

ECCO Board Meeting Minutes for February 7, 2013 at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church

Minutes recorded and submitted by Monica Smith and approved by the ECCO Board by electronic vote prior to publication.

Board Members Present: Sarah Sponheim, President; Harry Savage, Co-VP; Linda Todd, Co-VP; Andrew Bornhoft; Anja Curiskis; Susie Goldstein; Liz Heyman; Lara Norkus-Crampton; Heather Wulfsberg; and Jim Smith.

Board Members Absent: Glen Christianson, Treasurer; Emily Balogh; and Kate Davenport.

Guests and Residents: Michael Allen; Lisa Bender; Patricia Blakely; Lois Carlson; Kathleen Dion; Norbert Marklin; Tim Norkus-Crampton; Park Board Commissioner Anita Tabb; 10th Ward Council Member Meg Tuthill; Nancy Ward; and Aaron & Erika Zabler.

ECCO Board President Sarah Sponheim called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Park Board Commissioner Anita Tabb, District 4:

- The Park Board and the City continue to work to resolve the issue of the apartment building (1800 Lake) pumping groundwater from its underground parking lot into the lagoon between Lake of the Isles and Lake Calhoun. The City hired a consulting firm and a report is expected soon.
- The Loppet Foundation is interested in leasing land at Theodore Wirth Park from the Park Board. The proposal met with objections and is being revised.
- The Park Board is at the very beginning of a long process to review ideas from the Calhoun/Isles design charrette held in October 2012.
- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been found in Lakewood Cemetery. The Park Board foresters are working on a strategy for dealing with the invasive pest that kills ash trees. The strategy may include removing or chemically treating nearby ash trees. The plan is expected within the month.
- Staff is working on a plan to require all events on park property to offer recycling. They are also working on making improvements to recycling efforts throughout the park system.

Council Member Meg Tuthill, Ward 10:

- The City is working on options for a bike lane on 36th St between E Calhoun Pkwy and Dupont Ave.
- Step-Up is a summer job program for Minneapolis youth ages 14-21. Applications for paid internships are now being accepted.
- The next Meet with Meg is February 11, noon-1 pm at the 5th Precinct.
- The City Council is working on plans to expand benefits to domestic partners.
- Efforts are underway to add diversity to volunteer boards.

President's Report

- The ECCO Board voted to appoint Harry Savage as its delegate to the Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The delegate will serve as a conduit between the ECCO Board and the CAC.
- The Uptown Association asked ECCO for a letter of support to include in their Great Streets grant application. Sarah will forward the request to board members

- for an electronic vote.
- The ECCO Board will not meet in July 2013 (conflict with the 4th of July holiday).

Monica Smith, Staff Report

- The ECCO Board unanimously approved a plan modification to the NRP Phase II Environment strategy to include reimbursement of rain garden plant materials in our grant program. There is no change to the budget. Previous grant recipients are not eligible.
- The ECCO Board unanimously approved hosting a block party and puppet show on Saturday, June 1, 2013.

Committee Reports

Communications

- The committee is working redesigning ECCO's website. More information will be presented at the March 7 ECCO Board meeting.

Green Team

- Upcoming events:
 - Emerald Ash Borer symposium: February 12
 - Green Ideas & Ham, Environment Minnesota: February 19
 - 10th Ward City Council Candidates Forum: March 28, 7 pm at Bryant Square Park. The focus of the forum will be environmental issues. A suggestion was made to video tape the forum.

Uptown Neighborhood News (UNN)

- The UNN hired a new ad sales rep to help the paper's financial situation (currently operating with a deficit).
- Residents are encouraged to submit articles for publication.

Livability Committee

3448 Hennepin Ave S: The property owner requested a rezoning of the property from R2B (duplex) to R3 (multi-family) to add a one-bedroom unit in the basement. Also requested was a variance of the off-street parking requirement for the third unit. Objections were raised by nearby residents for the rezoning so the ECCO Board reevaluated its process and decision. The Board learned that the third unit had already been finished. Also, this property was reviewed during the Midtown Greenway Rezoning Study in 2010 and the R2B zoning was maintained.

The ECCO Board voted to reverse the original position of "no objection" from its December 6, 2012 meeting and unanimously approved the following motion: "The ECCO Board strongly opposes the rezoning request from R2B to R3 for 3448 Hennepin Ave S."

The rezoning request is on the agenda for the Zoning and Planning Committee on February 14, 2013. ECCO will send a letter to committee members prior to the February 14th meeting stating the neighborhood's opposition to the rezoning request. The parking variance has already been approved by the City.

New Business

- The ECCO Board will present a photograph (donated by ECCO resident Norbert Marklin) to Amore Victoria to thank them for hosting the fundraiser and silent auction to benefit the victims of the condo fire.

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Next meeting is Thursday, March 7, 7 p.m. at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church.