

**Community Participation Program  
2012 Annual Report**

Neighborhood Organization: **Victory Neighborhood Association** \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: **Debbie Nelson** \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Board Approval: 4/3/2013 \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Stakeholder Involvement**

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

- What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2012? **We distributed a quarterly newsletter to all 2000 + households in the neighborhood and a bi-monthly e-newsletter to over 200 recipients . We published an information ad in the Camden Community News each month. We maintained our website [www.victoryneighborhood.org](http://www.victoryneighborhood.org) and have an active Face Book page and a Twitter account that are managed by board members. We delivered 45 Welcome Packets to new residents. In addition to a board meeting and neighborhood meeting each month , we hosted a meeting with City and County staff and stakeholders regarding improvements at 44<sup>th</sup> and Penn Ave N and a meeting with MPRB officials and staff and stakeholders regarding improvements at Ryan Lake. We hosted our 19<sup>th</sup> annual Garage Sale Day , 20<sup>th</sup> annual ice Cream Social, and 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Movie in the Park and for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row the Camden Farmer's market . We partnered with adjacent neighborhoods on the Live on the Drive music series and Holiday on 44<sup>th</sup> and supported Music in the Heart of Victory .**
- How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2012? **We partnered with the Asian Cultural Club (ACC) at Patrick Henry High School (PHHS) to identify and engage our Asian residents. We promoted and encouraged our non-Asian residents to participate in the cultural events at PHHS, such as the May Show and the Hmong New Year in order for them to learn more about the culture of their Asian neighbors. We also had some of the ACC students perform at our Ice Cream social in June. We hired two of the ACC students as interns to identify Asian residences in the neighborhood and do door-knocking and outreach, to explain the existence and purpose of the Victory Neighborhood Association and to determine how the residents liked living in the neighborhood and to determine if there were problems or issues that they needed help with.**
- Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why? **Using the Hmong interns for outreach was a good strategy because the Asian residents were more likely to open the door to them than to our majority residents and the interns were able to overcome the language**

**barrier. For the first time to our knowledge Asian families attend our Ice Cream Social. Several block clubs reported that the Asian families on their block participated in NNO.**

- What did not work so well? Why? **We anticipated that our Hmong interns would be able to identify Asian residences but that proved to be difficult. It was very difficult for them to know where the Asian residents, who tend to be very private, lived. We also had difficulty coordinating time with our staff or volunteers to door-knock with the interns. The interns were generally not available during the day when staff was.**
- How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)? **Over 100 people attended one or more of our monthly meetings, 45 Welcome packets were delivered to new residents either by board members or block leaders and one on one contact was made with numerous people at annual events and the Camden Farmers Market.**
- How many individuals volunteered in organization activities? **90 individuals regularly volunteer for VINA activities, committees and events .**
- How many individuals participated in your organization's activities? **Garden Tour - 120, Ice Cream Social - 500+ , Garage Sale -1000+, Home Improvement Loans issued in 2012 - 3 , Home Security Rebates granted in 2012 - 6,Business Façade Improvement Grants in 2012- 1 application .**
- How many people receive your print publications? **The quarterly newsletter is delivered to each of the 1909 occupied units in the neighborhood which is a total of 4580 residents.**
- How many people receive your electronic communications? **There are 213 unique addresses which receive our electronic communications . Many of the recipients forward the communicatiosn on to their neighbors or block clubs.**

**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?

**See the attached Annual Report .**

**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?

**See the attached Annual Report**

**4. *Housing***

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

**Approximately 46% of staff hours were spent on housing or housing related issues/activities. Additional time was spent on these activities by volunteers on the Housing Committee and the Board of Directors but that time has not been tracked.**

**5. *Financial Reports***

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

**See the attached Annual Report. The Financial Report reflects the VINA fiscal year October 1, 2011- September 30 , 2012.**

**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?

**Working with Public Works on a redesign of 44<sup>th</sup> and Penn and Osseo Road**

What worked well? **Not much, other than repeated phone calls and/or e-mails.**

What could be improved? **Better communication from Public Works ; returning e-mails or phone calls.**

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? **\_3\_\_**

**2. *City Communications – effectiveness***

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

**Depends on who it is coming from and if it is timely . The City 's website is pretty much a black hole unless you know exactly where to find the info you are looking for. We did have good communication with Kelly Hoffman in CPED regarding the Great Streets grant we were awarded in 2012. (Kelly no longer works for the City.) Our Community Crime Prevention Specialist, Tim Hammett is excellent in keeping us informed and responding to our questions and concerns.**

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? **\_\_2\_\_**

**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.

**The only things going on in our neighborhood are the things that the neighborhood organization initiates. We do not recall any City initiated activities occurring in our neighborhood for which we received notice , timely or otherwise, in 2012.**

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? **\_\_1\_\_**

**4. *City Departments***

How can City departments improve the way in which they function in your neighborhood? **Respond to our e-mails, phone calls and requests for service , work with us in a fair and equitable manner , understand that we are the taxpayers and THEY WORK FOR US .**

5. ***City Assistance***

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

**Better communication with our Neighborhood Specialist and a quicker response . We submitted a request for a NRP plan modification months ago and have yet to hear anything about it. The NCEC commissioner who is supposed to represent us (District 1) has never contacted us – and only now we hear that he has not been attending meetings .**

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?   0  

6. ***Other comments?***



Diane Spector , Chairperson  
Victory Neighborhood Association



# Annual Report

## Letter from the Chairman of the Board

Greetings fellow Victory residents and business owners.

As we come to the end of another Victory year, we reflect on all that we have accomplished as a neighborhood organization.

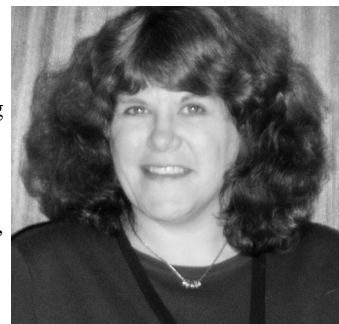
We can't stress enough how much we value and appreciate our wonderful volunteers, without whom we would not be able to undertake most of our activities. Your friends and neighbors deliver newsletters, help organize the ice cream social, the annual Garage Sale, and Holiday on 44th; they host a garden on the annual Garden Tour and weed the community garden at Loring School; they hand out popcorn at Movies in the Park and paint storm drains with a No Dumping stencil; and they serve on the various committees that manage our various activities. Volunteers are the life blood of the Victory Neighborhood Association. Thank You! Throughout the year the Board of Directors, committee members, and community at large depend on our part-time staff person Debbie Nelson to assist us with our work and serve as an information source and advocate with City Hall and the Park Board. We are truly fortunate to have someone who is as knowledgeable, helpful, and tenacious as Debbie.

This past year has seen the rise of social media as another community organizing tool that is bringing us together. While it is not an "official" ViNA Facebook page, the Victory Neighborhood page has over 300 members who converse about various topics. On a recent day there were posts about the Victory Dog Park, several posts about events at the Lowry Harvest Festival, an offer from someone who had a number of empty boxes to give away, a reminder notice about an upcoming meeting of the new NoMi Fermenters club, information from a resident who had a theft of items from her backyard, an inquiry from a Mom who was looking to join or form a Moms group in Victory, an event notice of a community meeting about the Osseo/Penn/44<sup>th</sup> intersection, and a Thank You from the Camden Music School to all who participated in various CMS events over the summer. There are Facebook pages for the Victory Block Groups and a whole range of other organizations, interest groups, and businesses in NoMi, so even if you can't get out to meetings, you can still keep in touch with what's going on.

In this ViNA Annual Report you will find information from each of our standing committees about

their activities in the past year, and their expected 2012-2013 activities. We met many of our goals, but fell short in some. Please consider joining a committee to help 2012-2013 be the most successful year yet for ViNA.

Finally, thanks to my fellow Board members Duane Atter, Kris Brogan, David Dexheimer, Kristopher Ehlert, Ann Kaari, and



*Board chair Diane Spector*

David Younk. It's been a great year, and fun to boot! We all have busy schedules and serving as a Board member takes time and dedication, and I appreciate all that you do for our neighborhood. Our neighborhood motto is Promote, Engage, Preserve. As Board members we pledge to continue to work with you and on your behalf to build a stronger, better community.

Sincerely,

Diane Spector, Chair



### Special points of interest:

- ViNA awarded 12 Home Security Rebates, investing \$1385 and leveraging an additional \$7644 in home security improvements.



## Business Committee

The bulk of the Business Committee's energy has been devoted to the administration, development and execution of materials related to the Great Streets grant awarded to the Victory neighborhood. The Great Streets Neighborhood Business District program is a coordinated effort to help businesses develop and succeed along commercial corridors and at commercial nodes throughout the city.

The grant awarded to ViNA is being used to highlight awareness of and drive traffic to the business nodes at 42nd & Thomas North and 44th & Penn.

The first phase of the project was the completion and presentation to the neigh-

borhood of a branding plan that gives foundation for the pro-

motional materials, as well as the identity of the neighborhood as a whole. We worked with Pat Weas from the Thorburn Group to research and develop the branding plan, as well as a promotional marketing plan that would help us achieve our objectives. These plans were refined, reviewed and completed through spring 2012.

The promotional campaign consisted primarily of creative executions to drive 2 components: direct mail and newspaper advertisements. Ancillary promotional items like environmental banners and promotional items (t-shirts and coffee mugs) were developed and may be implemented as resources allow.

Before the advertisements and direct mail was seen by the public, we commissioned

Discover  
**Victory**  
neighborhood

and executed a baseline study of business conditions and public awareness. This portion of the pro-

ject was handled in exemplary fashion by Lauren Maker immediately before she passed away.

We have mailed 2 waves of promotional postcards to every household in the Victory neighborhood. A third postcard and the first of our newspaper advertisements are being prepared as this report is being written.

More about the Great Streets program can be learned at: [http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/ba/cped\\_great\\_streets\\_home](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/ba/cped_great_streets_home)

As projects associated with ViNA's Great Streets grant are wrapped up in early 2013, look for the ViNA Business Committee to develop a strategic plan, work to stay engaged with local businesses and increase awareness of businesses in our neighborhood.



## Environmental Committee

The Environmental Committee undertook a wide variety of activities in 2011-2012, and looks forward to taking on challenges in the year to come.

On August 5, 2012, the Environment Committee hosted the fourth annual Victory Garden Tour, which showcased a variety of gardens throughout the neighborhood and attracted approximately 100 garden tourists on a gorgeous Sunday afternoon. For the second year the event was kicked off with a community cook-out at the Loring Community Garden hosted by the Livability Committee. Hungry garden visitors stopped by to tour the Loring School Garden and pick up their tour maps.

May 19, 2012 was Spring Cleaning day,

and various groups including local Girl Scouts turned out to pick up garbage along the streets and to stencil 168 catch basins with a No Dumping-Drains to River message.

The Committee unsuccessfully applied for a grant from Hennepin County to step up efforts to keep grass clippings and leaves out of our streets and storm sewer catch basins, and to remind people to clean up after their pets. Undeterred, we will apply again next year to fund our program – “Everyone has Riverfront Property.”

Over the winter the Committee hosted a dinner and a movie series highlighting the



documentaries Big River/King Corn, Tapped, and Thirst. Each started with dinner and was followed by a lively facilitated discussion. On May

14, 2012 the Committee and the Victory Garden Club hosted a workshop on gardening for butterflies and pollinators.

The Victory Garden Club continued to maintain the Loring Community Garden. Last year the club restored the Victory Neighborhood entry sign and reinstalled it on the triangle of land on Osseo Road at 46<sup>th</sup> and Sheridan Avenues, and they are looking forward to landscaping the



## Environmental Committee (cont.)

area around the sign.

The Committee looks forward to 2012-2013 and continued and new challenges. Another dinner and a movie series is planned, this time with the theme of reducing our solid waste. More gardening workshops are likely and the fifth anniversary of the Garden Tour. Now that Minneapolis Public Works has granted the Park Board an easement over the Ryan Lake shoreline, the Committee is working together with the Park Board to

finish the trail and lakeshore plaza and plantings project. Benches, a picnic table, garbage receptacle and bike rack have been in storage since we bought them with a National Park Service grant a few years ago. Let's cross our fingers and hope for a community grand opening of Ryan Lake Park in 2013!



## Events Committee

The Victory Neighborhood Association (ViNA) had another wonderful year of community building events and activities which would not have been possible without the terrific volunteers in our neighborhood. Because of their efforts, we were, once again, able to plan for the following: 18<sup>th</sup> annual Garage Sale, Salvation Army pick-up after the Garage Sale, 19<sup>th</sup> annual Ice Cream Social and our 4<sup>th</sup> annual Movie Night at Victory Park next to Loring School.

We experienced an unusual year of weather which impacted some of our events this year. Our annual Memorial Concert had to be cancelled because of rain that threatened to cause the Showmobile, the portable stage provided by the Park Board, to sink into the ground by the newly renovated Flag Pole. We had over 80 participants in our 18<sup>th</sup> annual Garage Sale and our thanks to resident Angela Scaletta for organizing the sale and to



Gilded Salvage for the printing of the maps. New this year was an indoor Flea Market held at Loring School. It was a

good beginning and we expect more participants in the future. We thank the staff at Loring for their cooperation. We, once again, drew people from all over the city and our neighboring suburbs.

Although it was an extremely hot night, the 19<sup>th</sup> Ice Cream Social drew large crowds. We were entertained by members of the Asian Cultural Club from Patrick Henry High School who performed music and dance. We also enjoyed the music of Victory resident Larry Thomas and his Abbott Blues Band. Movie Night at the Park attracted our largest crowd ever to watch the movie *The Help* and enjoy free popcorn and lemonade. Many of our events could not take place without the support of Webber Park Director, Emily Wolfe, and her wonderful staff. Although we are not an official stop on the annual Grand Rounds Bike Tour held in September, we hope to be in the future. Along with our usual events and activities, we partner with other neighborhoods in Holiday on 44<sup>th</sup> which is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year and will be held on Friday, December 7. We also support Live on the Drive and Music in the Heart of Victory during the month of August at Papa's Restaurant and Deli. Whenever possible, the Events Committee members help with other neighborhood events such as Spring Cleaning Day, the annual Garden Tour and the Farmers Market.

We know that our neighborhood attracts



new residents because of the variety of community building events and activities we are able to provide as well as our affordable and well constructed housing stock. We hope to be able to continue to provide this variety of positive and fun activities for our residents but could not do it without our wonderful volunteers. We need to involve more of our residents as volunteers. As our funds need to stretch even further every year, financial support from our residents will be necessary. ViNA is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and all donations, large or small, are tax deductible.

Thank You Victory Volunteers! Some of you volunteer year after year and you helped us make this year another success and we appreciate all that you do. If you would like to join the Events Committee, or have ideas you would like to share, please contact the ViNA Office -612-529-9558. We have a neighborhood we can be proud of and our residents make the difference!



## Livability/Housing committee

The Housing and Livability Committee has been busy in 2012 on many projects to maintain the livability of the wonderful neighborhood we all enjoy calling home. Many of them are ongoing projects that will carry us into 2013.

- The committee is continuing to work to **increase the number of Block Leaders and Key Communicators**. Currently approximately 40% of blocks have some sort of leadership and we are striving for a goal of 100%
- The committee was able to work



with our neighborhood Crime Prevention Specialist, Tim Hammett, to have a **speed cart on Penn Ave (between 40th and 41st Avenues)** this summer to address traffic speeds.

- The committee continues to work on **updating the current list of rental properties** in the neighborhood and projects to increase landlords and renters community involvement.
- The committee is working with city staff on a project that will place **art on utility boxes** throughout the neighborhood adding to the beauty and charm of Victory.
- The committee, for the second year, **hosted the community picnic before the annual Garden Tour**, welcoming visitors to the neighborhood and connecting with residents about block clubs.
- The Committee plans to work with



the city on the community works project for **44th and Penn Avenue** that hopefully will be moving forward this fall to address traffic mitigation concerns at this commercial node.

The Housing and Livability Committee has had an exciting and challenging year and is looking forward to continuing the projects at hand. We are working diligently within our community and with neighbors to continually add to the list as we continue to make Victory a great place to live, work and call home.

## Partnership Activities

### Camden Farmers Market



The Camden Farmers Market is a partnership between the Victory Neighborhood Association and The Warren: An Artist's Habitat. The 2012 Camden Farmers Market season started out with changes in our license. This year our license allowed us to have a wholesaler, which we had hoped would be a fruit vendor. This did not work out for us, but we hope to try again for next year. Another change is that we were al-

lowed to have a vendor that would be able to sell home processed items. Late in the season, one of our farmers was able to offer jams, jellies, pickles etc. Our attendance was lower this year, and we assume that the weird weather, and the fact that more people are growing things at home was the reason. Another great new addition was that we were able to include EBT as a way to offer an opportunity for more people to have fresh produce in their diets. Over all it was a great year and we were able to donate so far this year 1473 pounds of food to Emergency Food Shelf Network and about the same to Northpoint Health and Wellness Center.

Three other markets have opened in North Minneapolis and all four markets have formed a coalition under the umbrella of

Northside Fresh. Our first effort at joint marketing was initiated by the Camden Farmers Market in the form of a poster advertising all of the markets, each of which is on a different day or time. The poster was designed by a Victory resident, Tammy Rose.



## Neighborhood Partnership Initiative—PHHS Asian Cultural

For the second year in a row the Victory Neighborhood Association was awarded a Neighborhood Partnership Initiative grant from the University of Minnesota . The purpose of this grant is two fold :

- Increase understanding of the Asian culture in our non-Asian residents
- Identify the Asian resident of the neighborhood and engage them in the life of the community

To achieve our goals we partnered with the PHHS Asian Cultural club and invited all residents of the neighborhood to the ACC 's May show at PHHS.

To further increase our residents' under-



standing of the Asian culture we invited members of the ACC to perform traditional Asian dances and songs at our Ice Cream Social .

In order to achieve our second goal we have employed three student interns from the ACC who have identified Asian families in the neighborhood . They have been door knocking through out the summer in order to connect with them and in-

form them about ViNA and the activities, programs and services that are available to them. They made a special point of inviting families to the Ice Cream Social and some did in fact attend.

The students continue to do outreach in the neighborhood , informing the Asian resi-

dents of ViNA and trying to connect



them with their block clubs or neighbors. If residents know of an Asian family on their block that they would like to connect with, the interns are available to assist with making that connection and serve as translators if necessary.

They will also be inviting the entire community to their Hmong New Year show at PHHS in December .

## Footlights - Loring Community School

At last year's Annual Meeting , residents were asked what their priorities were for the use of Victory Neighborhood's remaining NRP funds . Residents overwhelmingly chose to fund Youth Activities.

Staff and board members met with Ryan Gibbs , the Loring School Principal , to determine how ViNA could best partner with them on afterschool activities for the youth at the school . Loring staff had started a fledgling theater program after school and were very excited at the prospect of assistance from ViNA for this program

ViNA has entered into a 2 year partnership with Loring School on their after school drama/theater program called



"Footlights". With support from ViNA the 35 + students who participate in the Footlights program were able to take busses to the see performances at Stages Theatre and the Children's Theatre , where they also received a back stage tour . They have also had guest speakers at school and with encouragement from ViNA have connect-

ed with the theater program at Patrick Henry High School . ViNA is also working with to connect the students with actors and others from the Workhouse theatre and who live in the neighborhood .

The students staged three performances of their own this last school year , culminating in their end of the school year production of "Sheldon Fizzlestein Saves the Day" . The students wrote the

script , built the set , produced the costumes and acted and directed in the play, which was connected with the school's anti-bullying campaign.

ViNA will continue to support the Footlights program this school year and the community will be informed of upcoming productions.

