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Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC)

Livability Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 20th, 2006
6:30-8:00 pm
Loring Park Community Center

Attendance: Dick Sandberg (Loring Green East), Jan Sandberg (Loring Green East), Bob Hansen (14th and Nicollet), Terry Thompson (Loring Green East), Luther Krueger (1st Precinct Crime Prevention Specialist), Richard Anderson (210 West Grant), Pat Havenstein (World Mission Prayer League), Jana Metge (CLPC Coordinator), John Van Heel (110 West Grant), Neil Carlson (Summit House), Diane Moe (Loring Park), Becky Gullickson (301 Clifton), Joan Bilinkoff (245 Clifton), Richard Tow (Loring Green West), Dave Samuelson (Loring Green West), Kathryn Dahl (former Clifton resident), Julie Ayer (210 West Grant), Carl Nashan (210 West Grant), Betty Hefner (210 West Grant), Cathryn Olson (210 West Grant), Gunther Gullickson (301 Clifton Ave), Linda Myers (210 West Grant), Judy Ericson (210 West Grant), Lt. Janee Harteau (1st Precinct), Lt. Mike Kjos (1st Precinct), Sherri Ginther (210 West Grant), Janet Coleman (Greenway Gables), Tricia Sumo Kush (1225 LaSalle), Maggie Bergat (210 West Grant), Nickie Dillon (210 West Grant), Don Davies (210 West Grant), Sean Boyce (210 West Grant), John Reger (210 West Grant), Dan Tracy (210 West Grant), Becky Tracy (210 West Grant). [Others were in attendance but the sign-in list was incomplete]

I. 6:30-6:45 p.m. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Approval, Minutes, Announcements—Dick Sandberg

Dick Sandberg led introductions of the 28 or so people in attendance. Eventually there were more than 40 people in attendance.

Decision to postpone the September minutes to November.

Announcements:

- Jana passed around a Friends of Loring Park newsletter. Diane provided extra copies for attendees.
- Jana distributed information on the Minnesota Gang-Prevention Summit to be held October 30, 2006 at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College. See www.umcpi.org for more details.
- Loring Park is partnering with Elliot Park for a Halloween event---most of the festivities will be at Elliot Park.
- NEIGHBORHOOD HOLIDAY PARTY – Dec. 1st @ 232 Clifton Ave.; hosted by Board member Pat Hafvenstein; Curry Dinner fundraiser for CLPC (\$10 per person) – RSVP to CLPC!!
- Look for “LIGHT UP LORING” – Thursday, November 16th!!!. There will be ten trees this year, up from two last year.
- The November Livability meeting will feature Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman!

II. 6:45-7:30 p.m. Meet our new precinct commander!! Inspector Janee Harteau

Inspector Harteau has written several books on safety for women and seniors. She has been with Minneapolis Police Department for 20 years and with the 1st precinct on and off since 1998. Her experience includes narcotics and the gang unit. She praised the quality of the staff in the 1st Precinct.

DRAFT

In Inspector Harteau's opening statement, she said she was impressed with the large turnout at tonight's meeting. She emphasized that resident involvement is important to solving safety issues.

Inspector Harteau reported on the arrest Saturday of three juveniles who were charged Monday and were likely involved in some of the other robberies. The juveniles were arrested for curfew violation and had the victim's credit cards. However, they were not the only offenders. The offenders now appear to be young and unafraid and need consequences. She will be tracking what happens to them in the courts. Years ago the police knew who the players were but the total number has increased. Week before last there were five different robbery patterns in the precinct, two of which were involved in the Loring Park neighborhood robberies. In these cases the victims were not intoxicated as is often the case with robberies. The police are also tracking some other folks who are likely involved but have not been able to charge them as yet. They have been using decoy operations, trying to flush offenders into specific areas. She wants to be sure to catch them, not just to move them to another part of the city.

Inspector Harteau strongly supports the need to direct resources throughout the precinct. The goal is to increase staffing by eight persons, including experienced officers. The 1st Precinct has dibs on the first set of officers added.

Questions:

Time of day? Robberies used to occur later but the police have been enforcing curfew (10 pm) and the robberies have been moving earlier. The three juveniles committed the robbery just before 10 PM and were arrested for curfew violation on Hennepin and then the officer matched them up to the robbery. The 15 year olds do not live in the city, and claimed that they were going downtown to attend a movie. They decided to "do" a robbery but knew that they had to be out of downtown before curfew. These youth do not seem to care about consequences. This is the type of case the police might use to demonstrate to the county that they need jail space.

Crime locations on the Greenway or Mall? In the most recent case the victim was headed through the Yale Place walkway to Hennepin. Lt. Kjos said that the offenders look for dark places, or might wait at a bus stop but not take a bus. Offenders will look over other people, be looking for vehicles a block or so away. Now offenders tend more to be in groups which can be challenging.

If offenders are not concerned with consequences, what is the deterrent? One option is to stop the behavior and have them do jail time. One attendee suggested putting together a judge watch to get judges to act less like independent contractors. Lt. Kjos added that meetings like this to discuss impacts on the neighborhood can help motivate residents to complete Community Impact Statements (CISs). Having a stack of CISs can get jail time although in this case if it is juveniles there are other issues. However, there also need to be meetings when life is good.

Lighting on the Greenway seems inadequate? The police agree that good lighting is important. The renovation plan is to provide better lighting but some shelters will remain. Concern among those present about whether the revised Greenway plan will adequately promote public safety.

What about cameras on the Greenway? There are some cameras at the Hyatt. They may be able to add a few more but cameras are not a complete deterrent. Adding the Wi-Fi system will help make the camera system more efficient. Unfortunately, if there are trees and low lighting, the cameras are less useful. Some residents have had concerns about cameras in residential areas. There are computers at the 1st precinct so that residents can see what the camera system sees.

What percent of crime in area involve those from outside the city? Many may be from the city but not the precinct. At a recent meeting of rental property owners, fewer of the rental

DRAFT

buildings are housing offenders. Fewer that commit crimes in Loring are from Loring. However, the rental vacancy rate can be a factor and it is now going up. There is a problem with the new condos that in the first few years allow rentals which can cause problems.

How different is this trend from what has happened in past, is it just part of a cycle?

Robberies seem to be increasing citywide—robberies may now be done as a thrill crime. There is a seasonal factor also.

How does the community of panhandlers and inebriates affect the situation especially since 911 staff are not responsive? Frustration that there is little that the police can do, and the questioner is especially concerned about unprofessional responses when calling 911. There was a clarification that the police and 911 systems are separate. Impression that the bad elements feel that it is OK to do bad things here because the aggressive panhandlers can get away with it. The questioner felt that she had tried to describe aggressive solicitation but felt that she was being challenged by the operator about what she saw. Inspector Harteau said that she would bring this to Deputy Chief Allen for his monthly meetings with the 911 staff. Suggested that the questioner call the precinct and request that they have a supervisor call them.

What about the police substation that used to be on the corner of 15th and LaSalle when the two officers walked the beat? Years ago there was a big drug problem in Loring Park and the neighborhood “bought” hours to patrol the park on foot. Is there any way to do this at least part of the time? No one really gets to know any of the local police because they are not on the beat. Maybe the neighborhood needs to do this itself? Suggestion that residents call Council member Goodman’s office about the upcoming budget. Lt. Kjos recalled that there used to be two-man beats several years ago but this went away as the number of police declined. Chief Dolan wants to return to more beat cops. Suggestion to bring back Craig Williams to work the neighborhood—now he has to work calls.

How many robberies involved weapons or assault? Only one had a knife that was not used, but often the victim is sucker punched so that he or she cannot identify the perpetrator.

Displacement from the Safe Zone? They are looking at it but don’t think that the current spurt is displacement from the Safe Zone. Right now they do not have the ability to have officers available on the street to answer questions which would be useful in the Safe Zone. The Warehouse Business Association has raised funds for police work in the Warehouse area.

III. 7:30-7:50 p.m. *SAFETY UPDATE – Luther Krueger/CCP-SAFE*

Question about the juveniles arrested and how the police work with the schools. Currently the Park Police have a contract to work within the schools.

Question about the high grass near the edge of the lake and whether this is a problem. Luther mentioned using environmental design to manage crime. As an example, businesses on some street corners have signs covering the windows. When signs came down, loitering is reduced. Further discussion about the cattails in the pond and the lake buffer strip that dissuades geese.

Added after the meeting as part of other correspondence: this year and last were the first that multiple convenience stores had their licenses revoked or suspended in a long time. One reason is that Grant Wilson, with zoning, has been getting a weekly calls-for-service report for all convenience stores in the city for about a year and a half. The City Council pulled the license for Uncle Bill’s at the October 6, 2006 meeting. See the administrative law judge report at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2006-meetings/20060922/Docs/07-Uncle-Bills-ALJ-Findings.pdf>

IV. 7:50-8:15 p.m. *Community Impact Statements--Jan Sandberg*

DRAFT

Luther described the revised system for submitting community impact statements (CISs). Statements give residents a chance to have a say in the sentencing of an offender without being a witness or victim. By state law, judges must consider the CIS. The judge knows that the resident will hear back from the police and city attorney about what happened to the offender.

Every day Luther gets a data dump of all those arrested in the last 24 hours including how often each was arrested in the last year and how many were arrested in the 1st Precinct. They will generate a map for some prolific offenders to assist in asking for geographic restrictions. The CISs have helped convince some judges to impose geographic restrictions. If the offender violates the restriction, it is a violation of probation and they can go to jail. It is never too late to complete the CIS—even if the offender is already sentenced the CIS goes into the permanent file.

The system is automated using e-mail to make the best use of Luther's time. Luther only sends out adult arrests since these are public information. For juveniles, Lois Conroy said that Luther can send out a similar form but not specify the name. Generally Luther does not send out a CIS for the first few offenses to support the Restorative Justice program.

Dick and Jan reviewed a sample original and completed forms and a grid of response options. See attachments to these minutes.

Meeting adjourned 8:20 PM

Possible Future Topics:

180 Degrees

Convenience store licensing. Zoning (Grant Wilson) to discuss use of weekly reports with licensing.

Crime activity data for the past year (?) in the vicinity of the SuperAmerica at Grant and LaSalle.

Nancy Page Crisis Stabilization Program, People Incorporated, 245 South Clifton (Joan Bilinkoff). See <http://www.peopleincorporated.org/>

Lois Conroy/City Attorney update on the City Attorney's five-year business plan, new happenings in the City Attorney's office, drug paraphernalia laws, and interaction between county and city attorneys.

Susan Young - Sanitation Director for the City of Minneapolis - Clean City USA initiative and "Adopt a Trash Can" program

John Dejung and information about the 911 system—possibly February with Inspector Harteau.

Hennepin County Attorney discussion about how to get feedback on downtown felony arrests

Scott Christenson, Third Precinct City Attorney (creator of drug paraphernalia law) to address questions raised about the law

Cathy Ten Brooke to speak about the homeless initiative

Street lighting issues