

Longfellow Community Council Community Participation Program 2011 Annual Report

1. Major accomplishments

LCC had many accomplishments in 2011. Our goal was to move from a planning year to an implementation year. We were able to achieve this through a number of activities and scopes of service where we funded programs/projects that would be used both to promote our organization and Greater Longfellow and involve residents in activities and priorities identified by the community.

The following are scopes of service that were approved, funded and implemented in 2011:

- League of Longfellow Artists – support of the annual art crawl (50 sites in Greater Longfellow)
- Make Mine Solar bulk purchasing program to provide installation of solar thermal systems in 20 Longfellow sites
- Facing Race – 3 part series
- Eyes on the Street program to produce yard signs and fund stroll patrol activities
- Irrigation Free Landscaping
- Museum in the Streets
- Falls for All universal access playground
- Bike Rack grant program - 40 racks for community business programs

The list of scopes of service shows programs or activities that are funded by LCC but does not encompass all of the work that we are involved in or that is initiated by LCC's committee members.

LCC also completed a two-year strategic plan and developed and approved a media usage protocol. Our Strategic Plan is used as a tool to assist LCC's committees and Board of Directors in reviewing neighborhood priorities and adopting strategies that will help us focus on those priorities. The Media Protocol has helped us to ensure that our communication with the residents, businesses, schools, churches, and other stakeholders in the community is the most appropriate and effective use of our media sources. Planning and communication make LCC a valuable resource to the broader community.

2. 2011 CPP Submission

Our regular outreach and engagement activities include in our 2011 CPP proposal were

- Regular communications and updates through LCC's media sources
- Monthly committee meetings (Board of Directors, Environment and Transportation, Neighborhood Development Caucus, Community Connections, Advancement, River Gorge, Seward/Longfellow Restorative Justice, Longfellow Business Association, Neighborhood Alliance and Problem Properties.
- Community meetings for on-going and emerging issues (Longfellow Station housing development, Howe School Redevelopment, and others as needed and requested)
- General Membership Meetings (April and October)
- LCC programs and events
- Meetings with Hennepin County Community Works, a collaborative of five Longfellow churches and other partner meetings.

We continued these activities throughout the year. At the end of the year and were able to accomplish the majority of our outreach goals but did not increase our participation numbers in great measure. In early 2012, the Board of Directors and staff began a review of our committees and their effectiveness in engagement. We have determined that there are other strategies that LCC could employ to reach members of the community who would not regularly participate within the structure of a monthly committee. The Board of Directors began a work group of residents interested in the revitalization of Lake Street, approved a new Transition Longfellow group independent of the LCC but able to access our resources and formed and participates in the Longfellow Faith Forum. These ideas were initiated in 2011 and have been attracting new members to LCC that had not currently participated in our committees.

LCC also continues to work with Hennepin County on a Hennepin County Community Works (HCCW) project and Federal CARE grant. Through funding for these initiatives we have been able to spend a great deal of time in our community gathering data through surveys and focus groups on the social and physical environmental priorities of residents and businesses. This work is of great compliment to the regular activities of LCC and has allowed us to implement new strategies for outreach and engagement.

3. Stakeholder Involvement

- A. LCC's 2012-2013 Board of Directors currently has 3 vacant seats. We have a 15-seat board and in October 2012 we will be amending the LCC bylaws to ensure that the Board is able to fill vacant seats during the year. Our board elections are held annually in April. The 2011-2012 Board of Directors had one vacancy.
- B. LCC committees are as follows:
- EC Committee – 4 members on the committee (11 meetings per year)
 - Advancement Committee
 - River Gorge Committee
 - Neighborhood Development Caucus
 - Longfellow Business Association
 - Environment & Transportation
 - Community Connections
- Total attendance: 647 people**
- C. Annual Meetings – LCC General Membership meetings are held in April and October of each year. There were 65 people in attendance at the April “No pie charts only pies” meeting and 150 in attendance at our October “Best Meeting Ever.”
- D. Publications – LCC uses at least six media sources to advertise, market and share information. Through these six sources we are able to reach a very large audience (have not quantified this) on a regular basis. Our media source include:
- Monthly page in the *Longfellow/Nokomis Messenger*
 - Facebook Page
 - Twitter account
 - Yahoo e-lists

- LCC's Insider e-newsletter
- LCC Website

E. Other activities include the following:

- LCC Stroll Patrol
- Community Warming Party
- A Chemical Reaction (film screening)
- Shea Stremcha Gathering
- Watershed Friendly Yard Tour
- Share the Gorge annual event
- Share the Road
- 46 & 46th Street development meeting
- Longfellow Corn Feed
- Facing Race series
- LCC Open House

Approximate total attendance: 2,005

4. Financial Reports – included in email file

Impact

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

Prior to completing the CPP proposal most of LCC's interactions with the NCRD involved information sessions on the CPP. While the sessions were helpful, they were also confusing. LCC's regular communications with other City departments remains status quo. We work mainly with CPED and have found department staff to be very helpful.

Post submission of the CPP proposal we have worked with Carrie Aspinwall on the details to complete our submission. It is beneficial to have a staff person assigned to the neighborhood as was the case with NRP. We are hopeful that as the CPP continues, it will be easier to understand.

City Communications – effectiveness

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

LCC receives regular notices from the City that are consistent and timely. The newsletter from NCR is also a helpful tool.

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.

Yes. There have been times in the past that the notice did not seem adequate but that has not been the case in the past year.

City Departments

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

I think that this question is too big to answer in this format. The relationship between the City and neighborhoods lacks continuity. It seems to be based on an "as needed" basis. I don't know if this is a good thing or a bad thing. I think that we all strive for the connectedness of strong partnerships and relationships but access may be the more important focus.

City Assistance

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

I've discussed the need for translation services in the past. I have been informed that this is not the work or the focus of the NCRD. I've also heard this need expressed by other neighborhood organizations. It would be very helpful if anyone (including the NCRD) could help neighborhoods to figure out a way to have affordable access to translation services. As one of our priorities is outreach and engagement, our activities, programs and events can only reach so far if we struggle with language barriers.

Other comments?

The future of funding for the CPP/neighborhoods seems unclear at this point. Is there anything that has been decided to date? Would love to have an update on this information.