

**Draft Minutes from the
East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 3, 2018
Augustana Care, 1425 10th Avenue South, 7th Floor Skyroom
Elliot Park Neighborhood of Minneapolis**

Present: Carina Aleckson, Marc Berg, John Campobasso, Chris Fleck, Vanessa Haight, Tom Hayes, Phil Huebner, Brian Maupin, Paul Mellblom, Carletta Sweet, Bert Winkel
Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge, Ben Kvale
Absent: Siyad Abdullahi, Jackie Barrett, Tim Briggs, Elizabeth Campbell, Daniel Gumnit, Jeff Hahn, Brooke Hajinian, Varun Kharbanda, Kelly Stenzel, Tim Tucker
Guests: Kelly Carlson and Elle Fox, Augustana Care
Kirstin Wiegmann, Minneapolis Public Art

I. Welcome, Call to Order, and Introductions

President Paul Mellblom called the meeting to order at 11:38 a.m., and thanked Augustana Care for hosting and providing lunch. Then he asked everyone to introduce themselves which included Ben Kvale, ETBP's new Social Media Intern (<https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-welcomes-new-social-media-intern-ben-kvale/>), and Kelly Carlson, Director of Housing at AC, and Elle Fox, Marketing Director at AC, both of whom attended on behalf of ETBP Board member Tim Tucker.

Fox advised AC serves approximately 600 senior residents in their Minneapolis campus (<http://minneapoliscampus.org/>): in the 340 Independent and Assisted Living apartments, and in the 255 Care Suites for those requiring a higher level of care. She further advised that due to the merger (<http://augustanacare.org/get-know-us/news-and-events/all-news/augustana-care-and-elim-care-join-serve-more-older-adults-and-others-need/>), they should have a new name by July with subsequent rebranding occurring over the next several years. Their home corporate office will move out of this campus – freeing up space for 40 additional senior living apartments – to a location to be determined around the Twin Cities.

II. Consideration of Agenda

The agenda was approved as amended adding under action items consideration of a letter of support for the new City Consolidated Office Building that Executive Coordinator Christie Rock Hantge emailed to the Board on May 2nd. The agenda as amended was approved (CS/CA).

III. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included minutes from the April 5, 2018 Board meeting; Treasurer's report which included the F2018 Budget vs. Actual as of April 30, 2018 and the Wells Fargo bank statement for the period April 1-30, 2018; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and 2020 Partners' report for April 1-28, 2018; and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 4/1/2018 to 4/30/2018 (BW/BM).

IV. Presentation: Samatar Crossing Public Art

Executive Director Dan Collison advised he's gotten to know Kirstin Wiegmann (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kirstin-wiegmann-77015715>) in the last few months and was invited to participate in this project. He considers it to be one of the most practical and important new pedestrian and bicycle bridges between the East Town and Cedar-Riverside neighborhoods. Wiegmann, who has a contract with the City and leads the public art engagement implementation, came today to introduce the Board to the project.

While using a slide presentation, Wiegmann explained Samatar Crossing was named in memory of Hussein Samatar, the first Somali-American in Minnesota elected to public office. Then she solicited additional knowledge about him from the Board (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hussein_Samatar). She noted one of former Mayor R.T. Rybak's last actions in office was to name this bridge after him (<https://blogs.mprnews.org/cities/2013/12/rybak-says-a-new-bridge-will-be-named-for-mpls-somali-leader/>) and cobble together a plan to repurposes the 5th Street ramp to downtown from I-94 into a

bicycle and pedestrian connection between downtown and Cedar-Riverside. She noted Rybak's metaphor was that Hussein created bridges for people in the East African community to assimilate, connect and commune with the larger social infrastructure; this bridge and crossing between downtown and Cedar-Riverside is a metaphor for Hussein's life.

Wiegmann guided the Board through the preliminary design for Samatar Crossing noting the pedestrian and bicycle paths (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@publicworks/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-203364.pdf>), and displayed pictures of what the trail enhancements looked like this past fall.

She gave a brief overview of how the City funds Art in Public Places; it is the purview of the Community Planning & Economic Development Department's Long Range Planning Division (<http://www.minneapolis.mn.gov/dca/>) and commissions are guided by comprehensive public art policies, including policies for project and artist selection, design development and maintenance. It has been only within the past several years that the City has had real dollars to put toward it due to a new Percent-for-Art Ordinance (<http://www.minneapolis.mn.gov/news/WCMS1P-149490>).

Displaying a map of existing artwork, current and potential projects (<http://www.minneapolis.mn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-148996.pdf>), Wiegmann explained the focus of the program is to integrate art into City infrastructure and building projects, i.e., buildings, roads, bridges, parks, plazas, bike trails, etc., on sites that are publically accessible and selected from the City's Capital Improvement Program by the Public Art Advisory Panel and the Arts Commission.

This project is in the Planning phase and Wiegmann anticipates having art installed by summer of 2019. During this phase, which has been going on for 5 months, she has been going into the communities that surround the project – Cedar-Riverside, Elliot Park and Downtown East – talking with as many people that she can, researching and learning. They have formed a Steering Committee, on which Dan serves, to help shape the goals for the project and the skills or capacities artists may need to successfully execute a project. Neither she nor the City nor the Steering Committee will decide the artwork, but ultimately the artist will create a work of art in collaboration with those entities. Once the Steering Committee designs the call for artists, it will put out a public document which will invite artists to apply, ideally nonpublic artists who work in any discipline and live in these communities. Then the following phases will occur: Artist Selection, Design Development, Final Review, Fabricate and Install, Celebrate, all of which takes time.

Thereafter, she entertained a few questions from the Board. For more information, she can be reached via email at Kirstin.Wiegmann@minneapolis.mn.gov.

V. Action Items

A. Consideration of Slate of Officers/Executive Committee and Chair Designations for the Committees. Paul advised he has spoken to Board members currently serving as the President (himself), Vice President (Carletta Sweet), Treasurer (Carina Aleckson) and the two At-Large (Chris Fleck and Daniel Gummit) and all have agreed to serve again for another year. He then asked if there were others who wished to serve. There being no additional nominations, the proposed slate of Board Officers/Executive Committee was approved (JC/BW).

Paul further advised it makes sense for him to continue to chair the Executive Committee, but that he is conferring with someone to join and eventually chair the Board Development Committee later on in the year. In addition, Dan has agreed to continue chairing the Business Forum Committee and the East Town-North Loop Development Group; and Chris Fleck has agreed to continue chairing the Membership, Marketing and Communication Committee.

Dan then distributed a Committee sign-up sheet for Board members to keep, remove or add their names; he'll reach out to those who are absent. He also developed a Committee Structure and Goals

document (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-2019-ETBP-Committee-Structure-and-Goals.pdf>) to be filled in by each committee in accordance with the goals of the 2018-2022 Strategic Framework.

Carina then asked that the contact list (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-2019-BOD-contact-list-04-26-2018.pdf>) reflect the fact that members are only eligible for two 3-year terms and to remove references to “not eligible for a 4th term.” Carletta noted neighborhood representatives have no term limits; however, as Paul clarified, they are elected annually [as it’s tied to the renewal of their membership].

- B. Consideration of Letter of Support for the City Consolidated Office Building.** Paul reminded the Board this project was presented before it on two occasions, i.e., on December 7, 2017 and April 5, 2018, and we have been asked, by Peter Brown specifically, to provide a letter of support. Consequently, he drafted a letter which was forwarded to the Board by Christie yesterday.

Discussion ensued during which Dan explained it is common practice for ad hoc, non-neighborhood groups and business associations to offer letters of support for publicly-funded projects, not for those leading into the thick waters of political controversy. The ETBP has submitted letters of support for projects presented before it and requesting such action, e.g., U.S. Bank Stadium, Kraus-Anderson Block Development, Ironclad.

Dan believes, based on the Stadium Transportation Management Plan that indicated more than enough parking to satisfy the largest entertainment asset in the area, there’s no downside to the ETBP supporting the project due to the net loss of 700 parking stalls in downtown; we still don’t have the pinch points that exist in the North Loop.

Paul commented there’s a political process to any project like this and having designed a lot of public buildings himself, if City Council Members started hearing a lot of pushback from the community on its design, he is certain it would change.

Marc Berg, who has been following this project closely and agrees with the vision as presented by CFO Mark Ruff but is uncomfortable with some of the wording of the letter and has quibbles with the process for taking public input, suggested several edits: (1) delete the second sentence in the second paragraph and combine the remaining sentence with the third paragraph; and (2) insert a paragraph break in the first paragraph after the third sentence ending in “as presented”.

Vanessa Haight advised EPNI approved the conceptual design, but the timing for the design team to return and talk about detailed plans hasn’t worked out before they go before the Planning Commission on May 21st. She also noted the potential for conflict of interest by having Paul as a signatory.

Christie added the DMNA’s LUC also recommended sending a letter of support for the conceptual design at its meeting this past Tuesday.

Thereafter, the letter of support was approved as edited (CS/CA with PM abstaining).

VI. Updates

- A. Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** Carletta referenced her report included in the online Board package for May. Christie then encouraged members to attend one of the Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan open houses this month, the one on May 17th being the closest for those living or working in the district (<https://minneapolis2040.com/may-open-houses/>).
- B. Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.** Vanessa referenced her report included in the online Board package for May and highlighted: they moved into their new office on the fourth floor in the FINNnovation Lab this past Tuesday; they have a new logo and look representing the brownstones in

the neighborhood; and their annual meeting will be on Monday, May 14th with Dan talking about development – all are welcome to attend.

C. Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District. Dan reported the following:

1. *Ending Street Homelessness Committee.* Comprised of volunteers and organizations working hard to help end street homelessness in the city by 2025. Awarded \$86,500 in grants to the following organizations intending to launch projects that will help Minneapolis reach the goal of “functional zero,” the point when the number of people experiencing street homeless is not larger than the number of housing placements available: (a) YouthLink; (b) St. Stephen’s Human Services; (c) Teen Tech Hennepin County Library; and (d) Avenues for Homeless Youth.

At this point in the meeting, Paul moved onto Committee Reports (see VII below).

2. *Vacant Storefronts and Pop-Up Businesses Initiative.* Dan reminded the Board part of his work is funded by the McKnight Foundation (he’s in a third grant cycle) which has an annual agreement to deploy Carlson Consulting Enterprise resources worth \$30,000 (<https://carlsonschoool.umn.edu/enterprise-programs/consulting-enterprise>) with current grantees. Dan wrote a proposal that intersects with ETBP’s 2018-2022 strategic framework’s goal to promote the establishment and growth of new, small, under-represented, and/or social enterprise businesses, and to collaborate for retail growth. The proposal was accepted and this morning he concluded the 3-month process with the CCE’s team comprised of five MBA students led by Daniel Webber and under the auspices of Severin St. Martin, Managing Director.

While using a slide presentation entitled *Minneapolis Downtown Council Final Presentation* dated May 3, 2018, Dan explained they were tasked with understanding retail vacancy in downtown, i.e., determining the ability to leverage vacant downtown retail and commercial space into business opportunities for emerging, small and minority-owned businesses. The partners they worked with included public entities, nonprofits (note to Dan to include the logos of ETBP and EPNI), subject matter experts and stakeholders, and small businesses.

Downtown retail vacancy rates are almost double everywhere else in the metropolitan area with the exception of during Super Bowl LII; it took \$60 million to create a 10-day pop-up to change the vacancy rate. Market inefficiencies that drive vacancy are based on the fact that building managers are not properly incentivized to minimize vacancies, particularly in regards to small retail and commercial space, and they are inflexible towards the issues small businesses face, such as rent and lease length.

The solution proposed is for the MDC to support the continued development of a vibrant downtown as well as emerging women- and minority-led businesses by creating an incubator program to leverage empty downtown commercial space to support entrepreneurs. The five-phase roadmap to implementation involves:

- Creating a management committee;
- Securing a location;
- Defining the program structure;
- Selecting and installing participating businesses – ETBP and MDC jointly won a \$35,000 competitive grant from CPED to go toward creating the management committee, \$7,500 of which is for Dan’s time, \$2,500 will go to the MDC and \$5,00 will go to the ETBP; and
- Iterating this process.

The program’s success is tied to the successes of the small businesses, as well as the achieving overarching goals, e.g.: lease adoption rate, business survival rate, minority- and women-led business share, external capital raised. External funding opportunities should be pursued along with the incubator program to enable long-term achievement of goals. Further research into the

following areas to increase understanding of the issues facing the small business community and downtown retail infrastructure should be considered: shopping habits; average lifespan and impact of transition to \$15 minimum wage on small businesses; average length of and concentration of vacancies in buildings; social equity; and public policy.

Dan explained with this new grant, he will be taking this initiative to the next step and providing ongoing reports on their progress.

VII. Committee Reports

- A. **Executive.** Paul needs to reschedule next week's meeting due to another commitment he has in Delaware.
- B. **Board Development.** Paul advised this committee is scheduled to meet in June to begin moving forward on finding candidates for those whose terms will be expiring.
- C. **Business Forum.** Dan advised this committee worked hard to develop the 1-page 2018-2019 business forum series and updated brochure; much gratitude to John Campobasso and Kraus-Anderson for covering the cost to print. A special sponsor acknowledgement will be given at June's business forum at KA in conjunction with the promotion of the forum.
- D. **Membership, Marketing and Communication.** Chris thanked Christie for preparing the Membership Report as of May 3, 2018 found on the Board Members Only page (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ETBP-Membership-Report-5-3-2018-1.pdf>).

Tom Hayes thanked Chris for recruiting Ben Kvale who is in his junior year at North Central University. He will be managing and growing ETBP's social presence, updating our Facebook and Twitter accounts, and providing material for Website posts. Ben will also be approaching members with a pathway toward engaging their social media for synergies.

Chris then summarized membership to date: 64 renewed and 15 new for a total of 79, the highest it has ever been. Christie advised that within the last 24 hours since she submitted this report, Sherman and Associates' Canopy by Hilton (<http://www.tdtmpls.com/news/2016/10/11/canopy-by-hilton-planned-for-downtown-minneapolis>) expressed interest in joining at the \$500 (Gold) level and she enticed them by saying if they joined this month their membership would be extended through June 2019. Chris reminded the Board to bring a guest to the business forums or to attend the Board meetings; we are the promoters to the growth of this organization.

Dan then returned to his MDC/DID update to report on the *Vacant Storefronts and Pop-Up Businesses Initiative* (see VI C 2 above).

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m. (CS/CA).