

RAILROAD ISLAND TASK FORCE AGENDA

Recognized by District 5, Railroad Island Task Force is neighbors working together to revitalize Railroad Island.

DRAFT MINUTES

MEETING DATE: Thursday, July 28, 2016

TIME: 6:00 PM

LOCATION: Hope Community Academy (720 Payne Avenue)

The meeting was convened by: **DON LORR**

(7 # in Attendance)

Task force members (Residents & Businesses):

Don Lorr, Mary Brauer, Gary Bobb

D5 Planning Council Staff & Board:

Bill Zajicek

Presenters & Friends of RRITF:

Jim Erchul (DBNHS), Dan Haak (City of St. Paul Public Works), Joe Yannarely (City of St. Paul DSI)

Topic #1__ New Business

Topics for future meetings:

- Fall social event, perhaps at Rivoli Bluff, perhaps in conjunction with Art Crawl on October 6-7
- Parking in area of Desoto and Otsego
- 470 Hopkins – Historical significance renovation possibility?
- Lower Phalen Creek Project – Melanie Klees
- RRITF Elections
- Review of RRITF Guiding Principles
- Have “Bee Lady” come to a future meeting to discuss her bee farm on Minnehaha

Topic #2__ Discussion of RRITF Guiding Principles _____ Don Lorr

The review of the rules and principles that guide the Railroad Island Task Force was laid over until the August meeting due to low attendance.

Topic #3 _____ Discussion or RRITF Board Elections _____ Mary Brauer

Discussion laid over to August meeting due to low attendance.

Topic #4 _____ Payne Avenue Construction Updates _____ Dan Haak, City of St. Paul Public Works _____

Dan Haak is the manager of the Street Design and Construction unit that is overseeing the upcoming Payne Avenue projects. Jesse Farrell is the Project Manager. The reconstruction of the intersection of Payne and East Seventh Street has been delayed until spring of 2017. MnDOT has not completed the review and the project cannot proceed until it is done. The delay will not affect the funding. The redesign of the Vento Trailhead parking lot and driveway will be done this year. The redesign of the Payne/Bedford intersection will proceed this year, and should be completed by October. Jesse Farrell has been in touch with the Morellis and the Yarussos to keep them updated on the project.

There was a question about public art money for these projects. Dan thought that the Payne Bedford project should have some funds, but not Payne-7th. Dan was asked to remind project managers that the Task Force would like input on any public art projects in the neighborhood.

The reconstruction of Payne Avenue between Edgerton and East 7th is being discussed by Ramsey County for possible construction in 2019. It was noted that we should submit a CIB proposal to the City of St. Paul for the streetscaping portion of this project. It would also be a good idea to contact Ramsey County Board Members to encourage their support for this project.

Topic #5 _____ Rivoli Bluff Update _____ Jim Erchul, Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services

Seven houses on Rivoli have received approval from the Capitol Region Watershed District to put in foundations. They are out for bid. DBNHS is putting together a proposal for an energy coordinator. They are in discussions with Xcel Energy trying to get them to "adopt" Railroad Island as a special project. A focus would be to try to replace electric baseboard heat in the homes on Railroad Island with something more efficient. MHFA is talking about letting cities have money for rental rehabilitation, which would really help with this. DBNHS is also proposing a solar garden in Rivoli Bluff. They are also having discussions with Rebuilding Together and Urban Oasis about having an area for community supported agriculture.

Topic #6 _____ District 5 Updates _____ Bill Zajicek

- An interim Executive Director, Lissa L. Jones-Lofgren, is in place. Her primary job is the hiring of a permanent replacement.
- Bike lanes on Payne Avenue from Phalen Boulevard to Hawthorne have been approved.
- Ramsey County has agreed to do a study on pedestrian safety on Maryland Avenue.
- The Chinese Garden at Phalen Park was dedicated during the recent dragon festival.
- On the third Tuesday in August, City of St. Paul Parks Department will present an update on parks projects on the East Side.

Topic #7 _____ DSI Updates _____ Joe Yannarely

- The soil at the Karibu coffee shop (old gas station) site is being tested for contamination. The project is hopefully going to be approved for STAR funding in August.
- The city is going to do a cleanup of the scrap yards at Bush and Desoto. There is an empty fenced lot in the area. The City might be able to get them to plant some trees.

Topic #8 _____ National Night Out _____ Don Lorr

There will not be an organized "Railroad Island" NNO even this year. Merrick did not have the resources to dedicate to this project, and no one else stepped up to lead the effort.

Adjournment (TIME): 7:30 p.m.

Next Meeting Date – Thursday, August 25, 2016

Do you have questions about the minutes? Contact Don Lorr 651.283.1682.