
2014-2016 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM
Submission to ncr@minneapolismn.gov.

7e, Board 11/19/13:
CPP Submission

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Organization Name:	Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association (MHNA)
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Board Contact:	Name: Cordelia Pierson
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Who should be the primary contact for this submission? Melissa Bean

Bylaws – Revised in June, 2013, and attached.

Date of Board review and approval: November 19, 2013

FUNDING ACTIVITIES

Use the following questions as a guide for your submission. For questions 1-8, please limit each response to no more than 3 paragraphs.

1. Eligibility.

Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association (MHNA) is an eligible organization, as identified in Section II.A of the Guidelines; it represents a defined geographical area as approved by City Council; provides for participation of all segments of the neighborhood, including homeowners, renters, property owners, business owners, immigrants, non-English speakers, low-income residents and communities of color; and ensures that membership is open to all residents.

2. Community participation efforts. Describe proposed outreach activity in the neighborhood, and methods to involve residents and other stakeholders in one or more of the three key program purposes. How will you engage residents and other stakeholders of their neighborhood in developing a Neighborhood Priority Plan?

MHNA provides outreach for both general neighborhood engagement and specific activities to identify and act on neighborhood priorities, influence city decisions, and increase involvement.

- MHNA convenes regularly scheduled board, general membership, and committee meetings, and facilitates task forces to achieve short-term goals. On its web site, MHNA invites people to get involved in committees and programs, and posts notices of meetings and information about the neighborhood, ways to get involved, committees and projects, upcoming meetings, and meeting summaries. MHNA sends a monthly "Items of Interest" email to members and stakeholders, including information from local businesses, institutions, and adjacent neighborhood organizations. MHNA sends meeting notices by email and mail to members and other interested parties, and plans to expand its presence on Facebook.
- When a committee is addressing a specific area, like a development proposal, we take extra steps to notify affected neighbors by email, mail and phone, and then send a letter and in-person representative to city decision-making meetings.
- We collaborate with partners on outreach both through specific campaigns and general support. Student liaisons hired by the University of Minnesota assist MHNA with specific outreach for meetings or projects, like National Night Out and fighting the I35W Noise Wall. Residential developers and the University of Minnesota place information on the neighborhood and MHNA in marketing materials for new residential developments and in the "new hires" packets sent to U MN employees.
- In 2013 we made several presentations - to student groups, churches, the Neighborhoods USA Conference.
- We post special events on the Varsity Theater marquee in Dinkytown, place ads in the online Minnesota Daily, the TC Daily Planet, and the Dinkytown Shuttle "Lucille," post on community calendars, and contact the media with press releases or interview calls.
- For targeted outreach, we lead lawn sign campaigns and conduct door knocking; for larger events like National Night Out, we have provided materials in Spanish.

With specific activities, we combine broadcast and targeted outreach. A major priority for us in 2013 has been updating our 2003 Marcy-Holmes Master Plan. Through focus groups, a representative steering committee, public meetings and a participatory website tool, Envision

Marcy-Holmes, we have gleaned neighborhood priorities for the next ten years. In January, we will present the Action Plan and draft Master Plan Update for community review. MHNA's Board of Directors is prioritizing those strategies, and will revise and implement the Action Plan depending on community support and resource availability. We are forming specific task forces and longer term committees to engage stakeholders in this work, and otherwise building capacity to complete the priorities.

We are now planning three outreach initiatives to complement launching a new Action Plan and Master Plan.

1. One is creating a "Get to Know Us/Neighbor Ambassadors" program to welcome people in the neighborhood, listen to their interests, and invite them to participate in MHNA activities, join MHNA by providing contact information, and appoint a liaison to MHNA. This program will focus on fraternities and sororities; landlords and property managers; large multi-family buildings; new riverfront and artist residences; business associations; schools; faith organizations; and special communities, such as immigrants. We look forward to working with NCR staff to reach targeted groups.
 2. The second is a partnership with the University's new Student Board of Community Engagement to team up on shared priorities with student groups interested in improving neighborhood livability.
 3. The third is increasing our neighborhood tours, online and in person. Because our neighborhood is rapidly gaining density, we will offer these tours to newcomers in the next two years, familiarizing them with local amenities as well as history. We have been working with Preserve Minneapolis on an audio history tour "app" for phones to supplement the neighbor-designed tours on our website. We will encourage more.
3. **Building organizational capacity.** How will you work to: (1) provide opportunities for the direct involvement of members, (2) build your membership and volunteer base, (3) encourage and develop new leadership, and (4) expand the organization's capacity through self-assessment and other activities?

Stakeholder engagement in the Master Plan Update process and individual meetings with board members informed the Board's selection of priorities for 2014-2016. We will use the outreach methods described above to invite people to participate in meetings or specific activities, events, or service projects, many of which are in the evening or on weekends. When someone joins or renews their membership, he or she checks off areas of interest, which we enter in our member database, and then we add them to the targeted communications for that interest area. Membership forms are available at all meetings, presentations, and public events like Neighborfest, and people can join and participate immediately at any meeting. Instead of relying on board members to suggest ideas for grant applications, we invite ideas broadly from our stakeholders and partners, as we recently did with the Good Neighbor Fund. After General Membership meetings, we encourage attendees to stay longer for social time and give out a door prize (a gift card from a local business). In 2014, we instituted a volunteer recognition program called the "Empty Bowl Award," recognizing individuals who built our capacity by creating an opportunity for others to improve our quality of life even more.

With renewed focus in 2013, and continuing in 2014, we are building leadership and assessing our strengths and weaknesses. After the new president interviewed all board members and staff individually, the board formed a Governance Task Force; reviewed board appointments to other

organizations and vacancies on MHNA's board; created a board manual and governance chart; identified training needs and completed Land Use Training; and is now integrating organizational development into the Master Plan and Action Plan drafting process. With support from NCR staff, we held a board training and retreat in early November. We have added board members from key stakeholder groups, and appointed members to other organizations' leadership. Each new board member has an experienced board member as a mentor. We are now completing a board talent survey, including asking people what kinds of leadership they can offer, and will use the results to inform our community leadership development priorities.

Strengthening and broadening leadership and volunteer engagement are very important priorities for 2014. The "Neighbor Ambassadors" program will be particularly important this year to build our member and volunteer base, as we have fresh priorities and welcome new energy. Because many students live here for only nine months, we are concentrating on anchor institutions, which may have a community service commitment, and student groups, where individuals may have a talent to contribute and find the experience personally or professionally rewarding.

4. **Building neighborhood relationships.** Describe your outreach, networking, and inclusivity efforts to: (1) build a sense of a whole neighborhood among residents, (2) build bridges among neighbors and diverse communities within the neighborhood, (3) work with other neighborhoods and organizations on issues of common interest, (4) build partnerships with private and public entities, and (5) benefit the neighborhood as a whole.

One of the strong themes emerging from our Master Plan Update is "Be One Neighborhood." That message is central in our communications, from the Marcy-Holmes poster and postcard highlighting destinations throughout the neighborhood, to the ash tree ribbons highlighting our threatened trees in all parts of the neighborhood. We are identifying specific Master Plan strategies for distinct character areas, while recognizing that our neighborhood's strength is in part its diversity. The Action Plan, the outreach described above, and the Neighbor Ambassadors program we are about to start will help us identify new ways to build bridges among diverse communities and neighbors. We will turn to NCR or local expertise to help bridge language divides.

We have appointed new representatives to boards of the University District Alliance and the Dinkytown Business Association. We continue to participate in those as well as the Marcy Arts Partnership; Friends of SE Library; SE Seniors; SE Minneapolis Council on Learning; and the Stadium Area Advisory Group. We are actively participating in both the Dinkytown Small Area Planning and the Central Riverfront Regional Park Master Planning, through its Citizen Advisory Committee. We work directly with several entities at the University of Minnesota, from the Center of Urban and Regional Affairs to the Community Relations team. We consult with nearby neighborhood groups informally around shared concerns, and our task forces will include stakeholders who are not residents and partners outside of the neighborhood. For example, we worked with SE Como, Beltrami and NE Park on fighting the I-35W Noise Walls.

To engage creative talent in shaping our community, we have formed a Creative Neighbors Network of people who work in creative professions. They have advised on place making projects, and we look forward to engaging them on new Action Plan initiatives.

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5. **Involvement of under-engaged stakeholders.** Organizations should discuss which stakeholder groups are typically un-engaged or under-engaged in their work, and how they will work to involve those groups. Organizations should also discuss how the NCR Department can help with this work.

We are very interested in more effectively engaging students, a group that has substantially increased here in the past five years. Because many students move every nine months, most don't think of this area as their home, and many identify it only as "the Dinkytown area," students do not often choose to participate.

We are working on three strategies to address this.

1. First, we recruited two board members to represent student groups, and included an undergraduate on our Master Plan Steering Committee.
2. Second, the University's Neighborhood Student Liaison and Student Board of Community Engagement programs have been very helpful addressing this challenge, and getting students involved in improving the quality of life here. The liaisons have directly assisted with specific outreach, and are also providing suggestions for our upcoming activities. The new Student Board is organizing meet and greets with student groups, with specific themes.
3. Third, we are identifying service opportunities for student volunteers, some based on a clear interest or talent of the students. Over 50 students helped in our Emerald Ash Borer Awareness campaign; that many participated in our Riverbells Carillon Festival where we commissioned 2 student composers to write original music that was broadcast throughout the neighborhood. We worked with several classes at the U to help with neighborhood planning. By offering specific opportunities where their talents can shine, we hope to engage more students.

Although we don't have a huge immigrant population, we printed several flyers in Spanish this year and took part in a Welcoming Immigrants workshop at a local church. We look forward to working with NCR to become more aware of how to be more welcoming, and look forward to continuing these efforts.

6. **Housing Activities.** Neighborhood organizations should discuss their work on housing and housing related activities. Organizations should estimate the percentage of time to be spent on these issues.

MHNA has three major initiatives related to housing, and invests about 51% of our volunteer and staff resources in this issue.

1. First, we offer a Home Improvement Program, administered by Center for Energy and Environment, to assist homeowners with improving their property.
2. Second, our Land Use Committee develops recommendations on proposed development and represents the MHNA at City decision-making meetings. This group recently initiated a Land Use Training offered with the University District Alliance to increase our shared capacity to shape local land use decisions. This committee meets monthly and between meetings as needed; we anticipate that for pending large developments, the committee will convene task forces to work more actively in shaping rather than responding to developments.

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3. Third, we collaborate in the University District Alliance with its three committees: Housing Committee, Livability Committee, and Vision and Planning Committee. The shared website: www.livenearyourwork.net highlights why this area is a great place to live.
 7. **Unused funds.** Organizations should discuss how they plan to use unused funds from the previous cycle for community engagement or implementation of neighborhood priorities.

Unused funds are earmarked in our 2014 budget planning for both community engagement and pending priorities, particularly in Housing, Economic Development, and Creative Places.
 8. **Budgets.** Submissions should include a budget showing how Community Participation Program funds will support the organization's community participation work and an amount set-aside for implementation of Neighborhood Priority Plans. An annual budget for the organization should also be provided.

Please see attached budget.