

Community Participation Program 2013 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Windom Park Citizens in Action

Contact person: Gayle Bonneville

Date of Board Approval: June 24, 2014

1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2013, Please provide information about:

- What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2013?

WPCiA continued its monthly postcard mailings to every address in the neighborhood, alerting people to meetings, agenda items and other special notices, home fix-up programs, security rebates and the like. We continue to use social media, Mail Chimp and our web site for electronic communications. WPCiA holds monthly neighborhood meetings and promotes these meetings to all – in fact, many new faces continue to come to the meetings and a number have stepped up to become board members. We introduced the neighborhood to our new office in August 2013 by holding an ice cream social/open house on site. Annually we also host a Holiday Social at a local restaurant.

- How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2013?

We sent postcards monthly via U.S. Mail to every address in the neighborhood, as well as e-blast e-mail updates to a list that has now grown to 402 e-mail addresses. We specifically targeted renters by having HomeLine tenant legal advisors present at one of our monthly neighborhood meetings. We followed up by sending an e-mail update noting that a copy of HomeLine's tenant handbook was available at the office for perusal. This notice was also published in our local newspaper.

- Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why?

Monthly postcards continue to bring in new faces and a stable attendance at monthly meetings following an uptick in the past two years when the postcards were initially sent.

- What did not work so well? Why?

We did not see the increase in participation from renters that we had hoped to see at our monthly neighborhood meetings. We continue to seek ways to engage them and to discover the best methods for reach them.

- How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?

200

- How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?

25

- How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?

450

- How many people receive your print publications?

3,100 addresses per mailing

- How many people receive your electronic communications?

402 e-mail addresses via Mail Chimp

2. 2013 Highlights

Please describe one or two major highlights, and if possible, please include digital photos or illustrations:

- What was the issue or opportunity the neighborhood was facing?
 - 1) ***One topic facing the neighborhood stemmed from questions regarding the future of community engagement itself in the City of Minneapolis and NCR/City Council plans for the future. A panel discussion was held at one of our neighborhood meetings in early 2013, complete with a panel from the city council and NCR departments and a "question and answer" period.***
 - 2) ***A second key project was the long-awaited kick-off for our new commercial loan program. This program began implementation in the summer of 2013 after more than a year of work.***
 - 3) ***On an ongoing basis, WPCiA continues to offer monthly meeting topics on timely, relevant subjects to engage residents in the neighborhood's issues as well as the city's issues overall. Topics/presenters at monthly meetings included MnDOT, Minneapolis Energy Options, elected officials, owner of a rare super-energy efficient new house, Police Second Precinct staff, city staff discussing various zoning and signage issues, and more.***
- Who was impacted? ***1) All residents and businesses in Minneapolis 2) businesses in northeast Minneapolis, including Windom Park - and their customers as well as passers-by, since the loan program is for exterior work 3) Windom Park residents and businesses, as well as visitors***
- What steps did you take to address the issue or opportunity? ***Held panel discussion and implemented loan program, as noted above.***
- What was the outcome? ***1) City staff and city council member saw that the Windom Park neighborhood is engaged, concerned about and supportive of the neighborhood having a seat at the table. 2) loans have been taken out/applied for, and some rehab work has already been completed.***

3. 2013 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2013:

- What were your organization's major accomplishments? **See above.**
- How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?

See above.

In addition, WPCiA moved its office to a more welcoming location within the neighborhood after a lengthy search for space in a tight market. The space includes a small meeting area, a conference room for board meetings and the like, along with a streetfront window office with great visibility and accessibility. WPCiA held an ice cream social/open house at the new location in August 2013.

4. *Housing*

What percentage of time did your organization spend on housing-related activities?

25-30 percent

5. *Financial Reports*

Please provide an income and expense report for your organization for the year.
(Please include all funding sources).

To come

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

1. Impact

What interactions with City departments occupied a major part of your time? What worked well? What could be improved?

We worked with a variety of city departments in 2013 – CPED on housing issues and questions regarding tax-forfeited properties, and of course, NCR for ongoing NRP and CPP projects. We also are in the process of engaging with public works on transportation/traffic calming issues. Timeliness of responses seems to have improved somewhat. Perhaps most in need of improvement is 311: Sometimes staff there doesn't know the answers or gives conflicting answers.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate your overall experience with your interactions with the City? 3

2. City Communications – effectiveness

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

In the past year or so it seems we have been missing certain communications from the city entirely. In particular, city council agenda items indicate neighborhood notification as part of the check-off process, but WPCiA has not received a number of these – a decline from past years. Some information – most often related to housing programs or proposed ordinance changes – is not understandable, mainly because no background information is provided. Perhaps explaining the current situation and then detailing what the proposed change is changing/accomplishing/hoping to achieve would shed more light on this for the benefit of community engagement.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? 2

3. 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.

See above. Yes, city has been informed several times. No response received.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the timeliness of communications from the City? 2

4. **City Departments**

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

Timely responses; explanations in non-technical terms; streamlining of permitting processes such as for special events; need for CLIC information/notifications – and in an easier-to-decipher format. Also: add Planning Commission to gov delivery system so that notices are e-mailed to subscribers as for other city council-related bodies.

5. **City Assistance**

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

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the assistance provided to your neighborhood by NCR? 4

6. **Other comments?**