

February 2009 PPERRIA Newsletter



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PPERRIA Board/Membership Meeting

Monday, February 23rd
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Prospect Park United Methodist Church
Corner of Orlin and Malcolm Avenues S.E.

*Come early for treats and talk
6:30 – 7:00 pm.*

If you have special needs requiring accommodation,
please contact Joyce Barta at bartajm@yahoo.com or 378-
9268 and we will make every attempt to meet that need.

February PPERRIA Meeting Highlights

- A discussion of the subject of the Future of PPERRIA. See Presidents Notes on P. 2
- Vote on the By-Law Proposal to limit Board Membership to residents of Prospect Park/East River Road
- Invitation to Central Corridor Community Summit Meeting in March – Phil Anderson
- Proposed resolution - Discuss a resolution brought forward through a joint effort by Prospect Park and St. Paul districts 7, 11, and 12 dealing with truck traffic on Pierce Butler Road, University Ave., and the proposed Granary Road.

Notes from the Presidents:

PPERRIA's Future

PPERRIA is about to encounter more and bigger challenges than it experienced in recent times. As a result, we may need to change how PPERRIA operates to prepare for those challenges. We the PPERRIA Presidents of this past decade prepared this paper to encourage the PPERRIA Board and membership to consider the challenges and solutions.

Major Considerations

PPERRIA is a neighborhood-run non-profit corporation with officers and a Board of Directors charged to promote, in a non-partisan, educational and cooperative manner, the health, safety and general welfare of the Prospect Park neighborhood residents and it has fiduciary responsibility for various donor and government funds.

The following challenges are foreseeable:

- further university encroachment;
- further student oriented development;
- business and high density residential development along light-rail route;
- traffic and parking issues related to all of the above
- Pratt Community School

Membership –

- Now less than 20% of the 1000-plus households are PPERRIA members.
- Various agencies of government, developers and businesses expect PPERRIA to speak for and represent the Prospect Park neighborhood. Can we do so effectively without a broader membership?

Finances –

- Currently, our annual income is primarily from voluntary donations amounting to about \$8,000. We also receive an annual \$2000 “Citizen Engagement” grant from the City.
- PPERRIA has had an enhanced budget and operational capacity courtesy of NRP. But, those funds will end in about a year. We must either find new revenue or eliminate staff and reduce operations to match a very limited budget.
- Our volunteer treasurer, who has successfully served us for a long time, will not be available in the next fiscal year. A good treasurer is essential because our finances, even without NRP funds, are relatively complicated.

- We have not sought funds through grants from foundations. However, nothing seems to prohibit it except the required time and expertise to write applications

Neighborhood Issues and volunteers –

- PPERRIA's officers and active volunteers are mostly senior citizens; few younger residents have been identified to help manage the organization.
- For many years, major time has been spent tracking city zoning changes that affect the neighborhood and attending related hearings at City Hall. However, the volunteer time available to do that work is becoming limited.
- The neighborhood list-serve is a major function serving about 500 addresses and is operated by a volunteer.
- The neighborhood website is a major function and is operated by a volunteer.
- Significant time is spent by PPERRIA's president in organizing and managing PPERRIA affairs with the assistance of a single part-time staff. At one time, that was performed by several staff. (Paid by NRP.)
- PPERRIA has no “place of business”, no telephone and no one to answer a phone in business hours.

Alternative Solutions

The question is whether PPERRIA is going to choose its future. Some of the choices for PPERRIA appear to include the following. They are not all mutually exclusive:

General Operational Philosophy –

- (1) Que sera, sera. (i.e. – continue to operate as we have done). This is likely to result in decreasing effectiveness as volunteerism declines and work increases.
- (2) Specifically limit PPERRIA activity areas to a few major or crisis issues. (Fewer meetings and fewer demands on volunteers.) The likely result is that important livability issues won't be addressed at all.
- (3) Open a physical neighborhood “office.” This would give PPERRIA a more visible identity in the neighborhood and provide a “place of business” for the organization.

Membership/Volunteers/Staffing –

- (4) Increase resident membership though a major membership drive. (Make membership permanent and not year-to-year.) With a larger membership, it is likely that more volunteers would be identified for

PPERRIA work.

- (5) Hire several additional staff to do work now done by volunteers and to help PPERRIA committees work more efficiently.

Fund Raising –

- (6) Raise funds from foundations by hiring staff specifically to apply for grants to cover new projects and enlarged administrative expenses. (But, grants are usually short term making long-term planning difficult and staff employment for the long term uncertain.)
- (7) Raise funds from the Prospect Park community through an annual fund drive, and set the goals to cover the basic operational budget. Likely result is that PPERRIA would have continuing resources for its mission.

- (8) Raise funds by seeking mergers with the neighborhood business associations for mutual benefit of residents and businesses. (Raising “dues” from new source.)
- (9) Raise funds by seeking city, state, and/or national funds to support PPERRIA operations.

Adopting any solution is not self-executing. We need volunteers to work on implementing chosen alternatives. The only good news is that PPERRIA has some cash reserves that could be expended to “seed” expanded operations.

-PPERRIA Presidents
 - Steve Cross (1999-2002)
 - Steve Banks (2002-2004)
 - Joe Ring (2004-2007)
 - Dick Poppele (2007-2009)

Minutes of PPERRIA Membership and Board of Directors Meeting on Monday, January 26, 2009, 7 pm, Prospect Park United Methodist Church

president Dick Poppele called the meeting of the Association to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. A motion to approve the agenda, was made by Richard Adams. Passed without noes.
2. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Phil Anderson. Approved without noes.
3. **Neighborhood Community Engagement:** The City of Minneapolis has requested a representative to meet with other neighborhood representatives on February 2 to determine a process for selecting neighborhood representative to the new Community Engagement Commission (replacement of the NRP Policy Board). President Poppele requested Peter LaSha to be our representative to this group. A motion was made by Mary Ann Page to direct our representative to convey that PPERRIA believes that a representative representing the Southeast neighborhoods is essential. Passed without noes.
4. **District Council Collaborative:** Phil Anderson moved adoption of a Resolution which was previously approved by PPERRIA which enables the organizations participation in the District Council Collaborative, which is applying for separate 501c3 status from the University United. The resolution has no requirement for any financial support from PPERRIA, and is substantially the same as the prior resolution. DCC is concerned with the Central Corridor light rail line which will be constructed on University Avenue in St. Paul and through the eastern end of Minneapolis.
5. **Luxton Park Book Exchange** Dean Abrahamson announced the establishment of a Committee consisting of him as chairman, Lois Willand, Claire Aronson and Meredith Poppele, to oversee the Luxton Book Exchange which has been built at Luxton Park. It consists of a room with \$110 linear feet of book shelves and outfitted with donated and purchased bookcases and furniture purchased with donations and some PPERRIA funds. It is open from 2 pm to 8 pm. Is used by kids and adults, and needs donations of books. Florence Littman made a motion to approve Dean's request to solicit donations to allow the purchase of some reference books. Approved without noes.
6. **Announcements:**

Dick Poppele announced the appointment of Andy Mickel as chairman of the nominating committee , and announced that Lois Willand will not be continuing as Treasurer beyond this year, and requested that members think of volunteering for the position.

Kale Severson, the new Park Director at Luxton announced that the Fire and Ice Festival would be held on February 7 from 5:30 to 8:00. He hopes to promote athletics at the park, and needs coaches for baseball, softball and badminton. A new computer lab will be open from 2 to 9:00 daily, 2 to :8:00 on Fridays. In response to a question, Kale said that he did not believe that air conditioning would be installed at Luxton this summer.

Betts Zerby moved that the History Committee be authorized to reprint Under the Witch’s Hat to raise money for PPERRIA. Funds to pay for the initial publishing would be approximately \$7000, to be allocated \$3,000 from the History Committee funds, \$2,000 from PPERRIA general funds, and \$2,000 from the PPERRIA Professional Service Fund. It is hoped that the sales proceeds would cover the costs quickly. Passed without noes.

Dick Poppele announced upcoming community meetings on the University of Minnesota Master Plan and LRT matters in March.

Karen Murdock announced that the St. Anthony Park Raymond Avenue Bridge would be closed and warned of traffic problems.

Ginea Klamecki thanked the group for donations to the Profile Food Shelf.

Dick Kain announced that he, Kathy Frank, Claire Aronson and Dick Poppele will serve on the 29th St. Light Rail Advisory Committee, Julie Wallace will serve on the Westgate Committee.

Sean Hart announced that The Bridge was losing money because of lack of advertising, and was sorely in need of donations to continue publication.

Meredith Poppele requested volunteers for the hospitality provisions for the PPERRIA meetings.

7. **WI-FI in Prospect Park:** Cam Gordon and representatives of the City staff (Lynn Willenbring and John Wurtges) and U.S. Internet provided information on the delay in getting wi-fi installed in Prospect Park. Problems with the availability of poles capable of carrying the wi-fi transmitters have caused the delay. Some new wooden poles will be erected, some have been erected and some newer stronger light poles will be used. The U.S. Internet folks said that they believed the system would be up and running in 60 days.
8. **CPED:** Joe Bernard from the city's Community Planning and Economic Development Department described the Zoning, Planning and Regulatory Review (ZPRR) process which has been happening since August 2008. The taskforce is a subgroup of the University District Alliance that's examining how the city can improve regulatory processes in the district. The group is attempting to tackle issues in areas such as parking and transportation, enforcement, design and development and planning and zoning, Bernard said. Comments and suggestions were made by PPERRIA members about tracking landlords by their violations, promoting family-friendly neighborhoods, eliminating relative homesteading and possibly limiting alcohol access in the area. Bernard said ZPRR's draft document is available on the city's website (www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/University_District_ZPRR.asp) and encouraged input from the neighborhood.
9. **Livability Report:** Livability Committee Chair Joe Ring said the 106 Review Process recently "ramped up." Many more entities were in attendance at the last meeting and Ring said the Met Council appears to be taking notice. A tentative programmable agreement between parties could be ready for signing in mid-April, Ring said. The Franklin Transportation Survey revealed that the residents would like to see a bike lane on Franklin Avenue. Dan Corneo has been commissioned to do a report on the intersection of Franklin and East River Parkway.
10. **Zoning Report:** Florence Littman reported that Metro Petro is now open and the car wash is functioning.
11. **Membership Report:** Julie Wallace reported that PPERRIA has approximately 335 members, utilizing a new counting method which considers each member of a household as a member.
112. **Staff Report:** As reported in the January newsletter.

A motion to adjourn by Phil Anderson was passed without a vote.

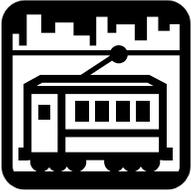
Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Zerby

Secretary

Richard Poppele, President

NRP Education Fund Release Motion

At the **March** meeting the Education Committee will present a motion to release \$18,500 of NRP I funds remaining in the Education portion of the plan, to address playground improvements at Pratt School. The motion to release funds requires a 30 notice before a vote. The goal is to provide a safe place for older K-5 students to play various ball activities. Refrain from using Malcolm Avenue between Orlin and Sidney Place as a playground. Provide minor changes to existing playground to offer upper body activity and attempt to contain the shredded rubber mulch on the school grounds.



THE DEMISE OF THE TWIN CITIES' STREETCAR SYSTEM

By John De Witt, chair of PPERRIA's Transit Committee

Part II – Concluding John DeWitt's story of the TCRT system

(See last month's PPERRIA News for Part I)

Green's tactics were a public relations disaster and in 1951 Ossanna waged a successful battle for control of the company. However, Ossanna continued to slash service and at one point threatened to terminate all service in St. Paul. Ossanna reportedly raised enough money to buy 25 new buses and went to GM, which offered to finance a total conversion from streetcars to buses on very favorable terms. Thus began a 25-month (1951-1953) conversion during which 758 streetcars and 351 older buses were replaced by 838 new GM buses.

Ossanna's link to NCL was "Barney" Larrick, who he hired to speed the conversion. (Larrick had overseen NCL's switch from streetcars to buses in Los Angeles, CA.)

It happens however that Ossanna, and others, had been getting kickbacks from scrap dealers as hundreds of miles of steel rail and copper wire were salvaged. Also, hundreds of older streetcars were burned for salvage. Ossanna, Larrick, and others were convicted and sent to prison. Lyndon Johnson pardoned Ossanna in the mid 60s. Barney Larrick appeared in the documentary: Taken for a Ride, in the late 90s. He remained adamant that every decision made, both in Los Angeles and the Twin Cities had been necessary.

Conclusion

The National City Lines conspiracy theory remains controversial after half a century – the subject of numerous volumes and documentaries. Was NCL part of a conspiracy, or was it simply seizing a competitive business advantage?

The demise of our TCL streetcar system is also subject to dispute. One local historian, well steeped in transit history, argues that the Strouse administration was blind to plummeting ridership and should have been quicker with its wholesale conversion to buses; that by procrastinating, it set up Green's takeover of TCL.

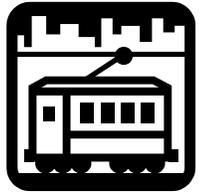
Another historian – who actually worked for TCL just prior to Green's takeover – reports that many of TCL's managers understood that it would be futile trying to preserve the streetcar system. But some also believed that three lines – most likely the Interurban Line (University Avenue), Selby-Lake, and Chicago-Fremont – had a ridership that justified continued streetcar operation. Cities such as San Francisco, Boston and Philadelphia did successfully preserve their busier streetcar lines. They are operating today.

Two articles from the era highlight the controversy:

Collier's magazine (09/29/51) printed: How Mobsters Grabbed a City's Transit Line, about our TCL system and,

Mass Transit Magazine (07/54) ran an article: Rapid Conversion Changes Twin City Transit Picture. (It praises Ossanna and his colleagues for a quick streetcar-to-bus conversion that returned TCL to profitability.)

For more on the streetcar system we once had, I recommend: *Twin Cities by Trolley – The Streetcar Era in Minneapolis and St. Paul*. Published in 2007 by the University of Minnesota Press, available in libraries and bookstores.



Staff report for January 2009

Supported PPERRIA activities, NRP I, and NRP II			
Contractors' services:	Hours billed	Total expense	% of total Budget
01/07/09 to 02/03/09	29.75	\$ 714.00	0.3 %
10/18/95 to 01/07/09	11,081.76	\$194,561.15	96.5 %
10/18/95 to 02/03/09	11,111.51	\$195,275.15	96.8 %

Total revised PPERRIA NRP Phase 1 and 2 budget for independent contractor services = \$201,661.45. \$7799.15 remains.

Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood Calendar

To include items in the PPERRIA calendar, contact Joyce Barta at bartajm@yahoo.com or 378-9268 by **Thursday, Feb 5th**.

Date and Time	Event and Location	Whom to contact
Tuesday, February 17 7:00 pm	(Tentative) Zoning & Planning Committee meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church.	Florence Littman 331-2970
Thursday, February 19 7:00 - 8:30 pm	Pratt Council meeting at Pratt.	Mary Alice Kopf 379-7436 Pratt Office 668-1122
Monday, February 23 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PPERRIA Board of Directors & Membership Meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church. Come at 6:30 for refreshments and conversation.	Dick Poppele 378-9242
Wednesday, February 25 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm	Garden Club meeting. Call for information.	Kent Petterson 332-1821 Mary Alice Kopf 379-7436
Friday, February 27 11:00 am	JOY Book Club at Appleby's on Washington Ave (next to the Radisson on the U of M campus)	Roberta Mark 331-6621
Wednesday, March 4 7:30 pm	Luxton Park Council meeting at Luxton Park.	Jim Widder 331-6129
Monday, March 9 noon - 1:30 pm	JOY Potluck at Pratt. Call for information.	Roberta Mark 331-6621 Luxton Park 370-4925
Monday, March 9 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PPERRIA Executive Committee meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church.	Dick Poppele 378-9242
Wednesday, March 11 5:00 pm	Glendale Resident Organization (GRO) meeting at 92 St. Mary's Ave.	Latrishia Collins 342-1952
Tuesday, March 17 7:00 pm	(Tentative) Zoning & Planning Committee meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church.	Florence Littman 331-2970
Monday, March 23 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	PPERRIA Board of Directors & Membership Meeting at Prospect Park United Methodist Church. Come at 6:30 for refreshments and conversation.	Dick Poppele 378-9242
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Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association, Inc.			PRSR STD U.S. Postage PAID
PPERRIA Standing Committees and Chairs			
Education & Human Services 66 SE Macdonald Avenue Minneapolis, MN 55414	Susan Larson-Fleming flemings@usfamily.net		Minneapolis, MN 55419
Executive Finance 512/331-2970 (voice mail)	Dick Poppele dick@umn.edu		Permit No. 2928-9242
Housing	Tony Garmers tggarmers@msn.com		378-2656
Livability (Subcommittees listed below, designated by *)	Roger Kiemele kiemele@earthlink.net		331-5106
*Community Events	Joe Ring jring@visi.com		379-4587
*Community and River Gorge Cleanup	Gratia Reynolds grandmagratia@yahoo.com		331-5312
*Environment	Tom Kilton tom@tomkilton.com		339-3064
*History Project	Dean Abrahamson deanabra@umn.edu		623-9449
*Landscape, Garden Club	Betts Zerby ejzerby@yahoo.com		379-8095
*Landscape Subcommittee: Tree Health Project	Mary Alice Kopf mollisk@earthlink.net		379-7436
Membership	Paula Denman pjdenman@mn.rr.com		338-1871
Personnel	Julie Wallace jwallace3@comcast.net		378-9429
Planning	Susan Larson-Fleming flemings@usfamily.net		331-8819
Transit	Dick Gilyard rgilyard.architect@earthlink.net		362-8995
Zoning & Land Use	John DeWitt jdewitt@comcast.net		338-1871
	Florence Littman littm005@umn.edu		331-2970
	Phil Anderson phil.ann.anderson@gmail.com		

Other PPERRIA Committees and Task Forces			
4 th Street	Julie Wallace	jwallace3@comcast.net	378-9429
Luxton Book Exchange	Dean Abrahamson	deanabra@umn.edu	623-9449
Motley Crew	Rebakah Lorence	rlorance@mm.com	331-2464
Nominating Committee	Andy Mickel	andym@pperr.net	331-8396

The following are not PPERRIA Committees, but they have PPERRIA representatives:	
Stadium Area Advisory Group (SAAG)	Dean Abrahamson, Florence Littman
Southeast Minneapolis Committee on Learning (SEMCOL)	Susan Larson Fleming, David Galle, Jakki Kydd-Fidelman, Susan Gottlieb
Southeast Minneapolis Economic Development Committee (SEMI)	Dean Lund, Julie Wallace, John Kari
District Councils Collaborative (DCC)	Phil Anderson
University District Partnership Alliance	Dick Poppele, Dick Gilyard



Upcoming Meetings:

February 17, 7:00 p.m. South St Anthony Recreation Center, 890 Cromwell Ave, St. Paul

The group studying the present and potential traffic problems on Franklin Avenue will have a meeting to present and discuss the results of their survey and future recommendations on bike and automobile traffic.

February 19, 7:30 p.m. St. Francis Cabrini Church, 1500 Franklin Ave. SE, Minneapolis

The group studying the design problems of the Franklin Avenue/East River Parkway intersection will hold a public meeting to discuss possible alternatives. Consultant Dan Cornea will conduct the meeting.