

Community Participation Program 2014 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Steven Square Community Organization

Contact person: Steven P. Gallagher, Executive Director

Date of Board Approval:

1. *Stakeholder Involvement*

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2014, Please provide information about:

- What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2014?
 - Door knocking
 - Social networking
 - Website traffic
 - Community meetings
 - Situational meetings
 - Employ an outreach coordinator
 - Hold events to develop relationships with residents
 - Engage through events and activities
 - Engage landlords to provide email addresses of new residents
 - Provide a neighborhood newsletter (two times a year)
 - Provide an E-Newsletter once a month
 - SSCO Door knocked 1773 residents (over 80%) during the year

- How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2014?

SSCO conducted a systematic door knocking plan that incorporated mostly renters in the neighborhood. Over 1700 doors were knocked, contact or left information as a result (in coordination with get out the vote and block patrol)

We have a system in place where new renters are given a chance to sign up for our newsletter through their landlords. A residents is given this information at the time a lease is signed.

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

Direct contact with the landlords of the neighborhood has given us a boost in informational data from the residents.

Also, having mini pop-up events at random locations within the neighborhood reaches out to many people who may not come to events or meetings.

- What did not work so well? Why?
We tried to coordinate door knocking with three other neighborhood cross using volunteers. This was harder on the volunteers who did not know the neighborhood intimately. However, it created a greater sense of accomplishment for the volunteers reaching across neighborhood lines which opened communication.
- How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?
SSCO has made contact estimated at 2000 people. Not all of these individuals were from the Stevens Square –Loring Heights area, but most all were from Minneapolis. Many of our mini events concentrated on pedestrian traffic which surveyed people visiting and living in the area.
- How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?
Last year through Block Patrol, Get out the Vote, Board and Committee meetings, as well as events we had over 400 volunteers
- How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?
Through all of our activities, meetings, groups and actions SSCO estimates that over 4500 people were served by our organization and its activities.
- How many people receive your print publications?
Print publications are sent to every household in the neighborhood. We estimate just over 3000 people.
- How many people receive your electronic communications?
This is a large audience that may have some duplication:
 - Stevens Square Website traffic: Average 404 hits a week
 - Stevens Square Facebook page: 517 Members
 - Stevens Square Cinema and Civics Facebook: 213 Members
 - Stevens Square Red Hot Art Facebook page(s): 2,735 Members
 - Stevens Square Block Patrol Alumni Facebook: 57 Members
 - Our email list consists of 1002 email address of residents

2. 2014 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?
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- Red Hot Art in Stevens Square Park
 - Cinema and Civics every Wednesday in June
 - Art Squared Event
 - Neighborhood “get together(s)” three events
 - National Night Out coordination
 - We facilitated five major landlords to financially contribute and participate in one large event (four other organizations)
 - Five mini-pop up events

A major accomplishment was the Old Abbot Hospital Complex (110 East 18th Street) opened for occupancy. SSCO was involved with every process in getting this project done. SSCO was given an community participation award by AIA.

A 27 unit apartment building was destroyed by fire two years ago. However, SSCO worked with a developer/owner to rehab this apartment (137 East 17th) to bring it back to historical standards; again SSCO was awarded with an AIA acknowledgment.

The “Mall Center” along Nicollet Avenue and 18th Street was also hit with an internal fire this year. Working with the owner and tenant we were able to assist with “red tape” in getting the rehab work completed, along with a redesigned and updated space.

3. 2014 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2014:

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

Safety and safety awareness was the backbone of the organization for 20 plus years. This year through our cooperation and active involvement of crime related issues Part One Crimes are down 3%; of those part one crimes a decrease of violent crime was down 20%. Livability crimes, which most people notice as the perception of the neighborhood are down 37.6% from last year.

The number of people/residents that SSCO strategically reached out to was at an all-time high this year. A coordinated effort by our board, committee(s), staff and working with other neighborhoods lead to this result.

An odd but exciting accomplishment was having a joint training between Loring Neighborhood, Whittier Alliance and Stevens Square Community Organization. Its leaders were able to come together to train on best practices and to implement joint cooperation and plan implementations.

4. *Housing*

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

This percentage has a complex number of variables. Housing issues involve development, maintenance, crime related issues, tenant rights' information as well as a drove of other pertinent workloads. All together we estimate the time involved with housing and housing related issues around 55-60%.

5. *Financial Reports*

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

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?

SSCO worked more closely with the NCR and NCEC department compared to previous years. We have found the staff excellent to work with; and feel the City should take pride in the department.

We have also continued to have an excellent working relationship with the Minneapolis Police Department.

SSCO would recommend each department have a liaison employee in which neighborhoods would have a single person to handle issues that arise.

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, however some planning information (variances, CUP and new ordinances) still come out with not a lot of information or have a very short turn around time for public input.

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.

There are some information which SSCO would like to send to residents for public review that may fall between a committee meeting and board meetings, thus we do not always have enough time to publicize and comment.

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? ____3____

4. *City Departments*

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

We find the City departments are easy to work with; however, it would be helpful to have one dedicated person in each department that acts as a liaison employee.

5. *City Assistance*

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

We would recommend NCR take more of an active role in explaining the good work neighborhoods accomplish. Also, when negative press comes out we would hope the department were to act more as a “union steward” in explaining the neighborhood actions, as well as, ensuring the perception of neighborhoods as a whole are needed and accomplished.

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?*