

STEVENS SQUARE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

February 19, 2026 / 6:00 PM

ATTENDEES:

- **Members:** Molly Ellis co-chair (she/her) Adam, Karen Ives (she/her), Ken Strobel (he/him), Frank Perez At-Large (he/him), D'Artagnan Johnson Co-Chair (He/him), Shykala Brinkman (she/they), Sydney Vasquez, Abby (she/they), Joyce, Maureen Wells (she/her), Kemi Ojelade (she/her), Chelcy Hunt (she/her)
- **Staff:** Adam Schneider, Khrys Wetzel (he/they)
- **Guests:** Jay Hill – Franklin Ave Reconstruction Project Manager

AGENDA:

- Introductions
- Approve Meeting Agenda
 - D'Aratagnan moves to add Hennepin History Museum to agenda
 - Karen moves to approve, seconded by Ken. Agenda approved
- Review and Approve the [Minutes of the Last Meeting](#)
 - Karen moves to approve, seconded by Ken. Agenda approved.

Guests

- [Franklin Ave Construction Project](#)
 - Looking to start construction on March 16th
 - Traffic will be closed to one lane, one direction starting on the north side
 - Mid-July traffic flipped to northside while work is being done on southside
 - Planning to be done with this phase by mid-November, starting next phase in 2027, hoping to fully wrap up project by mid-early fall
 - Jay Hill contact can be found on the attached document, can be reached with any questions during or about this construction project. Questions?

- Why this reconstruction?
- Hennepin county evaluates the condition of roadways and when they hit a certain level they get reconstructed. Also happens for safety when changing from 2lane road to center turnway, also working on bike lanes and enhanced pedestrian areas. Going to a 3lane (2 directions, center turning lane) also improves driving safety, reduces accidents.
- Detour signs? What happens with redirected traffic?
 - Advance notice signs will go up around March 2nd
 - Full detour routes for both directions, there will be a local access-only lane maintained.
- Is there a website to stay up to date?
 - There is a QR code on the document that will bring you to the construction website.

STAFF UPDATES

- Adam S. Report
 - FORTIFY 2025 extended, FORFITY 2026 & Homegrown Collaborative Projects submitted
 - 2025, Ext.: food shelf capacity and community discussions
 - 2026 & HCP: Stevens Square Sharing Garden
 - Budgeted in staff time in the grant
- Khrys W. Report
 - CEAP Grant award: \$960 for RHA
 - We got much more last year, we Khrys will reach out to see if there is the possibility of having more of our contract fees covered this year.
 - NICO Apartments Connection
 - Connected with a contact at NICO who is eager to regularly attend and be part of the SSC0 community- talked about the rent discount program, and having SSC0 materials in lobby

GENERAL UPDATES

NOTICES & ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

- [Skafte Garden Rock Memorial Messages](#)
 - Could do 2 memorials, 1 to match Loring Park and the second one as a larger paragraph

- Molly motions to approve the 2 wordings, provided Molly adds birth and death dates and pricing to board prior to March meeting.
 - Board approves this
 - We have a bit over \$4000 for this memorial.
- Community ICE initiatives
 - [Business Support Fund](#) at \$1200/\$10,000
 - Application went out today to businesses (about 25) alongside other grant opportunities
 - City just passed a similar grant program
- [Event Calendar](#)
 - Events/Proposals:
 - Spring Quarterly: Combo w/FORTIFY Discussions?
 - Yes, April 12th
 - Business Support Grant Fundraiser?
 - Narcan Training, Naloxone Training
 - Joyce is a trained trainer. Can get them and knows how to use them
 - Naloxone is cheaper, and a smaller dose which can be better for when they come to
 - Has the supplies and tools
 - FORTIFY '25 Community Discussions
 - CD1: Sunday, April 12th
 - Continuing the connections made through ICE occupation
 - Narcan/Naloxone convo/training
 - Time: 1pm - 3pm
 - CD2: Sunday, May 17th
 - Livability, greenspaces, health/wellbeing
 - Can we invite the folks?
 - United Renters for Justice
 - Time: 1pm - 3pm
 - Proposal @ board meeting: April event to be quarterly meeting, dates & times for a motion
 - RHA 7/18
 - Submitted MRAC Grant
 - Should hear back in April, disbursement in June
 - We submitted for \$24,500 to year this year and into next year

- Included contracted event coordinator next year
 - Connect
 - CEAP award: \$960
 - Annual Meeting Proposed Date: 8/22
 - Need to decide this to share with NCR ASAP
 - Board to approve officially at board meeting on 3/3
- Proposed Rolling Business Micro-Loan Program
 - We had a proposal of transferring \$10,000 into community development to serve as a match to donations
 - We talked to NCR reps, NRP funds cannot be used for our Business Support Fund grant activities. NCR can only be used for brick & mortar improvements (facades, HVAC, etc) and not rent, staff hrs, etc
 - We put money into an account with the city and we would get \$\$ from interest. This would be good to help with the facade improvement program to help businesses make that cost share. We have over 146k in unallocated program funds. In contracted funds, we have 128k. Right now we have categories on how we contract the allocated money, which can be updated to move funds without a community vote.
 - Do we want Adam to look into this?
 - We can have 0% or low interest and the city would manage those funds. This can be a way to help our businesses to help them out.
 - To businesses, if they are interested in facade improvements would this be for the owners to decide? As many of our businesses are renters.
 - We would likely have to go to property owners on physical improvements
 - We could also pause on this and do a community vote to provide bigger loans vs micro loans.
 - Adam to gauge interest, if enough he will get in contact with city and report back at next NDEC
- People for Parks Grant
 - Nature-based Ideas
 - Kid-friendly activities? Teach them about nature?
 - Lake Nokomis has a monarch festival- maybe pick something similar?

- Children's summer program at park
- MIA truck- art engagement?
- Field Day for kids, if held weekend of Juneteenth, would be a cultural event, get folks out and active, include nature, etc
 - Food, music, fun activity day
 - Could connect with precinct for outreach
- [Ward 7 Meeting, 2/22](#)
- Hennepin History Museum Collab
 - Talked to ED of museum about a partnership-
 - He's interested and wants to find a way to get involved in stories of community members and/or partner with RHA and other community activities
 - Expressed interest in attending committees/meetings
 - Could connect with him for Community Discussion for April
 - Can we collab on the history of our park/neighborhood?
 - *Contact: John Crippen, Executive Director •*
john.crippen@hennepinhistory.org
- Dog Poop problems
 - We will get 3 dog poop stations in the neighborhood!

Last comments:

A few days ago big lights were put up along First Ave that takes up a lot of the sidewalk. The lights are very bright and on people's property, and very bright.

- There is another one in front of another building, there isn't room for accessibility
- Who to call? City council, and 311
- Did public works put the light up? They may be another contact.
- Khrys can reach out with Ward 6.

Molly motions to adjourn, seconded by Ken. Meeting adjourned.

NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026