

Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association Meeting
Wednesday, December 6, 2006 7:00 P.M.
Bryn Mawr Elementary School

Call to Order and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 7:00P.M.

Agenda and November minutes were approved as written. Treasurer's Report accepted as presented.

In Attendance: Marlin Possehl, President; Joanna Danks, Co-VP; Ed Juda, Co-VP; Chad Smude, Co-Treasurer; Mike Roth, Co-Secretary; Lynda Shaheen, Area 2 Rep; Robert Lindquist, Area 5 Rep; Stephen Harvey, Area 7 Co-rep; JoEllyn Jolstad, Bugle/Area 4; J.Pam Weiner, Area 7; J Peterson, Area 6 Rep; and Lisa Goodman, City Council Representative.

Chad Smude was introduced as the new Co-Treasurer helping Ron tackle the BMNA financials.

Also, resident Jean Dufresne was introduced and spoke about the issues regarding public and non public school choices offered to Bryn Mawr. BM is no longer being offered Barton (Open), an Area C school. Each of the past 3 years, the MPS District has eliminated an Area C school option for Bryn Mawr (Whittier, Carondelet, & Barton).

City Council Report – Lisa Goodman

Lunch with Lisa is not held in the months of November and December but will resume on the 4th Wednesday in January.

Announcement: Dog tag renewal is up from \$15 to \$30 next year. The city is offering a license for the life of your dog for only \$200, but if you purchase before the end of December, it will only cost \$100.

Committee Reports

Budget and Fundraising (Ron Sterbenz and Lisa Mills, Chairs)

Fundraising

Ed Juda indicated the "Scoop off" is receiving positive responses from ice cream distributors that have been contacted about it and will have more information in the coming meetings.

Marlin stressed the importance of BMNA board members attending other committee meetings in the new year.

Seasonal Fundraising Suggestions:

1. North Bryn Mawr and South Bryn Mawr doggie washes.
2. Extended Farmers Mkt.
3. Wine tasting with wine vendors.
4. Ice cream tasting. (July 18th)
5. Garage Sale – selling donated items.

Budget

For 2007 we will end the accounting service and be moving to Quick Books. Chad Smude (who works in Finance at General Mills) has agreed to take on the role of Co-Treasurer now and we have decided to throw our hat in for another term with the two of us covering the job for the BMNA. We both reside under the same roof so coordination is easy. One of us will be at each meeting for coverage.

We have moved to Quick Books On-Line at \$16.00 a month - a savings of \$184 a month or \$2,208 per year. My goal was to eliminate the second largest budgeted expense during 2007 and we are ahead of schedule. I will be moving the difference to the Budget - Savings category to make up for any shortfall in membership.

QB on-line will allow us to maintain our records remotely and makes it rather easy to pass the task to anyone who would take on the roll later using any PC with internet access without having to install any software. The service is priced under the Non-Profit category and will give us the ability to produce the needed reports including budgeting. All of you will be granted read-only access to the usual reports and we will cut down the information printed for each meeting to only a summary of the month's activity and a new report in February "Budgeted vs. Actual." The BMNA Secretary will still receive one signed copy the Balance Statement.

We will be continuing the accounting service at \$200 for the month of January 07 and possibly February to review our plan and then move to an "As Needed" relationship to make sure that we are set-up to produce our year end tax reports. Chad and I will be generating the annual 1090 for independent contractors going forward. Our total with tax for this service for one year is \$183.46 (includes tax) for January to December 2007.

We will no longer maintains records with the accountant either. I am purchasing a fire safe for the BMNA for document storage. We will keep records for three years and then covert them to images for the 7 year storage via CD-Rom. While this would cost us up to \$400 for the document safe our total would be \$1,000 this year versus the \$2,400 we would be planning to spend.

\$200 for Quick Books One Year
\$400 for Document Safe
\$400 for January and February if needed
\$1,000 Total

Our annual IRS Filing and Audit will still be the account covered under the NRP program. Since there are no direct costs to us I see no reason to change it.
Our cost going forward in 2008 for accounting will be a mere \$200.

NRP Housing Committee (Rob Harris, Chair)

The Housing Committee met on Nov 20th. In attendance were Marlin Possehl, Mark Holmberg, Wendy Jerome, Clarence Shallbetter, Vida Ditter, Rob Harris (Chair) and Don Snyder of the Mpls Finance Dept. The Committee completed its RFP (with much help from Don) for the Bryn Mawr home improvement program. The RFP was mailed out on Wednesday, November 22 to three potential partners in Minneapolis: the Center for Energy and Environment, Greater Metropolitan Housing Corp, and the Neighborhood Housing Services. These bidders have until 3PM on Wednesday, December 13 to respond. If an acceptable proposal is received, the Housing Committee may invite the bidder(s) in for a face-to-face discussion at their January 3rd meeting. The Housing Committee hopes to select a partner for recommendation to the BMNA at the BMNA's January 10th meeting. If the bid review and approval process goes smoothly, we intend to communicate the application process to the neighbors in late Winter/early Spring, so that NRP Home Improvement money can be made available to qualified neighbors by the Summer of 2007.

NRP Traffic Committee (Steve Maurelli, Chair)

The delegation of Bryn Mawr neighbors (Steve Maurelli, Haris Sih and Rob Harris), met with the Principals of the Bryn Mawr schools (Beth Russell and Jim Lemmer) on Tuesday November 28, to discuss safety issues with children walking to and from the schools. The neighbors identified various intersections and streets in the neighborhood that were problematic (reflecting the comments made by Haris Sih in his open Bugle letter to the BMNA and Traffic Committee). We reported that children were at risk between 7AM and 9:30AM each weekday, all along Laurel Ave from Upton to Penn. The neighbors indicated that parents and bus drivers appeared to be the major violators of the speed limits, as they were rushing to school to drop off their kids.

Principals' Russell and Lemmer were surprised to hear that there were issues. However, they indicated that they focused their efforts on the school grounds, around which they make great efforts to control traffic and keep their kids safe, and that there could be issues with streets in the neighborhood they were not aware of.

Principal Lemmer said he doubted that any teachers were speeding through the neighborhood, as most of them arrive at the school before 7AM, before any neighbors have said they noticed anyone speeding.

When asked how many children walk to school each day, Principal Lemmer reported that approximately 25 students walk to Anawatin each day, and 4 kids walk to the Bryn Mawr Elementary school. He said that parents escort the elementary students to school, and that they were not aware of any traffic/pedestrian safety issues with the other 25 children.

They have considered having some of the older children patrol the intersections near the school. However, because of the different start times between the schools, it wouldn't be possible to take the older kids out of class to patrol for the younger ones. Consequently, until the start times for the kids are synchronized, the student patrol idea will not be possible. And, since, the bus companies control the school start times, this issue is largely out of the hands of the school administrators.

Haris recounted that when he and other neighbors inquired with the City about why a “child crossing” sign had been removed from Upton and Laurel Ave, he was told by the City the sign didn’t do any good, and in fact, gave children a false sense of safety, as drivers didn’t yield to these kinds of signs. Again, the Principals were not aware the sign had been removed, and agreed that the City’s response seemed counter-intuitive.

As for speeding buses, Principals Lemmer and Russell said that, historically, the bus companies have not been responsive to “general calls” about problem buses; they require detailed information about the day, time and bus number, so they can identify the driver, before they will take any action.

Principal Russell said that she had asked around to see if there were any issues with the intersection of Penn & South Cedar Lake Road since stop signs were put in place of the traffic signal lights, but said she had not heard any negative comments from parents, teachers or students. The Bryn Mawr neighbors concurred that the neighborhood’s response has been overwhelmingly in favor of making the four-way stop signs permanent. However, it was noted that no one has observed the intersection during the 7AM to 9AM time frame when safety is an issue for students walking to school. The decision to make the temporary four-way stop signs permanent will be made in January, at which time neighbors will have been able to observe the intersection in summer, fall and winter climate conditions.

The attendees discussed a variety of steps that the school and city could take to address and resolve these child safety issues—some actions were much more difficult, expensive, and punitive than others. After much discussion, the Principals agreed to work with the neighborhood on the following actions:

1. The Principals will communicate directly to parents about the importance of driving carefully through the neighborhood, particularly at that time of day when parents are dropping off their kids at the school. The Bryn Mawr neighbors offered to help review or write the announcement. These announcements will be delivered two ways: first by a written article in the school newsletter and second by automated phone calls to parents. Both of these can be delivered multiple times, if necessary.
2. The Principals asked that if neighbors provided detailed information about the day, time and bus number of speeding buses, they would gladly contact the bus companies.
3. Principal Lemmer offered to call the Mpls Traffic Police to inquire why a child crossing sign had been removed from Upton and Laurel Ave.

The attendees agreed to try these measures first, before trying more punitive and expensive remedies. The Principals also offered to escalate these issues to the School Board, the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Traffic Police or other external entities, if we thought that would help deal with these issues. For example, we could request that a Minneapolis Traffic Officer patrol along Laurel Ave for several days during peak commuting hours; install speed bumps on the street; petition for lower speed limits around the school, etc. Again, these ideas would be pursued only if the other measures fail to have the required effect.

NRP Administrative Issues

Budgeting Issues

- The BMNA NRP Steering Committee (comprised of NRP Committee Chairs) is scheduled to meet on December 16 to determine where to allocate the remaining Phase 1 funds into Phase 2 strategies. Rob will report the Committee’s recommendations to the BMNA Board at the BMNA Board meeting in January.
- Bryn Mawr NRP Payment 15 was signed and submitted to the Minneapolis NRP on Dec 4.

Mayor RT Rybak’s AIA/Great City Design Team

At the request of the BMNA, Rob Harris completed the ‘letter of interest’ to Mayor RT Rybak’s Great City Design Team for the Bryn Mawr Penn Ave Improvement Plan. The Plan focuses on improving the Penn Ave corridor from South Cedar Lake Rd to the I-394 interchange, emphasizing ways the corridor could be modified in support of the AIA’s top ten principals of livable communities. Special thanks to Greg Lecker, Steve Maurelli and Rachel Banken for their help in completing the ‘letter of interest.’ Also a special thanks to CM Lisa Goodman’s office for

submitting a letter of recommendation on behalf of the BMNA.

Schools Committee – Development (Lynda Shaheen)

Lynda reported that in January the school committee may be increasing in size and will provide names of members.

The IB Application A has been approved for the school stating it will become a “World School.” There are 3 total applications, taking several years to approve. With this status comes a change in curriculum, which has already begun to happen.

Pam Weiner (area 7 co-rep) reported on the South Wirth Trail Committee meetings on behalf of Emily Anderson, the BMNA’s representative to this advisory group whose charge is to delineate a preferred trail plan for recommendation to the Mpls. Park and Rec. Board. There have been 2 meetings of this committee so far, during which the 5 ‘stakeholders’ (BMNA, Nordic Ski Foundation-the Loppet, Friends of the Wild Flower Garden, Mpls. Audubon and MOCA –the mtn.biking group) have shared their various priorities and concerns regarding the trails in South Wirth.

In conjunction with the desire to promote the ‘nature park’ experience for the neighborhood, the birders and the Garden advocates, as well as to preserve the species and habitat richness of the area while focusing on removal of invasives and restoration of ecological vitality and diversity, the 3 nature recreation-focused members recommended a moratorium on all trails, except those providing minimal pedestrian access, until a science – based assessment of major trail-impact effects could be accomplished. While this idea was poorly received by the MPRB staff facilitators and the Loppet representative, it did serve to generate some consensus around the importance of reducing trails and creating a plan to foster more thoughtful use of the area.

Some specific trail alignment suggestions were made, and these will be further explored at the next committee meeting in February. On a positive note, the MOCA representative made it clear that his group will not be pursuing a mountain biking trail segment in the South Wirth area , because of precise terrain requirements and construction standards. He expressed serious concerns about the poor design of the Loppet racing swaths.

Saturnalia was a big hit with an attendance of some 400-500 people coming out to enjoy the great day.

Next Meeting: Wednesday - January 10th, 2007 at 7:00p.m.
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Upcoming Events: