

Community Participation Program 2013 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Nicollet Island – East Bank Neighborhood Association
(NIEBNA)

Person: P. Victor Grambsch (President)

Date of Board Approval: Feb 27, 2014

1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2013, Please provide information about:

- What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2013?
 - a) Regular Board Meetings (10)
 - b) General Public Annual Meetings (2 – one the annual meeting)
 - c) Small Area Plan public meetings – both focus groups and general all-neighborhood meetings (10)
 - d) Focus meetings regarding Superior Plating pollution remediation (2)
- How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2013?

Due to the nature of the NIEBNA housing stock (almost exclusively condominiums, co-ops and managed rental buildings) and our contacts with the managers, we have direct email and “insider” newsletter contact with essentially all residents of the neighborhood.

We also have good contacts with Northeast Business Association (NEBA), the local business association. Most of our interaction has been with retail operations in the neighborhood.

The main underrepresented group is non-retail businesses, a major source of employments in the area. We have recruited the owner of such a business to the Board and are building a contact base for further engagement.

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

Working with associations to gain access to internal contact lists works well. We have also started to make available a “State of the Neighborhood” presentation at association annual meetings which provides good face-to-face contact.

- What did not work so well? Why?

Web site contact form – a potentially use avenue, but we got very few contacts. The usual format and venue is group meetings on one kind of another, both those sponsored by NIEBNA and meetings sponsored by others like condo associations.

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

We estimate that in the last year we had has some direct personal contact with 400 area residents (approximately 40% of the population) and email contact with a higher percentage.

- How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?

Active Board of 14
Small Area Planning group (non-Board) 15
Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) reps 5

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

Board meetings – 60 (25 attendees x 10 meetings, but with many duplicates name)

General Meetings -- 120

Small Area Plan activities progress – about 200 individuals, many attended multiple meetings.

- How many people receive your print publications?

N/A

- How many people receive your electronic communications?

Direct email list of 300, mostly local residents and business who have requested inclusion.

Indirect “forwarded” email lists – about 1,100 . This source covers all condo associations, co-ops and larger rental buildings in NIEBNA. We also include nearby buildings (like Winslow House and Phoenix on the River in MHNA).

2. 2013 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?

- a) Superior Plating side redevelopment – there was a lot of activity and discussion surrounding the current status and future development of this site. The item was on Board agenda several times and we sponsored two (2) special Superior Plating Task Group meetings and participated in a public meeting organized by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

As a result, there is better understanding about the site in the neighborhood, although it would not be fair to say that everyone is completely satisfied with situation.

Monitoring the status of this site is an on-going activity for NIEBNA.

- b) NIEBNA Small Area Plan preparation –this was the big project for 2013. In the year we accomplish the basic organization of the project, retained a consultant, did the base community engagement work and wrote the first draft of the Plan. This was a community effort and many people and businesses across the Neighborhood participated.

We expect to submit the final Plan to the City by mid-2014.

3. *2013 Accomplishments*

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2013:

- What were your organization's major accomplishments?
- How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?
 - a) Continuing to monitor situations will affect the Neighborhood, if not immediately then down the road, in particular
 - Superior Plating site
 - Nicollet Central Streetcar
 - Central River Front Park Master Plan
 - Northeast Bike Committee
 - University District Alliance
 - Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)

The NIEBNA Board appoints members to the Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC) for these and other projects, receives status reports at Board meetings, and communicates its opinions and recommendations via resolutions – sometimes in favor of proposed actions and sometimes against. We believe we have been effective steering the projects into positive directions or at least effectively opposing inappropriate ideas.

- b) NIEBNA worked closely with adjacent neighborhoods – MHNA and SAENA in particular – on projects of common interest like the Nicollet Central Streetcar and development reviews for projects on the border (MHNA).
- c) The NIEBNA Board handled neighborhood review as part of licensing and planning applications for several new and existing businesses in the area.
- d) The NIEBNA Board handled planning review for two rental housing projects in the Neighborhood. La Pompadour, 21 units of boutique (pronounced “small”) rental apartments in long vacant building, is under construction. The other project has stalled.
- e) Created a simple web site (www.niebna.com) to make NIEBNA information available and to provide a contact point for anyone with interest in the area. Since NIEBNA has no office and no capability to handle traditional mail, electronic methods are especially important to us.

Other than businesses that received support in license applications, it is hard to determine the direct effect on individuals of all this activity, or to identify a single individual or small group that was impacted directly. These actions go to improving the neighborhood generally and we feel that benefits us all in a collective sense.

4. *Housing*

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

Due to the nature of the housing stock in the NIEBNA area, mostly well-maintained professionally managed condominiums, co-ops and rental buildings along with some private dwellings under long term leases from the Park Board on Nicollet Island, there is little scope for NIEBNA action on housing. There is simply no demand.

5. *Financial Reports*

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

Fiscal Year 2013 Balance Sheet and Income Statement are attached.

In 2013, the only source of funds was the CPP program.

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?

We work most closely with CPED (especially regarding zoning and planning). Our primary contact is Halia Maze who gives us first rate support.

Occasionally we deal with staff assigned to specific applications before the City Planning Commission (CPC) or the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). In all cases we have received prompt answers to our questions.

Stacy Sorenson from CPP has been very helpful in getting some of our major projects up and running, especially the Small Area Plan.

For the demands we make on City Departments, we get good and prompt service. We are happy and see no reason to change anything.

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? 5

2. *City Communications - effectiveness*

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

No problems with the content or clarity of presentation.

It would be very help if hearing notices for CPC, HPC and the like could be provided in PDF format as well as hardcopy. This would make distribution to NIEBNA mailing lists and inclusion on the web site much easier. This is especially important to us since we have essentially no capacity to handle paper mail.

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.

We get information in good time for us to act if formal action is necessary. No problems.

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?

Except for interfacing with CPED regarding planning functions (mostly for the Small Area Plan) and reviews of applications, NIEBNA has little routine administrative involvement with other City departments. Generally we are happy with responsiveness.

5. ***City Assistance***

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

NIEBNA routine operations are very simple with most work being accomplished in monthly Board meetings or in the meetings of specialized task groups like the Superior Plating Task Group and the NIEBNA Small Area Planning Steering Committee. There is little scope for outside support or assistance.

NCRD does good service in organizing City-wide conferences like the 2014 Community Connections Conference which are helpful and thought provoking affairs.

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? 5

6. ***Other comments?***

None