Proposed redesign of Hiawatha Golf Course

By Christian Fritzberg, Communications Committee

Several significant changes are presented for Hiawatha Golf Course, as outlined in a draft for a proposed design that was released April 9. These alterations come with a price tag of $43 million, and if approved, work would take place over the next two years.

The most notable change would be converting the course to nine holes, instead of the current 18, which it has been since the course opened in 1934. By decreasing the golf course play size, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) aims to create a more walkable, par-36 course more inclusive to all golf levels and also use the current course’s land in new ways that could be more beneficial to the neighborhood and greater Minneapolis.

Other substantial changes include adding three new buildings:

- New clubhouse
- Main park building with a restaurant and bar
- Lake house, situated on Lake Hiawatha and offering canoe, kayak and ice skate rentals

As part of the redesign, more pedestrian and cycling trails are slated for the western edge of Lake Hiawatha, so it would be fully encircled with a trail system like others in the chain of lakes.

Continued on page 2

Design changes to 48th and Chicago BRT station

By Chris Schommer, President of FRNNG

Metro Transit has updated the preliminary designs for many of the planned D-Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations along Chicago Avenue. While these locations were approved in July 2019, Metro Transit has continued to update plans for the stations themselves.

The most visible change involves the so-called “bump-outs” at the 48th Street and Chicago stop. Bump-outs are curb extensions that stick into the street so the bus never needs to pull over or merge back into traffic. Theoretically, keeping the bus in the driving lane shaves valuable seconds and minutes off the time of the ride.

The updated design gives 48th and Chicago four corner bump-outs rather than the two in the original design. The two new enlarged corners will be placed opposite the planned station bump-outs, eliminating some street parking, while shortening the curb-to-curb distance for pedestrians crossing the street. Also updated are design renderings of the stations, which are expected to include larger heated shelters, benches, bicycle racks and digital signage.

On March 11, Metro Transit invited business owners and local officials to review details of BRT shelter placement and other amenities around 48th and Chicago. Some people at the meeting expressed concern about the transit stations. The concerns ranged from bike lane blockage to bottlenecks created by the bump outs because vehicles will have to stop behind the buses as buses pick up and drop-off passengers.

While not unique to 48th and Chicago, the location of the bumped-out stations has been a point of contention during the design and review process that began in 2019. When reached for comment, Metro
Design changes to 48th and Chicago BRT station, continued from page 1

Transit officials shared these points to describe their planning process and vision for how the D-Line will operate along the route:

- Metro D-Line buses will stop in-lane at stations located on curb bump-outs. These reduce delay for buses and provide necessary space for station amenities and pedestrians.
- Curb bump-outs allow stations to be built without obstructing sidewalks, separation between transit shelters and storefront uses and provide shorter pedestrian crossings at intersections.
- Customers will pay fares at stations prior to boarding the bus. Off-board fare payment significantly decreases the time it takes to board, allowing buses to stop briefly in the travel lane, rather than pull over.
- Vehicles will stop behind the bus briefly while it stops. Buses only stop if a customer is waiting to get on or off, and most stops take about 10-15 seconds.

FRNNG will continue to work with Metro Transit, local residents and business during this long and complicated building project. Ideas include adding custom FRN-themed bike racks for the stations and other options to make the three stops at 42nd, 46th and 48th unique on the D-Line’s route.

Despite the extensive planning work, funding for the D-Line is still not fully secured. In 2019, the state legislature failed to include transit projects like the D-Line in the bonding bill, and this year’s bonding bill didn’t pass during the regular legislative session. Legislators are currently waiting for a possible special session to take up a new bonding bill. Without additional state funding, all BRT projects in the metro area will be put on hold. If funding is secured in a special session, residents can expect to see construction begin sometime in 2021. No official service timeline has been released.

To give feedback to Metro Transit on the D-Line please email dline@metrotransit.org. To see a detailed map and station designs along the D-Line BRT route, please visit: www.metrotransit.org/d-line-station-plan

Hiawatha Golf Course, continued from page 1

MPRB notes the Hiawatha site has been under-used during the winter season. To counter this, MPRB would like Hiawatha to be a “winter recreation destination”, including groomed cross-country ski trails, ice-skating loop on Lake Hiawatha and a sledding hill area.

The true catalyst for the redesign is the ongoing issue with flooding, excessive pumping needed to prevent it and water quality-concerns. The redesign won’t eliminate the need for ongoing pumping to protect neighboring residences from water intrusion, but will greatly reduce it by making the land more “flood resilient”. Ways to reuse the pumped water, whether for irrigation, snow production or use in park building HVAC systems, are also in the works.

For more information on the plan, visit the park board website.

https://www.minneapolisparks.org/project_updates/draft-preferred-design-alternative-is-available-online/

Close to Home

Close to Home is the official publication of the Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group (FRNNG) and is published six times per year by the FRNNG Communications Committee.

frnng.org

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Open positions (in red) will be voted on at the rescheduled annual meeting. Check our website: frnng.org
President’s letter

Hello Neighbors,

I hope you are well. There is a lot to carry right now for all of us. Sickness, unemployment, teaching from home and the rolling sense of uncertainty around nearly everything. My term is at a close, and as I shared in the February/March issue of Close to Home I am passing on my FRNNG responsibilities to others. As of June 1, 2020 my term as President of this organization is complete. Since our regular elections have been postponed due to COVID-19, First Vice President David Fronsoe will assume the role of Interim President until elections can be held. In addition, Business Chair Francesco Marrafia will be assisting David during this time. They are a great team and I know this organization will be in good hands. FRNNG hopes to hold elections in the fall and will share more information when it is available.

I have been with FRNNG for almost 10 years, and in that time I have met many people who have volunteered their time to making the neighborhood a better place. The best moments come when a group of people realizes that they have a vision for how things could be better. A better newsletter, a better street, a better celebration. The low moments come when we fail to work together, and frustration sets in. Good ideas can only travel so far alone. As the City of Minneapolis continues to reduce funding for neighborhood organizations, I hope future members of this neighborhood organization remember that working together means a lot, and to not give up.

For myself, I am going to continue enjoying being a neighbor in this neighborhood and will end with this story, which felt like a metaphor for these times. This April the kids and I were flying a kite at McRae Park when the string tangled and snapped. Rather than crash to the ground, our kite soared away in the wind, over St. Joseph’s, and I assumed was on its way to St. Paul. But instead, we found it gracefully flying itself over 12th Ave. until it eventually crashed in a tree. Also watching were a group of self-isolating neighbors who had been observing the kite fly, and neighbor Mike promised that if it came down he would return it. The next day, it showed up on our doorstep.

But that’s not the whole story. The line was tangled, so neighbors Tom and Patrick got up and pulled it down. They got a ladder from former board member, Lauren and husband Jimmy. It is a very helpless feeling watching your kite soar away, but when people work together they can create magic. My kids certainly thought so.

So if your kite crashes in the neighborhood, I hope you have people watching out for you too.

Take care, see you around the neighborhood.

Chris Schommer, President, FRNNG
11th-Ward update

Jeremy Schroeder, council member

First and foremost, I wish you and your continued health and safety during this unprecedented time. It has been a challenging year so far. I deeply appreciate how members of our community have stepped up to support each other—especially by sacrificing visits with loved ones and activities you enjoy to stay home and limit the spread of COVID-19. To the essential workers who are also our neighbors: I see you and I’m so thankful for you. To the teachers who have supported parents in the transition to at-home learning: you’re amazing. And to our local business owners forced to change how they operate under these circumstances: this community has your back.

I’m writing this item a couple of months before you’ll see it (due to printing deadlines) and at this point, it is hard to say exactly where we’re headed. There is too much uncertainty to guess what the world will look like that far into the future. However, I can confidently say the city continues to do everything it can to promote public health and a safe recovery for the people and local businesses that make our community what it is. I encourage you to visit the city’s COVID-19 website for the latest details on our response, impacts to city services, and resources at minneapolismn.gov/coronavirus/.

By the time you read this, the economic impacts of this global crisis will likely be even more pronounced. The needs across our community—among renters, homeowners, and businesses—are so much more than the city can meet on its own. We will continue to advocate through this pandemic and the recovery to come for state and federal funding to lift up and serve the people of Minneapolis. I won’t stop fighting for this community.

We are doing everything we can at the city to protect jobs and ensure that you continue to receive the essential services you expect. We’ve implemented a hiring freeze and a wage freeze for many city workers—steps that will help safeguard jobs over the long term. My colleagues and I have also trimmed our City Council office budgets to free up tens of thousands of dollars to help meet community needs for personal protective equipment and more. Again, it is difficult to predict exactly what happens next. We will face difficult choices, and I will always take very seriously my responsibility to be a thoughtful steward of your tax dollars.

I am heartened by the outpouring of generosity in this community. One of the most vital ways to help now and going forward is to invest in our local businesses, most of which struggled as they quickly and dramatically adjusted their operations to protect public health. Shopping small and locally provides a powerful boost to our neighborhood economy. If you are able, making purchases from local shops and restaurants—including gift cards to use later—is a great way to help them bounce back.

At this time, things continue to change quickly. It’s impossible to share real-time

Continued on page 11

Southside Barber Lounge

By Jason Flaig, Communications Committee

Old-school, traditional haircuts and beard trimming are coming to 48th and Chicago, but like so many things now, getting a shave and a haircut won’t be quite the same as it used to be.

“I could see everyone needing to be eight feet apart in the shop, being very careful, once we get back in business” said owner Mike Saeger, who is opening Southside Barber Lounge this spring. “It’s going to be different than before. When you’re trimming a beard or giving a haircut you are right there, right up close to people.”

Saeger, a South Minneapolis native, is a co-owner of the Southside Barber Lounge on 37th and Bloomington. With that location being extremely busy, Saeger decided to branch out on his own into a second location.

“I love this neighborhood. I think it’s an ideal location, in a perfect spot,” he said. “I’ve been in the shop getting it ready and I hear people walk by and stop outside and say that the neighborhood could really use a barber shop in this particular area.”

The shop will be taking over a space most recently occupied by Bikes and Pieces.

Southside Barber Lounge will offer hot towels and straight razor shaves in addition to haircuts and beard trimming. Saeger will work by appointment only to make sure that everyone can get in when they need to get in.

“It’s so easy now to use your phone to set up an appointment,” he said. “We’ve been so busy at the other shop that we just can’t handle walk-ins. This way everyone can plan on getting in.”

In lieu of words we let the pictures speak

8:46 of silence in honor of George Floyd

The George Floyd Memorial and mural at 38th and Chicago

Sovereign Grounds welcomes all, calls for justice

Speedway removed its pumps after fire damage

Walgreens at 4323 Chicago Ave. bears a quote by author Octavia Butler

The Parkway Theater suspends their jokes on the marquee
Local businesses: Weathering the pandemic

by Steve Date, Communications Committee, and Website/Social Media Manager

The governor’s orders have affected us all during the coronavirus pandemic, but small businesses have been hit particularly hard. Many have had to close indefinitely. Some needed to quickly ramp up their online presence and begin offering deliveries or curbside pickup. Restaurants have been only able to do takeout service. Others businesses were deemed “essential” and stayed open, within the guidelines for social distancing.

Here’s how COVID-19 has affected our neighborhood businesses during lockdown. (Editor’s note: Because of publishing deadlines, these comments were gathered in May.)

14 Hill — Owner Julie Stamps had to close initially because she didn’t have an online presence. With help from friends, she learned how to present items online. She also made many sales from storefront window shoppers and offered personal shopping for cards and gifts.

Bagu Sushi and Thai — Manager Karlea said that they were “getting by”. However, spring and summer is when they get busy and their seating doubles because of the patio space, so the future depends on when they can safely resume table service. The neighborhood has been “fantastic” and frequent customers are making a point to come for takeout.

ie Italian Eatery — Ella, working the takeout window said, “It’s been a big change, with owners and managers pretty much doing everything with the help of a bare-bones staff. They pulled in employees, as much as possible, to do jobs like maintenance and painting.” They also added delivery service, which they didn’t offer before.

Ken & Norm’s Liquor — Manager Vitalii Zub said sales were good because bars are closed and people are drinking at home more. They were able to keep all their staff working.

Jenny in the City — Jenny Nylin was already doing online sales before the shutdown, so she was perhaps better-prepared than some businesses when the shutdown started, but she saw a significant loss in revenue. She said that people in the neighborhood were very supportive.

Pedego Electric Bikes — Craig and Ann Paulsen felt very fortunate when they heard their shop was considered an “essential” business (transportation). They said the unpredictable spring weather affected their business more than the pandemic has.

Primp — Allison said they operate behind a locked door with only an online presence, which they had developed well before the crisis. They offer curbside pickup and accept returns at the door. They also use Facebook and Instagram extensively for marketing.

Pumphouse Creamery — Owner Barb Zapalka only sold take out ice cream by the pint. Her primary concern with selling cones and cups was that she worried about the safety of families and groups waiting in line. “We’re holding our own, and have been able to keep 70% of staff.”

R.A. McSammey’s Elbow Room — Owner Kevin Huyck reported they hadn’t been affected as much as other food places because their business is largely takeout anyway.

Sovereign Grounds Coffee — Hakan Sezer said he’s “surviving” financially, but the emotional support he’s gotten from neighborhood customers has been overwhelming. “I’m so grateful to everyone who stops in. I want to have a big celebration when this is over.”

Tom’s Popcorn — Tom’s sister Connie said, “We’re hanging in there, but our biggest problem is not COVID, but the Starbucks drive-thru line blocking our parking lot.” They hope that when other coffee shop drive-thrus open there won’t be so much traffic at this location.

Town Hall Tap — They were closed until the second week of May but opened serving a “condensed” takeout food menu with beer in 25-oz. “crawlers” (cans) also available with take away.

Turtle Bread — Harvey McLain said they took a big hit for two reasons: no dine-in, and loss of 27 out of his 30 wholesale customers, such as restaurants. He reported they’re doing only 10% of the business as they were pre-COVID and had to cut 70% of their staff.
Southside Family School develops distance learning during the shutdown

by Steve Date, Communications Committee, and Website/Social Media Manager

Pete Oppenheim and Brynne Macosko Paguyo, both long-time teachers at Southside Family Charter School, faced a steep learning curve when schools closed and switched to online learning in March. “We’re not really techies, so we had a lot to learn,” Brynne said in early May. “One thing I’ve learned is that there’s a YouTube video for how to do ANYTHING,” Pete added.

It was a bit shaky at the beginning. “At first, we were just trying to get everyone connected — bringing Chromebooks to those families that didn’t have computers,” Brynne said. But after a couple of weeks, teachers were getting into routines.

Pete said, “It was hard at the beginning for a lot of families to adjust their lives so the children could learn this way, but it’s gotten better every week.”

Pete meets with his 2nd grade class for 40 minutes a day on Zoom. Each student gets a chance to talk, present or react to something they’ve read about. One of their projects was for each kid to “adopt” an endangered species animal and present a report about it. Another assignment was to write a letter to someone they aren’t able to visit.

Brynne has been using paper packets for her math class. She drops them off at the students’ homes, comes back to collect them, then comments and returns those that need more help. Her 4th-6th grade Science class has a virtual meeting twice a week, alternating days with their Social Studies teacher. She has nearly 100% attendance for these sessions. They go through the written assignments for the week and discuss the readings.

There have also been disappointments. Having to cancel the middle school’s traditional triennial trip to Civil Rights historic sites was a huge loss, as was the 8th-grade graduation ceremony. Instead, teachers made this year’s celebration as special as possible, including an online ceremony. Each student received the ritual graduation gift of a copy of Howard Zinn’s, *A People’s History of the United States*, with a note about them written by teachers inside the front cover.

Both teachers have noticed how it’s affected their relationships with students and their parents. “I’m a lot closer with the parents now — both the hard stuff and the good stuff,” said Pete. “And parents are more aware of what their kids are working on.”

“It’s pretty cool,” Brynne said. “It’s amazing how quickly we can adjust to families’ needs and concerns. Parents have been very appreciative of the school in this difficult time.”


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Late August through September lawn care

by Jennifer Rensenbrink

Did you know that late summer is one of the very best times to do some basic lawn maintenance? In trying to strike a balance between having grass to sit and play on and lowering our impact on the natural environment, we can take some small measures with our lawns. They include:

- Raise your mower’s blade height to three inches. Slightly taller grass is more drought tolerant and healthier, which helps it edge out weeds.
- Leave those clippings on the ground! They break down into a wonderful natural fertilizer for your grass.
- Water deeply, no more than once per week. Skip watering if we get rain.
- Apply store-bought fertilizer, if desired, in September. This is the best time to fertilize your grass. Aim for no more than one pound of all purpose lawn fertilizer per 1,000 square feet; use one-half pound if your soil is high in organic matter.
- Late August through Late September is a fantastic time to seed your lawn. Buy a mix of seed that is specific to your light conditions. Consider seeding your lawn with new “no mow” fescue seed mixes that grow slowly and need little to no mowing.
- Next time you need to purchase a new mower, consider an electric or reel-type. Old-fashioned gas mowers

*Continued on page 9*
Summertime tips for keeping your home safe

By Jennifer Neale, Crime Prevention Specialist, Sector 3

Property Crimes typically rise in the summer months. This year’s unique circumstances may have tempered that rise, but we should still be vigilant to prevent these crimes from occurring.

It’s tempting to overlook home security and have doors and windows open to enjoy the good weather, but please keep in mind that most burglars are opportunists and are looking for an easy target.

Some common criminal tactics are:
- Sneaking in an unlocked front door while the resident is seen working in the backyard or vice versa.
- Trying door handles to garage service doors or vehicles.
- Approaching homes to steal packages or ringing the doorbell to check if anyone is home.
- Driving down alleys looking for garage doors that were left open overnight.

Reduce the opportunity for burglary:
- Keep gates, garage doors, porch doors, screen doors, front and back doors locked at all times. Even when you are home!
- Improve lighting around your property.
- Consider adding cameras to the front and back of your home.
- Keep keys, wallets, purses, laptops and cell phones out of plain sight from windows or doorways.
- Garage opener remote theft is the cause of many burglaries. Take the remote inside the house.
- Use light timers in various rooms if you are traveling.
- Know your neighbors. Active block clubs prevent crime!

2020 Southside Sprint Race canceled

by Jason Lordy, Race Co-founder and Northrop Neighbor

The Southside Sprint team was looking forward to July 19 for another spectacular day of bike racing through South Minneapolis and celebrating the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the current situation makes it impossible to bring the 1,000+ people who participate and attend the event each year together safely.

The safety of our racers, fans, sponsors, volunteers and neighbors is our top priority, and because of the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 virus, we have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Southside Sprint Bike Race.

We are especially grateful for the support of our long-standing community sponsors and partners. Many of these neighborhood businesses have experienced significant challenges in the last several weeks. We encourage everyone to thank these supporters for their contributions to the Southside Sprint and patronize them if you are able.

- Amp 13
- Family Dental Clinic
- Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group
- Pedego
- Rock Paper Scissors Goods
- Terrapin Technologies
- Town Hall Tap
- Twin Six
- VeloFix
- Wells Fargo

We will miss roaring through the streets of South Minneapolis this summer, but we look forward to a fantastic 10th Southside Sprint in 2021. Stay safe, stay healthy and ride on.

Sue Filbin retires from the Communications Committee

Sue Filbin, the outgoing editor of Close to Home, repeatedly asked us not to make a big deal about her “retirement.” For once, we decided not to listen to her. On behalf of the FRNNG board and the Communications Committee, we salute our friend Sue for five years of tireless work that helped make this newsletter something our neighborhoods could be proud of. We’ll miss her attention to detail, her emails, and especially her smile. Thanks for everything. Cheers.

Sue told us: “I will always be grateful for the really fine, personality-packed people I met and worked with, and all that I learned during the time I was involved with Close to Home. And I’m eager to read future editions to see the inventive things the new production team will put in place.”

Close to Home, newsletter for the Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group • frnng.org • July/August 2020
Walking the neighborhood

Fine . . . then we’ll do it

By Steve Date, Communications Committee, and Website/Social Media Manager

We all see it. Then, after a while, we kind of don’t anymore.

We walk by that soda can, candy wrapper, or . . . sock?? We ignore it. Would we pick it up if we’d brought a bag along? Would we pick it up if we didn’t have to touch it or bend over?

A while back, I heard writer David Sedaris talk about how he got tired of seeing garbage along the road of the small town where he lives in England. He began picking up some of it on his daily walks. He had a meeting with local government officials and asked them why they didn’t have someone clean it up. They told him they didn’t have the money for that. His sardonic response was, “Fine, then I’ll do it.” He made it his (unpaid) job to walk around for eight hours nearly every day picking up rubbish.

He became a local celebrity and then was invited to speak to the House of Commons about what he’d been doing. The town even named a garbage truck after him—the “Pig Pen Sedaris” truck.

Sedaris takes it farther than I’m willing to, but last winter when I was walking a lot to help my back recover from surgery, his story came to mind. I’d brought home a “grabber” from the hospital so I wouldn’t have to bend over for a few months if I dropped something. I grabbed my grabber and a bag and took off walking.

Our grandkids love the grabber, and when we went out for walks with them (pre-Covid), they argued about whose turn it was to use it. It was beautiful.

We have a great neighborhood, but there’s always room for improvement. We can’t control the few careless litterers who leave trash, but those of us who find it offensive could pick some of it up when we see it.

Steve’s grandchildren, Svea and Otto Cedermark.

I’ve seen others doing it, too. One woman I met at Lake Nokomis walks along the shore regularly and fills a big bag with junk she finds. She grew up on a lake in Perham, Minnesota, and can’t stand to see what ends up in and around the water. She’s kind of like David Sedaris in that way. Our grandkids are starting to be a little like that, too.

We all could be.

Lawn care, continued from page 7

release emissions equal to several cars, every time they’re used. In the past few years, many advances have been made in clean mower technology — take advantage of this as another way to lower your carbon footprint.

• Plant a bee lawn! Many neighbors (including me) have what I like to call “unintentional bee lawns” — allowing a certain number of dandelions and clover to co-exist with our grass. If you would rather have an intentional bee lawn, Blue Thumb offers webinars and even a grant program to convert some or all of your lawn to pollinator-supporting plants. https://bluethumb.org/

For lawn care advice from University of Minnesota experts, google “U of MN Extension Lawn care.” ✦

Jennifer Rensenbrink is a U of M Extension Master Gardener who lives and gardens in the Northrop neighborhood. Follow along with her gardening adventures on Instagram @ jenniferrensenbrink.
Field School makes distance learning work

By Jason Flaig, FRNG Communications Committee

Like students and teachers everywhere, the Field Community School has had to adapt to a new world of distance learning over the past few months. Principal VaNita Miller says the experience has been positive.

“Overall it has been good,” Miller said. “Our teachers have been very gung-ho about tackling this and finding new ways to engage their students.”

Assistant Principal Sonrisa Shaw said that teachers have adapted and improved what they are doing as they worked through distance learning challenges.

“Our teachers have been willing to take risks to see what works and what doesn’t,” she said. “Just like we tell our students, if you try something and it doesn’t work, that’s ok. You tried it and now you can improve it.”

Shaw noted that the first week of distance learning was daunting: “It felt like the first day of school all over again,” she said.

Both school administrators are very hopeful that school will be back to normal by this fall. They have changed some things that they normally do for incoming students from Hale, who would have toured Field already. Miller said that they are making videos for the students who will be new next fall, and they are trying to find other ways to get students ready for the switch from Hale to Field.

Miller and Shaw said they miss seeing their students every day. They pop into virtual meetings and try to find ways to connect with the people that they used to see every school day.

“I never thought I would miss middle school hallways but I actually do,” Shaw joked.

Both Miller and Shaw said that the distance learning situation wouldn’t work without the cooperation and help from the parents of their students.

“We’re so appreciative of the parents. They are doing such a great job,” Miller said. “They’ve had to take on so much with all of this, and it hasn’t been easy.”

El TacoTorro food truck

by Steve Date, FRNG Communications Committee

José Haro was excited and “kind of scared” last summer when he first parked his food truck in Holy Cross Lutheran Church’s lot at 18th and Minnehaha Parkway. “It’s my first business and I had to learn a lot,” he says.

He, his wife and their three children were living at 43rd and Cedar when he started thinking about opening a business. He’d been a cook for 20 years at Red Lobster and Buca restaurants. “I thought this area needed a place that served good Latino food,” he says, and he scouted out places where he could park a food truck. He moved his family to Richfield but kept his eye on this spot on the Parkway.

José had been hesitant to act on his dream until one day when his church invited a “prophet” as a speaker and he decided to talk with him. “He said to me, ‘Now it’s the time,’ . . . before I even told him about my idea.”

With that spiritual boost, he made the leap and bought an empty truck. A friend from church built the kitchen. Other friends helped with start-up money and business advice. He worked out an agreement with Holy Cross. “It’s a great location,” he says, “with a big parking lot and a lot of people walking by.”

The business grew gradually in the first few months, but by January, customers were few, and his truck developed costly engine and transmission problems. He was feeling terrible about the whole thing and almost ready to give up.

March arrived, the sun came out, the temperature warmed and so did his spirits. Customers returned and many are now regulars. “I know them by name, and I know what they like,” he says. He’s used what he’s learned to build a menu where every item sells well. “Gorditas are very popular. They’re from Aguascalientes, Mexico, where I’m from.”

José’s dream is coming true. He’s amazed by how wonderful the people of our neighborhood have been to him. “Tell them that I am happy to know them, and I really appreciate all their support.”

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At-home tips for moving rather than munching

By Patricia Miller, FRNG Communications Committee

If the waistband of your sweats is getting a little snug, you’re spending more time munching than moving and even the dog hides the leash when you say “Walkies!”, it might be time to bring new energy to staying fit while gyms and clubs remain closed.

To recharge your exercise routine, start with a routine, like setting aside 30 minutes in the afternoon to workout. But be flexible. If homelife or telework intervenes, tell yourself, “I’m doing the best I can today.” Then try again tomorrow.

Remember that all movement is movement! It doesn’t need to be a specific class or exercise. Do chores, garden, dance, shoot hoops, jump rope, play tag, set up a kickball game with your kids. It all keeps you mobile and moving.

Miss your workout buddy? Set up a Zoom workout, share pictures of your what you’re doing and challenge each other by keeping track of reps, rounds, miles, etc., completed.

Use what you’ve got around the house for equipment. Stairs or even the back steps can fill in for gym step machines, soup cans make great hand weights, jugs of laundry detergent make pretty good kettlebells or free weights. Just remember to use the same form and holds as you would in the gym.

Recreate your workout in the wild. Think spin classes. Use your bike (probably not on a crowded path) to duplicate the sets.

Gear up! Put on workout clothes, shoes and grab your water bottle. You’re more likely to move if you’re dressed for the occasion.

Take an online class. The YWCA of Minneapolis (www.ywcampls.org) offers both on-demand and live online classes open to members and nonmembers. On-demand classes are available 24/7, while the live classes are on a weekly schedule. Options range from chair yoga to core fit to fitness barre to pilates to bodyweight bootcamp. Want something more customized? Sign up for virtual personal or pilates training. These sessions are $30 for members, with a small administrative fee added for nonmembers.

To check out the Y’s offerings, visit the website and click on the “Fitness” tab.

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updates in this newsletter, but as always, you can reach me at jeremy.schroeder@minneapolismn.gov or (612) 673-2211 with questions, concerns, ideas or requests. I do my best to respond promptly to every inquiry and will do what I can to get you whatever information you need. We’re in this together.