

Recap of the East Town Business Partnership Annual Meeting
Advancing Arts and Entertainment in East Town
(<https://easttownmpls.org/new-board-members-elected-at-etbp-annual-meeting-on-april-18/>)
Thursday, April 18, 2019, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Best Western Normandy Inn, 405 South 8th Street, Continental Room
Downtown West Neighborhood of Minneapolis

I. Welcome and Announcements

Paul Mellblom, ETBP President, welcomed the audience to the annual meeting noting the difference in the number of attendees at the first annual meeting he attended and today's full house, i.e., approximately 35 versus over 75. He hopes that's a validation of the good work the ETBP does as an organization and in attracting all the great people assembled here today. Then he formally called the meeting to order, and thanked Mike Noble, Innkeeper of the Normandy, for his gracious hospitality in hosting this event over the years, and the Minnesota Vikings for donating a football signed by Adam Thielen for the drawing at the end of the meeting.

Because of the size of the audience, he forewent introductions, but encouraged everyone to circulate and network after the meeting.

Dan Collison, Executive Director of ETBP, advised if this organization held annual meetings since its formation in 1979, this would be its 40th year, and it's astonishing to see how the neighborhoods, businesses and district partners have coalesced over the years. He extended gratitude for the support of the audience members and the Presenting Sponsor, Minnesota Vikings. He also extended gratitude to the other platinum sponsors who enable the organization to build capacity and infrastructure to accomplish its goals:

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

Collison then announced the following upcoming events:

- *Thursday, May 16, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.:* Business Forum|Crime and Safety, Sentencing and Restorative Justice at Sawatdee Thai Restaurant, 607 Washington Avenue South (<https://easttownmpls.org/etbp-may-16-business-forum-at-sawatdee/>).
- *Wednesdays-Fridays, April 17-26, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.:* Chameleon Shoppes, 50 small and diverse businesses, have landed in four retail spaces at Gaviidae Common (<https://www.chameleonconsortium.com/shopping-spree/>).
- *Monday, April 29, 3:00-5:00 p.m.:* The Art of Living Well with Hippocrates Café at Abiitan, the 55+ independent living, assisted living and memory care facility at 428 South 2nd Street

(<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/event/the-art-of-living-well-with-hippocrates-cafe/>).

- *Saturday, May 4, 8:00-11:00 a.m.:* Teddy Bear Clinic at Hennepin Healthcare Emergency Department, 730 South 8th Street (<https://www.hennepinhealthcare.org/teddy-bear-clinic/>).
- *Saturday-Sunday, May 18-19, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.:* Doors Open Minneapolis, free, behind-the-scenes access to more than 110 buildings across Minneapolis (<https://www.doorsopenminneapolis.org/>).
- *Spring & Fall:* Plan It! Entrepreneur Training Classes by Neighborhood Development Center in partnership with Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc., at Impact Hub MSP (<http://www.ndc-mn.org/what-we-do/business-training/>).
- *Wednesday, May 8, 1:00-2:30 p.m.:* Series on Entrepreneurship & Equity|Creating a Culture of Inclusion at Impact Hub MSP (<https://www.facebook.com/events/236974560558965/>).
- *Wednesday, April 24, 5:00-6:00 p.m.:* Coffee with Ward 3 Council Member Steve Fletcher at Taraccino Coffee (<https://northloop.org/event/coffee-steve-fletcher-minneapolis-city-council-ward-3/>).
- Neighborhood organizations' meetings
 - Visit <http://www.thedmna.org/> for the DMNA Board meeting on April 22nd and Land Use Committee on May 7th; and
 - Visit <http://elliottparkneighborhood.org/> for the EPNI Building, Land Use and Housing Committee meeting on April 18th; Spring Litter Cleanup on April 20th; and Annual Meeting on May 13th.

II. Minneapolis Downtown Council-Downtown Improvement District and ETBP Partnership Report

Steve Cramer, President and CEO of the MDC-DID, thanked Mike Noble for his hospitality. He noted it was not quite 2 weeks ago when the eyes of the basketball world, if not the greater world, were on East Town which showed well, so he extended a round of applause for everyone in the room for that wonderful success.

The MDC-DID continues to be ecstatically happy about the partnership with the ETBP and the shared staffing relationship with Collison at the helm. The East Town edge along with the NūLoop edge, are their areas of dynamic and exciting growth that tie into an equally dynamic Central Business District. From his perspective, Collison's work as the Director of Downtown Partnerships for the MDC and Executive Director of ETBP continues to pay great dividends.

Cramer then reviewed some of the topics on which the MDC-DID focuses:

- 8th Street Reconstruction (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cip/currentprojects/WCMSP-200236>). Part of the design, which will eventually work its way to East Town, is an innovative approach to storm water management that will rely on storm water recycling as a sustainable way to keep the greening alive in planting beds near Park and Portland Avenues. This is a partnership between the City, DID, and Mississippi Watershed Management Organization that will hopefully pay dividends and be a permanent design feature as they try to green up the streets as projects occur.
- Hennepin Avenue Reconstruction (<https://bringmethenews.com/minnesota-news/major-hennepin-avenue-reconstruction-project-kicks-off-monday>), another multi-year major road reconstruction underway that will impact commutes into and out of downtown.
- Transit investment is a priority again this year at the Minnesota legislature (<https://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/13883>) and East Town demonstrates why that is

important for downtown overall as the neighborhood more fully develops; it creates more transit options for how people can get to and around downtown.

- In addition to Chameleon Shoppes – he can't say enough about how hard Collison and others have been working on this project – they are also following up on several recommendations made by the [2025 Plan Development Committee] Retail Task Force that were developed in 2017, e.g.: a comprehensive data report titled *Yes Minneapolis* (<https://www.mpls-downtown.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/mpls-downtown-retail-report-2017.pdf>); and an analysis comparing retailers in downtown Minneapolis to comparable markets to target opportunities for recruitment. They've got some tools in place to strengthen retail on Nicollet between 5th and 10th Streets.
- As the suburbs edge ever closer to downtown, safety continues as a top priority and their 2019 strategy, in cooperation between the Minneapolis Police Department, Metro Transit Police, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, is rolling out to ensure downtown is a safe place for everyone. Note their Coffee & Conversation event with Hennepin County Sheriff David P. Hutchinson on May 1st at 7:30 a.m. (<https://www.mpls-downtown.com/registration190501/>).
- They continue to work on the 10 goals of the 2025 Plan but took a slight hiatus earlier this year to assess progress made and reconfigure the way to pursue what's left to be done. A forum on Intersections: The Path Forward will be held on Thursday, May 9th, 4:15 p.m. at the Hewing Hotel (<https://www.mpls-downtown.com/registration190509/>).

III. 2018-2019 Year in Review

Christie Rock Hantge, Executive Coordinator for ETBP, advised this is her 7th annual meeting with the organization and expressed gratitude for being able to work with Collison, Mellblom and the rest of the Board and she looks forward to doing so for the 2019-2020 season.

She explained one of her job responsibilities is to work with Collison and the Business Forum Planning Committee to plan and coordinate these events. Then she guided the audience through the 2018-2019 season beginning with May 17th at Wells Fargo new headquarters through March 21st at Dorsey & Whitney, during which she acknowledged Mary Beth Weiseberg, Membership Director, and Dana Grady, Even Coordinator, with whom she works with on the joint forums with the MDC.

Hantge thanked everyone who have taken time to attend these events and advised attendance has grown substantially over the past few years. Today's attendance is over 70, the first time it's been at the level for the annual meeting. Then she acknowledged Board Member Carletta Sweet who prepares summaries of the monthly forums which can be found the ETBP website at <https://easttownmpls.org/calendar/business-forum-recaps/>.

She also thanked U.S. Bank, Minnesota Vikings, and Hennepin Healthcare for sponsoring a business forum this past season; the additional revenue generated from their sponsorship helped support ETBP's work.

Lastly, she thanked the Normandy Inn for hosting today's annual meeting and the other venues that hosted this past season. Venues rounding out this season will be Sawatdee Thai Restaurant on May 16th and Ryan Companies on June 20th. She asked if anyone was interested in hosting to contact her or Collison.

IV. 2019-2020 The Year Ahead

Collison commented this conversation about what is East Town that circulates occasionally in the press and in conversations with various stakeholders in the community is something we want to continue to point out is a community vision of understanding this part of town. East Town is a way to engage everyone's narrative in a time of catalytic change, i.e., \$3 billion of redevelopment in 6 years, of course catalyzed by the stadium project and the adjoining 5 block urban campus and The Commons park. All of the partners here, ranging from real estate professionals, construction companies, developers, and nonprofits are taking big risks to advance their mission and grow with East Town in a unique way. As we move into this next year, of course redevelopment will be astonishing to track, e.g., 1,000s of new units of housing including some of

the most dramatic increases in Elliot Park seen in 30 years, continued growth along the riverfront, and the advancement of larger institutions.

Part of ETBP's goal is to celebrate those development, but as philanthropist Jay Cowles once said, if you're not building community you're not building much, so ETBP's goal is to be the mortar between the bricks and will continue to track these developments and celebrate them, but we're *vibrant* urban community, *multifaceted* enclave welcoming a diverse community, and *connected* focus point of the city.

Collison advised a lot of time is invested in thought leadership and why they provide a review of the year and the year ahead, a copy of which is available on everyone's table and thanks to Kraus-Anderson for printing them. He invited everyone to take a copy home and share with their colleagues. Because this is the 40th year, they're at the cusp of another decade of participation and leadership. The topics are a terrific mix of looking back while casting a vision going forward.

V. ETBP Board Business

A. Outgoing Board Members. Mellblom thanked the following Board Members for their years of service and whose terms have expired [and therefore unable to serve until a year has elapsed]: Tom Hayes of Hennepin Healthcare, and Brian Maupin of Allied Parking.

Mellblom is departing because his firm, MSR Design, is relocating to the CBD. Siyad Abdullahi of the Language Banc, submitted his resignation because he's overextended, and Tim Tucker, former CEO of Augustana Care, has retired.

B. Incoming Board Members. Mellblom advised after the Board Development Committee reviewed its Board Profile to determine areas of professional expertise it lacked, received referrals and conducted interviews, the following slate of nominees were put forth, all of whom agreed to serve:

1. Jacquie Berglund, Finnegans
2. Richard Kiemen, Sherman Associates (absent)
3. Julia Lauwagie, Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge
4. Deborah Moses, House of Charity
5. Theresa Pesch, Hennepin Healthcare (absent)

After the nominees present introduced themselves, John Campobasso moved and Chris Fleck seconded the motion to accept the slate of nominees to the Board of Directors. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Recognition of Outgoing President. In recognition of his 7 years of service, Collison noted the organization was improvising and still continues to improvise through its growth edges and Mellblom has a strategic mind, caring heart, and is connected and engaged. His firm, an industry leading architectural firm that supported Mellblom running the ETBP and the Executive and Board Development Committees, has been extraordinary in reviving the riverfront. Much love goes to him and his firm.

Then on behalf of the Board, Collison extended a gift card to Mellblom's favorite restaurant, and to represent how he has helped the organization grow, a framed image of the ETBP logo filled with a word cloud of thoughts from the Board about his leadership.

Mellblom stated he's been held up by a really fabulous Board and staff, Dan and Christie, who are wonderful collaborators and chiefly responsible for everything the ETBP has achieved. He then thanked all of the great people on the Board with whom he has served.

VI. Advancing Arts and Entertainment in East Town

Referencing the FAQ sheet on the tables, Collison advised when the Business Forum Development Committee was thinking about how the arts and entertainment industry was evolving in the East Town narrative, they were taken aback by how much regionally and nationally recognized A&E is taking place here. We often times celebrate the leading industry players, i.e., MacPhail, U.S. Bank Stadium, The Armory and Guthrie, and realized there were several in the industry that haven't had a voice at the business forums. The FAQ is a chance to read about all the A&E organizations in East Town which is becoming a complete cache of small to medium size to mega size venues and events.

Then he introduced each presenter and provided a brief overview of their biography.

A. The Loft Literary Center. Britt Udesen, Executive & Artistic Director

(<https://www.linkedin.com/in/britt-udesen-7a49923>), advised they were founded in 1975 at the University of Minnesota above a bookstore as a place for poets to share their work and have grown to be one of the largest literary arts center in the country. In 1988 they banded with two other nonprofit organizations in service to the book, i.e., Milkweed Editions and Minnesota Center for Book Arts, and have been in East Town since 2000 at a time when their only neighborhood was The Liquor Depot.

They are best known as the educational resource for writers, but they are working hard to expand the definition, their mission being to build a thriving literary community and inspire passion for literature. Minneapolis is known as being a place for great art and theater, but it should also be known as a place for great literature; this week Milkweed was a finalist for two Pulitzer Prizes which is no small feat. Each year they give away about half a million dollars to regional and local writers to support their growth, offer 4 to 600 classes per year for everyone from preliterate preschoolers to people working on their novels, mentor series for poetry and creative prose, asserting the idea that literature is essential for understanding each other through conversations, host a Big Idea series, and thematic programming (<https://loft.org/events/loft-themes>) such as "Needs" and one that will be launched in the fall called "If".

On May 10th they are launching the largest literary festival ever seen, i.e., Wordplay Festival (<https://loft.org/wordplay/wordplay-lineup>). Imagine Rock the Garden for books. There will be 8 outside stages with 110 authors from around the world, the area around Open Book will be shut down, Finnegan's will be serving beer, and a lot of partner companies have jumped in to make this possible. Part of the reason why this happening is because we all love books and this is an opportunity to come together and talk about why this important.

For more information, visit <https://loft.org/>.

B. Gamut Gallery. Cassie Garner, Gallery Director (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/cassie-garner-034900118>), advised they use to be located at 10th Street and Marquette Avenue and was planning to relocate in 2015, but because their building was slated for demolition they looked around and found their current location near Band Box by happenchance and opened there in 2012. They love the neighborhood and it's amazing to see the development that has occurred in just the 3 years they've been there, and there is a large demographic come in that hasn't been there before and it's awesome to witness it grow.

Embracing their namesake, they show a spectrum of art, media and performance so you'll never walk into their space within the same year and see a show that has taken place. Every month they rotate out their exhibitions and are completely different from what has happened in the past and will take place in the future by artists from across the nation. If you have time this evening, come by at 7:00 p.m. and say hello.

They love Minneapolis and the community which is a big part of what Gamut represents. Although they are a limited liability corporation, the business partners are paid just pennies to keep the project alive and because they believe in making art accessibility to everyone. With that mentality they have the most amazing group of volunteers and from their back courtyard space they get to watch this beautiful

community thrive throughout the events they hold; they want everyone who walks through the door to feel this space in meant for them.

For more information, visit <http://www.gamutgallerympls.com/>.

C. Good Arts Collective. Ben Kelly, Founder and Director (<http://www.goodartscollective.com/benjamin-james-kelly/>), advised he came from a long lineage of random gypsy artists trying to make weird things happen. As such, the most important thing you need is space and there's all this empty space all over the city and world and through a partnership with First Covenant Church there was this whole top floor they remodeled and created their space. Because his fellow creators share in the work and price, they have a subsidized opportunity through the church. It's a recording studio, rehearsal hall, meeting venue for artists who want to make something big and small, for profit or nonprofit, just to put something in the world to build culture. They are there because they like the area and city. Not everyone has the money and ability to go into huge theaters, so if you have a weird, esoteric, avant garde show, bring it here. GAC is one big art installation with the goal of allowing creators to make what's on their hearts and mind and it's constantly evolving.

For more information, visit <http://www.goodartscollective.com/>.

D. Mill City Summer Opera. After apologizing for inadvertently left off the agenda, Collison asked Cory Johnson, Development Director, to give a brief overview of their summer program. Johnson advised this will be their 8th season of MCSO and opening night for *Così fan Tutte* is on July 12th with 7 performances. Also, new this summer they are adding a second production, *La Serva Padrona*, at the Icehouse Bar & Restaurant.

For more information, visit <https://millcitysummeropera.org/>.

Thereafter, the presenters responded to a few questions from the audience.

VII. Football Drawing and Closing Remarks

After Mellblom drew Paul Verrette's name for the football signed by Adam Thielen, he thanked the audience for attending and encouraged everyone to hang out and shamelessly network.