



‘Where the biggies leave off...’

# Hill & Lake Press

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SEPTEMBER 18, 2015

## Council committee recommends approval of revised SWLRT plan

By Michael Wilson

The City Council’s Transportation & Public Works Committee voted on Tuesday, Sept. 15, to recommend municipal consent to the Met Council’s latest iteration of plans for Southwest LRT, but not before committee members heard strongly worded criticism of those plans from a score of Cedar-Isles-Dean and Kenwood residents.

Council Members Lisa Bender, Linea Palmisano, and Kevin Reich voted in favor of the Met Council’s revised plans. Council Member Cam Gordon voted no, while Council Member Blong Yang abstained. The Council approved consent last summer to an earlier version of SWLRT plans by a 10-3 vote. Gordon cast one of the three “no” votes, along with Council Member Lisa Goodman and Council President Barb Johnson, to deny municipal consent to the project.

The full City Council will vote again on Friday, September 25, starting at 9:30 in Council Chambers on whether to grant municipal consent once again, this time to the revised project. Hill and Lake residents can attend the meeting in person or watch it online on Channel 79

(<<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/tv/79>>).

The current round of municipal consent votes in the five cities along the SWLRT route and in Hennepin County was made necessary by substantive changes to the project earlier this year caused by increasing cost estimates and the subsequent need to make cuts.

The municipal consent vote last summer in Minneapolis came after intense, closed-door negotiations with the Met Council and Hennepin County that sought to buy the city’s acquiescence to colocating freight and light rail through the Kenilworth Corridor, a worst-case scenario that the city had been promised for years would never happen.

### Class 3 flammable cargo next to electrified trains.

The city agreed to scrap the so-called “north tunnel,” which was projected to cost \$60 million. Half that amount was promised to the city as a dedicated fund for mitigation and betterments along the corridor above and beyond what project planners already intended to spend. With project planners currently scrabbling for dollars anywhere they can find them to cover SWLRT’s ballooning costs, area residents are beginning to see evidence that the Met Council has come to see that \$30 million fund as a cookie jar for meeting basic design requirements.

During the past several months SWLRT’s projected cost has yo-yoed from \$1.65 billion to almost \$2 billion, settling back currently at about \$1.77 billion. A make-or-break funding battle looms for the 2016 state legislative session, where a refusal by the majority House

## Burnham Bridge reopening to be celebrated on Monday, September 21, at 2 pm



Workmen prepared the newly rebuilt Burnham Road bridge earlier this week for installation of railings, the last step before the bridge is reopened on Monday, Sept. 21. Prior to removal of the barricades the Cedar-Isles-Dean and Kenwood neighborhoods will celebrate completion of the project at 2:00 pm with (brief) speeches by Council Member Lisa Goodman and neighborhood and Department of Public Works dignitaries. Isles Bun & Coffee is donating refreshments. The weather promises to be lovely, so bike or walk over to the channel and join in the celebration.

Photo: Dorothy Childers. Caption: Michael Wilson.

Republicans – and perhaps by some DFLers also – to fund the state’s ten percent share could doom the project.

The lead-off speaker at Tuesday’s Transportation & Public Works Committee public hearing was Rep. Frank Hornstein, who has become a hero in our Hill and Lake neighborhoods and around the region for championing the cause of freight rail safety and promoting legislation to require railroads to make safety improvements and restrict the shipment of flammable materials – including ethanol – through populated areas. Hornstein, DFL-Minneapolis, said more study is needed to fully determine what effect freight trains using the light-rail corridor will have on the 19,000 residents who live nearby.

Speaker after speaker addressed poorly answered or unaddressed questions regarding south tunnel construction concerns, danger for the thousands of Hill and Lake residents who live in the freight-rail “blast zone,” groundwater contamination, and other issues. But it was Sarai Brenner who best summed up the journey that so many Hill and Lake residents have taken,

from eager participation in a large public undertaking to anger and cynicism at the Met Council’s determination to ramrod this project through to completion.

“I want to talk to you about how cynical I and many of my fellow citizens of Minneapolis feel about the political process that has led us to this point,” Brenner told committee members. “We thought you stood with us. We thought you represented us. Instead, you traded our safety and security, under ugly threats in a dirty back-room deal, for some other favor that the Met Council had the power to grant. I used to be an idealist, believing in the power of what was right and what was just, and in the process of democracy. But this political process has been so vulgar and so disgusting. It makes some of us fight harder, but it also makes many more people just give up.”

### Tunnel construction two feet from residence tower.

Three homeowners – Paul Petzschke, Bob Brockway, and John Shorrock – from Calhoun-Isles Condominium Association (the “grain silo” towers) addressed the severe structural damage that seems

Revised SWLRT plan approval to page ten

## CORRECTIONS

In the August 2015 issue, a photo in the middle of page 12 was of the East Isles Ice Cream Social, not National Night Out. And it was taken by Rich Harrison of East Isles. In the July 2015 issue, a caption for a photo on page 14 had an incorrect address for Penny Jacobs who has written a book that is for sale. Please contact her directly at 2011 Drew Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55416. We regret these errors. Please visit [www.hillandlakepress.com](http://www.hillandlakepress.com) for the July and August issues.

## INSIDE

Happenings	2	CIDNA, LHNA, KIAA	10-12	Madeleine Lowry	15
The Urban Coyote	7	Masthead	14		
Sand Upon the Waters	13	Real Estate	14		



### 31st Hennepin Lake Community Wine Tasting Fund Raiser Wednesday October 28, 2015 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

\$25.00 advance / \$35.00 at the door  
Uptown Never Tasted So Good ~ ! ~

The 31st Hennepin-Lake Community Wine Tasting will take place Wednesday, October 28th 2015 inside of Calhoun Square (3001 Hennepin Ave South, Minneapolis, MN, 55408). All proceeds benefit surrounding residential neighborhood organizations in Uptown. Neighborhoods include Calhoun Area Residents Action Group, Cedar Isles Dean Neighborhood Association, East Calhoun Community Organization, East Isles Residents Association, Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association, West Calhoun Neighborhood Council, and Kenwood Isles Area Association.

Guests will be able to sample over 400 varieties of wines along with light appetizers by renowned Chef Todd McDonald of Parella Restaurant.

This Wine Tasting Fundraiser has raised over \$330,000 for the community for its 30 previous events. This is also the oldest and largest wine tasting commu-

### Lunch with Lisa September 30, 2015

Topic: Nicollet mall final design.

St. Thomas University - Minneapolis Opus 202  
\$10 lunch is offered. Discussion starts promptly at noon.

**October 21 Noon Lunch with Lisa with Secretary of State Steve Simon discussing Voting rights Act.**

nity fundraiser in Minnesota. The money raised has been used for purchasing bicycles & vests for the 5th Precinct Police officers, block clubs organizing, community newspapers, movies in the park, community gardens, support of disadvantaged students, ice cream socials, amongst other neighborhood activities.

Tickets can be purchase from each neighborhood association or at Hennepin Lake Liquors.

Online sales at Eventbrite beginning 9.15.2015  
Sponsors: Parella, Calhoun Square, Great Clips, Hennepin Lake Liquors

### HAPPENINGS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

SEPT. 19 LINDEN HILL DANCING CLUB

SEPT. 19 SIERRA CLUB 20TH ANNUAL BIKE TOUR

SEPT. 21 7PM POET ROBERTA HILL PLYMOUTH CHURCH

SEPT. 30 LUNCH WITH LISA

OCT. 4, 4:30PM MIDTOWN GREENWAY COALITION PROGRESSIVE DINNER

OCT. 11 CIDNA FALL FESTIVAL

OCT. 21 NOON LUNCH WITH LISA

OCT. 24, THRILLER IN KENWOOD

OCT. 28 WINETASTING 6PM CALHOUN SQUARE

Neighborhood monthly meetings:

CIDNA: Second Wednesday, 6pm Jones-Harrison.

KIAA: First Monday, 7pm. Kenwood Rec Center

LHNA: First Tuesday, 7pm, Kenwood Rec Center

EIRA: Second Tuesday, 7pm Grace Church

### 2015 Minneapolis Energy Fair

Learn how to save money and help the environment at the inaugural Minneapolis Energy Fair sponsored by NRG Energy. This family friendly event will feature a variety of presenters highlighting ways to make your home energy efficient with the opportunity to learn more about solar options for your home.

Xcel Energy, CenterPoint Energy, Center for Energy and Environment, and Clean Energy Resource Team representatives will be on site to answer questions and provide information on signing up for money saving programs.

- Kid's activities
- Xcel Energy sponsored free LED lightbulbs
- Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy sponsored free Home Energy Squad Visits
- Grand prize giveaway
- Complimentary continental breakfast

When: Saturday, October 10, 2015 from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM (CDT), Where: Minneapolis Convention Center. 1301 2nd Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55403. Questions? Michael Rainville, 612-767-8074.

### An Arts-Specific Program for Preschool Aged Children in the Twin Cities!

beARTrageous is offering the first ART-SPECIFIC PROGRAM for PRESCHOOL-AGED in the Twin Cities! The program welcomes 2-5 year olds to join us for exploration of the ABC's through visual arts and crafts, music, and storytelling while building their social skills, dexterity control, and confidence in the arts! This program is unique in its art curriculum and its flexibility. Parents choose days of the week and session time, allowing parents flexibility in their schedule while adding enrichment to their child's

**Native Poet Roberta Hill reads for Literary Witnesses on Monday, Sept. 21, 7pm. at Plymouth Congregational Church (Nicollet Ave. at Franklin),** Poet Joy Harjo calls Roberta Hill "one of America's best poets of her generation." Author Louise Erdrich says "Roberta Hill is a poet who understands struggle, and generously imparts her passion for renewal." The free event is co-sponsored by The Loft Literary Center and RainTaxi Review of Books. There is plenty of free parking. A reception and book signing will follow.

Roberta Hill is an enrolled member of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. Her fiction, poetry, and essays have appeared in The American Indian Culture and Research Journal, The Beloit Poetry Journal, Luna, and Prairie Schooner among others. She has received a Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Award and a Chancellor's Award from the University of Wisconsin. She teaches at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Her newest book, Cicadas: New & Selected Poems, gathers together seventy-five poems, from previous poetry collections Star Quilt and Philadelphia Flowers, plus a generous selection of new poems culled from the past thirty years. Roberta's poems are powerful lyrical expressions of love and respect for family, friends, and fellow artists within a wide context of contemporary life. Literary Witnesses is a program of the Fine Arts Board at Plymouth Congregational Church.

### Planning for Park Board's 'Closing the Gap' campaign moves forward.



Deferred maintenance and heavy use of Minneapolis' 100-plus neighborhood parks, including Kenwood Park and Rec Center, seen above on a beautiful fall morning, have reached a critical juncture, and the Park Board is exploring the feasibility of asking voters to approve an additional levy at the November 2016 general election. Attend a public forum, "Closing the Gap: Insights for Park Funding," on Tuesday, Sept. 29, from 6-8:30 pm at Walker Art Center. Park leaders from four major cities around the nation will discuss how their systems met the challenges facing our Park Board. The event, sponsored by City Parks Alliance and the McKnight Foundation, is free, but an RSVP is required because of limited seating. Call 612-313-7789 or go to <closingthe gap@minneapolisparcs.org>. Take a 15-minute survey by Sept. 30 at <www.surveymonkey.com/r/ourparks>.

(Photo: Dorothy Childers. Caption: Michael Wilson.)



The Minneapolis (Aquatic) Log Rolling club has been formed! Club members will be rolling throughout the summer. Log rolling enthusiasts are seen at Easter Cedar Lake Beach (Hidden Beach).

Photo by Dorothy Childers



# SOUTHWEST LRT: Developing Minneapolis from City of Lakes to City of Stadiums

By Susu Jeffrey

The Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) is the most expensive tax-payer project ever imagined for Minnesota. It is considered the next big tax supported construction project post-football stadium to be followed by a soccer stadium. Each development project cuts into the water table that supports Minneapolis as the City of Lakes.

## Water

Destruction of parkland is the hallmark of recent transportation development in Minneapolis. Our famous parks, the only undeveloped urban land, are actually lakes, creeks and wetlands previously too wet for development.

## The Great Medicine Spring and Glenwood Spring

The Interstate-394 corridor west out of Minneapolis is dewatered daily at the rate of 2.5-million gallons. Plastic drain tile pipes with little holes where groundwater infiltrates funnel the water into a series of ponds from the Highway 394/100 intersection to Sweeney Lake and out Bassett Creek, piped under downtown Minneapolis, to the Mississippi. A sign at the mouth of Bassett Creek used to warn pregnant women and children under six not to eat fish caught there.

Two springs dried up with Highway 394 permanent dewatering: Glenwood Spring, formerly sold as commercial spring (now well) water and the Great Medicine Spring in Theodore Wirth Park. Indian people “came hundreds of miles to get the benefit of its medicinal qualities” Col. John H. Stevens, first white Minneapolis resident, said of the Great Medicine Spring in 1874.

The place is still there but no water runs. Treated city water is now piped into Wirth Park. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board waited 10-years for the spring to recharge. In 1999 a 150-foot well was drilled with negligible results.

## Coldwater Springs

The Hiawatha reroute and LRT reduced the flow to Coldwater Springs by more than 35-percent. Coldwater is the last major natural spring in Hennepin County, is a federally recognized Dakota sacred site, it furnished water to Fort Snelling 1820-1920, and is considered the birthplace of Minnesota where the first Euro-American community developed to service the fort.

The Hiawatha project resulted in the loss of 46,000 gal/day at Coldwater—from 130,000 down to 84,000. The Hwy 55/62 interchange pipes out 27,500 gal/day but a mysterious 18,500 gal/day is simply gone.

“How could your professionals be so far off in their hydrology? What facts were not available to you,” Judge Franklin Knoll asked MnDOT attorneys in Hennepin County court 9/13/01. “MnDOT is one of the largest and most well-staffed departments in Minnesota. Your engineers, geologists and water specialists all signed off on this design,” Knoll said.

MnDOT attorney Lisa Crum said “MnDOT (design) standards were based on reasonable estimates.” Coldwater supporters were repeatedly told that the groundwater would “just flow around” sunken highways built into the water table. The inference was that the water would just flow around and return to its former paths. It did not.

Removing groundwater results in less-but-dirtier water and less moisture in the soil. The land dries out when groundwater is prohibited from running through nature’s slower filtration system. The water gets dumped into the lakes, creeks and the Mississippi with contaminants adhering to dirt particles. Consider the problem of mercury poisoning from fish taken in northern Minnesota lakes far from the coal-fired power plants that vented toxins into the air.

Dry soil does not easily absorb the increasingly heavy storms events experienced with climate change.

Storm water runs off quickly with top soil, fertilizers, air and road impurities, and goose, duck and pet poop.

## SWLRT Tunnel through the Chain of Lakes

A half-mile tunnel would be inserted (after approximately 44 acres of tree removal/land clearance) between Cedar, Lake of the Isles and Calhoun. Solid steel walls would be sunken 55-feet down for the length of the tunnel to anchor the 35-foot wide structure. Otherwise it would float up or down with fluctuating underground water levels.

According to the Burns and McDonnell Engineering Company water study for the Metropolitan Council as much as 24,000 gallons per day from inside and around the tunnel would be pumped out. Less groundwater flow into and out of the lakes would allow more contaminants and particulate matter to fill in and remain in our public waters, our water commons.

Again citizens are being assured that the groundwater will “just flow around” a half mile long “shallow” tunnel—built into the already saturated land between the lakes. The Chain of Lakes is an old channel of the Mississippi. In flood times, water “remembers” its old pathways.

The very same paid consultants in hydrology and geology are employing the very same language to assure Metropolitan Council appointees, Hennepin County Commissioners, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District staff and managers, and concerned citizens that groundwater will “just flow around” a huge underground tunnel in the land between the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes.

Actually the Burns and McDonnell water study warns of local flooding with groundwater around the proposed tunnel recycled back into the groundwater. This arrangement avoids admitting any permanent

Southwest LRT to page 10



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## In their own words . . .

Thirteen of our dedicated Hill and Lake neighbors spoke before the City Council's Transportation & Public Works Committee on September 15 during the public hearing on granting municipal consent to the revised plan for Southwest Light Rail. Here are excerpts from their statements. (Compiled by Michael Wilson.)

### CRAIG WESTGATE (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

Many cities across the nation are banning the transportation of ethanol within their city limits. Not only are we [keeping ethanol trains in the Kenilworth Corridor] – we're putting people in an electric train underneath. ... They will be digging down as much as 48 feet into the water table of our city – the Chain of Lakes. Even when this is complete they'll be pumping water out of this tunnel into our soils forever. ... The Project Office has been minimizing so many of these concerns of ours. It becomes a frustration, it becomes a passion. ... [At the Tryg's site] their cost overruns have gone up 350 percent for the foundation. Is that something you're willing to take?

### KATHY LOW (Kenwood)

Regarding the plan to co-locate light rail and freight rail carrying Class 3 flammable materials through the Kenilworth Corridor, did you know that the Park Board's comment letter on the SDEIS says, "The presence of freight rail and its impacts on users of the Kenilworth Corridor has not been fully addressed in the SDEIS from the perspective of any failure of the freight rail infrastructure and the ability to respond to an emergency condition"? Did you know that the City's comment letter on the SDEIS asked for ridership [projections] by station including reverse commute, new to transit, and transit-dependent, saying that calculating the number of reverse commute riders is an important equity measurement? If you don't have this information, how can you evaluate the equity of spending all this money on this project?

### MARY PATTOCK (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

We've learned quite a bit about the dangers of running ethanol-laden trains with millions of gallons of explosive ethanol next to the electrically-charged Southwest LRT lines – as close as 15 feet in some places. ... There are hundreds of us whose safety is at stake. ... Locating Southwest LRT close to the freight line would drastically increase the risk of an explosion. Given the several light-rail derailments we have already seen in our community, it is hardly alarmist to raise this issue.

### JEANETTE COLBY (Kenwood)

I'm here to ask you to read the public responses, especially the ones from Kenwood, CIDNA, and LRT Done Right. The problem with the SDEIS is that there have been too many issues that haven't been dealt with in that study – issues that were minimized, underplayed. ... Some of these issues include co-location, public safety, noise, hydrology – questions that we've been asking for years without responses.

### PAUL PETZSCHKE (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

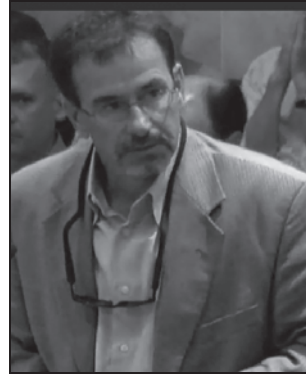
The construction at the nearby Trammell Crow [Tryg's site] project has raised many concerns about the feasibility of building the shallow tunnel.... The Met Council has identified two methods for installing sheet piling for the shallow tunnel: a vibratory hammer or a hydraulic press. [When Trammell-Crow used the vibratory-hammer method at the Tryg's site] ... damage occurred in the surrounding area and caused abandonment of this method. ... The Met Council is now banking that the hydraulic pressing method will work. Instead of hoping, the Met Council needs to develop a detailed and actionable contingency plan for installing an alternate sheet-piling system ... [to] ... prevent a last-minute scenario where the identified methods fail and homes need to be taken by eminent domain so the three main transport systems can go at grade. ... The Calhoun-Isles high-rise is two to three feet from the proposed piling system while the garage footings are a mere six inches from this system. If the Met Council is unable or unwilling to develop ... an alternate piling system for constructing the shallow tunnel, the City of Minneapolis needs to withdraw municipal consent as nearly 100 neighbors of ours are at risk of losing their homes.

### BOB BROCKWAY (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

With the wall of the LRT tunnel being within 4-5 feet from the foundation of our high rise and less than 35 feet from the [Cedar Lake Shores] townhomes, I have grave concerns about three items. The first one is, temporary living may be necessary for some of the families during construction. Second, if there were damage to our building during construction, how are we to be compensated? And finally, if once in operation our livability is adverse-



Barbara Lunde



Craig Westgate



Jeanette Colby



Kathy Low



Lisa Goodman



Mary Pattock



Patty Schmitz



Paul Petzschke



Rosanne Halloran



Bob Brockway



George Puzak



John Shorrock



Kathleen Standing



Frank Hornstein

ly affected, how are we to be compensated? In the past the Met Council has shown no sympathy at all for city residents who have incurred damage due to their projects. If the City gives municipal consent to the LRT project the City must stipulate in writing that the above three compensations will be provided without the need of legal assistance....

### PATTY SCHMITZ (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

If this proposed route went through your ward, and your ward's constituents raised concerns and opposition to it, would you still be supportive of it? When it comes to our bike paths, our green space, and our Chain of Lakes, the entire city is your ward and your responsibility. ... The planners failed to secure even the most basic freight reroute. Do you really trust them to build unstudied tunnels next to our Chain of Lakes? ... There are other alignments that serve Minneapolis better and won't risk our lakes. Will they be complicated and protracted and delayed? For sure. But our Chain of Lakes is worth it.

### GEORGE PUZAK (Lowry Hill)

Does the Met Council ... think that Southwest LRT is only a transit project? How can the Met Council make this claim when they are giving Twin Cities & Western railroad \$260 million public dollars for alignment shifts and upgrades? Is there an alignment that does not require \$260 million public dollars for freight? We don't know.

### BARBARA LUNDE (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

I'm opposed to the present alignment. How many of you drove here today? ... I got on the bus at West Lake and Dean Parkway – it comes every nine minutes – and rode here in about 15 minutes. I didn't need to use a parking space or any extra gas. ... In my opinion this [LRT] route is not necessary.

### KATHLEEN STANDING (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

No co-location was at the heart of agreeing to [the Locally Preferred Alternative]. Mayor Rybak got duped. He said yes, but the Met Council reneged on their promise. ... In my opinion, the white boards used at public meetings to explain the SDEIS were a whitewash. They had everything covered, yet they hardly addressed the real dangers of co-location to riders and residents if a train carrying ethanol or other flammables exploded.

### JOHN SHORROCK (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

The oil and gas trains weigh around 130 tons each for each car, and it's roughly about 50 cars that go down that rail, which is 6,500 tons of explosive material. ... The trains [also] stand in the corridor for hours and have been known to stand there for 16 hours. ... This is a hazard statistically waiting to happen.

### ROSANNE HALLORAN (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

Big money fuels big momentum. ... We hear such comments as, "The project is too far along," "We've spent too much money so far," "We'll stand in the way of progress," and ... "No one wants to see this project die." ... This project should have been suspended until relocation of freight rail was assured. ... I support LRT expansion, but I oppose this alignment.

### DOUG PETERSON (Cedar-Isles-Dean)

There's a five-foot sewer main that goes underneath the trail [between Depot Street and Park Siding Park] ... that has to be lowered so that the tunnel can be put in there. Lowering [it] will [require] a trench about 45 feet deep. Because of the soil conditions ... the lateral support very likely will be [unable] to hold up the train traffic [overhead].... There is a very good likelihood of a crash with the sides of the trench failing and wiping out the entire neighborhood. There is no insurance that's going to be covering this.

### ART HIGINBOTHAM (former CIDNA board chair)

Why do I stay involved? It's a matter of conscience. Running hazardous freight through urban areas is a hazard to many residents of Minneapolis. [This alignment] should go back to the drawing board. ... Unrelocated freight rail – a promise that was made by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority 17 years ago — is a broken promise. It should be relocated [or] alternatives for the light rail should be looked at, including running it down the Midtown Greenway or out the Burlington Northern corridor to St. Louis Park's West End....



**BOB CARNEY (honorary Hill and Lake resident because of his persistence on SWLRT)**

The Legislature cancelled \$30 million that they had put into Southwest light rail ... [leaving just] \$15 million that the Legislature has put in so far. The budget calls for \$165 million. You're \$150 million short. You're voting on a dead plan. The Met Council ... has lost so much credibility over at the Legislature that you're not going to get this done.

**COUNCIL MEMBER LISA GOODMAN**

[I came today not to speak but to] hear the very eloquent comments of my constituents. I have to echo the comments of one person more than anybody else, and that's Sarai Brenner. I feel that what she said is really illustrative of how so many people feel. When Council Member Gordon talks about the lack of democracy within railroads, let's talk about the lack of democracy at the Met Council – an unelected group of people appointed by a political appointee, charged with building out the regional transit system without much concern for the people who are most affected. Imagine being someone living in a home that you purchased and your entire amount of equity is in it, and they're talking about building a tunnel two feet from your building. Imagine the level of uncertainty you would feel, the lack of trust you would have when you read an SDEIS that says, "There's not going to be any problem with that." You don't need to be an engineer to understand why people have such serious concerns.

I know the fix is in. I understand where the votes are. I'm very clear about the fact there are a lack of people on this Council willing to take on the Met Council. ... I feel like I was elected to represent my constituents' point of view. You mark my words: there's going to be a problem with this. There's no possibility they're going to be able to dig ... a tunnel in this pinch point [as they're suggesting] without affecting a massive number of people. You can see the example of it right now with the Trammell-Crow construction project where a building that's even farther away has experienced damage from this exact same system that they're talking about using at this pinch point.

I don't want to be here saying, "I told you so..." But I think that this is a serious enough issue that I wish more people would pay attention to it. I do appreciate the efforts on behalf of Rep. Hornstein. ... The Legislature's going to make the final decision about whether or not this is something that should be funded. I think Mr. Carney is correct in regard. This fight is not over in that sense. I also want to note that saying this project is coming in "on budget" is the most ludicrous thing I've ever heard. That's because the budget keeps going up. I am proud of the fact that Council Members Reich, Glidden, and the Mayor's Office negotiated the situation where we're not going to be losing any stations in Minneapolis. I do think that our professional staff and elected officials did an extremely good job in making sure we made it through [to this point] without further damage....

But in the end I put myself in the shoes of Sarai Brenner who I think says it best when she says, "Who is looking out for us? I have lost faith in the system." Sarai, I tell you I lost faith in the system a long time ago. That's partially why I ran for re-election unopposed – to be able to represent my constituents' point of view. I put myself in your shoes every day. I'm in the blast zone [although] I don't live in this immediate neighborhood. I feel our system has failed constituents and that will be one of many, many regrets we have down the line.

**Hornstein asks Council committee to include freight rail safety in municipal consent consideration**

By Michael Wilson

Appearing before a Minneapolis City Council committee for only the second time in his legislative career, state Rep. Frank Hornstein urged the Transportation & Public Works committee members on September 15 to consider freight rail safety in the Kenilworth Corridor as they weigh their votes on giving municipal consent for the revised Southwest LRT plan.

Hornstein has taken a lead role locally and at the Legislature on the issue of shipping hazardous and flammable materials. His concern was spurred, he told the committee, "in part by the explosion in Quebec a couple of years ago where there was significant loss of life, but primarily when I read about the oil train explosion 20 miles west of the Minnesota border in Casselton, North Dakota late in 2013."

Hornstein credited several of his Hill and Lake constituents for putting ethanol "on my radar" during the legislative session earlier this year. "Studies have shown," Hornstein said, "that ethanol has similar explosive qualities as crude oil. When we're looking at these unit trains of ethanol that are traveling through the Kenilworth Corridor and downtown Minneapolis, you should understand that we're dealing with hazardous, highly flammable material. Think about it as similar to the Bakken oil trains that are passing through our city. Once you get that in your mindset, then we have to be very, very adamant about ensuring that public safety is addressed as these trains pass through."

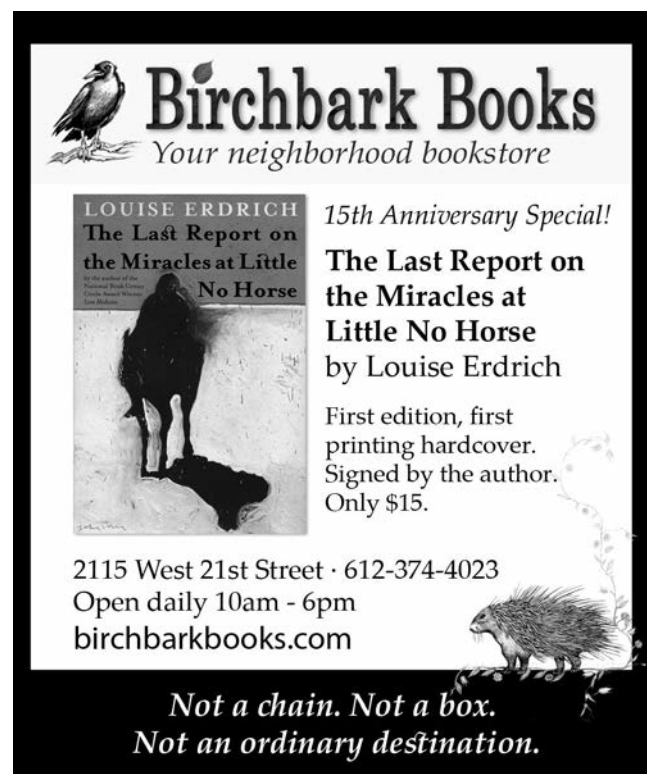
Hornstein told the committee that ethanol safety was included in legislation passed earlier this year which called on the state to analyze preparedness and impacts on public safety from transportation of ethanol by rail. "We have about 19,000 residents who live in the evacuation zone in case there was an accident or explosion of an ethanol train in the Kenilworth Corridor or downtown," Hornstein said.

"Ethanol is a hazardous material that is coming through densely populated areas," Hornstein reiterated. "I was hoping – it was certainly my expectation – that the Supplemental DEIS on the Southwest project would include more discussion of this issue and really

look at some of the safety concerns. That has not happened. I testified on that issue on the record and sent a letter to the Met Council imploring them to take this issue quite a bit more seriously."

Hornstein noted that he has helped pass legislation asked railroad companies to update their spill response plans. "The railroad that's primarily involved in Kenilworth – TC&W – has actually resisted disclosure of those plans," Hornstein told the committee. "I find that very problematic."

Hornstein reminded committee members that the Kenilworth Corridor is one of the few areas where passenger/light rail trains are planned to run alongside freight trains carrying flammable, explosive cargo. He asked them to include a conversation and discussion about ethanol train safety in their deliberations.



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# Kenwood Isles Neighborhood of Raingardens

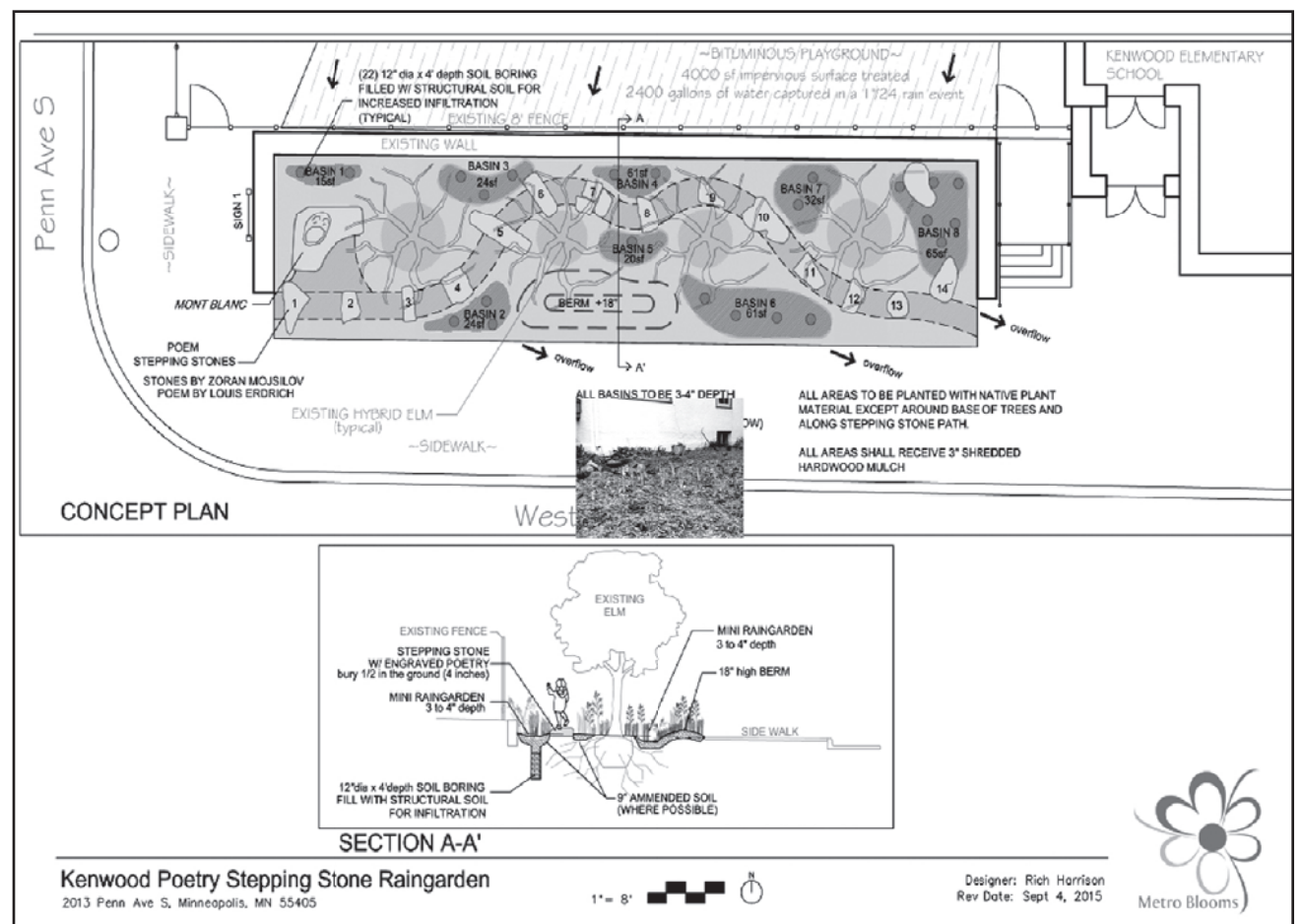
By Laura Hurley

If you've walked through the Kenwood Neighborhood recently and noticed a flurry of digging and planting, you're not alone. Throughout the past summer, more than 20 residents in the Kenwood Isles Neighborhood participated in a community raingarden project, known as the Kenwood Isles Neighborhood of Raingardens program. The Kenwood Isles Area Association (KIAA) partnered with Metro Blooms, the Conservation Corps of Minnesota, and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) to teach neighborhood residents about stormwater runoff and work with them to install raingardens on their own property. The project was possible due to funding from KIAA and grants from MCWD and the Minnesota Clean Water Fund.

Raingardens are beautiful landscaping features that capture runoff from roofs, driveways, and yards and allow it to soak into the soil to be cleaned and cooled naturally rather than flowing into storm drains and directly into the nearest water body. They create native habitat which attracts birds, bees, and butterflies. The native plants also have long root systems (up to 15 feet, compared to turf grass which is about 3 inches!) and are adapted to Minnesota's climate so they don't require watering once they're established. Projects like this are especially important in neighborhoods like Kenwood because this area drains straight into our beautiful lakes. The Kenwood Isles Neighborhood of Raingardens project resulted in 15 raingardens throughout the neighborhood, which create over 2,000 square feet of native habitat and capture over 8,000 gallons of runoff when it rains just one inch. This runoff, and the pollution it picks up, would otherwise flow into Lake of the Isles or Cedar Lake.

The project truly was a partnership. First, KIAA reached out to interested residents. Those residents were encouraged to attend a Raingarden Workshop in May to learn more about raingardens and then received a site consultation and raingarden design from Metro Blooms. Most raingardens are about 6" deep to allow them to capture more water while it's raining, and the excavation is the most difficult part. Thankfully, we were able to work with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota to the install the raingardens (by hand!), mix in compost, and place mulch on top. Metro Blooms ordered plants from Glacial Ridge Growers, and residents planted their raingardens. Because of the grant funding, participants paid about \$300-\$500 total. The site consultations began in June, and by the end of August all of the raingardens were in the ground and planted!

While this project was focused on neighborhood residents, KIAA, Metro Blooms and other community partners are working on another raingarden project at the Kenwood School. Students will be able to use the



Raingarden Concept Plan



Raingarden Preparation



A North Minneapolis Raingarden

school raingarden for learning and exploration and have these lessons reinforced through neighborhood raingardens. As part of the curriculum for the school raingarden, students will walk from Cedar Lake to Lake of the Isles to view the neighborhood from a "watershed perspective." The raingardens will demonstrate to students what citizens can do to improve water quality.

Four other neighborhoods throughout Minneapolis began or continued their own Neighborhood of Raingardens programs this year, for a total of 55 new raingardens. While this was the first year of the project in the Kenwood Neighborhood, if we can continue these partnerships in the future we're well on our way to a City of raingardens in Minneapolis.

## KENWOOD CORNER: A TIMELINE OF ITS TRANSFORMATION

By Angie Erdrich

In January 2015, Kenwood Elementary School received a Cynthia Krieg grant from the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to develop a watershed curriculum and excavate/plant a raingarden at Kenwood Corner. Raingardens are purposeful landscaping featuring deeply rooted pesticide-free native plants which promote pollinators and depressed basins that capture storm water which protects the lakes. The vision of the grant includes a sculpted stepping stone path by Zoran Mojsilov which will feature an engraved poem by Louise Erdrich. Partners involved or advising/supporting on this project: Louise, Zoran, Metro Blooms, Rich Harrison, landscape architect and volunteer, the Kenwood Isles Area Association, 5th grade teachers at Kenwood, Joan Freese (Master Water Steward), Heid Erdrich (curator), Keith Prussing of the Cedar Lake Park Association, Principal Aura Wharton-Beck, The Kenwood School Green Team, Nancy Hope, (designing signs), Todd Bockley and Bockley Gallery, the Conservation Corps as well as generous local art patrons and DNR educators working with Joan Freese. 2008-2009 The Kenwood Environmental Improvement

By Angie Erdrich

angie\_sandeep@yahoo.com

Project (KEIP), spearheaded by Kenwood school parents, Sanja DeGarmo and Kristi Pearson, raises funds to beautify the area. Accomplishments: replacement of chain link fence, improved landscaping, planting of elms. Partners: The Tree Trust, CIDNA, KIAA, Lowry Hill, and numerous parents and alumni families who sponsored engraved bricks in the columns around the school.

2010 - Vegetable Garden established and continues to "help students grow!" Apple and plum trees teach valuable lessons about pollination. Butterflies a common sight in September.

2011 - Gnome Garden magically appears under apple tree, quickly becomes favorite magical spot of local children.

2012, 2014 - Kenwood Elementary School Vegetable Garden receives Metro Blooms garden awards.

2014 - Neighbors purchase and install granite sculpture, Mont Blanc by local artist Zoran Mojsilov. Bockley Gallery, Birchbark Books, and Kenwood Pet Clinic donate significant funding.

2014 - Professor Alan Ek, University of Minnesota Forest Resources, Dept Head and Master Arborist, volunteers to prune the four elm trees. 2015 - Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD)

awards Kenwood School a Cynthia Krieg Education grant and a cost share grant to cover \$10,015 for watershed curriculum, raingarden excavation and signage. Art and poetry engraving to be funded privately.

April-August, 2015 - Metro Blooms designs a raingarden, sparing the elm trees and integrating a sculpted stepping stone path. Rich Harrison, Metroblooms landscape architect, incorporates over 20 infiltration columns (depth 4 feet) and 4 inch deep mini raingardens ranging in size from 20-75 square feet designed to mitigate significant storm water runoff from asphalt playground. Harrison volunteers with Mojsilov to plan the stone path. Both Harrison and Mojsilov magnanimously donate significant time and resources, thought, muscle and sweat.

August, 2015 - Excavation complete thanks to 2 days of hard work by the Conservation Corps and volunteer Rich Harrison. Stones prepared with chisel and blowtorch and placed ever so beautifully using forklift and brute force by Mojsilov

September, 2015: Engraving of Erdrich poem to occur on-site. Erdrich has written a site specific poem for the stones.

Kenwood Corner to page 13





**END OF SUMMER...PREPARING FOR DISASTER?**

By Jim Lenfestey

EARLY September days were dank with humidity, the morning and evening sun a crimson disc in a scrim of moisture and smoke from Western wildfires. The full August moon dripped blood. Is disaster about to fall upon the earth?

Yes. But not in our neighborhood.

Did you read the article in The New Yorker – “The REALLY Big One,” July 20 issue, about the earthquake and tsunami statistically overdue to hit the Pacific Northwest, making the havoc of Fukushima seem like an afternoon in a child’s play pool?

Two of our adult children live in Seattle, one with four children plus a husband we like a lot too. I sent them the article, with a short note advising them to immediately sell their house and move to Hill and Lake land! They can live in the basement with pets and kids until they find other accommodations. Or we can move to the basement! Or maybe the extra room in your house!

A freak-out, perhaps. Or perhaps not. Read the article.

Back to The New Yorker, this time the Aug 24 issue, and the deeply researched article by Elizabeth Kolbert on the upcoming global climate negotiations in Paris this December, with “global collapse” hanging in the balance. Is she exaggerating? No. Read the article.

Do I sound like a scold? Well, I’m old, and scared, so if those words together make “scold,” so be it, I’m a scold. If well informed on matters of tsunamis and climate change, you’d be a scold too.

What does this have to do with Hill and Lake Press land? Everything. Even a glance around the generally hotter, drought-plagued, glacier-melting planet reveals the simple fact that our region is the safest place for humans to live on Planet Earth! Touched by the Great Lakes and surrounding fourteen thousand smaller ones. Rich farmland to the horizons. Abundant, if changing, forests. Plentiful sunlight and wind to power our region without fossil fuels. Smart, hardworking, four season-loving people, and a tradition of innovative businesses and progressive government, where the challenges of the future are not ignored (e.g. climate change deniers) but embraced.

I hope you are as ecstatic as I am to live in a part of world better prepared, and more resistant to disaster, than any other.

My friend Jim Bogan would disagree. A resident of the heart of the ancient Ozark Mountains in Missouri, he says the next earthquake from the New Madrid fault is gonna get us. That was the largest earthquake ever east of the Rockies, actually four quakes over two weeks in 1811 that, among other wreckage, ran the Mississippi River backwards. But I have looked into this matter and assure HLP readers that further shocks will not do damage here. To wit:

In a report filed in November 2008, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency warned that a serious earthquake in the New Madrid Seismic Zone could result in “the highest economic losses due to a natural disaster in the United States,” further predicting “widespread and catastrophic” damage across Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, and particularly Tennessee, where a 7.7 magnitude quake or greater would cause damage to tens of

thousands of structures affecting water distribution, transportation systems, and other vital infrastructure. (from Wiki).

Minnesota is not mentioned! (Don’t tell my friend but Missouri is on the list).

So add to the long list of benefits of living here the happy discovery that, relative to the rest of the planet, our city and region are not mega-disaster prone. The occasional tornado and blizzard – child’s play. Winter - the snowplows are ready.

We do need to prepare for a flood of climate, tsunami, and earthquake refugees. My basement will not be available. Children and grandchildren currently living in the shadow of California’s “Big One” and Seattle’s “Really Big One” will be living there, even if they don’t realize it yet. Better crowded into Paradise than the hot or hellish alternative.



John Abraham-Watne

**Cedar-Isles-Dean author launches second book**

John Abraham-Watne launched his second book, “Last Man on Campus,” with a reading and reception at Magers & Quinn Bookstore on Thursday, Sept. 3. His first book, “Our Senior Year,” came out in 2014. Abraham-Watne describes “Last Man on Campus” as a supernatural thriller with a surprise ending. (Photo: Dorothy Childers. Caption: Michael Wilson.)

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Alexa Russo

..... taken in the Fine Arts Exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair. Alexa Russo is the subject. Her grandmother, Dorothy Childers from the Hill and Lake Press, was the photographer of the image, taken last year in the Horse Barn at the Fair.

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## SOUTHWEST LRT from page 3

“dewatering” however 15,000 of the 24,000 gallons per day of expected water elimination would be piped to the Pig’s Eye sewage treatment plant because of tunnel contamination.

The idea that people can “manage” water is being sold like comfort food. Hydrologists, geologists, architects and engineers are hired to plan waterproof structures. Sure—in a virtual world. In our world infrastructure is Interstate-35 West falling into the Mississippi or a brain-eating amoeba returning to Lake Minnewaska.

While SWLRT is the most expensive public works program ever proposed in Minnesota wet soil conditions along the proposed route would multiply costs. “Reasonable estimates” versus digging down into a saturated landscape will become obvious if this project makes it through the legal obstacles set up to protect citizens from government-business collusion.

### Conflict of Interest

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) purchased 17-acres of land across the street from the proposed Southwest LRT station at Blake Road. The land deal was brokered in 2011 for \$15-million for redevelopment investment, stormwater storage and Minnehaha Creek restoration.

Normally the last process before shovels break the soil is a watershed district permit. Odds are the appointed MCWD Board of Managers would vote to permit SWLRT construction.

When developers take over a watershed the mandate to protect the water commons is compromised. When taxes were collected by appointed officials in colonial America people revolted.

When SWLRT opponent Bob Carney asked about interest payments on the \$15-million tax payer bond managers skirted the question. Approximately \$100,000 per year in interest payments would be expected.

Below are transcribed legal audio minutes of the May 8, 2014 regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers (appointed by Hennepin and Carver County commissioners).

The discussion centers on SWLRT and 17-acres at 325 Blake Road and West Lake Street, south of Knollwood Mall, in Hopkins, across the street from the proposed Blake SWLRT station. The station location is now part of a strip mall, just south of the railroad tracks and Pizza Luce at 210 North Blake Road. The parcel includes a large cold food grocery storage warehouse, and borders Minnehaha Creek and the Cedar Lake bike trail which is next to the railroad tracks.

### When Developers Take Over the Watershed

The players in this audio transcription of the May 8, 2014 regular MCWD board meeting include:

—Sherry Davis White, president, Orono, term expired 3/15 (wife of former Orono mayor, Jim White who organizes housing developments), reappointed until 3/18

—Brian Shekleton, vice president, St. Louis Park, term expires 3//16 (works for Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin)

—Richard Miller, treasurer, Edina, 3/17 (former Wells Fargo employee who arranged bonding, government finance) Wells Fargo is financing the Blake Street bond purchase.

—Jeff Casale, secretary, Shorewood, 3/15 (realtor); Kurt Rogness of Minneapolis, architect, was appointed for a three-year term replacing Casale. Minor felony charges against Casale for using MCWD staff in his private real estate business were dropped because “the alleged embezzlement occurred outside the statute of limitations.”

Three managers were absent:

—Jim Calkins, Minnetonka, 3/16 (PhD, professor Horticultural Science UMN)

—Pamela Blixt, Minneapolis, 3/17 (MA public administration, City of Minneapolis emergency services)

—Bill Olson, Victoria, 3/16 (engineer Rockwell International)

All but one of the seven managers represents Minneapolis suburbs.

### Transcript

—Richard Miller “...the worst could be that LRT

didn’t get approved...we’ve got to do a quiet plan if LRT doesn’t go through and it (the land) doesn’t have its commercial value at its highest and best use as a train station site....We’ve got to build in our budget someplace (for) the losses we’re going to absorb on disposing of that site, because we always know [sic] we’ve got more in it than we’ll get from it but the benefits of the (Minnehaha) creek frontage, and the (storm water) storage capacity, etc. you know it had certain value to us and so that could cover the, but you know, if we do have a problem in 2 or 3 years or 4 years you know let’s not have it in a situation where we’re in a disaster with no plan. And I don’t think it would take much of an effort to plan it out, you know, how we’re going to pay for the costs.”

[The bonding loan to be paid back with tax money comes due in 2017]

—James Wisker, MCWD staff Director of Planning, Projects and Land Conservation: “By the end of July [2014] we should have a lot more clarity...worst case scenario planning we should revisit like, July 24th by then all municipal consent should have occurred.”

[In a 6/16/14 email Wisker wrote to the author: “Regarding (SWLRT) dewatering. I referenced that there would be no system in place to perpetually dewater following construction completion.”

—Richard Miller: “We can’t be naked when that \$15-million comes due (in) 2017....We’re planning for the best but we’re ready for the worst”.

—unidentified male voice: “When we started on this...we had very strong interest in senior housing...there’s no question it’s going to be more valuable with light rail...”

—Brian Shekleton: “And I will offer that light rail will happen...”

—Jeff Casale: (interrupts) “That’s going in the minutes I think.”

— (laugh)

—Brian Shekleton continues: “and by every indication I get that commitment from (Minneapolis) city council members.”

Jeff Casale: “If we’re going to have this on the record...disaster is nothing like I would have considered it as. I think the property has been improved significantly from the work that we’ve done surrounding it...whether or not LRT goes in that property will have significant real estate value and I would not characterize it at all as disaster planning.”

Richard Miller: “Well, you can call it what you want but it will be (a disaster) when the note comes due and we got a third of the value of the note.”

(To hear the transcript of the 5/8/2014 MCWD meeting go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urIqTx1HF8Q>, and forward to minute 13:10 for the discussion transcribed above.)

(The 9/22/11 MCWD meeting is a discussion authorizing a \$15-million bond purchase of 17 acres adjacent to the proposed SWLRT Blake station. To hear the 51:25 minute audiotape go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urIqTx1HF8Q>.

The voting managers of a permitting agency should be cognizant of the appearance of conflict of interest regarding public money and development decisions. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District deciders have violated public trust with their ambitious financial scheme that supersedes the preservation and protection of the famous Minneapolis Chain of Lakes.

### Water Standards Enforcement

Neither the MCWD nor the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has enforcement powers. The state legislature did not grant permitting agencies police powers.

It took the DNR three years to win a court order to stop illegal pumping of groundwater from 1800 West Lake Street into the lagoon. Some 240,000 gallons per day of water from a sub-sub basement parking garage was piped into a city sewer emptying into the lagoon between Lake of the Isles and Calhoun.

Two kinds of pollution flowed into the lagoon and Calhoun and down the water chain: a temperature differential and garage drippings including grains of heavy

metals from cars mixed with oil products. The temperature change was noticed by Loppett organizers when parts of the lagoon failed to freeze which could have allowed skiers to fall through rotten ice.

The problem was “solved” by moving the discharge pipe. Before the Calhoun apartment construction the Minneapolis Park Board had spent a quarter million dollars on Lake Calhoun clean up and new wetlands.

Calhoun and Cedar lakes have six of the city’s dozen swimming beaches. Lake Hiawatha at the butt end of Minnehaha Creek was closed to swimmers for most of the summer of 2015 because of high E. coli counts from goose, duck and pet poop. Water obeys gravity and all the yard and street runoff drains into the lakes and Minnehaha Creek.

The Park Board warns swimmers to stay out of all city lakes for two days after a rain event.

The new \$7-million natural filtration public swimming pool at Webber Park in north Minneapolis seems to be the future of safe swimming in our city.

### Small Scale Flexibility

Nobody is disputing the need for transportation.

LRT is 20th century technology—big, clunky, really pricey and fixed in a wheel hub-and-spokes configuration. We need to have smaller, more numerous and flexible transport choices. The greater Twin Cities are growing in an expanding circumference with multiple “centers.”

SWLRT is bully politics at its most primitive, threatening the Minneapolis Park Board with millions in funding cuts, threatening office holders with no political party reelection support in this one-party area.

SWLRT is a jobs construction program selling \$850-million-plus of “free” federal money as a cure-all for the hours-long constipated rushhour commute. To build a big linear system would be transit without the mass. SWLRT is inefficient in time and money, does not provide jobs and sabotages our water in the city and state named “water.” Mi-ni is Dakota for water.

### Revised SWLRT plan from page one

inevitable from construction of the south tunnel, given the recent experience at the nearby Tryg’s site on West Lake Street when contractors there tried using the same pile-driving technique that Southwest Project Office engineers plan to use on the LRT tunnel. Residents are unwilling to accept the SPO’s dismissive “trust us” assurances and the lack of specific, enforceable procedures for settling damage claims.

Calhoun-Isles sustained damage from construction at the Tryg’s site, even though it sits 180 feet away. The Loop-Calhoun condominiums and apartments adjacent to Tryg’s suffered considerably more damage. The tunnel as planned will be constructed two to three feet from the residence tower and six inches from the parking structure. Moving the tunnel construction area farther away from the residence tower at the Corridor’s “pinch point” would almost certainly require demolishing some of the Cedar Lake Shores townhomes on the other side.

The Transportation and Public Works Committee did unanimously pass a resolution co-authored by Palmisano, Bender, and Reich that calls on the city to request emergency response and spill prevention plans from Twin Cities & Western, the railroad whose trains currently haul Class 3 flammable materials – ethanol – as well as other cargo through the Kenilworth Corridor.

As summarized by Dylan Thomas in the Southwest Journal, the resolution also seeks a public process to address neighbors’ concerns about rail traffic; public disclosure of freight routing plans during light rail construction; and a report to the city on its liability in the case of a spill, fire or explosion. From the Met Council, the resolution seeks a report on similar instances of freight and light rail co-location elsewhere in the country; inclusion of a hazardous materials response plan in the project’s final environmental impact statement; and a discussion with the city on how the agency will help to ensure TC&W cooperates.

Palmisano said the full council plans to consider a similar but broader resolution in October that would address rail safety concerns citywide.



## CEDAR ISLES DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (CIDNA)

By Monica Smith, Recorder

### CEDAR ISLES DEAN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES, September 9, 2015

The meeting was held at Jones-Harrison Residence. Board members in attendance: Chair Craig Westgate, Vice Chair John Wessinger, Secretary Rosanne Halloran, Treasurer Roger Klimek, Steve Goltry, Barbara Lunde, Elaine May, James Reid, Amanda Vallone, and Mike Wilson. Staff: Monica Smith

Chair Craig Westgate called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

#### Announcements

The Park Board is facing funding gaps for neighborhood parks. A group has formed to assess the chances for a referendum. A public forum will be held to hear how other cities have tackled funding challenges. The forum is Tuesday, September 29, 6:00-8:30 p.m. at Walker Art Center. The forum is free but advance registration is required as space is limited. Register by noon, September 28 by emailing [closingthegap@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:closingthegap@minneapolisparcs.org) or calling 612-313-7789.

#### Treasurer's Report

Roger Klimek presented the Treasurer's Report for June-August 2015.

#### NRP/ CPP Report, Monica Smith

Expenses for the current Community Participation Program (CPP) funds were reviewed.

The NRP Committee did not meet in August. The September meeting is being rescheduled but the date has not been set.

The next gardening day is September 26, 9:00-11:00 a.m. at Park Siding Park.

#### Uptown Community Engagement, Rosanne Halloran and Mike Wilson

Neighborhoods and business associations held three meetings to find ways to address common issues in the greater Uptown area. The group requested \$350 from each neighborhood to hire a facilitator to keep moving forward. A motion to contribute \$350 for this effort did not pass.

#### Council Member Lisa Goodman, Ward 7

The City of Minneapolis public hearing for Southwest LRT will be Tuesday, September 15, 9:30 a.m. at City Hall. Public comments and testimony are encouraged.

Cedar Lake Parkway will be closed beginning October 19 for one week to resurface the road between I-394 and the BNSF railroad bridge.

Lunch with Lisa: September 30, noon at St. Thomas, the topic is Nicollet Mall final design and October 21, noon at St. Thomas School of Law, the speaker is Secretary of State Steve Simon to discuss the Voting Rights Act.

A new resolution commits the City to planting more pollinator friendly plants and decreasing pesticide use on city property.

#### Trammell Crow Project, John Wessinger

The vibratory method of placing pilings at the Trammel Crow project at 3118 W Lake St resulted in damage to the Loop Calhoun Condominiums. The Loop hired an engineering firm to document damage to the Loop and to monitor the foundation construction at

3118 W Lake. The Loop will send a letter to the City Council about the problems and the implications for construction of the Southwest LRT tunnel in the pinch point area of the Kenilworth Corridor.

John Wessinger and Bob Corrick will draft a resolution for the CIDNA Board to consider at the next meeting. The resolution will ask the Met Council to identify a back-up construction method and associated costs if the planned method causes damage to nearby property.

#### Midtown Greenway Coalition, Mike Wilson

There have been three separate robberies on the Greenway (near Cedar Ave and Bloomington Ave). All have been late at night. The coalition is working with police and adding more trail watch volunteers. Tips: Call 911 to report suspicious behavior and ride with a buddy whenever possible.

A progressive dinner is being organized to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Midtown Greenway Coalition – Sunday, October 4, 4:30 p.m.

Support the coalition by becoming a member.

#### Minneapolis Anti-Idling Ordinance, Barbara Lunde

Barbara Lunde raised a concern about idling trains that lay over in the Kenilworth Corridor.

Minneapolis has an anti-idling ordinance that restricts idling of cars and other gas or diesel powered vehicles to no more than three minutes in a one-hour period. A suggestion was made to call 311 to report idling train.

#### Fall Festival, Elaine May

Volunteers are needed for the October 11th Fall Festival.

#### Lake of the Isles Warming House, Cliff Swenson, Park Board and Kathy Spraitz, Lowry Hill resident

The Park Board has been approached by several area residents about upgrading/changing the warming house at Lake of the Isles. Before they proceed on a more formal basis, they wanted general feedback from surrounding neighborhoods. The Park Board does not have funding for the project so support would come from other organizations.

#### West Lake Multimodal Transportation Study, Nathan Koster and team

As a result of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Metropolitan Council and the City of Minneapolis for Southwest LRT, an area-wide multimodal transportation study is being conducted for the West Lake Station area.

The team reviewed proposed refinements and improvements for the station area that fall into one of three categories:

Level 1 - Recommendations as refinements to the station area design. These items cannot increase the project costs.

Level 2 – Improvements that are outside of the budget of SWLRT that ideally would be implemented by opening day of SWLRT.

Level 3 – Larger projects that require major capital investments.

The CIDNA Board stressed the need for connectivity from the Cedar-Isles-Dean neighborhood to the

West Lake Station. This issue has not been resolved.

A community workshop will be held on Wednesday, October 7, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Jones-Harrison Residence.

#### Pedestrian Safety Committee, Steve Goltry

The community continues to observe and record traffic violations; results are being incorporated into the Multimodal Transportation Study.

#### New Business

The Wine Tasting Fundraiser will be held on Wednesday, October 28, 6:00-9:00 p.m. at Calhoun Square. Tickets are \$25/advance and \$35/door and will be available soon. CIDNA keeps 100% of the proceeds of tickets that we sell. Volunteers are needed the night of the event.

Amanda Vallone volunteered to administer a Facebook page for CIDNA.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

#### Next meeting

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 14, 2015, 6:00 p.m. at Jones-Harrison.

Note to CIDNA residents: sign up for our monthly e-newsletter by sending a request to [info@cidna.org](mailto:info@cidna.org).

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## KENWOOD ISLES AREA ASSOCIATION (KIAA)

BY SHAWN SMITH

### September 2015 KIAA Meeting Minutes

KIAA Board met September 14th, 2015 at Kenwood Rec Center. Chair Jeanette Colby called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Board Members present: Jeanette Colby, Larry Moran, Mike Bono, Jim Gilroy, Ed Pluimer, Josine Peters, Angie Erdrich, Shawn Smith (minute taker).

Others present: Park Police Chief Ohotto, Mark Holtey (Kenwood Rec Center), Jean Deatruck, Jody Strakosch, and 6 other neighbors

### Opening Business

September Agenda was approved.

The Board recognized with gratitude outgoing member Kathy Low for her many contributions and long service to the neighborhood. The board also expressed appreciation Larry Moran for Chairing KIAA for the past three years.

It was agreed that a November KIAA newsletter will be published and mailed. Articles will be needed and will need to be sent to Jean Deatruck.

Angie Erdrich led a discussion regarding the final cost of the Raingarden Project, which will be finalized at a future date. Angie noted the special contributions of artist Zoran Mojsilov to the rain garden at Kenwood School. This garden will be incorporated into a comprehensive curriculum about watersheds.

### Bylaw and Finance Update – Ed Pluimer

Ed shared that he will put together a list of proposed bylaw changes that were discussed at the July KIAA meeting to be submitted.

Ed gave an overview of committed and past spending as a follow up to the account balance update emailed prior to the meeting. It was determined to maintain one KIAA checking account going forward, instead of two, and Ed named some follow up tasks that he would tend to in order to ensure KIAA is compliant with the city policy, and it was also determined to maintain a May 31st fiscal year end and coincide with the annual election of the KIAA board.

### Kenwood Rec Center – Marc Holtey

KIAA invited Marc Holtey to present funding requests for Rec Center priority items. Marc proposed the replacement of 3 picnic tables at about \$2800 each, and acquisition of a sound system at about \$1000. A vote on the picnic tables was deferred until ownership of the space where they are located is confirmed (school or park). Additionally, it was suggested that the Rec Center investigate whether fund-

ing for the tables could come from the Park Board. Ed Pluimer pointed out that a portable sound system could be used by all the Rec Center user groups, including KIAA, and Larry Moran asked Marc to provide more details on related power equipment and costs. Marc will look into this.

### East Cedar Lake Beach Update – Park Police Chief Ohotto/Matt Spies

Chief Ohotto shared that there has been a significant reduction in police reports for ECLB: 69 so far this year, compared to 114 last year. Most reports were misdemeanors, and many were the result of proactive policing. He attributes the improvement to the community involvement at the beach, led by Matt Spies and the East Cedar Beach Committee, as well as concerned residents calling 911 when incidents occurred. Chief Ohotto recommended that KIAA plan to maintain funding for additional patrols at the same level in 2016.

The next Subcommittee Meeting is on October 13th at 7PM, Kenwood Rec Center. Residents are encouraged to attend; Matt pointed out that the problems are not solved and will need continued commitment by neighbors to create permanent change.

The board addressed the Next Door thread advocating a petition to request permit-only parking as a way to manage impacts of the beach on the neighborhood. KIAA has discussed this issue in the past with Councilmember Lisa Goodman and found that the area is not likely to fulfill requirements for a “critical parking area” set out by city ordinance. The board agreed, however, that the East Cedar Beach Committee should reevaluate this as a solution to ensure that any recommendation reflects current views.

### Amanda Vallone - beArtrageous

Amanda on behalf of beArtrageous proposed some activities for ECLB for 2016. Activities would be for residents of all ages: potlucks, craft parties, coffee and sunset gatherings, etc. Activities could be funded by CPP or participants.

Amanda requested funding from KIAA to fund Thrill Kenwood on October 24th. The activity is a neighborhood dance to Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” at the corner of Penn and 21st St. Proceeds in excess of expenses go to Bridge for Youth, an emergency shelter for 10-17 year old youth. KIAA approved \$800 to fund the event, about 40% of the budget.

### MPRB Ice Rink Warming Hut – Cliff

### Swenson/Kathy Spraitz

Cliff Swenson of the MPRB informed KIAA that the MPRB is considering updating the warming hut (without disruption to the footprint or skating area) at Lake of the Isles and across other skating rinks in the park system. It would be done in conjunction with the Minneapolis Parks Foundation. They are beginning by introducing the idea to neighborhood boards, and if the project moves forward there would be a community engagement process in the future. Kathy Spraitz of Lowry Hill is presently the lead volunteer and would ask neighborhood boards to appoint a liaison if the project advances. A potential goal is to have the project done by Fall 2017.

### Southwest Light Rail Transit – Jeanette Colby/Shawn Smith/Jody Strakosch

Jody provided an update from the Community Advisory Committee, which met recently and the Project Office is proceeding as if they have full funding. Jody asked that the Project Office’s work on issues raised in the Supplementary Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) responses be a standing topic on the agenda going forward. KIAA and others have raised serious issues including co-location, noise, vibration, and visual impacts. Meetings occur the 4th Thursday of every month.

Jeanette asked if there is interest in inviting County Commissioner Marion Greene to a KIAA meeting or to hold a separate neighborhood meeting.

KIAA agreed to distribute the SDEIS response to additional public officials. The purpose is to gain support to get answers to those questions posed in the response, submitted to the Project Office in July 2015, that have yet to be answered.

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Jeanette Colby at 8:50 p.m.

**Updates:** If you are interested in receiving monthly email updates, please email us at [kiaa55405@gmail.com](mailto:kiaa55405@gmail.com). Also please visit our website at [kenwoodminneapolis.org](http://kenwoodminneapolis.org) to learn more. If you are interested in participating on the Board, please contact us. The next Kenwood Isles Area Association Board meeting is Monday, October 5th from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Kenwood Recreation Center. Monthly meetings are held on the first calendar Monday of each month unless otherwise noted. KIAA invites and encourages participation by every resident to each program, service and event organized by KIAA. Should you require an accommodation in order for you to fully participate, or if you require this document in a different format, please let us know by contacting us at [kenwoodminneapolis.org](http://kenwoodminneapolis.org)

## LOWRY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (LHNA)

BY JANIS CLAY

### Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association Board Minutes Tuesday, September 1, 2015

Present - Board Members: Phil Hallaway, President; Michael Cockson, Vice President; Dan Aronson, Treasurer; Janis Clay, Secretary; Susie Galiano; Thomas D. Huppert; Clint Conner; Emily Beugen; Baygan Hartzheim; Sarah Janecek; Rebecca Graham; Jennifer Bickett.

Present – Guests and staff: Lisa Goodman, Seventh Ward Minneapolis City Council Representative; Chris Madden, LHNA Coordinator; Cliff Swenson; Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Kathy Spraitz; Ryan Johnson, 5th Precinct, Minneapolis Police Department; David Galligan, Walker Art Center.

President Phil Hallway called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

**Approval of Minutes:** Tom Huppert moved and Dan Aronson seconded approval of the minutes of the June 2, 2015, Board meeting. All approved.

**Community Announcements:** Seventh Ward City Council Representative Lisa Goodman presented community announcements. Lunch with Lisa will take place on September 30th. The topic will be the final design for the Nicollet Mall.

**Minneapolis Police Department, 5th Precinct:** Sargent Ryan Johnson addressed crime and safety in the 5th Precinct, including how the 5th precinct allocates limited resources and what residents can do to assist in crime prevention and investigation. He distributed a list of crimes reported during August in Lowry Hill, and crime prevention tips and resources available to residents to stay informed.

**Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board:** Cliff Swenson, of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, discussed the possibility of redesigning and rebuilding the warming hut at the Lake of the Isles skating rink. Plans are very preliminary, but the thinking is to redesign the structure in a modular fashion, which could be stored off

site, and could serve as a model to use for other locations. He is seeking input from neighborhood associations, and will prepare a report to the Park Board.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Dan Aronson gave the Treasurer’s report. We have \$29,800 in the bank and some expenses have been prepaid. We are starting off the season from a solid financial position.

### Committee Reports:

**Environment:** Several years ago, seven “floating islands” were installed in Spring Lake in an effort to improve water quality and provide habitat. Two have drifted to shore. Susie Galiano will contact former LHNA Board member, Craig Wilson, who was involved in the original installation of the islands.

**Zoning and Planning:** Zoning and Planning Committee Chairs Clint Conner and Michael Cockson handled a zoning request regarding 1611 Dupont during the LHNA Board’s summer break. Sisyphus Brewing has submitted an application to add a small sidewalk café and music entertainment. There will be no speakers or music outside. A public hearing will be held on September 15th.

**Crime and Safety:** There was no further report in addition to the earlier presentation by Sargent Johnson.

**Events:** The Ice Cream Social was a success, with about 220 people in attendance. One attendee wrote a letter to Hill and Lake Press, saying she did not feel welcomed. The Board discussed ways to improve the event for new residents.

**Neighborhood Priorities Survey Working Group/Community Participation Program:** The Board discussed neighborhood priorities, and where the LHNA should focus its efforts. Construction at the Walker, the Sculpture Garden, and Hennepin/Lyndale will complicate decisions and timing. Sarah Janecek will contact Lisa Goodman to see if someone from the City would be available to discuss issues surrounding deterioration and repair of sidewalks in the neighborhood.

**Communications:** The Board discussed possible improvements to the website.

**Overview & Status of LHNA Staff:** Since 2012, LHNA has paid by the hour for some communication, website, and miscellaneous services. The Board discussed how to best use and account for these.

### New Business:

**Greater Uptown Community Partnership:** Phil Hallaway and Emily Beugen have attended meetings of the Greater Uptown Community Partnership. The partnership is seeking \$350 to \$500 contributions from various associations near Uptown.

The contributions would be used to pay for coordination services for the partnership. After discussion, the Board declined to contribute at this time.

**Potential narrowing of Vineland Place:** David Galligan of the Walker Art Center explained that Vineland Place was constructed to be very wide to accommodate the Guthrie Theater’s bus and automobile traffic. The width is no longer needed since the theater has relocated. A narrower Vineland would add green space and improve pedestrian and traffic issues. Future funding for such a project is likely from the City of Minneapolis and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, but is not available yet. Because it would be most efficient to do the Vineland project in conjunction with the Walker and the Sculpture Garden projects, there is an immediate need for \$30,000 for an initial engineering study. Mr. Galligan asked LHNA to consider contributing to fund this study. The Board discussed the request and asked for additional information.

LHNA’s next Board meeting will be Tuesday, October 6, 2015, at the Kenwood Rec Center. All residents are welcome. Everyone is encouraged to visit the LHNA website at [www.lowryhillneighborhood.org](http://www.lowryhillneighborhood.org), and sign up to receive LHNA’s monthly E-Blast about events in the neighborhood. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.



Kenwood Corner continued from page 6



Metroblooms landscape architect, Rich Harrison (R), has volunteered many hours of work to this rain-garden project. He is shown here with neighborhood volunteers John and Jules Burke who helped pick axe and haul mulch on a Saturday morning in August.



Poet Louise Erdrich and Sculptor Zoran Mojsilov discuss their one-of-a-kind collaboration underway at Kenwood Corner. Zoran has donated his efforts and many of the stones which are sourced uniquely, some from an 1800's family gravestone business in Delano, Minnesota and one chunk from the demolished Metropolitan Building. A collaboration between sculptor Zoran Mojsilov and writer Louise Erdrich is part of the vision of a "destination raingarden" at the corner.

2016- Plan to create audiofile online of Louise reading poem, Mojsilov discussing origin of the stones and Rich Harrison educating about the unique features of raingardens.

September, 2015: Through the MCWD Cynthia Krieg grant, Joan Freese, Master Water Steward and Curriculum Consultant is working with teachers to imple-

# sand upon the waters

By Tom H. Cook

The swimming season is coming to a close. Whether in Cedar Lake or the Pacific Ocean, the subtle shift has begun. Pockets of very cold water, previously a refreshing anomaly, are now asserting themselves like Trump followers. The vanguard will soon become the establishment and while "The Donald" will likely leave the race entranced and distracted by a new shiny object, the water will turn cold.

This saddens me because swimming is what I laughingly refer to as my exercise. I splash, paddle, and tread water with joyous abandon. Between pretending I am Lloyd Bridges in "Sea Hunt" and frolicking underwater, I feel energized, youthful and refreshed. A jogger friend scoffed at the number of carbs I burn and how little cardio effect I gain from my water play. I was going to let his criticism pass or more correctly roll off my back, but when he added I looked childish, I was stung enough to retort, "At least when I finish my workout I'm not all sweaty."

One of the few things I took from Camp Ockanickon (aside from a lifetime hatred of oatmeal and singing "Mamma's Little Baby Loves Shortnin' Bread") is feeling comfortable in the water. Camp was deep in the pine barrens of southern New Jersey on a dark, picturesque, spring fed cedar lake. Even at 4' 4" I could not see my feet standing in waist deep water. This unnerved me and I failed the deep water swimming test (jump in and swim 25 yards any stroke) I was sent to remedial swim class every day after breakfast. As a non-swimmer I could not join any other activity until I passed. Too terrified to leap into the ink colored water, I generally needed to be pushed. After splashing around frantically I would grab the pole and be fished out in tears.

In the afternoon during compulsory free swim time, my stigma, wearing a red non-swimmer string around my wrist, confined me to the shallow area. Much worse, the caste system carried over to the mess hall, the cabin, and all non-water activities. Blue stringers (50 yards) and white stringers (100 yards) heaped scorn on us ("Red stringers, red stringers why are you here? Red stringers, red stringers have some beer?"). We would then be doused with whatever non-beer beverage was available.

I have been dancing around the most embarrassing part. I was the lowest of the red stringers: I wore nose plugs! Decades later I have difficulty admitting it. Even other non-swimmers scorned me. The plugs, pink to simulate a flesh tone I have never seen on a living person, was the only way I could navigate in the

water. Blue and white stringers might deign to come into the shallow end but I quickly and painfully learned they were on a mission to pull back and snap the rubber strap. The sting subsides long before the red mark on the back of my neck. Perhaps that is why I never became a bra snapper in my adolescence.

Some of the counselors were college kids ready for "Hi Jinx" (it was the 50s) like sneaking out to the girls' camp across the lake after lights out, then regale us with their exploits the next morning. Joey was different. He was an east Camden (N.J.) tough guy who someone (possibly a judge) thought could benefit from a summer of sunshine and fresh air. Even as a child I sensed his anger and despair marooned in a wholesome woodsy setting with a cabin full of brats. His surliness made what happened all the more surprising.

Joey was on lifeguard duty, supervising the shallow (red string/loser) area. Standing on the dock he beckoned me over. I'll never forget his words. "Hey squirt! Yeah you, dum dum with the nose plugs. Blow a little stream of air out your nose when you go under. Just a trickle. Then you won't need that stupid s \_ \_ \_ on your nose."

It was not a Hallmark moment, but I did it and it worked! It might have helped knowing Joey couldn't care less. Other counselors had more patiently told me to blow air out. When I tried for them, I either panicked and, seeking to please them, blew all the air out at once, or I accidentally inhaled. With the breathing mastered my fear diminished and I was able to enjoy the water. Thanks to Joey I left camp a blue stringer.

My "instruction" was a momentary distraction for a bored, sullen teenager. Joey, if he is living could not possibly comprehend that I still give him thanks every time I wade into the water. "Blow it out your nose slow, dum dum!"

I am not talking about mentoring, adoption, or huge life changing sacrifices and good deeds. My focus is "Joey moments." Serendipitous chance encounters where a word, an act, a small gesture made a huge difference. The classic is "The Lone Ranger" leaving before he can be thanked unaware of how he has altered history. I am not so grandiose but I really hope I have done small anonymous kindnesses that have been meaningful to others.

**Tom H. Cook has often imagined writing a letter of support for Joey to his probation officer or appearing in court on his behalf**

ment a watershed curriculum which includes planting of the raingarden, field trips to nearby lakes and a visit to Minnehaha Falls and hike to the mouth of the creek at Mississippi River.

2016- Plan to create film of Louise Erdrich reading poem, Mojsilov discussing origin of the stones and Rich Harrison educating about the unique features of raingardens.

Volunteers needed to help students plant on September 29th. Contact: [angie\\_sandeep@yahoo.com](mailto:angie_sandeep@yahoo.com)

The Kenwood School Principal, Aura Wharton-Beck, wishes to thank all of the donors and volunteers for educating children about personal stewardship of the local water supply, protection of pollinators and for creating a significant piece of public art in the process.

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## Backyard Summer

By Marian Moore

I travel a lot for my work, away from our little Kenwood town. I am a facilitator, leadership coach and organizer in the realm of changing how we, as a society, work with money. During those travels, I'm often at conferences that engage people to grapple with strategies for social change. I listen to extraordinary leaders who challenge the audience to step up to their own potential to be part of the solution. Over the years, as I listen and consider, my little mantra has been, "I want to take a stand in my own backyard."

I was raised to be an activist, growing up in Washington, D.C. in the sixties with parents who were thoroughly engaged in the civil rights and peace movements. We marched with our church after the 1968 riots, in the anti-war moratoria in 1969. I was arrested at the Pentagon when I was 14 when my mom arranged for my brother and me to be part of the beatnik priest Malcolm Boyd's liturgy there.

More recently I have been part of the growing movement in the country sounding the alarm about climate change. More specifically, in addition to attending marches in DC, NYC and St Paul, I have been helping to raise money for organizations – namely MN350 and Honor the Earth — seeking to block the Canadian company Enbridge from expanding pipelines that carry dirty and dangerous oil from the Alberta Tar Sands and the Bakken oil fields. The oil in these pipelines are not to serve Minnesota, but bound for export perilously close to the lakes, streams, and rivers of Northern Minnesota. Bill McKibben recently called Minnesota "ground zero for climate change" because of this proposed expansion. Not only is blocking the flow of this oil critical to slowing climate chaos, but also to protecting our water supply: love water, not oil!

Meanwhile over the last year, with the emergence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, I have been excited by signals of a cultural shift here in Minnesota. Historically my experience has been that when the idea of racism is brought up, white Minnesotans reject any role in the perpetuation of the system by defensively saying, "I am not a racist." It has prevented us from looking at the institutional racism that lives on in our state. At the various BLM events I've attended this year – at Mall of America, midtown and at MLK Park — I was heartened by the engagement of high school and college students calling for recognition of systemic racism and its dismantling.

Another signal of change was revealed at the Dakota, in January when the Steeles – the extraordinary singing family who hail from Gary, Indiana—performed a moving and personal tribute to Martin Luther King. In the 35 years I have known them, worked with them and attended their shows, I had never heard them tell stories publicly of how they have been personally affected by racism as they did that January night. They never had.

During our glorious spring and summer, I had three full months without travel. Mn350 (www.mn350.org) hired a new leader, Kevin Whelan, a community organizer who has a close working relationship with Anthony Newby, the leader of Neighborhoods Organizing for Change (www.mnnoc.org), a leading racial justice organization in Minneapolis. I told Kevin I'd like to do a house party for the two organizations in recognition of this MOMENT in the evolution of the broader movement for justice and sustainability. I wanted to take a stand in recognition of how these struggles are connected. Kevin and Anthony were game. We set a date for a backyard party and I started to organize.

Because my early career was in music, I have lots of talented musician friends. I invited them to sing ("Yes of course!"). I asked Molly Broder to donate food ("Yes of course!"). The new Northfield-based Keepsake Cidery donated two cases of hard cider. I assembled a diverse array of co-hosts and set about making the invitation list. And I began to clean my backyard.

For me to make a priority of tending to my backyard, apparently it required that it be part of my activism! I scavenged new plants – painted ferns! Russian sage! — via "Nextdoor Kenwood." My friends Georgianna and



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HILL LAKE PRESS  
Selected Real Estate Sales  
August 2015

STREET ADDRESS	ORIGINAL PRICE	Seller Contrib	DAYS MKT	SALE PRICE	TYPE	BED	BATH	SQ FT	TAX VALUE	PROP TAX	YR BLT
2881 Irving S	\$ 124,000	\$ 3,690	62	123,000	C	1/1	450	80,500	903	1916	
2716 Humboldt S # 301	173,000	3,500	12	173,000	C	2/1	860	157,000	2,615	1926	
1770 Bryant S # 102	197,700	5,697	32	189,000	C	2/2	1,316	211,000	3,262	1968	
2300 Girard S # 303	199,900	-	25	195,000	C	2/1	930	185,000	2,786	1916	
3104 W Lake St # 308	219,900	-	26	220,000	C	1/1	957	186,000	3,098	2007	
918 Lincoln	240,000	7,620	4	254,000	C	2/3	1,466	207,500	3,223	1989	
1945 Fremont S # 2	269,900	-	53	250,000	C	2/1	1,300	181,500	2,863	1913	
3151 Dean Crt B105	259,900	-	344	254,000	C	2/2	1,525	263,000	4,445	1983	
818 Summit Ave	349,900	-	110	349,900	TWN	2/2	1,940	329,000	5,494	1990	
2621 Humboldt S # 1	358,000	-	13	360,000	C	2/2	1,600	297,500	4,950	1910	
1936 Dupont S	365,000	1,000	26	365,000	TWN	2/3	1,700	304,500	4,932	1976	
2700 Drew	375,000	-	13	420,000	H	3/3	2,774	476,000	7,929	1952	
3145 Dean Crt # 804	429,900	-	123	400,000	C	3/2	1,750	315,000	5,110	1983	
1905 Fremont S	484,900	-	26	466,000	TWN	3/4	2,065	385,000	6,375	1981	
2324 Girard S	519,900	10,000	136	458,700	H	5/3	2,955	503,500	8,483	1900	
1809 Irving S	650,000	4,250	61	550,000	H	4/4	3,313	517,000	6,681	1900	
2006 Fremont S	699,900	-	15	699,900	H	5/4	2,809	495,000	8,349	1907	
1811 Emerson S	950,000	-	455	772,460	H	5/5	6,400	935,000	16,987	1907	
1819 Logan S	1,375,000	-	696	1,025,000	C	3/4	4,213	1,122,500	21,018	1914	
2726 Kenilworth Place	1,490,000	-	74	1,322,000	H	4/4	4,002	1,156,500	21,615	1925	
1925 Penn S	1,675,000	6,950	51	1,537,500	H	6/5	7071	1,572,500	30,035	1902	
57 Groveland Terrace	1,800,000	-	0	1,800,000	H	4/5	4,954	750,000	13,506	1914	

Sources: Harvey Ettinger Steve Havig

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This Little Light: Prudence Johnson, Marian Moore, Jearlyn Steele, Claudia Schmidt and Jevetta Steele on Marian's back porch.



Mayor Betsy Hodges

Joy came over to help clear debris and transplant perennials. The wondrous "Garden Ninja" came to pull weeds and put down 3 cubic yards of mulch. I bought some new plants from Mother Earth Gardens where my daughter Maeve's employment gave her a nice discount. By party day, the 15th of July, my yard looked better than it had in the 27 years I've lived here. By a long shot!

The weather eventually cooperated after some summer showers just minutes before party time. Over 100

people poured into my backyard on 22nd Street including neighbors, old friends, friends of friends, our mayor, and activists from the two organizations.

I welcomed the guests and set the stage, that is, our back deck. Singers Larry Long and Claudia Schmidt started the evening with original songs that invoked the party's themes with virtuoso Dan Chouinard on the keys. Next up was Mayor Hodges, days away from her trip to

Backyard Summer To page 15



# Mensa and Me

By Madeleine Lowry

I first learned about Mensa, the high IQ society, while riding the NYC subways as a teenager. Riding subways was something I spent quite a lot of time doing since it took over two hours each way to get to my high school in the Bronx.

Why was a nice girl from Queens taking three different subways to a gritty part of the Bronx just to attend school? The Bronx High School of Science was no ordinary high school. It's a specialized public science and math school open to residents of the five boroughs of New York City. Each year 800 open spots are filled through an entrance exam given to approximately 30,000 hopeful eighth graders.

For me, gaining entrance to Bronx Science was like pulling a winning lottery ticket. It allowed me to escape my undistinguished local high school and enter a world of higher learning. Spending hours on a subway seemed like a small price to pay. And whenever we, the kids from Queens, felt sorry for ourselves, we only had to think of our classmates from Staten Island who had to catch the ferry in a commute that took more than three hours in each direction.

In those days Mensa published a sampling of questions from their admission test in Readers Digest. My friends and I entertained ourselves on the long subway rides working practice questions and dreaming about becoming a member of Mensa one day.

A few years ago when I had a hankering for some cerebral stimulation, I thought of those days on the subway. Maybe it was time for me to make an attempt at the Mensa entrance exam? Visiting their website I learned that if you had a score report from a standardized test, like the SAT, that showed that you were in the top 2%, you could submit it and get into Mensa through the back door. And that is how I became a member of Mensa on the merits of a test score from 11th grade.

I laughed all the way to the post office with my application and my dues check. This was going to be fun! I had visions of puzzles and brainteasers being delivered to my mailbox each month. I thought I'd meet super-smart, quirky people at association meetings. Instead what I got

was a rather boring monthly newsletter from the local chapter with a listing of meet-ups in the metro area. "Mensa women who knit, join us at Barbara's house on the first Tuesday of the month." How disappointing. Where were the puzzles?

Which brings me to my third Mensa moment: Prime Digital Academy. In my search for a way to gain some technical skills to reboot my career I'd heard about Hack Reactor and other computer programming boot camps on the coasts and wished I could bring them to Minnesota. In December my wish came true when the first local coding boot camp was announced at Prime Digital Academy in Bloomington. I applied, took the aptitude test and underwent a brief psychological analysis (i.e., interview). I was admitted to the third cohort, a class of 20, which started in June.

This is a Mensa meet-up to beat all Mensa meet-ups! We arrive at 8 each day and are given code puzzles to work. These are difficult, but they are often designed as peer and group exercises so that we can share knowledge. There are no grades and no exams and yet the students are so motivated that they leave class at 5:30 pm only to spend a few more hours coding and researching the technologies we were introduced to during the day. On the weekends, we receive a solo challenge that usually takes more than a dozen hours to complete.

At Prime we have a small supportive learning community. We learn from each other, our instructors, and very directly from the computer itself with the various clues it provides as error messages.

Even outside the classroom we are linked by Slack, an online communication channel. When we are stuck, we can post a question online and our friends help us untangle our code messes. Our classmates also post useful tools they find online, study guides and, sometimes, animated gif rants.

Not an idle pastime, this 18-week program provides an entrée to the software development industry. And unlike a Mensa membership, it is an investment that will pay dividends in the future.

## Backyard Summer From Page 14

the Vatican to engage with other mayors about poverty and climate change. Kevin Whelan and Anthony Newby informed and engaged the crowd with explanations of the work they lead at Mn350 and NOC. We learned how communities of color are often at the front line of the effects of climate change without the infrastructure to support the resilience to recover. Note the effect of the 2012 tornado on Minneapolis' north side.

Kenwood's representative to the legislature Frank Hornstein fired up the crowd in the spirit of his mentor Paul Wellstone. I then asked for money and people gave generously to support the climate justice organizing work of the two organizations while Prudence Johnson and Mary Jane Alm harmonized on the moving song "Only Remembered". Jearlyn and Jevetta Steele then emerged from the back porch to sing a soaring version of "You've Got a Friend" to a transfixed and very happy crowd.

As I spoke with people after the program, mingling among the mulched beds and the new permaculture hugenkultur mound where my tomatoes, okra, kale and cucumbers are growing, I heard so much gratitude for getting to learn, to engage, to give, to enjoy music and to gather where these issues are being discussed. In the privacy of our days, we hear about climate change and often feel powerless, not knowing how or where to engage. When we learn about the deaths of Michael Brown, Sandra Bland and Minnesota's own Marcus Golden, how do we locate our own agency to be part of change? As I explained to the party-goers, in this time of such extraordinary threat, it is also a time of possibility, as these movements are growing and strengthening. People are waking up to what is at stake; that is, our survival.

I recognize my privilege to have enjoyed living in this peaceful neighborhood of extreme natural beauty for 27 years. It is easy to become insulated from the different reality in which other Minnesotans live. It is also important not to. It feels better to recognize and embrace our interconnectedness.

It wasn't until the day after this wonderful fulfilling evening that I realized I had literally manifested the intention of "my little mantra". I took a stand in my own backyard!

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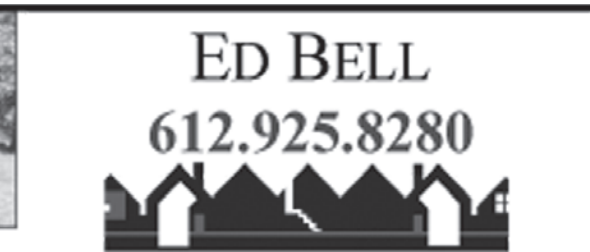
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