

**Wednesday, August 9, 2006 7:00 P.M.**  
**Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church**

**Call to Order and Introductions**

**Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm**

Approval of Agenda and July minutes: Approved as written.

In attendance: Marlin Possehl, President; Joanna Danks co-Vice President; Lisa Mills co-Secretary; Rachel Banken, Area 1 Rep.; Jessica Wiley, Area 3 Rep.; Alan Torborg, Area 4 Rep.; Barry Schade, Carey Sirianni, and Jay Peterson, Area 6 co-Reps; J. Pam Weiner & Steve Harvey, Area 7 co-Reps; Rob Harris, NRP Chair; Vida Ditter, Neighborhood Organizer; and JoEllyn Jolstad, Bugle Editor. Also in attendance were Doug Kress from Councilwoman Goodman's office and Tim Hammett, our new Minneapolis Police Liaison.

**Neighborhood Coordinator**

Report on status in usage of contract hours (Vida).

She's at 70% of her hours after 50% of the year has passed. Next year, her budgeted hours may be even less. We need to re-think how we 'use' Vida, and do it judiciously. For instance, we need to identify tasks which she is uniquely qualified to do, and find volunteers to pick up the rest. She's been keeping track of her hours, and how they are spent, to assist us in this effort. This is something we need to do, anyway, since the Neighborhood Coordinator budget will be decreasing over the next few years (as NRP Phase 2 winds down).

**Crime / Neighborhood Watch Meeting**

Tim Hammett is our new crime prevention specialist from the Mpls Police Dept (replacing Rowena Hicks). Tim will be working with our neighborhood on the current crime issues.

First, a quick update: Two juveniles were arrested after a break-in and vandalism at the Anwatin school. A math classroom was damaged so extensively that the class will have to be moved in the Fall, while it is repaired.

The Board had many concerns and questions for Tim, after several robberies & burglaries have been reported in the last several weeks.

First of all, some wonder whether the current 'wave' is a predictable, cyclical thing (since crime everywhere goes up in the Summer), or if it's as unusual as it seems to feel to most neighbors. Tim will pull the last several years' worth of crime statistics, and forward them to the Board.

Next, we discussed ways to keep our neighborhood safer, and topics to cover at an upcoming neighborhood meeting.

Tim had several suggestions on how to deal with the situation:

- If you are questioning whether to call 911, you should call 911. The operators have a rating system for calls, ranging from 0 (officer down/ needs assistance) to 3 (crime already happened, need officer to file a report, but not an emergency). Tim promised to follow up with us on specific "response time" numbers associated with the different ratings.
- Block Clubs are a great way to increase safety. Groups of neighbors who get together regularly are more likely to look out for one another. Also, if you know your neighbors, you also know who doesn't belong, and are more likely to recognize and report suspicious activity. Training of Block Club Leaders is offered by the MPD periodically, when they have enough interested people. Tim will help us, if we get a group who wants to be trained.
- Victims are encouraged to keep in contact with the investigator on their case. In particular, they should share any information they come by, as cases without sufficient evidence cannot be investigated.
- The BMNA is contemplating a 'neighborhood watch' patrol. Tim says the Lyndale Stevens Square has a well-organized 'citizen patrol.' They are on foot, wearing vests, with walkie-talkies to the PD. Often, a watch can get corporate sponsorship. However, research shows you need at least 50 dedicated people, to commit long-term. He's seen 4 or 5 neighborhoods start watch patrols, but those efforts fizzled out from a lack of volunteers.

Overall, the key is a neighborhood that knows each other and is involved.

Tim also shared some general information:

- The MPD has recently reconstituted its Juvenile Unit. Under the previous Police Chief, the unit was disbanded, and juvenile crime rose rather dramatically.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> precinct has a dedicated 'property crimes unit' that investigates (non-violent) thefts.
- If you have questions about how/why things happen at MPD, ask Tim. He can also assist in crime-solving and prevention. For instance, if there's a 'party house' on your block and several neighbors are upset, call Tim (he doesn't get involved in disputes b/w 2 neighbors). (673-2866).

### **NRP Update—Rob Harris**

#### **NRP Budget & Planning Issues**

As reported in the August Bugle, there is money left over from Phase 1, which we can apply to Phase 2 strategies and actions. Rob will work with the NRP committees and the BMNA, to allocate these funds to Phase 2.

Meanwhile, we will move full steam ahead on implementing our NRP Phase 2 strategies; in fact, there may be financial incentives to move quickly on those housing programs (e.g., low interest home loans) that could result in revolving funds paid back to the NRP.

#### **NRP Housing Committee**

Our next meeting is at 7:15PM at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, on August 21<sup>st</sup>. The agenda for the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting is to review lessons learned from the Phase 1 strategies & actions, and discuss which of these we should possibly repeat for Phase 2. Thereafter, we will meet at 7:15PM on the third Monday of each month, at the designated meeting room at the School. All are welcome to join us.

#### **NRP Parks-Recreation-Community Committee**

Saturday, September 9 is the scheduled date for planned improvements at Bassett Creek, at the falls next to Fruen Mill. Improvements there include installation of a bench and removal of buckthorn, garlic mustard, motherwort and other invasive plants.

The area of the 2005 Brownie Lake buckthorn removal is looking fairly good. The prairie/savanna appears to be naturalizing into the woodland. Some native shrubs (like Red Elderberry) and snakeroot (a native herbaceous wildflower) have grown up where buckthorn is removed. We should plan to pull burdock that has grown up where buckthorn was removed. The burdock is three to four feet tall now and flowering and will go to seed this late summer or fall. The more we can remove the less seed bank there will be in the future. We hope to plan a fall planting of \$2,000 worth of native shrubs to stabilize hillsides where buckthorn was removed. Future work can certainly include more buckthorn removal, especially working southward from the 2005 buckthorn removal areas.

#### **NRP Downtown Bryn Mawr Committee**

Greg's August 2006 garden tour article in the Bugle summarizes the success of an event sponsored by the BMNBA, an organization whose formation was recommended by the NRP Phase I Action Plan (no NRP funds are used for organizing the garden tour, nor are NRP funds needed).

#### **NRP Traffic Committee**

The Traffic Committee met on Monday, August 7, at the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church. In attendance were Steve Maurelli (Chair), Vida Ditter and Rob Harris. The two agenda items were 1) the temporary four-way stop signs on the intersection of Penn Ave & South Cedar Lake Rd and 2) a follow up on the "Roundabout" conference held in April (attended by Steve and Vida). We also discussed ways to work together going forward and agreed on a regularly scheduled meeting time.

Penn Avenue & South Cedar Lake Road

The response to the four-way stop signs at Penn & Cedar Lake Rd has been overwhelmingly in support of the change. Most folks comment on how well the signs have increased the flow of traffic and improved pedestrian safety; however, there is still uncertainty on how the four-way stop signs impact the speed of traffic on Penn. The Traffic Committee is evaluating the temporary four-way stop signs using several criteria, including: 1) how well do the signs control traffic, 2) how do the signs affect pedestrian safety, 3) how do the signs impact traffic speed on Penn and 4) how do the signs affect businesses and residents on or near this intersection. Our recommendation to make the four-way stop signs permanent will depend on the neighborhood's response to a combination of all these criteria, not just on whether the stop signs increase traffic flow through the intersection.

The Traffic Committee believes there has been difficulty in obtaining accurate speed measurement data for traffic on Penn. The committee reviewed the data collected by the city in its July 2005 report on Penn Ave (both lanes of Penn Ave South from Hawthorn to Mt View) and is not convinced this data is accurate. However, it was agreed that we would use this data, in the absence of any other, as baseline data to test the effectiveness of the temporary four-way stop signs at Penn/Cedar Lk Rd. It was also agreed that we must use a variety of ways to test and confirm that the temp 4-way stop signs on Penn are not actually increasing the speed of traffic on Penn.

To this end, the Traffic Committee agreed to:

- Find time in the next few weeks to personally observe traffic on this busy corridor (Rob to coordinate).

- Ask the City to install speed measurement devices ("tubes") at several points on Penn Ave between Mt View and Chestnut (Vida to coordinate). We will compare the data captured by these and compare it against the data documented in the July 2005 report from the City.

- Have the city provide one or two "speed wagons" in September, to help us measure the speed of traffic on Penn (already agreed by City).

We also discussed the possibility (and effectiveness) of permanently pole-mounted speed stations that show the speed of oncoming cars. There are several around town, but specifically one at the north end of Marshall where traffic enters the City and one in Edina on 50th heading from toward France from 100. These speed stations (and the speed wagons) appear to calm traffic.

Review the feedback provided by neighbors on the temporary four-ways stops (Committee).

### **Roundabout Conference**

At the suggestion of a planner at MN/DOT, Steve and Vida attended a two-day conference on roundabouts in April 2006, sponsored by the University of MN. The BMNA Board discussed the possible pros and cons of installing a roundabout at the intersection of Penn Ave and Mt View. The possibility may be remote, but we feel it is worth exploring. The land is owned by MN/DOT, and it would be their decision to make any changes there. Vida will follow up with Paul Stine at MN/DOT on the subject. Paul presented at the April conference, and could possibly provide additional direction to the committee on this topic. It was noted that there may be interest among the roundabout advocates in Minnesota, in using the Mt View/Penn intersection as an experimental/Beta location. The Traffic Committee will also explore whether there is grant money available to help fund the installation of a roundabout. Steve will e-mail Rob his mock-up drawing of a proposed roundabout at the Mt View/Penn intersection. Rob will review the roundabout conference presentation & materials that Vida collected at the April conference and work with Steve and Vida on this project.

There was discussion and agreement among the committee members that all meetings (and meeting agendas) with external entities (city, county, consultants, etc.) on Bryn Mawr traffic issues must be approved by consensus of the Traffic committee. Whenever possible, these external meetings should be scheduled at times convenient for committee members to attend (e.g., lunch time or evenings during the week).

In support of our Phase 2 strategy 15.1.2; Improve Pedestrian Access in Bryn Mawr, Steve will provide Rob the maps of Bryn Mawr, highlighting those streets without sidewalks.

Finally, the Traffic Committee agreed to meet again on Monday, September 11 at the Bryn Mawr

School. We will meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month, thereafter.

**NRP Schools Committee** (Rob reporting on behalf of Lynda, Chair)

Lynda has been putting together the following:

Purpose of the schools committee statement

Committee guidelines

Leadership structure

Conflict of interest policy

The Board will review and discuss these documents at the next meeting, when Lynda is present.

**Ice Cream Social** wrap-up – Joanna Danks

The ice cream social was a great success. Attendance was up from last year, despite weather-related rescheduling of the event. Joanna thanked Board members and neighbors for lots of help with setup, scooping, cleanup, etc...

**Fundraising Committee** – Lisa Mills

After discussion among Board members, it was proposed that the committee actually become the **Budgeting and Fundraising Committee**, to be co-Chaired by the Treasurer and Fund Raising Chair. This acknowledges the necessity of coordinating efforts, particularly going forward, as NRP Phase 2 draws to a close and fundraising becomes our only source of income. A newly drafted committee charter (including purpose of the committee statement, committee guidelines & leadership structure) was presented to the Board, and approved on a voice vote.

Lisa proposed a fundraiser (suggested to Vida by a neighbor): Painting/repairing of house numbers, to assist police in finding their way around Bryn Mawr. The effort was approved by the Board. An advertisement for the service will be included in September's Bugle.

**Discussion Items:**

The Board began a discussion about writing impact statements to judges, on criminals who have been active in Bryn Mawr, but time was inadequate to fully cover the subject. Tim noted that impact statements can have an effect at sentencing, and that there is an impact statement system in place. The system is internet-based and coordinated by another crime prevention specialist with MPD. Tim will send us a link, so we can check it out. Discussion will continue before any action is taken by the Board.

The Board discussed writing a petition to the Park Board, for a moratorium on 'heavy recreational use' permits in South Wirth. At the very least, we hope to compel MPRB to define & discuss high vs. low impact uses, environmental impact, stakeholder involvement, etc. Agreement was reached to pursue this – Marlin, Vida, etc. will work up a proposed petition, to bring to the next meeting.

**Carried over to next meeting:**

Discussion about taking over management of the Bryn Mawr Garage Sale.

Discussion about controlling unauthorized signage in BMNA garden spots.

**NEXT MEETING:**

7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 13, 2006

**Bryn Mawr Elementary \***

**\*Note return to regular location**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:** Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, Share the Harvest Potluck