

## **Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC)**

Livability Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, February 18, 2004  
6:30-8:00 p.m.  
@ Loring Park Shelter

**Attendance:** Jana Metge (CLPC), Craig Williams (1st Precinct SAFE), Luther Krueger (1st Precinct SAFE), Insp. Rob Allen (1<sup>st</sup> Precinct, Mpls Police), Lt. Dick Sandberg (CLPC board), Jan Sandberg (local resident), Jim Bullock (CLPC board), Mary Turner (CLPC board), Bridget Bernstrom (Mpls Parks), Jessie Taylor (316 Oak Grove), Neil Carlson (CLPC Board), Michael Harralson (1402 Spruce), Sgt. Fred McCormick (Park Police), Joshua (advocate for 316 Oak Grove), John van Heel (CLPC Board), Michael Medaris (230 Oak Grove), Ethelind Kent (Jeremiah Project).

### **Agenda**

#### **I. 6:30 Welcome & Introductions Richard Sandberg**

*Minutes from January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Motion by Michael Harralson, seconded by Mary Turner.*

*Passed unanimously.*

#### **II. 6:30-7:15 \$1 Million NRP Crime Funds Jana, Inspector Allen**

Mpls City Council voted this past year to take \$1 million of NRP funding and dedicate it to Crime and Safety. These funds have been appropriated to the individual precincts. The NRP Policy Board met Monday, Jan. 26th to discuss the processes for using this funding.

As it stands now, these funds have been appropriated as a fixed number of hours to each precinct and precincts need these funds to continue business as usual, make up for previously planned cutbacks, and avoid further layoffs.

A task force is working on making the city council's decision meet legal requirements because NRP Policy states that the funds cannot be used until a neighborhood-driven strategy is in place. There is concern that putting extra requirements in place will raise expectations that there will be more policing than is possible.

Insp. Allen talked about policing/staffing needs in the 1st Precinct. It is difficult to translate the hours. He wants to identify areas for directed patrol, understanding that these are not additional hours but redirected resources.

Dick Sandberg asked if this had been done in the past—Insp. Allen said that it had, though not through a formal written agreement. Part of CCP/Safe's purpose is to look at trends and figure out ways to address those issues. For example, there have been issues in the "lower Nicollet" area, near District 202, where people do not feel safe, although it is a low crime area.

Dick asked if other neighborhoods have provided guidance—Not yet, except for Downtown, and they should get something for Elliot Park next month, but Cedar/Riverside will take longer.

Mary Turner raised concerns about keeping lower Nicollet and parts of LaSalle safer—we want to encourage Loring residents to use those businesses. Insp. Allen said that it seems that there has been a dramatic increase in Park Police activity in terms of arrests and the working relationship has improved. Insp. Allen also mentioned that St. Thomas security is doing a great job.

Insp. Allen also feels that SuperAmerica is getting better—the police had a meeting with them and the call load is down. However, *the committee supported the idea that as part of the NRP hours, direct CCP/Safe to implement the ordinance citation process in the area of the SuperAmerica store on Grant and LaSalle.*

Insp. Allen briefly discussed the camera project: there have been some delays, but the first camera will be installed at the end of March, and all cameras will be operational by the end of May. The process is more complex than anticipated. Another piece of this project is to set up a common radio channel for building security downtown.

Insp. Allen also said that the work with the assigned community prosecutor (Lois Conroy) has been very positive—the court is starting to apply geographic restrictions on offenders.

There was a general discussion about difficulties with some reported “crimes” that are not as represented in the news. Several recent incidents were not random and would not trigger a crime alert.

Jana suggested that perhaps Livability could target a building of the month or problem property for special attention. Craig suggested that this could go beyond the Livability Committee since some buildings would likely need more involvement with the city inspections department.

Jana gave John and Dick a copy of the evolving NRP Crime Proposal. She also distributed a copy of a letter from the Native American community.

There were other comments with concerns about use of NRP dollars for the work of SAFE teams in individual buildings. There is training available for CERT (community emergency response team) through the fire department—see Ruth Rollwagen. Due to budget cuts, this is now going to a train-the-trainer model. It was suggested that this training could be promoted at the annual meeting.

### **III. 7:15-8:00 Meet our Loring Park Neighborhood Park Police** *Sgt. Fred McCormick*

Sgt. McCormick is the night supervisor for the Park Police, working mostly out of the 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct. He described the structure of the Park Police, set up in teams, and their relationship to the Minneapolis Police. The Park Police are doing some plainclothes work, trying to address livability concerns.

The Park Police now work with the public schools. This allowed them to add 17 officers to the department and that should allow additional officers on the streets during the summer. There has been talk about adding a beat officer for Loring Park but this would require more study. He thinks this relationship with the schools has lots of positives for the future.

The police reports allow indicating if the arrest is at a school or park and the Park Police review these. The resources that used to be dedicated to Hidden Beach (significant drop in calls to that site) can be delegated elsewhere, including Loring Park. Their goal is to deal with behavior issues as soon as they occur.

There was a question about the visibility of the officers: there are sometimes sweeps of several squad cars at once to check for outstanding warrants, there are also surveillance activities.

Jana noted that in 2002, Loring Park had the most calls of any park in the city. Powderhorn Park obtained a golf cart that was useful during the heat of the summer. John van Heel asked about support for Loring Park vs. the other parks—Sgt. McCormick said that the Park Police strategy is

more focused on preventative work, such as working with kids at the open gyms during the winter. But sometimes they are just running from call to call.

Craig asked about the importance of the management of the facility—Powderhorn was much more assertive than past management has been at Loring Park. Proactive management involves being seen, possibly with a distinctive shirt. Craig suggested the value of the park staff having a management plan. The time is ripe for putting something like this into place since the building was closed for most of last year. Technically, the park closes at midnight and lurking off path is a misdemeanor.

Dick asked when citizens should call about nuisance crimes—Sgt. McCormick said that Level 2 calls (most nuisance crimes) will take 15-20 minutes for a response and offender could be gone by that time. But citizens should always feel free to call.

Luther asked about truancy—do the police within the schools handle this? They do not deal with this outside the schools. This may be a good Livability topic.

There was also a question about removal of some of the foliage around the park for crime prevention.

Question about lighting issues in the park—are there additional lights needed? Sgt. Schultz is in charge of safety issues and would do an evaluation, but any changes would be up to the Park Board.

#### **Announcements:**

**Annual Meeting:** there will be a dozen or more vendors.

**Legislative Update:** CCNP has been following the sentencing guidelines report. There has been pressure on the state to reduce DOC spending and to open up beds for Level 3 sex offenders. One way to do this would be to reduce consequences of 5<sup>th</sup> degree drug offenses. The proposed changes would impact the amount of drugs, length of sentence, and other factors such as special circumstances. The county says that over 50 % of the increase in some crimes is due to probation violation. Only 8 % of drug offenses are in prison. But there is no funding for long-term treatment or intervention.

At the legislative meeting today, Minneapolis took the following position:

Minneapolis opposes the increasing of thresholds and the reduction of sentences for drug offenders. Minneapolis supports more effective drug abuse assessment and treatment programs, including necessary funding. Minneapolis supports the Sentencing Guidelines completion of their initial charge, which included a study of recidivism as well as further their work by doing an evaluation of individuals who are being sentenced to prison and their impact on neighborhoods.

**Street signs:** Jim asked about the colors used to paint parts of “utensils” at the beginning of Grant Street.

**Adjourned 8:15 PM.**

#### **Items For Future Agendas:**

- Restorative Justice Quarterly report
- Expand downtown fare zone for buses.
- Truancy and livability crimes

- Invite the 1<sup>st</sup> precinct community prosecutor Lois Conroy to a future meeting.
- Jana suggested inviting Hillary Freeman to speak at a future meeting about working with offenders.
- Police reserves program information
- Jana's notes from meeting with Judge Burke
- A letter from CLPC based upon the Stevens Square letter on livability crimes gap.

*Respectfully submitted, Jan Sandberg/JLM*