

**Community Participation Program
2011 Annual Report
Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association**

Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association, established in 1901 is the oldest continuously active neighborhood improvement organization in the city of Minneapolis. It was incorporated in 1986 as a non-profit (501(c3)) corporation with the following mission statement: “The purposes of the corporation are to promote, in a non-partisan, educational and cooperative manner, the health, safety and general welfare of the residents within the association's geographic jurisdiction and to promote the maintenance and improvement of the aesthetic, residential and physical qualities of the environment in which those residents reside”.

Work Plan for the 2011 funding cycle

The PPERRIA Board entered into a comprehensive strategic planning process in September 2010. Following a Board retreat in December of 2010, the Board assigned work plans to each standing committee based on data gathered and issues highlighted through neighborhood listening sessions and a neighborhood wide survey.

The work plans were the foundation for PPERRIA's efforts for 2011 and beyond, and they continue to benefit from input from the standing committees. Most standing committees are populated with rank and file neighbors, as opposed to only Board members, as well as the neighborhood at large.

Specifically, in terms of engagement and communication, the 2011 work plan calls for:

- **Community building through communication**
- **Better communication about LRT related progress and development**
- **Increased neighbor-to-neighbor interactions (e.g., reinvigorate block clubs)**
- **Increased PPERRIA effectiveness on e-list (listserv), Facebook and other social media**

Accomplishments in the 2011 funding cycle

We can now point to a number of specific accomplishments in this period that were realized within this set of work plans. These accomplishments include:

- Establishing a PPERRIA Office that provides meeting space for PPERRIA committees as well as other community activities (e.g. Central Corridor neighborhood construction review committee meetings). PPERRIA had no office prior to this.
- A subgroup of the PPERRIA Master Plan and Transit Committees applied for and received funding from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative to carry out implementation planning for development around the Prospect Park LRT Station.
- The PPERRIA Communications Committee engaged 3 consultants to: (1) revitalize the neighborhood Block Clubs and form a network of Block Club leaders, (2) reach out to the business community and (3) reach out to renter residents.

Planning activities

In order to advance the neighborhood endorsed vision for the creation of a richly diverse, affordable, walkable and connected mixed-use urban village, the Master Plan and Transit Committees provided the management leadership to guide a refined level of planning and development of implementation strategies and actions for the area surrounding the station and along the University Avenue Gateway Corridor.

Funding for these activities was obtained through PPERRIA partnerships that included local businesses (Textile Center, Tiereney Brothers and Prospect Park Properties), Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis (CPED), University of Minnesota (Planning Dept), the University District Alliance and Seward Redesign. A \$60,000 grant from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative was augmented by an additional \$60,000 in donations and support from area business, PPERRIA, Hennepin County and individuals. The project named Prospect Park 2020, was led and managed by a Steering Committee of 14 members (6 PPERRIA Board members, and a representative from each of the partners) who met on a regular basis. (see www.prospectpark2020.org).

Specific accomplishments include:

- Secured the commitment of the Textile Center to remain and expand their facilities in the Station Area;
- Assisted the Textile Center in marketing their concept for an arts center/assemblage to other crafts and arts organizations including the Goldstein Gallery;
- Attracted the interest and ultimately the investment of a progressive, inspired developer who shares the neighborhood's vision to develop a high-density, mixed occupancy residential project on a key site directly adjacent to the station;
- Acted as an influential force in assisting the developer in their successful effort to secure Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County and other funding for the purchase, cleanup and development of the site as well as money directed to securing control of the adjacent properties;
- Refined the public realm plan in coordination with commissioned consultants, the Metropolitan Design Center of the University of Minnesota, the city of Minneapolis and the neighborhood;
- Held multiple meetings and workshops with investors, potential partners and others with interest in the community-endorsed vision, including the University of Minnesota Foundation, business owners and developers;

Over the course of the year the Project Steering Committee shared all stages and all information related to the project development process with the community. Specifically, monthly progress was reported at all monthly PPERRIA board meetings; three project specific workshops were held and attended by more than 125 people; Textile Center events featuring the Station Area development were attended by more than 400 people; and, 15 neighborhood coffee parties were held over a period of three months with attendance by more than 100 residents.

Closely related to these neighborhood improvement efforts, PPERRIA also worked closely with the City, University and County on the Stadium Village small area plan. This plan, recently adopted by the Minneapolis City Council included many of the development principles developed by Prospect Park 2020.

Outreach and engagement activities.

In order to advance the strategic objective of increasing neighborhood outreach efforts, PPERRIA established 3 temporary consulting positions. They were charged to (1) revitalize the neighborhood Block Clubs and form a network of Block Club leaders, (2) reach out to the business community and (3) reach out to renter residents. Work descriptions were formulated and the positions were posted. Applicants were interviewed and 3 consultants were engaged. They accomplished the following:

- 36 Block Club leaders were identified and trained, 13 block club organizations were formed.
- All businesses operating in the geographic boundaries of the neighborhood were identified. Many businesses, have been contacted and entered in a business directory. A regular feature at the monthly PPERRIA meetings is now to feature a neighborhood business, introducing them and having them describe what they do.
- The renter outreach consultant coordinated the fall Meet-and-Greet (move-in of students) with the University neighborhood liaison program and neighborhood residents. Welcome packets were prepared and distributed to new rental residents.

Things that worked and those that did not.

Block club organization was carried out efficiently by the consultant. The continued communication and coordination has been less successful since it depends on a volunteer having limited time and capacity.

Outreach to local business was very successful in making the businesses feel more like they belonged to the community and helped the residents realize the rich mix of business and services available in the community.

Membership outreach

Membership campaigns throughout the year have increased the current PPERRIA membership by about 10% to 381 households (representing about 40% of the households in the neighborhood). There are currently 623 individual resident members, plus 28 resident businesses and organizations on the membership rolls.

A neighborhood investment fund, Prospect Park *FORWARD*, was initiated with the help of a grant from the University Good Neighborhood Fund. Three-year pledges were solicited from Prospect Park residents and businesses for a fund to support and advance neighborhood needs and initiatives. To date 33 pledges for over \$16,000 have been received.

Stakeholder Involvement

The under-represented communities in our neighborhood include the residents of the Glendale Town Homes public housing area, and the University students residing in student dormitories within the neighborhood boundaries. Students living in the residential neighborhood are not underrepresented.

Outreach to Glendale - Glendale outreach was enhanced through attendance at Glendale Resident

Council (GRC) meetings and electing the President of the GRC to the PPERRIA board. Several ongoing activities have also enhanced outreach (e.g. Ice Cream Social and Fire and Ice Festival)

Ongoing outreach and community building activities.

- A neighborhood e-list emailed to over 800 addresses several times a day with news, announcements and neighborhood bulletin board.
- A PPERRIA website (pperr.org) maintained and updated with the PPERRIA newsletter, photos, announcements of events, and a directory of neighborhood services
- A neighborhood calendar maintained on the website
- A neighborhood news blog posted on the website
- A neighborhood Facebook account
- Newsletters mailed out to those without email (US Post) 10 times per year.
- An annual Fire and Ice festival at Luxton Park - February
- Twice annual neighborhood cleanup - April and September
- An annual Ice Cream Social.- June
- Garden walk and plant sale--June
- A summer concert series at Pratt amphitheater. - July, August
- National Night Out - August
- Flea market and Pancake breakfast - September
- Winter Holiday Concert - December

Please also provide the following:

- How many people currently serve on your board? - **40** Are there vacancies? -**NO**
- Approximately how many individuals have participated in committee meetings in the last year?
About 70 individuals are members of the 7 PPERRIA committees.
- How many people attended your annual meeting? **About 120, 66 were PPERRRIA members.**
- How many households regularly receive your publications (such as newsletters or newspapers)
ppe-list emailed daily to 866 addresses
monthly newsletter is mailed to 244 members and emailed to the entire ppe-list.
(Members have the option to receive the newsletter by email, US post or both)
- Approximately how many people participate in other activities of the organization?
Difficult to say even approximately, but it numbers in the hundreds when all the ongoing activities are included.

4. Financial Reports

Report for fiscal year 2011 (May 1, 2011 to April 30, 2012)

Staff	\$7,429
Admin	\$750
Office	\$3,800
Space	\$6,100
Meetings	\$927
Communication	\$885
Outreach	\$7,912
Development	\$74
LRT Planning	\$12,500
total	\$40,376

Report of the 6 month extension period 2012 (May 1, 2012 to October 31, 2012).

Staff	\$3,615
Admin	\$234
Office	\$1,757
Space	\$6,550
Meetings	\$389
Communication	\$355
Outreach	\$928
Development	
LRT Planning	\$4,264
total	\$18,051

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

- *Impact*

What interactions occupied a major part of your time? What worked well, what could be improved?

The city interaction that occupied the major part of our time was with CPED. The interactions included planning (Stadium Village master plan), Heritage Preservation (local designation and now Conservation District), project review (several new and proposed projects in the neighborhood) required intensive interaction with CPED, the Planning Commission and City Council.

- *City Communications – effectiveness*

Is the information that you receive from the City understandable and useful?

Not always. There are a lot of communications, not all are relevant. Therefore it requires that we somehow filter and triage information as it comes in. We do not have a clear understanding of NCRs role and how it relates to our communications with our Council-member or other City departments (e.g. CPED or Reg services)

- *City Communications – timeliness*

Do you receive adequate notice of City activities in your neighborhood? If not, did your organization inform somebody at the City of this? Did the City respond in a positive manner? Please explain.

Again, not always, but when notified, we usually found City staff to be helpful and accommodating.

- *City Departments*

How can City departments improve the way in which they function in your neighborhood?

Given the extent of new development and planning occurring in our neighborhood, we feel that these functions would be improved if we had planning staff assigned to our area who would then be familiar with the issues and their history. We, along with other SE neighborhoods are now part of a University District overlay in the city zoning code, so there would be a rationale to adapt the operations of CPED to recognize that.

- *City Assistance*

How can the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department improve the assistance it provides to your organization as a citizen participation group?

We're not sure yet. So far we appreciate the financial help that has contributed to capacity building in our organization. We also welcome any feedback about how we can better represent the neighborhood.