable timeframe and we can all enjoy them.
4. *Funding.* Work with individuals, businesses and foundations to invest enduring public assets.

Since 2003, have raised nearly \$18 million for transformative parks projects and that effort has accelerated since 2015 when the RiverFirst campaign was launched. They are \$2 million away from the campaign goal and urge those businesses that have not yet participated to consider coming on board because the work that will happen on the riverfront is a tremendous benefit to the neighborhood, district, businesses and all residents and visitors to the Twin Cities. For more information about MPF, visit <https://mplsparksfoundation.org/>.

Bruce Chamberlain explained RiverFirst (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/East-Town-R1-presentation-5-17-2018.pdf>) is about the transformation of a piece of the river corridor that has remained elusive for about 100 years. If you think of the Chain of Lakes, Minnehaha Creek, and riverfront from downtown to the south and a bit through northeast, almost all of our water bodies are public space except this 5-1/2 mile stretch from downtown to the northern city limits as a result of when the city was developed and when the MPRB was formed in 1883. When the COL and MC were established as public spaces, they were farmland and easy to acquire.

He believes that more than any other city in the country, the park system in Minneapolis has established the foundation for the development pattern for the fortunes and riches we all share in the city. Within the RiverFirst initiative, from its southern most project, Water Works, to the northern city limits, there are a host of public space projects that will come online, get constructed, move off and get replaced by others projects over the next decades representing hundreds of millions in investment in

public space acquisition, transformation cleanup and ultimately development of public land.

Transitioning to Water Works, Chamberlain explained it falls at the end of the Stone Arch Bridge and acts as a gateway between East Town and the riverfront. Displaying historical pictures of the site, he explained WW is built on an area that was consumed by grain mills down slope from the Mill City Museum, and the elevated railway was on the river's edge. We are applying a layer on top of prior eras. Some of the mill ruins were uncovered in the early 2000s and someday the rest will also be uncovered. As a bit of irony, he showed an image of the gravel piles that a gravel and aggregate company used when they had control of this piece of waterfront; it was relocated to the North Minneapolis riverfront so that redevelopment could occur in the Mill District. Now that same area is looking toward transformation as well.

Continuing on with character images of what exists today, Chamberlain explained the old Fuji Ya restaurant has been taken down and decoupled from the mills underneath in preparation for redevelopment of the park land, the first phase of WW. They consider it a venue for storytelling, for people and peoples to tell their own stories. It's a park and public space but, more importantly, it's a forum for the way communities come together much like what The Commons will become for the next generation of downtown Minneapolis.

Chamberlain described the site evolution and site plan for phase one of WW which is roughly 3 acres bounded by 3rd and 5th Avenues and West River Parkway and South 1st Street. It will include a Pavilion embedded in the Bassett Mill and Columbian Mill ruins within which will be a new dining facility, restrooms, meeting space, reception, green rooftop plaza, elevator and stair core. There will also be outdoor spaces, restoration of land, a promenade along the parkway, and connection of bikes to the riverfront.

This project will be under construction later this year/early next year. Both public and private funds will be going into it and they expect the fundraising campaign to be done by the end of this year.

Chamberlain also described the gatehouse that was connected to a canal from the river with steel gates in the archways that would control how much water would come into the mills. The gatehouse is buried under the surface parking lot on the riverside of the parkway that will be the backdrop of a performance space in phase two of WW. The surface parking lot will be removed and reestablishing a bridge trail over a replica of the inlet canal that existed as a way of remembering the rail history and cleaning up the circulation.

The water works facility built in 1867, the namesake of this project, was where portable water was first delivered to residents of Minneapolis. It kept moving upriver beyond that point because so many people died of typhoid from the pollutants in the river that found its way into the water system. It eventually it landed in Fridley above all the industry in north and northeast Minneapolis.

Displaying an image of the 25-mile river corridor stretching through Minneapolis and St. Paul, Chamberlain noted the areas represented in green are planned for public space with over a \$1 billion in investment over the next several decades, a centerpiece for these two cities.

Kjersti Monson advised they are just at the beginning of The Falls initiative; however the two stories, Water Works and The Falls, are deeply intertwined because they are abutting. There is an enormous treasure trove of information at <http://thefalls.org/about/the-falls-initiative/> including the status of government actions, history of the project, and renderings and onsite photography.

Monson is here representing Friends of the Lock and Dam, a nonprofit formed in 2016 to repurpose the Lock into a visitor's center and park. That was a major goal considering it is federally owned and the federal government is notoriously burdensome in disposing of its assets, but when the Lock closed to commercial navigation, that is what everyone thought would be coming. It is still authorized for

flood management, but the potential of the site in both MPRB plans and Heritage Preservation Board plans has long been acknowledged as a cultural asset and jewel site on the riverfront. The nonprofit was formed and immediately raised \$5 million to proceed with a challenging but important journey to redefining the Central Riverfront.

Currently, they have a budget of \$680,000, but almost none is going toward design; rather it's going toward legal, lobbying, government relations, and administration.

They have a 12 member board of directors, a recent expansion. One notable addition is D'Angelos Svenkeson, VP of Thor Development and one of the management team on the Upper Harbor Terminal. This is a strategic relationship for FL&D because these two sites have been continually connected through commercial barging and will be a strong connection in the future for the community. Every member on the FL&D board is engaged in some form of support, relationship building, fundraising, and actively working to achieve this goal. They are lucky to have board members who have been connected to prior planning initiatives and strategies for the riverfront and to resource organizations they look to for support.

It is also a major coalition effort. One of the important activities last year was to shape a vision and mission that other organizations or stakeholders on the riverfront could buy in and support. The organizations that have endorsed the mission statement and brought a constituency who support the objective have helped them move forward at the city, state and federal level in a significant way.

Their idea was not unique; it has been a concept present in multiple plans over many years by many different entities, most significantly: the Destination Transformation 2030 Plan identifying the Central Riverfront as a site for a future visitor center; Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan which identified the Lock as the location; the 2025 Plan which lists the river as the premier experience in Minneapolis; and the MN Historical Society/St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board's look at the assets we heard about from Chamberlain.

The coalition convened in several large meetings and most recently in November 2017 to determine what role the Lock should play in the riverfront and what the impact is of the entire Upper River because a lot of the organizations look beyond that one site. They looked at riverfront destinations and activities and there is already a lot happening in the Central Riverfront, i.e., the Lock and Dam has a good connection to The Commons and the greening of Park and Portland concept, Mill Ruins Park and Water Works, and repurposing the USPS which will happen in the future. As you move north there are a few things coming. Some restaurants already have docks in the water, there's the Minneapolis Water Taxi serving out of Boon Island you can take it to the Sample Room. And there are 12 navigable miles that go further north to Coon Rapids Dam where you can imagine ports of call. Through mapping, existing and recommended water access was identified as well as additional ports of call (shown in yellow).

They took The Falls initiative to the state where there's an even bigger story and why the state should care about it. The site is on the 10-state Great River Road, a National Scenic Byway that follows the Mississippi River and called the best drive in America. It is a state tourism asset and Explore Minnesota has taken an interest. It is also at the heart of the Mississippi National River Recreation Area, our national park; the National Park Service has a strong interest in the Lock and already has a use agreement with the Corps to provide tours and the National Park Conservation Association is one of the endorsing organizations.

Lastly, due to a time constraint, Monson gave a brief overview of the proposed site plan "Implementing a Shared Vision for the Upper Lock" and urged the audience to call their legislators to support their bills introduced at the state legislature for \$1.5 million in bonding for predesign. They also have some language in the Water Resources Development Act at the federal level; working with

members of Congress to direct action on the disposition of the Lock.

- **Closing Remarks**

Collison advised they will provide links to the presentations in a follow up email and then thanked Wells Fargo for hosting, the audience for attending and the speakers for their presentations.

Lastly, he reminded everyone the next business forum “Celebrating the Opening of the Kraus Anderson Block” will be held jointly with the MDC on Thursday, June 21st, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the FINNnovation Lab/Impact Hub MSP