



EPIC Board Meeting Draft Minutes

December 4, 2021, 10am – 11am

EPIC web address: eastphillips.org

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Office: 2433 Bloomington Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404

Phone: (612) 354-6802

Board Roster: Laura Dale, Mary Gonsior, Cassandra Holmes, David Ingold, Shontal Lajeunesse, Steve Sandberg, Earl Simms, Karen Townsend, Nikolas Winter-Simat

Board Members Present: Mary Gonsior, Steve Sandberg, Cassandra Holmes, Karen Townsend, Nikolas Winter-Simat, Laura Dale

Board Members Not Present: Shontal Lajeunesse (E), David Ingold (E), Earl Simms

Members: Brad Pass, Carol Pass

Guests:

10:00 Review vision and mission

Welcome guests/intros

Approve agenda, **NWS, StS, Approved**

Approve minutes, **NWS, KT, Approved**

Reminders:

- Next Community Meeting will be: Thursday, December 9 from 6:30 to 7:30 at **East Phillips Park** and online (link to join meeting can be found at eastphillips.org)
 - We were unable to reserve the gym at East Phillips Park, we will be in the community room
 - Overdose Prevention Site group will give quick 5 minute update
 - Presentation on resurfacing work and ADA pedestrian improvement in East Phillips in 2022-2023
 - Masks required
- Next Board Meeting will be: Saturday, January 8 (note one week later than usual due to New Year's) from 10am to 11am at the EPIC office and online (link to join meeting can be found at eastphillips.org)
 - Board Meetings are open to the public

Announcements:

- Board voted via email to approve new policies and procedures - view at eastphillips.org
 - This includes changes to how community gives input on expenditures
 - Bylaw Amendment Votes:
 - Online votes: 4 in favor, 0 against
 - Paper votes: 1 against (disqualified because person is outside of East Phillips)
 - Community Meeting votes: 8 approved, 1 abstained
- The EPIC board voted and approved the following two motions via email
 - **MOTION:** The EPIC board approves the use of funds up to \$3,000 for a Phase I Environmental Assessment of 2433 Bloomington Avenue.

- No further voting needed
- **MOTION:** The EPIC Board recommends the purchase of the Bloomington Office for \$180,000 plus closing costs of up to \$5,000, provided sufficient resources, acceptable Phase I Environmental Assessment, sufficient property appraisal, and approval of pro forma by CPED or NCR.
 - The community has been given 21 day notice for the voting period for this motion - voting will occur at the EPIC Community Meeting on 12/9 and be open via an online survey from 12/9-12/21. EPIC will also do outreach to those without access to internet via phone calls
- Monthly Financial Report was shared via email
 - Any questions or concerns?

10:05 Report/Update from Executive Coordinator

- Bylaw amendment
 - Alternative voting methods - add the following to our bylaws - will need to be brought to the Community Meeting - any edits from the board?
 - **Alternative Voting Methods.** Voting may be conducted via electronic methods, such as SurveyMonkey. In addition, a ballot drop box for paper ballots can be utilized at a location determined by the EPIC board, such as the EPIC office. Voting may stay open for up to 7 days before or after the meeting (Annual Meeting or Community Meeting) where the voting begins, as determined by the EPIC board.
 - Confusion around 12 day voting period for motion regarding purchase of office
 - Add the following to Community Meeting agenda so clearer:
 - The above alternative voting methods addition conforms to city requirements and is for the future
 - Currently voting regarding finances is outlined in our Operating Policies and Procedures
 - Currently in our bylaws member voting in bylaws are reserved for election of board members and ratification/rejection of bylaw amendments
 - Add election section excerpt to Community Meeting agenda

MOTION: The EPIC board recommends the above Alternative Voting Methods addition to the EPIC bylaws for a community meeting vote, **MG, NWS, approved**

- Budgets
 - Calendar in Operating Policies and Procedures states that the board reviews budgets in December for realism, appropriateness and completeness
 - Garden Steering Committee budget - Garden Steering Committee reviewing on Monday, will submit to board via email after that. Draft was emailed to board.
 - Board reviewed and approved 2022 Operating budget at October Board meeting
- SHRS use of space discussion

- SHRS would use bi weekly or once a month
- 10 people max, including SHRS staff
- Share a google calendar to schedule use of the space
 - Print calendar too
 - Print sign (24 hour surveillance)
- MoU: [MOU SHRS Use of Space](#)
- Concerns:
 - Giving out security code - see [Key Use and Security Code Agreement](#)
 - Can add security code for different users
 - Certificate of insurance for liability insurance and worker's compensation insurance - Sarah added to MoU that SHRS will provide these to EPIC
 - COVID protocols - Sarah added to MoU that SHRS will follow EPIC's COVID protocols
 - Sanitize surfaces - post in office, add to document
- Building purchase update
 - Meeting with Bob Cooper - made it clear that the process to purchase the building will not be done by the end of 2021 due to the time it takes for CPED to do the paperwork needed - issue then is using CPP funds.
 - Met with Ariah Fine, our Neighborhood Support Specialist to request his approval to use our Equitable Engagement Funds for the purchase of the office building
 - Did not get a clear yes or no, he will bring it to his team and get back to us next week
 - In the meantime he said that being able to show robust community engagement will be very important
 - Recommends joining groups of East Phillips residents who are already gathering for a 15 minute 'presentation' - ask questions and get feedback
 - Meet with community partners - benefits to their organization
 - Make phone calls - be sure to get a good representation of East Phillips demographics
 - IMPORTANT: presenting this in a way that is unbiased and gets feedback from the community
 - Committee work or form work group?
 - Nikolas
 - Benefits, risks, how risks would be mitigated
 - Good price, based on partnership
 - Hear concerns
 - Board is recommending after looking at risks and benefits
 - How benefit org, block etc.
 - Make sure neighbors are informed, tell your neighbors, direct to website
 - Get feedback on script from Ariah

- Document showing past discussions
- Next steps: pro forma (David worked on); appraisal (Sarah scheduling); offer agreement with Mark Welna saying we are committed to purchasing (since won't be able to purchase by end of year and his verbal commitment was through the end of the year); Phase I Environmental Assessment
- Discussion about purchase agreement
 - Nikolas will work on Offer Agreement, something that states that Mark Welna is committed to offering it to us at this price in this time frame
 - Written agreement so not putting money into purchase and then it falls through because just based on verbal agreement
 - Mary will pass on information from realtor - get advice
 - Have Offer Agreement before payment for appraisal and Phase I get agreement from Welna

MOTION: The EPIC board approves up to \$3,000 for an appraisal of the building at 2433 Bloomington Avenue, **LD, MG, Approved**

- Greater Phillips collaboration - TABLED
 - Reps from all 4 Phillips neighborhoods have been meeting once a month
 - Thinking about doing a project together, some ideas so far:
 - Phillips garden tour incorporating a workshop
 - 24th Street - shared boundary between all the neighborhoods
 - Lighting project along the street
 - Open Street event
 - Traffic calming initiative
 - Green Zone - all share
 - Equitable development scorecard - build power behind it so as developers approach us with proposals we have a scorecard stating our priorities i.e. 30% AMI
 - Traffic calming
 - Shared approach to traffic improvements
 - Look at common corridor issues
 - Form committees or subgroups around any of these ^^
 - Rank these ideas - Zoom quiz
 - Other ideas? Chat or email Sarah!

Report from Departments

- Executive Committee from this morning:
 - Future: lull from late November through end of January
 - Short Zoom board meetings
 - This year: Executive Coordinator works less hours end of December, January and February
 - Board supports all of the above
 - Retirement benefits discussion

- Check with Steve Gallagher - planning to talk to lawyer - gathering information from him
- Think about more than one employee for future
- Budget (5-12%) - do it in a way that gives flexibility
 - Or match contribution up to certain amount
- Look at technicalities around timeline for implementing benefits
 - Payroll basis?
 - Eligibility requirements?

MOTION: The board approves up to \$1,000 for lawyer fees for advice on retirement benefits, **MG, KT, Approved**

- COVID or holiday bonus
 - Staff being out and about - COVID risks
 - Put on agenda for February agenda
 - Legal finance bring proposal
- 36 hours per week for Executive Coordinator
 - Look at comprehensively
 - Come up with proposal
 - January - February Executive Committee meets to discuss
 - Early January meet
- Facilitation for Strategic Plan
 - Call for submission didn't get submissions beyond Devika
 - Would like a report for social media

MOTION: The EPIC Board approves Devika Ghai to facilitate EPIC's strategic planning process for \$4,000, **MG, LD, Approved**

Split payments evenly, 1/6 each month, cancellation policy

10:35 New business

- TOPA - Tenant Opportunity to Purchase
 - We are invited to join the fight for a strong TOPA policy
 - Led by Housing Justice League
 - [More information here](#)
 - Many tenants forced to move out when building is sold to new owner because rent goes up
 - Repairs rarely happen
 - TOPA gives the opportunity for tenants to collectively purchase their buildings when they go up for sale
 - The group believes that tenants are the biggest investors in their own property
 - HJL wants TOPA for all rental properties with no exemptions

- HJL wants the option for tenants to assign or sell their right to purchase the building if they aren't interested in owning it, including to a nonprofit organization
- The city has talked about this for many years and are currently having info sessions about their proposed policy ([more information on the city policy here](#))
 - Housing Justice League wants stronger policy than what city is proposing
 - City wants to exempt most small buildings - exempts individual landlords of 1-4 units with 5 or fewer buildings
 - City plan does not include right to sell
- EPIC sign on?
 - Spectrum of involvement from
 - Encouraging neighbors to take city's survey
 - To hosting events in our ward to joining weekly Friday meetings and dedicating staff and volunteer time
 - Discussion:
 - Board member hesitant because might not agree with everything group stands with
 - Board member wants community member vote
 - Need to be aware of who is at table
 - EPIC supports tenants power - here is what Housing Justice League supports, here is city proposal and here is how to give feedback
 - Add to community meeting announcement
- Restorative Justice program?
 - a new program that Sarah suggests that EPIC applies for. Through Minneapolis Office of Violence Prevention, a partnership of [Restorative Justice Community Action](#), [Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute \(Peacebuilding\)](#), and community leader Manu Lewis have collaborated in bringing a multi-dimensional process for communities to develop skills and create a public safety model that fits the needs and desires of local neighborhoods.
 - EPIC would need to:
 - Identify and recruit a core team of 5-10 community members committed to full training and mentoring throughout the project which includes:
 - Strategies for Trauma, Resilience, and Awareness (STAR)—MN Peacebuilding Leadership Institute:
 - 5-day Virtual training: January 18-19 and 24-26, 2022
 - Restorative Circle Training—Koinonia Leadership Academy: 4 day In-person training—March 1-4, 2022
 - Public Safety Workshop: Saturday March 19, 2022
 - Monthly mentorship gathering
 - Trainings are free for participating core group and staff of Neighborhood organization
 - Core group community members (not staff) receive \$100 stipend per person per month of participation January-June 2022 (\$600)

- EPIC would get 1 year membership with the National Association for Community Mediation
- Application due December 10
- Group would form a public safety model for the community
 - Set goals
 - Individualized for our community
 - Community driven
 - Revisit throughout program to alter based on what learn in trainings
- EPIC will apply
 - Consider supplementing with EPIC funds

Add Roof Depot to announcement to CM agenda

1pm-3pm Saturday December 18

11:55 Adjourn