

## **Waite Park Community Council 2011 Annual Report**

### **1. Accomplishments**

In 2011 the Waite Park Community Council (WPCC) had a great year rolling out a number of new initiatives, meeting with many new residents and continuing our drive to represent the residents of our neighborhood to make urban living positive and rewarding. With the sunset of NRP and the launch of the new Community Participation Program, our board worked quickly to shore up our existing programs while keeping an eye on opportunities to pursue new modes of engagement in a changing environment. During 2011 the WPCC was able to engage new homeowners, continue residential programs, and provide activities while also providing a forum for new businesses, new park initiatives and address area-wide livability concerns.

The Waite Park Neighborhood in Northeast Minneapolis is a primarily residential neighborhood on the edge of the City of Minneapolis, bordering St. Anthony Village on the east and Columbia Heights on the north. With over 94% of our available land zoned and built for housing, with most of that being comprised on single-family dwellings, a major focus of the Waite Park Community Council over the past 58 years has been addressing residential livability concerns. Among other accomplishments, the WPCC has launched a “welcome package” program for new residents. This package includes a t-shirt or travel mug with the Waite Park Neighborhood logo, a Waite Park magnet advertising our public meetings and contact information, a map of the area and amenities, a \$50 security rebate form for homeowners, as well as information on a number of area businesses, parks, and schools. During National Night Out (NNO), WPCC board members dropped off a number of welcome packets at each block party in the neighborhood and used the opportunity to meet with neighbors at each party to discuss area concerns. These packets have proved to be a great device to introduce new residents to our neighborhood organization and inform them of the opportunities for them to voice their issues, get involved in their community, and make urban living an easily approachable concept.

We hosted our annual Fall Festival and Push Cart Derby in September 2011 with a great turnout of nearly 400 residents from Waite Park and Northeast Minneapolis. This event has proved to be a great event for neighbors from around the area to meet, discuss issues, and participate in a great, safe activity within the city. This year we were happy to partner with the Be The Match Foundation to educate residents on diseases like leukemia and lymphoma and allow them to join the Be The Match Marrow Registry.

The Waite Park Community Council has continued its successful involvement with the Waite Park Community Garden. Over the past 15 years our board members and residents have worked to create a well-run, well-tended, highly functional community garden. The garden included 70 rental plots and has become not only a successful neighborhood fixture, but also a financially self-sustaining entity.

In 2011 the WPCC continued its partnership with the Community Energy Services (CES) program, offering energy saving services to Waite Park residents. Using legacy NRP funds, the WPCC was able to offset the cost of the first 100 residents to participate by reducing the cost of in-home energy consultations to just \$20. The program has proved useful for our residents by getting over 200 households participating in the program in some way.

The WPCC re-launched a low-interest home improvement loan program with the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation (GMHC) in late 2011. Throughout much of 2011, the WPCC worked to identify and consolidate program income through a number of legacy-NRP programs

to re-launch a general home improvement loan program geared toward all Waite Park homeowners. The WPCC retooled an existing home loan program with over \$100,000 worth of untapped funds, added program income from four dormant loan programs and reintroduced the program in January 2012. This program offers residents up to \$10,000 for home improvements with a low 4% interest rate. This program is being offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

During regular monthly meetings, the WPCC addressed a multitude of issues, large and small. In April 2012, Mr. Ali from Midwest Auto Repair discussed his plans to open a small auto service facility on 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Stinson Ave. The meeting brought Mr. Ali, his designer Jeff McElmury, WPCC directors and surrounding neighbors together to talk about the project and address concerns about the redevelopment of the property. The WPCC also brought together a number of elected officials and the Minneapolis Department of Public Works to discuss the realities of a new household hazardous waste facility being proposed on University Avenue, roughly one mile from the Waite Park Neighborhood. This meeting served as a good opportunity for area residents to learn about the realities of the project and ask questions in a public setting.

In the fall, the WPCC pitted our successful social media profile on Twitter, @waiteparkcc against the CARAG neighborhood's @CARAGMpls in a friendly contest to see who could generate 300 followers for bragging rights as Minneapolis' "most popular neighborhood." By January, the CARAG neighborhood narrowly beat out WPCC to 300 followers. CARAG was rewarded with pizza at their regularly scheduled meeting, where sitting President, Jeffrey Martin, thanked the CARAG board, discussed the contest and traded a few neighborhood ideas.

We look forward to continuing to work with residents to make our neighborhood, our city and our greater urban environment a great place to live.

## **2. 2011 CPP Submission**

The WPCC has worked to maintain a consistent level of engagement with our residents during the sunset of NRP and the initiation of CPP funding. We are happy to report that we have seen a better than average interest in neighborhood issues in 2011. This increase is due in part to distribution of welcome packages, special events, memberships in various other groups and projects in Northeast Minneapolis, as well as our regularly scheduled meetings. Social media has been a useful device to help us reach our younger, tech-savvy residents while our hard-copy newsletter has kept our older residents and those less Internet-connected similarly informed.

We realize that neighborhood engagement is an ever-present issue. We are working to reach as many residents as possible through honest and open communications. In 2011 we have found communication with our Crime Prevention Specialists from the Second Police Precinct to be difficult due to staffing issues that were beyond our control. Likewise, we look for support from our NCR and NCEC representatives to help us identify and communicate with various under-represented groups in a combined strategy.

## **3. Stakeholder Involvement**

We were able to continue outreach to as many residents as possible with our newsletter, social media initiatives, partnerships with Waite Park Elementary School, MPRB, the Second Precinct Advisory Committee, Northeast Chamber of Commerce and more. We are looking forward to working with the Neighborhood Community Relations Department to find more ways to reach our growing Latino population, an aging demographic, and the larger Minneapolis community. With significant turnover in our neighborhood due to aging populations and general home turnover, we found that the best way to engage our community is with multiple outlets of

meetings, publications, digital influences, and regular communication with other area organizations.

- A. The WPCC is comprised of 15 board members; four of those board members serve in executive leadership functions as President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. As of June 2012, the WPCC has two open board positions.
- B. Many of our board members serve on a variety of committees, both internally and externally, with groups like the Waite Park Elementary School Site Leadership Committee, Waite Park PTA, and other area working groups. To date, nearly all of our board members have served on a committee, with executive representation in nearly a dozen roles within Northeast Minneapolis.
- C. Our March 2011 annual meeting was attended by approximately 50 Waite Park and area residents.
- D. Our printed newsletter is distributed to 2,350 households in the Waite Park Neighborhood with a growing number distributed to area businesses, governmental entities, and other area neighborhoods.
- E. Other activities of the WPCC have included walking in the NE Parade or helping to coordinate and staff our annual Fall Festival. Participation has ranged from 40% at a parade event (though the 2011 parade was canceled), to nearly 100% during our festivals.

**4. Financial Report 2011 - Mid 2012** (see attached)

**Waite Park Community Council**  
Statement of Cash on Hand, Revenue & Expense  
For the Period January 1, 2011- June 30, 2012

**Cash on Hand January 1, 2011**

|                            |          |          |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| General Checking Account   | 3,859.65 |          |
| CPP Checking Account       | 0.00     |          |
| NRP Checking Account       | 5,588.36 |          |
| Total Cash o Hand 1/1/2011 |          | 9,448.01 |

**Revenue**

|                                   |           |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Waite Park Garden Fees            | 6,408.60  |           |
| Waite Park Community Events       | 2,899.79  |           |
| Award                             | 500.00    |           |
| Misc Donations                    | 100.00    |           |
| CPP Contract C-28964              | 24,872.13 |           |
| CPP Contract (Billing in Transit) | 5,189.69  |           |
| NRP Contract C-25339              | 7,214.68  |           |
| NRP Contract C-26619              | 3,025.00  |           |
| Interest on Checking Accounts     | 3.48      |           |
| Total Revenue                     |           | 50,213.37 |

**Expenses**

|                             |           |                  |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Bank Fees                   | 105.50    |                  |
| Garden Operating Expenses   | 2,072.68  |                  |
| Board Approved Expenses     | 525.48    |                  |
| Community Events            | 891.37    |                  |
| Professional Services       | 525.00    |                  |
| Occupancy                   | 1,200.42  |                  |
| Communications and Outreach | 17,972.61 |                  |
| Supplies and Materials      | 1,203.06  |                  |
| Festivals and Events        | 699.26    |                  |
| Membership Dues             | 1,533.04  |                  |
| Other Services              | 553.50    |                  |
| Security Rebates            | 742.61    |                  |
| Energy Audits               | 900.00    |                  |
| Chamber of Commerce Dues    | 125.00    |                  |
| City of Lakes Youth Hockey  | 500.00    |                  |
| Total Expenses              |           | <u>29,549.53</u> |

**Total Cash on Hand 6/30/12** 30,111.85

|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| General Checking Account | 7,473.24  |
| CPP Checking Account     | 4,014.15  |
| CPP Billing in Transit   | 5,189.69  |
| NRP Checking Account     | 13,434.77 |

## **Interactions with City departments and other jurisdictions**

### **1. Impact**

The interactions that occupy most of our time are the build up to our regularly scheduled monthly meetings. Each month we work diligently to make sure that we address current issues in an even-handed manner with special guests, researched work, and appropriate interactions. Likewise, the time our board members spend in other organizations, work groups, and special meetings comprises much of our volunteer time.

### **2. City Communications - effectiveness**

A good deal of communications received from the City of Minneapolis is adequate. We believe that it is important to note that our board only meets as a whole twice a month, so items that require our attention need at least 45 days for us to review, research, and take action on. We would urge *all* city offices to understand that communication with neighborhood groups and the residents they represent is integral to the health of the city.

### **3. City Communications – timeliness**

We typically receive adequate notice on City activities. Often issues regarding planning and zoning, we do not. This has been an on-going issue that we have addressed on many occasions and we hope will be addressed further with CPED and Zoning Administration.

### **4. City Departments**

We urge all City departments to develop a public-facing approach to their work. Neighborhood organizations are typically the first line of political interaction for residents in a city of 383,000 people. The WPCC is happy to help foster dialogue and shepherd issues on behalf of our residents, but we need interested parties in every department within the City of Minneapolis to help us address these issues accordingly.

### **5. City Assistance**

We look to Neighborhood and Community Relations to help us navigate the complex City structure to address immediate issues, some small, some large. The WPCC would like to find ways to translate a number of our neighborhood correspondence into Spanish for the benefit of our residents, an issue we do not have the resources to address.

This report was accepted and approved by the Waite Park Community Council, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012.