

Community Participation Program 2012 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association
Contact person: Deb Schirber info@eastharriet.org
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1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2012, Please provide information about:

- What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2012?

Earth Day - cleanup at Lake Harriet: East Harriet Parks, Environment and Schools Committee partners with Linden Hills and the park to host Earth Day at Lake Harriet. EHFNA encourages residents to put on gloves and pick up garbage bags and rakes for this yearly event. Although this event is dependent on weather, it continues to have a good turnout of residents and local groups.

Sale-O-Rama: EHFNA coordinates the sale by gathering the individual sale information, creating maps, placing ads and distributing the packets to each sale location. East Harriet has coordinated the sale on the same day as CARAG to attract more buyers to the neighborhood. A couple of dozen residents officially sign up for the garage sale but we have found many additional households participate by setting up sales on the same day.

Open Streets - EHFNA participated in this second annual event initiated by the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition. The event takes place on Lyndale from 22nd to 42nd Street bordering our neighborhood's eastern border from 36th to 42nd. This year we partnered with East Harriet business, Parents Autocare and set up our tent & bike decorating station in their parking lot at the corner of 36th and Lyndale. East Harriet volunteers served up grilled hotdogs and lemonade (sponsored by Parents Autocare) to all the bikers, walkers and skaters along Lyndale Ave.

National Night Out - Crime, Safety, Transportation and Noise (CSTN) committee chair actively communicates with the block leaders throughout the year. CSTN Committee Chair and other Board members promoted and visited most of the 20 plus block parties held in the neighborhood. Neighborhood has a total 50 blocks.

RoseFest, East Harriet's annual neighborhood summer festival draws East Harriet neighbors and residents from several surrounding neighborhoods together to celebrate community. The event focused on highlighting local talent and area businesses. The event includes live music from several local bands, grilled food, a variety of fun events for all ages, The Classic Auto Event and business & organization informational booths. The funds raised from this event helps support KiteFest and Movies in the Park.

Historic Walking Tours - East Harriet co-sponsored the two part/day walking tour of the Lakewood Cemetery grounds and buildings, which included an opportunity to see the new Mausoleum, which has garnered much acclaim for its innovative design.

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Annual Meeting - Held in October, the annual meeting offered music, food, interaction with neighbors and a chance to hear about EHFNA, speak to board and committee members about involvement in the neighborhood and hear from the local elected officials. Elections are held for open board positions. East Harriet residents can seek a position and or participate in the voting

(KiteFest 2012 was scheduled for January 14 with a backup date of Jan 21. Planning and recruiting volunteers began but both dates were canceled due to unsafe ice conditions created by the warm weather.)

- How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2012?

A 5 X 7 postcard was mailed to all residents promoting the Annual Meeting in October. Both the door-hangers and postcard encourage a broad neighborhood attendance and involvement.

Volunteers delivered door-hangers to all homes/apartment buildings in East Harriet. The door-hangers included crime prevention and safety tips from Crime Safety Transportation & Noise committee and details on RoseFest promoting the summer festival.

All of our board and committee meetings are held at Walker Methodist providing neighborhood exposure to the senior facility and easy access for the seniors to attend our meetings.

East Harriet communicates and promotes VOA Southwest Senior Center activities and announcements in our eNews and website. We also rent office space in this building which keeps us in close contact with their staff.

East Harriet volunteers coordinate with Walker Methodist staff to purchase, prep and store food for RoseFest. This partnership has helped with the cost of food, preparation time and a provided a convenient location to store and access food during the festival.

- Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why?

We proactively reached out to residents during the National Night Out events. The event provided easy access to residents. We found residents to be very interested in talking with us about EHFNA's activities, and the positive face-to-face interaction had a galvanizing effect on both Board members and residents.

Our email blasts were an effective way to reach residents. Residents told us that they had learned of major city projects affecting East Harriet, sometimes solely through EHFNA e-blasts.

The EHFNA Board engaged in team-building activities, such as ice-breaking exercises at the start of meetings and social gatherings after Board meetings, with an emphasis on being inclusive and welcoming. These activities allowed Board members and other attendees at our meetings to feel more comfortable participating in the group discussions, as well as encouraged cross-pollination of ideas through conversations in an informal setting. We also held a workshop session, led by our Chair, to define our goals for 2013 as a group. It was very effective way of sharing and combining the perspectives of all Board members.

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- What did not work so well? Why?

The 7th Annual RoseFest was held at Lyndale Farmstead Park on August 25. For the third year in a row, weather has been a challenge. Despite the rain, our volunteers came to set up, sell tickets, assist with carnival games, inflatables, dunk tank, scoop up snow cones, grill and serve food.

The weather has been a major contributing factor in the lower attendance numbers over the last three years. The board would also like to examine the current RoseFest format and activities that could possibly increase new attendance.

Low attendance by neighborhood residents at the annual meeting is challenging. We continue to work on new strategies to boost attendance.

- How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?

Monthly Board Meetings - a dozen or more

Monthly Committee Meetings - two dozen

Meetings on special issues (airport noise, dog park, city construction projects, proposed bike lanes, crime, etc) - 150

2500 Door Hangers were distributed to all homes/apartment buildings EHFNA combined Crime Safety Transportation & Noise committee info with RoseFest Event

Board and committee members are on hand at events including RoseFest, Open Streets and Annual Meeting to discuss and answer questions about EHFNA board, committees and project currently in progress.

Coordinator and CSTN committee chair biked around the neighborhood and visited residents at most of the 20 block parties held in East Harriet neighborhood during NNO. We were able to promote CSTN committee and RoseFest.

- How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?

96 individuals

- How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?

630 plus

NOTE: KiteFest 2012 was planned but canceled due to weather. It normally draws around 1000-1500 individuals/

- How many people receive your print publications?

EHFNA does not publish newsprint.

- How many people receive your electronic communications?

East Harriet eNews has 661 email subscribers

Facebook has 168 followers

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2. 2012 Highlights

Please describe one or two major highlights, and if possible, please include digital photos or illustrations:

- What was the issue or opportunity the neighborhood was facing?
- Who was impacted?
- What steps did you take to address the issue or opportunity?
- What was the outcome?

Micro Grant

The East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association (EHFNA) is engaging neighborhood residents by offering a one-time community engagement micro grant to initiate a neighborhood program or initiative in East Harriet. The idea is to promote involvement by our residents in EHFNA's mission to engage residents. We have had several inquiries involving creative proposals and continue to fine-tune the details of the grant. We are excited about this new initiative.

Heffelfinger Fountain

The Heffelfinger Fountain is located in the Rose Garden, technically within the boundaries of East Harriet. The fountain was installed in the 1940's and has been declining in recent years. Parts of the fountain were inoperable in 2012. In spring of 2012 EHFNA started working closely with the MPRB to facilitate repair of the mechanical components of the fountain. The collaboration has been successful and work on the fountain began in December 2012 and is continuing into 2013. EHFNA will be leading a fundraising effort for cleaning and conservation of the sculptural components of the fountain. This overhaul of the fountain will be a lasting contribution to the wonderful regional park that is a signature destination in Minneapolis. (See attached photos courtesy of the MPRB archives, David C. Smith and Kristina Hughes)

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3. 2012 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2012:

- What were your organization's major accomplishments?
- How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?

National Night Out

Board Members and staff visited numerous block parties on National Night Out, to connect with residents about their concerns, sign residents up for our e-news and invite them to participate in our activities.

Parks, Environment and Schools (PES)

The neighborhood expressed concern over proposed MPRB budget cuts at Lyndale Farmstead Park that would reduce the weekly open park building hours from 27 to 14 hours in 2013. The recreation center is an activity hub for our neighborhood, where lasting relationships with neighbors are forged and a sense of community is fostered. Drastically reducing hours at the recreation center would negatively impact the sense of community in our neighborhood. PES committee members encouraged residents through eNews, website and facebook to provide input and comments to MPRB at meetings and or online link. PES committee members testified at the MPRB Commissioner's meeting. Outcome - hours were not reduced in 2013.

PES has been following the progress of the 6th District Off-Leash Dog Park. The dog park was to open late summer 2012 and after many construction delays; the dog park opened on a temporary basis during the winter, with construction to be completed in spring 2013. East Harriet continues to provide off-leash dog park updates to residents. PES hosted a community meeting to discuss concerns about parking for the new amenity.

In response to the recent school re-organization, the PES committee is making an effort to expand our relationships to include all three of the elementary schools located in or serving our neighborhood. At the time the NRP plans were developed, only one school had a significant relationship with our neighborhood and the NRP plan reflected that by listing only 1 school in our funding plan. To allow EHFNA to work with all three schools, PES completed a modification plan to alter the NRP Phase II funding strategy to allow EHFNA to fund proposals put forward by all three of the charter, magnet and community public schools of East Harriet. PES has also met with school representatives and parent groups.

PES collaborated with District 6 neighborhoods Lyndale and Kingfield to host a 6th District School Board Candidates Forum in May.

PES participates in a stewardship program for the Roberts Bird Sanctuary, along with Linden Hills, and Audubon of Minneapolis. The three partners have been working to revitalize the Bird Sanctuary. EHFNA contributed to an Arbor Day planting event held in the Sanctuary. The Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis also participated, contributing funding, planning expertise and volunteers. Additional help was supplied by the Conservation Corps.

PES supported a grant application for new turf in Lyndale Farmstead Park. The application was successful.

PES sponsors a Movie in the Park in Lyndale Farmstead Park, to encourage residents to gather in a public space and enjoy our wonderful park.

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Crime, Safety, Transportation and Noise (CSTN)

Crime, Safety, Transportation and Noise (CSTN) committee chair actively communicates with the block leaders throughout the year. We promote block leader training, and crime prevention & safety tips to the neighborhood through enews, facebook and website.

CSTN has a dedicated website page providing updates on biking news. Also hosted meeting & informed residents of future road construction projects affecting our neighborhood that will include new bike paths as well as biking events throughout the City.

CSTN Committee chair along with an East Harriet resident represented our neighborhood at the first meeting of Southwest Airport Advisory Team (changed to MSP FairSkies in 2013).

A local business, Kyle's Market, was repeatedly vandalized in 2012. The community was very upset by the violent nature of the crimes. Fortunately, the perpetrator was apprehended by the police. CSTN reached out to the business owner, and to the residents. CSTN authored a community impact statement for the judge, and encouraged residents to do the same. CSTN also issued letters in support of the excellent work of the police department in responding to the crimes in our neighborhood.

Housing, Zoning and Business (HZB)

The HZB committee continues to support the business community in our neighborhood and the surrounding area of Southwest Minneapolis. The neighborhood feels it is important to the vitality of the neighborhood to have a vibrant business community. Local businesses benefit by receiving Minneapolis Great Streets Business Façade Improvement Grant from both East Harriet and Nicollet East Harriet Business Association

HZB met with the Met Council to review their plans for an upcoming sewer project. The work scheduled for late 2013 and 2014 along the western border of the neighborhood. HZB will continue to work with the Met Council in 2013 to communicate information and dates for the upcoming project. An initial community meeting and open house is planned for January 2013.

HZB continued its work interfacing with residents on zoning variances and successfully assisted a request for a variance.

HZB interfaced with Met Council on upcoming sewer work that will take place in our neighborhood. HZB took an active role in communicating with Met Council and informing residents of the upcoming project. First contact about the project was made in 2012, with HZB hosting an open house event in early 2013.

Housing

What percentage of time did your organization spend on housing-related activities?

Four hours a month are spent on housing activities

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4. Financial Reports

Please provide an income and expense report for your organization for the year. (Please include all funding sources).

(Attached)

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In addition to your annual report, please take time to describe your interactions with City departments and other jurisdictions.

1. Impact

What interactions with City departments occupied a major part of your time? What worked well? What could be improved?

It has been a challenge to understand the Phase I and Phase II NRP strategies, funds and contracts. These were created many years ago by previous board and committee members. Much of the history and information is no longer available or is overwhelming to current board members. The availability of legacy NRP staff to provide their knowledge to this system has been helpful. This situation tends to repeat itself annually with each new board.

The reporting requirements take up a large share of the Board's and staff's time. We finish one report and have to start on another. The reporting requirements take resources, time and energy away from the mission of the Board, to engage residents and create community. Perhaps a 2-year reporting cycle would be more effective.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate your overall experience with your interactions with the City?

___4___

2. City Communications - effectiveness

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

Yes

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? ___4___

3. 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

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the timeliness of communications from the City? ___5___

4. City Departments

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

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The NRP program is confusing and complicated. Find a way to stream-line the program and provide more training for City staff.

5. City Assistance

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

NCR could facilitate communication between neighborhoods. Each neighborhood is developing its own programs and initiatives, it would be very helpful to share ideas and work together.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the assistance provided to your neighborhood by NCR? ____4____

6. Other comments?