D Line BRT coming to 48th and Chicago

By Chris Schommer, President

On January 23, 2019, the Met Council voted to approve the D Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Station Plan that will place a new station at 48th and Chicago when the line is completed in 2021 or 2022, pending state funding. This station was the subject of several community meetings and an extended comment period in response to concerns about the impact a station might have on the corner. Metro Transit received 147 comments and summarizes the findings as, “Broad support for a D Line station at Chicago and 48th Street from local community members as well as from other parts of the city.” A full transcript of all comments may be read on the D Line project page at www.metrotransit.org/d-line-library

In addition to reviewing the station location, Metro Transit did an additional review of the station design, including an option to keep the current layout in place with a mid-block southbound stop. Metro Transit staff declined this option, and chose to continue with the baseline design of a new southbound station on the southwest corner of 48th and Chicago, and to convert the existing northbound station on the northeast corner to a BRT station. The existing southbound bus stop will be reverted to parking. The primary reasoning to avoid a mid-block stop was to encourage safer pedestrian crossing at the intersection lights, the proximity to the 46th Street station, and conflicts with existing driveways.

Continued on page 2
The Charming Architecture of Field Regina Northrop, continued from page 1

Stucco is the most popular siding (wood-lap siding and cedar shingles are also used, especially in gables or on dormers). Also present is decorative “stickwork” comprised of beams, brackets and exposed rafter tails, with eaves usually left exposed. Successor to the Prairie School style, Craftsman homes were generally mass produced; many catalog homes of the era were of the Craftsman style.

**Victorian** – A smattering of later, more simplistic Queen Anne Victorian known as “Folk Victorian” homes can be noted in our neighborhood as some of the early development. These less ornate Victorian homes were constructed with affordability in mind. Asymmetrical in design, these structures can vary significantly in size from single to two-and-a-half-story structures. The size of the home also dictates the roof pitch the home has, with the smaller versions generally having lower-sloping roofs. Originally these Folk Victorians had front porches and ornate detailing in the porch railings (spindle work), gables and decorative cedar-shingle and lap siding. Sadly, much of this detailing is now absent on these homes. Pattern books and the ability to mass produce wooden decorative elements paved the way for these homes to be built and decorated.

**Colonial Revival** – A strong sense of order is created by using simple, often rectangular forms, to create a symmetrical and balanced overall structure. The front door is often accompanied by sidelights and is usually placed in the center of the structure. Colonial Revival homes can be seen with and without front porches or entry porticoes. Windows are often double hung, six-over-six divided-light Mullions. Windows can be accompanied with or without shutters. Colonial Revival homes can be clad in a variety of materials from wood-lap siding to vinyl to stucco to brick. Most often seen as full two-story homes, roofs are often steeply pitched to allow for a third-floor expansion space where dormers are sometimes used to bring greater functionality and natural light to these spaces. Subset Colonial Revival styles are the Cape Cod, Dutch Colonial and Garrison.

**Tudor** – A very common housing style in our neighborhood. These charming asymmetrical homes are often clad in stucco (or sometimes brick or cedar shingles, or a combination thereof) with steeply pitched roof gables that are adorned with decorative half timbering, which is most often seen on the front gable or upper façade. Prominent chimneys are often focal points on the facades of these homes. Stone trim of sandstone or

The well-known “Painted Ladies” in San Francisco vividly represent the Victorian style.
Hello FRN Neighbors,

There are some changes coming to how the 84 neighborhoods and 74 neighborhood organizations that make up Minneapolis are funded and operate with the city. Currently, the majority of our operating expenses are funded by the City of Minneapolis by using a special tax district. These funds help us pay for basic operations like office rent, this newsletter, and professional staff time. However, this funding expires in 2020. While the Mayor and City Council are committed to new funding, there has been an effort to examine the current system and look for improvements. This project is called “Neighborhoods 2020.”

The goals of Neighborhoods 2020 are to increase transparency, pool resources between neighborhoods, and add an extra emphasis on outreach to all neighbors. I believe FRNNG is well positioned to meet these goals. Please provide your feedback on Neighborhoods 2020 by March 31. I would love it if neighbors would take a moment to check out the plan and offer comments to the City for what you want to see in your city.

Visit the Neighborhood and Community Relations 2020 plan webpage for more details: [www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/2020](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/2020)

The best thing about being involved in this group is meeting neighbors and hearing your stories. We all have so many perspectives to share. I hope everyone can go out, meet some new neighbors, and learn something new!

See you around the neighborhood,
Chris Schommer
Greetings, Field Regina Northrop Neighbors!

We’ve had a busy start to 2019 at City Hall, with transportation emerging as a key area of focus for the coming year. Public Works staff wants your help in building a better transportation system, and I hope you’ll join me in offering your feedback on how we can make sure Minneapolis streets are safer and more efficient for all road users.

Outreach efforts are underway to shape the Transportation Action Plan, which will outline strategies for improving and modernizing our entire transportation system. It will focus on pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, freight, street operations, street design, and ways we can integrate and leverage technology. See more about this process and how you can get involved at go.minneapolismn.gov

This work will happen alongside the development of a three-year Vision Zero Action Plan, which more specifically focuses on eliminating fatalities on our roadways. Data show that pedestrians face the biggest risks of injury or death on our roadways, and that crashes are concentrated in lower-income neighborhoods. Cedar Avenue is among the high-traffic streets listed as a crash hotspot. We need safer streets for all users, across Minneapolis – including in our community. Review citywide crash data and find out how to engage in Vision Zero efforts at visionzerompls.com

In other transportation news, the Metropolitan Council earlier this year approved plans for a D Line rapid bus station at 48th and Chicago, one of the most vibrant intersections in our community. This decision came after many community members voiced support for a station here, and after significant discussions between Metro Transit and local business owners. In the design phase of this project, staff will continue to engage with business owners and community members to ensure we end up with facilities that work for everyone. Learn more about the project and sign up for email updates at metrotransit.org/d-line-project

Another key long-term planning effort is underway for our neighborhoods, including Field Regina Northrop. The funding source that has supported neighborhood organizations for the past two decades will no longer be available, so the City has been evaluating options for the future – and treating this as an opportunity to evaluate what makes these groups effective today and how they can improve. Key goals include ensuring organizations reflect the communities they serve, simplified participation for all, and saving money and staff time.

For the last few years, City staff has been working through this Neighborhoods 2020 process alongside community and neighborhood leaders to understand what it will take to make our neighborhood groups successful over the long term. We’ve learned a lot of important lessons, and I’m proud that Ward 11 is home to some of the best-functioning neighborhood organizations in the City. My goal is to understand how we can best set up our neighborhoods to succeed. For me, that means ensuring they are equitable, vibrant, active, and inclusive. This takes resources, intention, and commitment.

My office has been engaged in Neighborhoods 2020 since I came to City Hall last year, and I will continue to stay involved. You can dig in, too, by reviewing recommendations for neighborhood programming, funding, and governance, and submitting comments between now and March 31. Find details and upcoming meeting dates at minneapolismn.gov/ncr/2020

While I’ve outlined opportunities to engage on specific issues like transportation and neighborhoods, I welcome your thoughts about all things Ward 11. Have ideas, questions, or concerns? Let me know at an upcoming Community Conversation. I hold these drop-in events several times per month at various locations and times, to keep my promise of meeting you where you are. Next up, I’ll be at Nokomis Library (5100-34th Ave S) from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12. A representative from the City’s Neighborhood and Community Relations department will join me, in case you’d like to talk about Neighborhoods 2020.


Of course, I’ll be seeing you at FRNNG gatherings, too. You can always reach me by email at jeremy.schroeder@minneapolismn.gov, or by phone at 612-673-2211.

Keep in touch! ✩
Spotlight on the Greening Committee

By Tim Price and Lauren Anderson, Co-chairs, Greening Committee

The goal of the Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group Greening Committee is to support and develop environmental programs throughout the three neighborhoods. Recently the Greening Committee’s main focus has been stewardship of the land along the west side of 2nd Avenue, adjacent to the 35-W sound-wall.

While this area is public right-of-way owned by MnDOT, neither the state nor the city has the resources to maintain this corridor. FRNNG stepped up to take care of this section of land, which spans both the Field and Regina neighborhoods. From East 42nd Street to East Minnehaha Parkway, FRNNG works with volunteers to mow and clean up litter as well as coordinates volunteers to rake leaves to keep them out of storm drains.

In 2018, thanks to a grant from MnDOT and the City of Minneapolis, the Greening Committee held a volunteer planting day to install two new gardens along 2nd Avenue—one south of 46th Street and one just north of 50th Street. We hope to continue converting the grass to perennials and shrubs to build community and beautify this corridor.

During the 2019 gardening season, we have selected these activities for the Greening Committee: Identify a new, larger native-garden site along 2nd Avenue between 43rd and 46th Streets; help redesign the pocket-park garden at 49th Street and 2nd Avenue; make FRNNG’s own events greener; connect our neighborhoods to some of the great programs happening at the City (like reduced-cost Home Energy Squad visits and zero-interest home-energy improvement financing); and collaborate on community planting events and alley clean-ups. With a warming climate, change begins here in our neighborhoods.

Volunteers are essential to the Greening Committee’s efforts and we need your help!

You can get involved in a few ways:
• We meet the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Turtle Bread Company on 48th and Chicago. All meetings are open to community members and your suggestions and ideas are always welcome.
• We’d love donations of perennial plants and flowers for planting along 2nd Avenue. If you’re dividing hardy perennials and shrubs or redesigning your own gardens, please consider donating your extra plants to the Greening Committee to improve the appearance of the 2nd Avenue gateway thoroughfares.
• From early spring through fall, volunteers rake, weed, and plant new perennials at select sites along the 2nd Avenue thoroughfare. Even giving 90 minutes once or twice a month makes a huge difference in our community.

If you’d like to get involved, please send us an email at greening@frnng.org to be added to the 2nd Avenue volunteer list.
Francesco Marraffa, Bridge Realty

From London to being at home in FRN

By Steve Date, Communications Committee
The British voice might come as a bit of a surprise, but talk to Francesco Marraffa for a few minutes and you’ll see that 14 years of living in Minnesota has made him one of us. His Italian name comes from his father, who lived in Salerno as a child, where he learned English by helping American GIs in WWII.

Francesco previously lived in England and worked for an international oil company. He met his wife, Rebecca, while she was in London on a study-
Continued on page 8

Julie Madge, Julie Madge Interiors

Interior design studio celebrates two years

By Julie Madge, Interior Designer, and Sue Filbin
Julie Madge, interior designer and owner of Julie Madge Interiors, has the philosophy that a home is a comfortable refuge for its inhabitants as well as for welcoming guests and friends. It is a dwelling where you live with objects that reflect your life and passions, and a space to experience moments that bring you joy. Julie believes that interior design “…is for real people with real lives, including pets.”

Continued on page 8

Mark Foreman, Loco Design

Landscape design for urban spaces

By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee
When a family chooses to live in one house and then another in the same neighborhood for almost two decades, what emotion comes to mind? How about happy?

Mark and Jill Foreman, and their son, daughter, and dog, live and have a home office in Northrop. And Mark is happiest when his projects as a landscape designer are for yards in the city. Not that he doesn’t design projects all around the Twin Cities, because he does. But his heart belongs to small-space, urban backyards “where families and friends come together to enjoy themselves.” Mark’s designs often implement materials that are already on the site or include other reclaimed materials he sources. He analyzes the space, soil, and surrounding architecture, and is especially adept at designing “outdoor spaces—especially hard spaces—that are creative and intimate, organizing their space in anticipation of their use.”

In Mark’s earlier career, he worked for a landscaping company. He got excited about landscape design which led him to return to Ball State University, in his home state of Indiana, to earn a degree in landscape architecture. His first position was designing the playground portion of projects for a firm that did work for Indiana state parks and open spaces.

When the opportunity to move to Minnesota presented itself, Mark was lucky enough to find a job working for a Minnesota-based vendor of top-quality playground equipment that he had sourced during his time designing for state parks. Here he designed custom structures and play environments that included tree houses, playhouses, imagination and butterfly gardens, and inclusive playgrounds for special-needs children. He also taught landscape design and developed a training program for the sales team on the elements of good design.

A longing to get back to working with homeowners and impacting personal

Continued on page 9
Nate Lansing, RES Realty

Aiming for stress-free moves

By Nate Lansing, Chair, Housing Committee
When was your business started?
I started my real estate business six years ago.

What is the nature of your business?
I provide full-service real estate advisory services (buying, selling, renovating, etc.) specializing in the Nokomis area of south Minneapolis. Our neighborhood real estate market is unique and it takes local knowledge to provide the best service possible to clients.

Christian Fritzberg, Coldwell Banker Burnet

Selling homes in his dad’s old neighborhood

By Steve Date, Communications Committee
Christian Fritzberg grew up in Plymouth, but says he’s “been frequenting” the Field Regina Northrop area since about 1998, in part because of his father’s and grandparents’ history here, but also because of the natural beauty and architectural charm of the neighborhood. Having studied Historic Preservation in college, he loves the 1920s through 1940s vintage houses that are so plentiful here.

“My dad grew up on 46th and Columbus. It was my grandparents’ first home in the 1940s, but it’s still a part of the fabric of the neighborhood that he’s passed along to me and my family.”

Susie Passons, SP Design

Home staging flourishes from a home office

By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee
When was the last time you thought about space, movement, harmony, or other elements and principles of design? Field resident, Susie Passons, thinks about them all the time. They’re part of her education, experience, and now her career as a professional home stager in her home-based business, SP Design.

After graduating from the University of Wisconsin–Stout in Menomonie with a degree in graphic design, Susie worked in that field while living in California. When she, her husband, and their two children moved to Minneapolis, Susie’s position as an art director and photo stylist in the furniture industry was bolstered by her background in and focus on marketing and visual presentation.

As Susie recalled the stress of moving “tons of times,” she now relishes her role in making a difference in people’s lives after founding her business in March 2016. Like the accountant we hire to master our taxes or the hairstylist we trust to enhance our appearance, Susie addresses home presentation with élan, empathy, and experience.

In her collaboration with real estate agents and homeowners, Susie asks about the anticipated buyer. Before selecting furniture or accessories from her storage facility, she often moves or repurposes items that already are in place. Beyond working with homes on the market, Susie extends her creative service to families who are updating or remodeling their present home.

Our neighborhood is very accommodating for a home-based business such as hers, Susie says. She appreciates the high-speed internet, freeway access, and friendly nearby coffee shops and restaurants that enable her to focus on her passion for patronizing local businesses. She stays current in her field as a member of...
Julie Madge, Julie Madge Interiors, continued from page 6

After working with clients from a nearby home office, Julie sought space from which she could meet and interact with more people. While shopping at 48th and Chicago, she noticed a “For Lease” sign. When Julie saw the intimate space, she quickly became a tenant of Hakan Sezer, a Minnesota-based company. He likes Bridge because it’s smaller than the more well-known giants. He says they focus on local communities and can give more attention to individual buyers and sellers.

Francesco Marraffa, Bridge Realty, continued from page 6

abroad program. She was from Shoreview, Minnesota. He found Minneapolis to be an appealing city to put down roots and raise a family, which now includes two sons and a daughter.

Francesco had owned rental properties and invested in real estate for years, when a friend who was a mortgage broker told him he had the skills to be a good realtor. He took that advice to heart, and now works for Bridge Realty, a Minnesota-based company. He likes Bridge because it’s smaller than the more well-known giants. He says they focus on local communities and can give more attention to individual buyers and sellers.

Francesco is looking forward to another hot year in the FRN neighborhood real estate market. “We don’t have a lot of homes on the market in our neighborhood,” he says, “and when they come on the market, they usually don’t last long.”

When asked to describe the typical buyer in Field Regina Northrop, he doesn’t hesitate. “They’re all over the board — everything from young people starting families to empty nesters looking to downsize.” Some are moving from busier city neighborhoods looking for a little quieter atmosphere, while others are moving in from the suburbs wanting to be closer to downtown.

His first home was in Highland Park, but when his family began to grow, he and Rebecca bought his current house on Minnehaha Parkway in the Field neighborhood, and they love it. “We can walk to coffee shops, walk to parks. This community has everything that’s needed, and if it’s not within the FRN boundary, it’s just streets away.” He also appreciates knowing so many of his neighbors.

“When I lived in London, I didn’t know my neighbors, and if it’s not within the FRN boundary, it’s just streets away.” He also appreciates knowing so many of his neighbors. “When I lived in London, I didn’t know the people who lived next door.”

Julie now hosts an open-studio day on Thursdays from 11-4. She invites you to stop in, ask design questions, look around, touch things, and maybe just say hello. She is also happy to set up meetings with you by appointment.

Julie has been collaborating with more local artists to bring their work into her studio and into her clients’ homes. Watch for upcoming events that will showcase some of these creations.

Sustainability in design is of particular interest to Julie. She is continually investigating improvements in the industry, and seeks out companies, products, and practices that truly make a difference. Perhaps you have some information to share with her that she will share with others!

Instagram: juliemadgeinteriors
Facebook: Julie Madge Interiors
Jmadgeinteriors.com

newhomeeconomics.wordpress.com
Thanks to our reader who contributed the link to this absorbing blog on permaculture, native-plant gardening, and much more, written by Northrop neighbor Jennifer Rensenbrink. We met Jennifer when she contributed to Close to Home an informative article about rainbarrels.
Mark Foreman, Loco Design, continued from page 6

space beckoned Mark to work for a residential landscape company before founding Loco Design, his own business, in 2004. The name is an abbreviated version of “locomotive,” the engine of a train that’s “difficult to stop.” Neighbors and clients who have seen Mark in his own yard can attest to his zeal for and focus on a project!

As a landscape designer, Mark directs his energy toward creating useful outdoor spaces that reflect the needs of the client, the house, and the space. He gains an understanding of a client’s expectations, including their budget, sometimes recommending subcontractors to fulfill the specifications of his design. By having a home office, he keeps down costs, saves travel time, contributes to neighborhood safety by coming and going throughout the day, and contributes to the neighborhood economy by meeting clients at nearby coffee shops and restaurants.

locodesignstudio.com
612-799-0730

Susie Passons, SP Design, continued from page 7

RESA—Real Estate Staging Association, meeting monthly with local professional stagers, and she attends the annual RESA conference in Las Vegas. Her work has earned “Best of Houzz” service awards in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

For the second year in a row, Susie presented on the main stage at the annual Minneapolis Home + Remodeling Show at U.S. Bank Stadium. She shared practical steps on how to love your home, as well as elements and principles of design with which Susie is so familiar.

www.susiepassons.com
612-751-1017
Facebook: www.facebook.com/spdesign612/
Instagram: spdesignmn

Nate Lansing, RES Realty, continued from page 7

It is my goal to make the process of buying or selling a home as stress free and fun as possible. I have done everything from installing faucets and ceiling fans to interviewing painters and contractors for out-of-town clients, and even cleaning up houses before showings. All to make the process easier for my clients.

What is the inspiration behind this business?
My wife and I had moved several times including a move from Colorado, and each time it was extremely stressful. Our kids were young at the time and dealing with showings with young kids was tough. I saw a need for an agent who would go the extra mile to make the process easier.

Why are you passionate about this business?
I love educating people about our great neighborhood, from the local restaurants and businesses to our great schools and outdoor amenities. I also enjoy guiding people through what is most likely the largest financial decision of their life. Whether it is to buy or sell or renovate, I am able to provide the information necessary to help.

Who are the customers your business anticipates serving?
Anyone who lives or wants to learn more about our awesome neighborhood!

How do you stay current within your industry and with overall business practices?
I'm constantly studying the housing market in our neighborhood and spend time touring as many homes as possible. Local knowledge is a must when helping clients.

I live in the Northrop neighborhood with my wife and two kids who attend(ed) Hale Elementary. I'm the current Housing Committee Chair for the neighborhood group and treasurer for the Hale Field Foundation.

I recently started a neighborhood blog, www.nokomisliving.com to track all the events and news stories happening in our area. Keep an eye out for a new web video series highlighting all the great local restaurants, businesses, and events in our neighborhood.

natelansinghomes.com
612-499-2769
www.facebook.com/natelansinghomes/
Instagram.com/natelansinghomes

Christian Fritzberg, Coldwell Banker Burnet, continued from page 7

so the 48th and Chicago streetcar corner was the stomping grounds for my dad and his friends.” Christian’s father shared a lot of memories with him about the neighborhood and the businesses here, ”like going to the Parkway Theater and seeing the newsreel and the cartoons before the movie, as well as playing by Minnehaha Creek.”

Christian’s interest in historic houses made him a natural for the job of real estate agent in this part of town. He bought a house in the Field neighborhood near Minnehaha Creek in 2011 while he was working in senior housing and became a real estate agent with Coldwell Banker a couple of years ago. He works in Minneapolis and the western suburbs, but our part of south Minneapolis is where his heart is. Christian is certified by the National Association of Realtors as a Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES), trained in addressing the needs of people over 50 who want to transition to a different type of home.

He says the housing market is "still good this year, especially in our area. He thinks that the multiple-offer phenomenon of recent years might be easing a bit, which is a good thing for buyers.

Continued on page 10
The Charming Architecture of Field Regina Northrop, continued from page 2

Limestone is often used as is ornate brick patterning as further detailing elements. Windows are often grouped on the main floor. Windows can be either double hung or casement and have either the standard six-over-six rectangular mullions or occasionally diamond-shaped mullions are utilized. What are often seen in our neighborhood are more modest examples in both story-and-a-half or full two-story forms. These homes are based on 16th-century English precedents.

**Spanish Revival** – Often crowned by clay tile roofs in either red or green shades. Roofs are generally not steeply pitched. Predominantly clad in stucco, these homes can be either one story, story-and-a-half or two-story varieties. Arches and iron work were used to adorn these homes. The use of the arch was commonplace in principal windows, entry doors and within the stucco itself. Elaborate iron detailing can be noted in decorative window boxes and entry railings. Use of pilasters and decorative gable vents also are hallmarks of the style.

**Ranch** – Often seen as Mid-Century Modern infill housing in our neighborhood on blocks and lots that were previously undeveloped. Ranch homes are single-level homes that are long, rectilinear homes that often accommodate all of the living spaces on a single level. Garages are often attached. Simply adorned, often with a large picture window to the living room space. Roofs are not steeply pitched and often have large eave overhangs. Siding can vary significantly from vinyl-lap siding to brick or stone. Popular again, especially among baby boomers who are looking to age in place.

To learn more about architectural style, I recommend the following as two great resources to start your studies. The book *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia & Lee McAlester or the website: [Architecturesyles.org](http://Architecturesyles.org)

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Christian Fritzberg, Coldwell Banker Burnet, continued from page 9

Christian has some basic advice for homeowners who are considering selling. While the adage that “kitchens and bathrooms sell houses” is true, he believes that doing more sprucing up than major remodeling will result in the most profit. “Fresh paint doesn’t cost that much,” and can quickly add a lot of appeal to a house. Cleaning up, decluttering, and doing a little planting in the yard can also increase the appeal of your house without breaking the bank. Sometimes “people think they need to have their home completely updated to sell it, but it’s not a good investment to do large-scale updates like a complete kitchen remodel (just to sell). If you’re thinking about doing that, you should do it well in advance of selling, so you can enjoy it.”

Christian cautions against going it alone, such as “For Sale by Owner,” or using online sites for pricing information, as they don’t take into account the nuances understood by a realtor who works the neighborhood and knows both properties and buyers. If a realtor “focuses on an area, they’ve likely got some people that they’re working with already who might be a perfect fit.”

**ChristianFritzberg.com**

(612) 414-6175

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Christian Fritzberg, Coldwell Banker Burnet, continued from page 9

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St. Mary’s Cemetery
A neighborhood cemetery

![St. Mary’s Cemetery](image)

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Welcome Jenny in the City

By Sue Filbin, Communications Committee
Credit the location of the shop named Jenny in the City to serendipity, or propinquity, or both! When owner Jen Nylin noticed new development where a worn-out convenience store had been located on 47th and Cedar, she contacted the developer. After Jen committed to the space, a contractor added a fitting room and bathroom. Within a week, Jen and her husband, Steve, painted everything, built all the fixtures, finished the flooring, and installed the lights to prepare the women’s apparel shop for its grand opening on December 6, 2018.

Jen has always loved fashion. Her passion for fashion shines when she styles customers—one of her favorite activities. She said, “It’s fun hearing people’s stories.” She asks her customers what they do, how they live, and what their family life is like. Jen explained that her “intention is for clothes to be for everyday life” and that the clothes she sells are “fashionable and affordable.” Jen elaborated by saying, “I love helping people feel good. There’s nothing worse than being uncomfortable and not feeling good about yourself.”

With a tagline that reads, “Your destination for effortless fashion,” Jen’s goal is to “provide pieces from which a woman can base her wardrobe—garments that last, and are easy to mix and match—so no one has to think about it too much, yet they feel good at the end of the day.” Jen acknowledged that her mother-in-law buys all her clothes from her, while some of the garments Jen selects are favorites of teenage customers.

The range of sizes, including plus or curvy-line styles, as well as age-appropriate clothes that appeal to several generations is perfect for Jen’s hosting of events. Recently, a mother/daughter event drew a crowd of women, girls, and even little girls to enjoy shopping, music, and refreshments. Jen also hosts free private-shopping events for a group of friends, neighbors, club members, or co-workers. The events last for two hours, with customers realizing a 10% discount or donation to their favorite fundraising effort.

Jen’s background is in merchandising and retail, most recently with Evereve in St. Paul (formerly Hot Momma). For two years before opening Jenny in the City, Jen ran her business online. By attending three buying shows a year and “traveling all over the country,” Jen builds relationships with vendors and manufacturers. She’s proud of the lines she carries. “Denim is big,” Jen said as she described the distinctive Lola Jeans brand—pull-on jeans (“rubber-band jeans”) without zippers or buttons that are “so smooth and comfortable.” Kut from the Kloth is one of Jen’s favorite lines. Coin 1804 manufactures T-shirts, tunics, bottoms, and more that are “100% cotton and really comfortable.” Jewelry from Mata Traders supports the livelihood of women artisans in India and Nepal.

As for local sources, the proprietor of Not Bad Goods of south Minneapolis was a customer before becoming a vendor of pom earrings, and Jen stocks leather wristlets made by Leather Works Minnesota that’s located in Lowertown St. Paul. She said she’s “always willing to talk with people” about their fashion-related creations.

Some customers have divulged to Jen that they feel so welcome they don’t want to go to the mall again! Other customers have cancelled their online shopping subscriptions because they find what they want, affordably and in their size, at Jenny in the City.

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