

**Community Participation Program  
Kingfield Neighborhood Association 2011 Annual Report**

*Major Accomplishments in 2011 and impact on neighbors:*

- KFNA's successful **Utility Box Wrapping Pilot Project (completed in 2010)** is in the planning process of being launched city-wide in 2012. If all neighborhoods that have expressed interest proceed with their projects, **HALF** of Minneapolis will display wrapped boxes!
- The **Pleasant Community Garden** completed its 2nd successful year with 19 gardeners, who also and planted and maintained a satellite garden to produce food for a local foodshelf. In 2011, gardeners also began working with stakeholders related to two new potential community gardens. Successful fundraisers including the **Kingfield Community Garden Tour**, which drew almost 60 neighbors, & the sale of **Chinook Books**. These two projects raised over \$1000 which support the mission of connecting gardens and gardeners throughout Kingfield.
- **Solarize Kingfield** was funded with a City of Minneapolis Climate Change grant. The project provided **solar assessments** for 6 commercial properties and **energy audits** for 3 that were determined to have good solar potential. KFNA also contributed to the cost of **structural assessments** for the two buildings that proceeded to install solar PV. The goal of the project was to help **commercial properties** learn more about **solar electric** and help them overcome the barriers to installation.
- As a result of the racial tensions that became apparent in the arguments regarding an off-leash dog park at MLK Park, KFNA continues to play a leadership role in **Building Bridges** and explore our **community history** and the role that race and racism have played in it. With KFNA's support in 2011, Building Bridges started a monthly **Multi-Cultural Book Club** and also successfully organized a conversation entitled 'An **Evening with Michele Norris**' which drew close to 250 people. This event was the impendance and kick-off for the first-ever citywide read called **One Minneapolis, One Read** based on her book called "The Grace of Silence".
- Held events to celebrate the completion of the **RiverLake Greenway** & the **Blaisdell/1<sup>st</sup> Avenue bikelanes** including a "**yarn bombing**" of the 40<sup>th</sup> Street Pedestrian bridge.
- Accepted awards from the Center for Energy and Environment totaling \$6500 for KFNA's staff outreach and outcomes related to attendance at information workshops regarding **home energy use** & arranging over 300 **in-home energy assessments**.
- Testing a new location, KFNA once again held the annual **community art show** which featured over 50 local artists and raised money for public art pieces and activities in Kingfield. The new location was determined to not fit our needs, so the 2012 art show is under evaluated as to its goals and outcomes.
- **Eating for Art** raised the highest amount ever, to the credit of our awesome local restaurants, with all proceeds going toward artwork along the **reconstructed Nicollet Avenue** between Lake Street & 40<sup>th</sup>.
- Served on the **Nicollet Square Advisory Council** to assure the new site, which houses formerly homeless youth, is integrated into the community.
- Organized the 3rd annual **Celebrate 38!** festival to honor the 102nd year of settlement of the City along 38<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Worked with the new **Dr. Martin Luther King Legacy Council** to prioritize park improvements including moving the **Freedom Form II** sculpture back to location of prominence. The Council also advocated for, and received, a Park Board budget adjustment to redesign the playground equipment in 2013.

### *2011 CPP Outreach and Engagement and Outcomes*

- Once again, KFNA partnered with Sebastian Joe's to bring Kingfielders the sweetest **National Night Out** bonus ever...ice-cream biked directly to every registered block party, over 50 of Kingfield's 100 blocks were involved!
- Maintained a weekly presence at the **Kingfield Farmers' Market** (26 weeks) to keep neighbors informed about activities, issues, and opportunities in Kingfield Neighborhood, including adding them to our weekly eNews list. The Kingfield Market draws close to 2000 people each Sunday.
- Had info tables on committees and activities at the Kingfield /MLK Summer festival and the KFNA Annual Meeting.
- Held **4 Traveling Block Parties** instead of meetings May-September, plus a block leader focused bonfire at MLK Park in October to learn about crime concerns, engage new people, and share safety information.
- Maintained regular open committee meetings focused on Youth & Schools, Redevelopment, Events, Crime & Safety, and Green activities, as well as monthly Board Meetings.
- Maintained our **website at [www.kingfield.org](http://www.kingfield.org), weekly e-mail notice, and thrice-yearly newsletter** to share information with neighbors on Kingfield events and projects.

### *Stakeholder Involvement for under-represented populations:*

As we stated in our application, in Kingfield the under-represented groups are more blocks of the neighborhood rather than a specific class, race, age or sex of the population. Pockets of the neighborhood have traditionally not engaged with KFNA and the organization worked this past year to reach out to these sections of the neighborhood so they know they can turn to KFNA as a resource. This was exhibited in our National Night Out outreach, and both doorknocking and the hosting of Traveling Block parties in these sections of the community. At both events we collected many new email addresses and now keep these neighbors in touch with Kingfield activities and events via our weekly email list. We have found that going to neighbors, on their street, is more effective than inviting them to attend a meeting at a general location.

Additionally, KFNA worked to build connections with the many populations that use facilities in our community, including the many churches, a few nonprofits, and Dr. Martin Luther King Park. These organizations in Kingfield serve a broad racial demographic and our hope in building connections with these agencies is to encourage their communities to feel a part of our neighborhood.

KFNA worked with a non-profit called Nicollet Square, where we establish connections with staff and residents, as well as their partner agencies. Staff invited and attended neighborhood events with residents and in 2011 we also began planning Kingfield's 1<sup>st</sup> ever Empty Bowls event in partnership with Nicollet Square and as a fundraiser for their facility. This event, which took place in early 2012, drew over 200 people including involving a dozen youth that lived in Nicollet Square, brought Washburn High School teachers and students to the event to support and volunteer at it, and raised over \$4000 for Nicollet Square, some of which is being reinvested visibly in the community as a community vegetable garden for, and by, the youth living on site. This work has cemented a strong relationship between our organizations and now that we have a trusted working relationship we look forward to holding future events and activities together.

Additionally KFNA is actively working in a number of ways to build relationships with the African-American community since a rift developed in 2010 over a proposal to build an off-leash dogpark at Martin Luther King Park. KFNA staff and board members serve on the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Legacy Council initiated by the Park Board, as well as on a Building Bridges Steering Committee. Through Building Bridges we started a multi-cultural book club which meets monthly and regularly

draws close to 20 people of various races and ages. The group regularly brings in authors, of all races, to discuss their books and their views on race and history.

Work with the churches in our community has been a bit more difficult to sustain. It seems that KFNA is often in the position of reaching out to them reminding them that we would like to promote their non-secular events. Most are willing to open their doors to our requests for space or communication to their parishes, however, so although we don't have a consistent relationship, we recognize and support each other's work when needed.

Lastly, one community that has gained recent attention in Kingfield is Latinos. We have seen an increase in native Spanish speakers and in Spanish-speaking businesses. We currently have two board members with Hispanic heritage and another that also speaks Spanish. We have discussed how to use these members more intentionally for direct outreach to the Latino community.

**Additional Information Requested:**

- A. How many people currently serve on your board? 12
- B. Are there vacancies? Yes, there is one vacancy due to a board member resigning in July 2012 due to health reasons.
- C. Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year? Committee membership sits at about 100 people, with some of these attending two meetings a year, and others attending multiple meetings. Membership is counted by a stated desire after attending at least one meeting to join either the Youth & Schools, Green, Redevelopment, Crime & Safety, Event, Building Bridges, or Dr. Martin Luther King Legacy committees. Additional people have attended various meetings of these groups either from other neighborhoods, or one a one-time, as-needed basis.
- D. How many people attended your annual meeting? 50
- E. How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)? 3700 households and 100 businesses
- F. Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization? A rough calculation taking into account all the events in Kingfield in 2011 including the volunteers at the KFNA table of the Farmers Market, I would say an additional 200 volunteers on various activities and 1000's of participants.

*Financial Reports—see attached income and expense reports for KFNA*

**In addition to your annual report, please take time to describe your interactions with City departments and other jurisdictions.**

1. *Impact:* What interactions occupied a major part of your time?

I regularly communicate with Planning & Zoning, Traffic, Public Art, the Park Board, and City Council. I occasionally communicate with CPED, Liquor Licensing, Neighborhood Community Relations Department, and Solid Waste and Recycling. To see the effectiveness of these communications, please see notes in #2 below.

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

I like the weekly e-mailed Planning Report which I can scan to see if any Kingfield addresses are included and then directly call the correct city staff person with questions. However, I think this information comes out too late in the process—sometimes when I call an individual has been working with City staff for months before they make it to the point where they have submitted an application and KFNA would prefer to be notified and work with them before everyone else gets all cozy with the plan that is submitted. There should be a way to bring neighborhoods in at the start of the conversation to develop a solution that also works for the community, instead of asking us to simply review and approve or not approve a design or variance. The fact that neighbors are told they need to notify their neighborhood association and provide evidence of support of neighbors often results in a misrepresentation of a project to win approval. This then results in the association spending time trying to decipher what is true about the proposal and where the City rules fall regarding it and often puts the neighborhood association in the middle of the disagreement without enough information to really make our own decision.

The Nicollet Avenue Reconstruction Planning process was a mess of lack of city leadership and poor communication. The project planning stalled for months due to the City not being clear on who should have been leading the process. Finally the city recognized this and hired an outside firm to lead the process. Now that it is in implementation, the regular meetings are clear and efficient.

Working with the Park Board is challenging. The layers of process they have created result in a very slow and non-responsive organization.

I like the regularity of the 8<sup>th</sup> Ward Council newsletter being e-mailed out. I feel this is a valuable communication tool and repost it on our website for neighbors.

I find the “In Touch” e-News interesting to see what other neighborhoods are doing but I don’t feel this is the role of the City to prepare this communication tool.

Additionally, I think a lot of the communications from the City are very unclear in their intent. They will explain what is being changed or voted on but not why and not the implications of the changes. Often they don’t include steps for actions. My questions reading info from the City are: “What are the implications of these changes on the properties or people in Kingfield? What actions can I take or ask the board to take if the change causes negative consequences? If there is nothing I can do about the change then be clear that you are just notifying us of the change. Do you want to know what neighbors think or want an opinion of the neighborhood association? If so we need at least a 4 week lead time. With such small staffs in neighborhoods, I don’t think the city can expect us to do policy or zoning analysis and create our own opinion on every issue and change. Every unclear letter costs KFNA time and money to figure out, but sadly with so few staff resources the letter may also get pushed to a back burner and not dealt with in time if clarifications are needed.

Definitely the most effective tool is knowing people in the various departments. These folks feel that they can call me directly, and I know who I can call also to directly to problem-solve. Where I have a contact, I feel like the City works well...when I don't know who to go to, I often spend hours trying to figure out who to talk to.

3. *City Communications – timeliness*

The ongoing weekly update concerning the construction along Nicollet Avenue is great, however as I mentioned elsewhere in this report, the process of getting the project moving and getting the /city to communicate with us was pretty dismal.

The other big disconnect I have noticed is when the City arranges a meeting regarding something at MLK Park, a s a large gathering spot in south central Minneapolis, and doesn't think to notify us. KFNA makes the effort to inform residents of all activities happening within the neighborhood under the premise that people will be more likely to attend something 1. If they know about it, and 2. If it is close to home in a familiar spot. I think there are other city public meeting locations (like MLK Park) and the neighborhood association should be informed if they city is hosting any meeting these as a courtesy to the organization and as a stakeholder in the facility, even if they meeting may be more general than a neighborhood-based conversation.

311 is awful. The people always sound like they don't know anything and just thumb through a book of names and numbers they have no connection or relationship with. Let me have a staff and department directory and call people directly.

4. City Departments: How can City departments improve the way in which they function in your neighborhood?

- Always include direct phone numbers on email communications—don't make me track you down through 311 or a general department number.
- Let us know about everything being discussed that could affect our neighborhood, even if it is a citywide policy—let us decide what we think is important to engage on.

5. *City Assistance*: How can the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department improve the assistance it provides to your organization as a citizen participation group?

Provide us with adequate financial resources to run our organizations, communicate with the City, work with citizens and the City to develop solutions, and the funds to use to help implement the solutions as well. Don't duplicate our jobs; just provide us the resources for us to do them well, as the ground-level organization in each community.

6. *Other comments?*

Not at this time.