



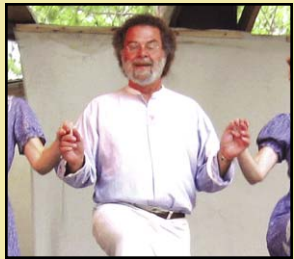
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North End Teen Center born at old Washington Junior High

By JAN WILLMS

It began as a conversation in 2007. The Rice Street Library was becoming a place where teens were spending their time talking with friends, and patrons were feeling a bit intimidated.

"There were some real concerns about this, and our office and the library staff, council member, mayor's Second-Shift Initiative and police juvenile unit started talking about what to do," said Grit Youngquist, Healthy Youth program coordinator with St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health.

"We were moving in the direction of having more of a police or security presence in the library, but no one really liked that idea. It was not the best use of police resources. We wondered if there was a better way we could do something."

That germ of conversation in 2007 has led to the recent opening of the North End Teen Center, in a newly remodeled space below the Rice Recreation Center at 1021 Marion St.

One of only two teen centers in St. Paul, it offers a place where the youth can congregate, talk with their friends and just "hang out."

"My hunch is that having a place to just hang out is one of the most valuable things about these places," Youngquist said.

When the various organizations first started looking at how to resolve some of the concerns at the library, they asked the young people what they felt was missing for them in their neighborhood.

"They said they had no place



A germ of conversation in 2007 has led to the recent opening of the North End Teen Center, in a newly remodeled space below the Rice Recreation Center at 1021 Marion St. Above, Danielle Fleming, Mark Bausch and 7th grader Angel Martin-Braun. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

to go where they did not get chased away from," Youngquist recalled. "They were feeling like this was an area that did not offer much, and they wanted to get away from it."

Finding a safe and secure place where youth could be became the primary focus of this group, according to Youngquist. The Wakanheza Project, a prevention approach to addressing family violence that was developed in 2002 by the Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health and The

Initiative for Peaceful Families and Communities in Ramsey County, offered input. Wakanheza is the Dakota word for child and its closest English translation is "sacred being." The representatives at the conversations were introduced to concepts and tools that could help reduce stressful situations and conflict.

"We could use those tools as a group of interested parties in the neighborhood to change the tone of what was going on at the library," Youngquist said. And a place for the youth to gather, rather than at the library or on the street or in front of a business started to take hold.

She said the teen center became a reality largely thanks to the efforts of Council Member Lee Helgen and Kathy Korum, deputy director of Parks and Recreation.

"Lee made the financial resources come together, and Kathy brought in the youth's voice," Youngquist said.

"I'm very pleased to see this happen," Helgen said. "We made a real effort to get the youth engaged in planning the center. As they start to use it, I hope they will drive the programming as well."

He said the renovations for the center were made possible by

a \$350,000 grant from the city's Neighborhood STAR grant program.

"It's a safe, secure place to go. The kids can cook some food, watch TV, play games, chat and be on the phone," Helgen noted. "There's a lot of flexibility with this space, and a regular rec center with a meeting room doesn't offer this. The timing for the opening is great, too, with the beginning of summer and kids looking for a place to go."

Korum said she remembers back to when the building was Washington Senior High School. Then Washington Junior High. Later a child care operation was in the building, and when that stopped, it stood empty for awhile. Parks and Recreation used the location for a time for housing its staff, with offices, cubes, desks and copiers filling the space.

But Korum said when the teen center was proposed, the location below the Rice Recreation Center seemed ideal. "We knew there was a leaky roof, but we fixed that," she said. The door and window openings are new. Some of the teens picked the carpet, the wall colors and the furniture.



The teen center became a reality largely thanks to the efforts of Council Member Lee Helgen and Kathy Korum, deputy director of Parks and Recreation. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

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Staycation brings celebration to Como Park

By DEBORAH BROTZ

Whether it's two days or two weeks, paid or unpaid, at home or away from home, everybody loves a vacation.

With the high cost of gas, lodging, and entertainment, you may be thinking taking a vacation this summer is not in the picture. But, you're in luck because you live in the Como neighborhood and can Staycation right in your own backyard.

The second annual Como Neighborhood Staycation will be held Friday, July 15-Sunday, July 17. The District 10 Como Community Council, Northwest Como Rec Center, Chelsea Heights PTO, the Coffee Grounds, and the Como Park/Falcon Heights Living at Home Block Nurse Program are working together to bring you a fun-filled family weekend with family activities galore.

Friday, July 15, from 6 p.m.-10 p.m., there will be a Summer Music Festival at Coffee Grounds featuring Hula Peppers and Spruce Top Review. Also, from 6 p.m.-7 p.m., there will be a talent show at Coffee Grounds. From 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., there will be family activities, a jump castle, climbing tour and concessions at Northwest Como Rec. At 9 p.m., an outdoor movie featuring "Yogi Bear" will be shown at Northwest Como Rec.

Saturday, July 16, from 8 a.m.-2 p.m., there will be a Flea Market in the fields of Northwest Como Rec Center along with family activities, concessions, a jump castle, resource tables, and

free blood pressure checks by the Block Nurse Program. From 9 a.m.-3 p.m., there will be an Art Crawl throughout Como Park. From 10 a.m.-2 p.m., there will be a Garden Tour throughout Como Park (maps for the Art Crawl and Garden Tour are available at www.district10comopark.org/staycation.html). From 4 p.m.-10 p.m., there will be a Summer Music Festival at Coffee Grounds featuring 7 Cats Swing, Ben Woolman, Wild Goose Chase Cloggers and Atomic Flea.

The band 7 Cats Swing will play swing music, which people can dance to. Ben Woolman is a singer/songwriter who plays folk music. Wild Goose Chase Cloggers play bluegrass music and will do a demonstration of Appalachian clogging that people can participate in. Atomic Flea is a local group that does alternative music.

On Sunday, July 17, at 11:30 a.m., a Kickball Tournament will be held at Chelsea Heights Elementary. At 1 p.m., there will be a Como Park Bike Ride and History Tour with free bike inspections, helmet checks, prizes and giveaways. The bike ride and history tour will start at Black Bear Crossings on the Lake and end at Coffee Grounds. From 4 p.m.-9 p.m., the Summer Music Festival will be held at Coffee Grounds featuring B.L.T., Flamenco and Frogtown Midway Arborator.

B.L.T., which stands for Burke, Lidell, and Tate, does folk music. Flamenco does classic Flamenco dancing to music with costumes and Spanish guitars and will also be doing a demonstration, which people can join in. Frogtown Midway Arborator is a brass concert band.

Dave Lawrence, owner of The Coffee Grounds, who is sponsoring the Summer Music Festival, chose the performers for the event.

"I wanted different styles of music with audience participation that people can get up and move to," he said. "A lot of them are local folks. I wanted to give it a local flavor. A lot of them have played here before and support what we do here."

Lawrence says his Music Festival was started 15 years ago.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Wild Goose Chase Cloggers play bluegrass music and will do a demonstration of Appalachian clogging that people can participate in. The second annual Como Neighborhood Staycation will be held Friday, July 15-Sunday, July 17.

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MIDWAY/COMO/NORTH END Monitor in a Minute

Hamline-Midway Coalition plans move

Hamline-Midway Coalition will be moving effective September 1, from the historic Hamline Park Playground building to the Hamline Midway Branch Library. The move has been discussed by city officials and the district council for several months. It will undergo review by the St. Paul City Council, acting as the city's library board.

The district council led the charge to save the building in the 1980s. The building was designed by Clarence "Cap" Wigginton, the first African-American municipal architect in the United States.

But recently HMC announced that unfortunately, it has become prohibitively expensive for to maintain its space in the historic Hamline Park Building. Starting in September, all HMC board and committee meetings will be at the library. Over the next several months, HMC will be working with the City of Saint Paul to find a new use for the Hamline Park Building.

Council approves transit projects

Plans to make transportation improvements at Como Park and move the saints to Lowertown are among items on St. Paul's 2012 legislative agenda. The St. Paul City Council approved the projects June 22, so the list could be submitted to state officials to meet a June 24 deadline. The stadium request ranked first, followed by expansion and renovation of the Minnesota Children's Museum, expansion and renovation of Twin Cities Public Television, Como Park transportation improvements, Watergate Marina improvements and flood control in Lowertown.

All but the Lowertown stadium request are new projects, said Ward Five Council Member Lee Helgen. He chairs the council's Intergovernmental Relations Committee, which reviewed the requests June 8.

While it may seem counterintuitive to be planning for 2012 legislative actions when the 2011 session has wrapped up, council members noted they didn't have a lot of choice, given the state's

deadline. The Minnesota Legislature typically has a bonding year, in which it considers statewide and local projects, every other year.

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm said the 7,500-seat Lowertown ballpark continues to be the city's top priority. Even though 2001 wasn't a bonding session, city officials submitted the request to state lawmakers anyway. He said the project won a lot of support during the 2011 regular session and could fare well in 2012.

"This is very much a regional facility," said Hahm. It would be used by the Saints baseball team as well as by other teams that currently use Midway Stadium. He added that Midway, given its age and condition, needs to be replaced.

A new stadium would host about 200 events a year.

Council members said they agree with placing a priority on the new stadium. But Ward Two Council Member Dave Thune said he'd prefer to not see concerts scheduled there. Concerts this spring at Midway Stadium resulted in many complaints to city officials.

The city and Saints would each contribute \$10 million, with state bonds paying the re-

maining costs.

The council is also requesting \$7 million for parking and transportation improvements to serve Como Park. It would draw on a number of studies including a 2010 transportation improvement plan, said Como Campus Manager Michelle Furrer. Ideas include adding more close-in parking, improving shuttle services and bus loading zones, adding more signage and making improvements to better serve those who bicycle and walk in the park.

Furrer pointed out that of the park's visitors, 47 percent come from metro communities other than St. Paul, with 22 percent from outstate and 15 percent from outside of Minnesota.

More meters on University OKed

Plans to install more parking meters along University Avenue won a 6-1 vote of approval from the St. Paul City Council June 22. But not all council members are plugged into the idea. Ward Three Council Member Pat Harris voted against the plan, saying meters could be yet another blow for businesses struggling in the

downtown since light rail construction began.

Harris said he'd rather see the city post time zones along University.

Meters have disappeared in the University-Snelling and University-Raymond areas. They'll be back, along with many new meters.

The St. Paul City Council held a public hearing June 15 on new parking meter zones along University Avenue. There currently are several small scattered zones, including the Raymond-University and Snelling-University areas. There are also meters on parts of Sherburne and Aurora avenues.

The change will put meters all along University from the west city limits to Marion Street. The meters would have two-hour or 30-minute limits. Fees would be \$1 per hour or 75 cents for 30 minutes.

The meters are meant to better regulate parking, and make sure that parking is used by University Avenue businesses and not commuters.

The meters on University west of Snelling were removed recently, because traffic is down to one lane in each direction.

- Compiled by Jane McClure

Staycation

Continued from page 2

"We wanted to check with District 10 so we weren't competing," he said. "Instead of that, we decided to join together. Last year was the first year we were put together (District 10, Parks and Recreation, and The Coffee Grounds). High water floats all ships. We became symbiotic. We decided to have it on the same weekend, the second weekend of July every year, so it's easier to plan."

Although the Summer Music Festival started with the first owner, Lawrence, who is the third owner, has kept it going.

"We've been here 10 years," he said. "The community told us we pretty much had to do this when we bought the place. So, we did. It's gotten bigger and better since."

The Summer Music Festival fits in with the Staycation.

"A lot of people stay in town, mostly because of the economy," said Lawrence. "We're not a drive by coffee shop. We're a designated stop. There has never been an admission charge for anything done here. Without them, we would not be here. Musicians are not paid ei-

ther except for any tips or whatever donations they get. Those who really understand, do this of their own free will. This year we're taking used book donations and using that to go toward the bands."

Parks and Recreation had the talent show last year with a truck that opened up like a stage.

"They got rid of them all," said Lawrence. "They won't have it over in the Chelsea Heights fields. We've taken over the talent show. It looks like it will be mostly young kids."

All the sponsors who participated in the Staycation event last year decided to do it again this year.

"It was pretty successful last year," said Jessica Bronk, District 10 administrator and coordinator. "There are a lot of great neighborhood events going on this year. It's a good community event they're looking to hold in the neighborhood."

District 10 will be holding the Art Crawl and Garden Tour on Saturday and the Bike Ride on Sunday.

"We're hoping this event brings community to the neighborhood," said Bronk. "Every person has a way to have fun and be part of the community."

This event is important to

the neighborhood because it's a community organizing tool, which brings people together.

"It's a great way for the organizations to come together, enjoy local businesses, and enjoy what the neighborhood has to

offer," said Bronk.

Members from each organization came together and started planning for this event in March. They hope people will mark their calendars and look forward to having a lot of fun at this

year's Staycation.

"We hope we have as good a turnout as we had last year, if not better," said Bronk.

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"It's a great way for the organizations to come together, enjoy local businesses, and enjoy what the neighborhood has to offer."

- Dave Lawrence



After 116 years the Church of St. Andrew has closed its doors. Following the Pentecost Sunday services June 12, St. Andrew's merged with the Church of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin or Maternity of Mary. The church was closed as part of the archdiocese's strategic plan, which took effect January 1.

St. Andrew's closes its doors after 116 years

By JANE MCCLURE

After 116 years the Church of St. Andrew has closed its doors. Following the Pentecost Sunday services June 12, St. Andrew's merged with the Church of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin or Maternity of Mary.

The church was closed as part of the archdiocese's strategic plan, which took effect January 1. Changing demographics and a shift in where Catholics live and go to church are driving many of the mergers.

St. Andrew's and Maternity of Mary, which have shared a school since 1989, are two of six St. Paul parishes affected. Twenty-one parishes in the region are set to be folded into what are called "receiving" parishes. Some parishes have appealed their closing to the Vatican. Others, including St. Andrew's and Maternity of Mary, have held events prior to merging so that parishioners could get to know each other better.

In his final message to the St. Andrew's congregation, Father Peter Williams said, "There is un-

doubtedly something quite sad about having to close a church that has meant so much to so many for the past 116 years. And it is a sadness that is much more than the mere disappointment about the decision that was made (or how it was made), the frustration of necessarily being inconvenienced by change, or the melancholy associated with any parting from any meaningful place in our lives. It is a sadness, rather, than is to our belonging to a shared history, of being bound up with a unique tradition, inheritors of a legacy of faith, devotion, commitment, character and resolve. Just to think of the thousands of infants baptized at Saint Andrew's, the thousands of funerals, and the countless moments of beautiful and grace-filled encounters with God and with one value - a pearl of great price - beyond the community our eyes can discern."

But Williams also noted that when he recently found a 1907 letter from then-Archbishop John Ireland, Ireland noted the difficulty families from other parishes would have in making the transition to St. Andrew's when it became a full-fledged church. "I guess belonging to the Catholic Church will always entail the willingness to be on pilgrimage and to embrace the changes that once with a spirit of faith and trust in God's providence."

St. Andrew's began in 1895 as a mission church, in a modest wooden building. The current church and school opened in the early 20th century. Thousands of students attended the school over the years and at times it held hundreds of pupils before dwindling enrollment forced its closure in 1989.

An overflow crowd filled the picturesque brick church June 12, with many exchanging hugs. There were more than a few tears as the final mass began and ended. Many snapped pictures before the service.

Many former priests and Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis were on hand for the final mass, which Auxiliary Bishop Lee A. Piche presided over.

The final mass included reminiscing about the church building and grounds. One theme was the stones in the church's landscaping and that parishioners were described as stones in the foundation. Afterward, parishioners crowded into Carroll Hall beneath the church for coffee, cake and more reminiscing. Carroll Hall included a history display of St. Andrew's, including school and parish pictures of classes, events and leadership. Items on display included sports trophies, school garb and other memorabilia.

Long-term plans for the closed churches, including St. Andrew's, could involve sale to other congregations. The archdiocese has to approve any building reuse and sale. St. Andrew's, with its beautiful building and landscaped grounds, has already drawn some interest from other congregations. But no decisions have been made.

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Stakeholders weigh in on Central Corridor impacts

By JANE MCCLURE

Central Corridor light rail's impact on University Avenue businesses has been widely debated since construction began earlier this year. Reports from Metropolitan Council, University Avenue Betterment Association (UABA) and the community development consortium U7/Neighborhood Development Center are giving a clearer picture of businesses losses and gains since construction began in March. What more can be done to help businesses is also being outlined.

Businesses continue to report heavy losses due to light rail construction, with some losses in the tens of thousands of dollars.

The information is helpful not only for tracking what is happening along Central Corridor now, but will be used in the future as construction continues over the next few years. "One of our frustrations when we got into this is that there are very few models from around the country that we could look at," said Nancy Homans, senior policy advisor to Mayor Chris Coleman. "There just wasn't any data for this kind of project in an urban neighborhood. All of this information has given us a better understanding of what is working, what isn't working and what we need to do in the weeks and months ahead."

One of the most interesting reports is U7's analysis of current trends and needs along University Avenue, which has been presented to the University Avenue Business Preparation Collaborative and the District Councils Collabora-

tive. U7 is a consortium of seven community development corporations in neighborhoods along University Avenue, led by the Neighborhood Development Center. Its report indicates that construction on University Avenue from Emerald Street to Hamline Avenue that began in March has impacted many businesses. Revenues are down 30 percent or more for some small

ing a significant drop in sales and customer counts since construction began in March. Businesses on the north side of University are also feeling the effects of lack of pedestrian access due to construction fences, as well as loss of on-street parking.

"Businesses are in need of anything that will help their visibility, but the most important item is assistance with parking

abelle Broyld of NDC said the marketing and communication pieces are needed.

"We're working together with limited resources and we're trying to grow the marketing fund," she said. Broyld also said there needs to be an effort to get Twin Cities television stations to carry a more positive message about Central Corridor.

Other reports track business openings and closing, and storefront vacancies as a whole. On June 10 Metropolitan Council issued a 50-page report that details how many businesses have opened, closed or moved along the 11-mile light rail route. Business loss and gain reports will be issued monthly by Metropolitan Council, with the next report due July 10. The updates will be issued monthly, as a result of a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) mandate to the Metropolitan Council this spring. The FTA request for information about business impacts emerged during a legal fight over the project, which was led by the NAACP and other groups.

Many business owners along University were dismayed in April when the FTA issued a business impact study indicating that it would be "impossible" to separate construction impacts on businesses from the realities of the economic recession and other external factors. But the FTA also asked Metropolitan Council to report monthly on the extent of construction mitigation, including the number of complaints and how those complaints were resolved.

The June report describes those efforts. Metropolitan

Council is working with business groups along the rail line to track the business issues, said Robin Cauffman. She recently gave the Central Corridor Management Committee an update on the business reporting efforts. UABA, St. Paul and Midway Chambers of Commerce, U-Plan, and U7 have been involved in the Metropolitan Council's work.

The Metropolitan Council staff has gone door-to-door to track businesses. Each section of the rail line already had a project staff member assigned to work with businesses. The council has estimated there are about 1,200 businesses between the two downtowns.

The report contains few surprises and hasn't generated much if any controversy. The report states that from the beginning of February to the end of May, 22 businesses opened along Central Corridor. Some of the new businesses are in Frog-town Square, a new mixed-use development at University and Dale.

"I think seeing 22 businesses open was an encouraging since," said Homans.

Fourteen businesses closed and nine relocated during the report period. Of the nine relocations, six moved to other spots along Central Corridor, two relocated to other St. Paul locations and one moved to Roseville.

The report only examines street-level businesses directly along Central Corridor and doesn't track businesses that may be on upper floors of buildings.



Businesses continue to report heavy losses due to light rail construction, with some losses in the tens of thousands of dollars. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

businesses in the construction zone. Small grocery stores are reporting losses of 40 to 60 percent, with beauty salons and beauty supply stores reporting losses of 30 to 50 percent.

The report notes that with so much of University Avenue under construction at once, businesses had less time to prepare for construction impacts than initially expected. Businesses on the south side of University have especially been affected, report-

solutions," the U7/NDC report stated. The report makes a number of suggestions to help businesses. These include expanding the funds available to create off-street parking, improving pedestrian access to businesses that are now fenced off from those trying to cross University, improved communications about construction, improved marketing efforts and a media campaign to urge people to come back to University Avenue. Is-

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Planning Commission OKs conditional use permit for former Sholom Home

By JANE MCCLURE

Reuse of the former Sholom Home took a key step July 8. The St. Paul Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit that will allow the facility at 1554 Midway Parkway to be reused as a 170-unit assisted living facility.

The Planning Commission decision is final unless there is an appeal to the St. Paul City Council within 10 days.

The Sholom Home nursing home operated on Midway Parkway from 1924 until 2008. The building itself was built in four stages over the years. Sholom moved its operations to a new West Seventh Street campus in 2008, citing the difficulty in providing a range of care and living options in such an old building.

For a time during Sholom's final years on Midway Parkway, part of the building was also used as a rabbinical school.

The Traditions project will include 170 living units, of which 19 will be more memory care. The remaining units will be assisted living, said Rhett McSweeney of Traditions SP Land Limited Liability Corporation.

"We're very excited about bring the Sholom Home back to life as Traditions Homes of St. Paul," said McSweeney.

Reuse ideas for the 2.6 acre property have been controversial in the past. Social services provider RS Eden proposed sober, supportive housing in 2008 but dropped those plans

amid protests. Residential developer PAK Properties brought forward a proposal last year to develop about 100 high-end rental units at the property but that was later shelved.

The current developer is based in Minneapolis and owns assisted living facilities in Albert Lea and Owatonna. The developer needs a conditional use permit as such permits are required for all nursing home and assisted living facilities in St. Paul. The permits allow the city to set specific conditions on redevelopment, to minimize impact on neighbors and regulate use. No specific conditions were attached to the Traditions permit, beyond the conditions set for all nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

At this point it doesn't appear that any other zoning permits or variances are needed for the project to go forward. One challenge McSweeney noted after the meeting is that of renovating the building, given its age.

The permit request met few questions when it was heard by the Planning Commission Zoning Committee June 30. Only three neighborhood residents attended the public hearing. No one spoke in opposition.

Como Community Council (District 10) took no position on the permit request but McSweeney said he still wants to meet with the district council and discuss issues. He has met with district council members

and neighborhood residents, and offered tours of the facility.

The city is looking into whether or not there were problems in getting early notice out to District 10, said City Planner Josh Williams.

Three neighbors attended the Zoning Committee public hearing. None expressed opposition to Traditions' reuse of the facility. How Sholom Home would be reused has raised questions over the years. While neighbors don't like to see an empty building, there have been concerns about other proposed uses in terms of parking, traffic, noise and other impacts.

Delores Rufenacht lives on Canfield. "Our neighborhood is so happy to have someone moving into the Sholom Home," she said. "This is the type of development we have been looking for."

Parking was a question for the Zoning Committee. The property has 54 off-street parking spaces on two lots, said Williams. The developer also owns the former fire station at Snelling and Canfield and that site could provide more space for parking if needed. Rufenacht also suggested that the end of Canfield, which dead-ends before reaching Snelling, could also be converted for off-street parking. McSweeney said Traditions will meet with Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark later this month to discuss the project and could talk parking issues then.



Reuse of the former Sholom Home took a key step July 8. The St. Paul Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit that will allow the facility at 1554 Midway Parkway to be reused as a 170-unit assisted living facility.

Rice Street Festival Director a parade lover at heart

By **DEBORAH BROTZ**

Louis Ryg knows parades. He not only loves watching them, but he loves working behind-the-scenes putting them together from start to finish.

As the parade coordinator for last year's 100th Anniversary Rice Street Festival, a multi-day festival and parade celebrating the North End community along Rice Street, Ryg brought his extensive parade experience to the event. For this year's Rice Street Festival, "Racing to Our Next Century of Fun!," from July 28-July 31, Ryg will not only be parade director but is also the festival director.

"I came in to the offices of District 6 to pass on the torch to the person next year and joking-

ly said I should try to be festival director," he said. "They asked me if I'd like to be festival director, and I said yes."

Born and raised in Minneapolis, Ryg was the parade director for the Minneapolis Aquatennial for 35 years.

"I've been doing parades for 44 years," he said. "I've done 1,300 parades in 44 years. I've done parades all over the states. I ran parades for Winter Carnival, both the Torchlight and Grande Parade. I want to make this year's Rice Street Festival a little bit better for the crowd."

Going to parades as a child, Ryg loved them.

"Mom and dad took me to the Aquatennial Torchlight Parade all the time," he said. "We

would get Chinese food at the Nankin Cafe, a Chinese restaurant in downtown Minneapolis, and eat the food on paper plates by the statue in Loring Park and watch the parade go by. I just got into parades. Before I graduated high school, I was already working in parades. After I went into the Marines and did two tours in Vietnam, I came home to work in parades."

Ryg feels the Rice Street Festival has lasted so long because of its strong community base, especially businesses of the Rice Street area affiliated with the North End Business Association (NEBA).

"Its membership has dropped a little bit," he said. "It will take baby steps to start bringing the neighborhood back to Rice Street. We've pared down the event this year. I'm here to work with what we have. I want it to be better next year."

Remembering when he saw thousands of people lining Rice Street for the parade, Ryg would like to see that happen again.

"With the economic times, we've been suffering lately," he said. "A lot of businesses are cutting back. I sent out 100 letters to businesses on Rice Street. It's their festival. They can say they helped with that. I want the businesses of Rice Street to feel they want to be part of this."

Ryg feels the Rice Street Festival is a good match for the



For this year's Rice Street Festival, "Racing to Our Next Century of Fun!," from July 28-July 31, Louis Ryg will not only be parade director but is also the festival director. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)



This year's Rice Street Parade on Thursday, July 28 will start at 7 p.m. and run from Atwater to Arlington.

neighborhood because of the diversity of Rice Street cultures.

"Everything blends together," he said. "It's very nice. People are very encouraging. I walk

around Rice Street and take a look at the businesses. You can see the cultures."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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Festival director

Continued from page 7

According to Ryg, the parade is one of the oldest events in the festival.

"There has been a parade all 101 years," he said. "Some events have gone away. The parade is the longest standing one right now. I want to add more cultural play for next year. I'd like to bring in a small carnival for the Rice Street kids. I want to find a major sponsor who will cover the carnival so it's free to neighborhood children."

Volunteers are vital to putting on the festival.

"Basically, they're the backbone," said Ryg. "They do all the behind-the-scenes work that nobody sees. It takes 30 to 40 volunteers to get ready for the parade. Others are multi-taskers.



Rice Street Festival Director Louis Ryg feels the festival gives people who don't live in the neighborhood the chance to see the real Rice Street. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

We rely on them heaviest. They don't get a lot of credit."

Last year was the first year

Ryg ran the festival parade.

"Fred Huerta, who was the festival director last year, was so

swamped that he asked me to help with the parade," said Ryg. "We had 100 units last year.

Right now, we're still accepting applications. We're right around the low 80 unit numbers. There are a lot of festivals on the same weekend. In all 44 years, I've never cancelled a parade because of weather."

Although neighborhood festivals are expensive to put on, the Rice Street Festival has continued due to the support of small businesses in the North End and the North End Business Association.

"Vendors are very expensive," said Kerry Antrim, District 6 executive director. "Everybody wants a fee to be in the parade. Most festivals are run by what they can raise. Economic sponsorships are down and costs are up. Any events on Saturday for the Rice Street Festival are not charged back to the festival. They're paid for by certain people taking charge for certain events. Sponsorships are highly important. The more sponsorships there are, then there can be a larger festival."

On Saturday, there will be displays from non-profits and schools on Rice Street between Hatch and Jessamine, which come in at no charge.

"We try to do a lot with a little," said Antrim. "It's all about the economy. It's tough. In economic times such as this, festivals are really important."

Antrim feels the festival is important to the neighborhood because it brings people together.

"It's a great way to get together and meet your neighbors," she said. "You can have a good time at no cost. It builds community and tolerances."

Ryg feels the festival gives people who don't live in the neighborhood the chance to see the real Rice Street.

"It highlights the neighborhood itself and brings people outside the area to the neighborhood to see what Rice Street is really like," he said. "Rice Street is the home community of different ethnic cultures. Don't judge Rice Street by what you read in the paper. The North End is trying to rid itself of a bad image. The Rice Street Parade will help them. We want people to judge Rice Street by what they see and hear when they talk to people."

Antrim hopes people will just come down to Rice Street and check it out.

"I would like attendance to be up and hope that everybody enjoys themselves," she said. "I hope people who normally don't take advantage of the festival will come to Rice Street. I would like them to come and take part. It's a very good time."

Ryg hopes the Rice Street Festival can get back to what it was in the '80s and '90s when he came as a visiting dignitary.

"I want it to be successful and hope that we'll have the steppingstones laid down now to take us in a new direction," he said. "I hope to make Rice Street Festival bigger and better in years to come. Someday, I'll pass the baton. It can always get bigger and better. We can make Rice Street a very popular place to come enjoy the businesses and do the little shops."

More information is available at www.ricestreetfestival.org.

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Rec Center

Continued from page 1

The center offers four activity spaces, a kitchen, two computer labs, a teen lounge and a commons area, plus a staff office. A ping pong table and a foosball game are in one room, a couch in another. Korum said there is a space that can be used for stand-up comedy or spoken word performances.

"They can eventually watch movies or have a Wii set up in here," she said. Some cooking classes are planned, and eventually community gardening may take place.

Whereas the rec center is designed for kids through adults, this center is aimed towards youth ages 12-17. "If a parent has a younger child that needs to use the bathroom, of course they can," Korum said. "But this is a space for teens."

She said two people on the staff of the teen center are from the University of Minnesota

Youth Development program. They are Danielle Fleming and Katy Avira.

"Our partnership with the U of M has been great," Korum said. She said the U program, under the leadership of Mike Baizerman, provides staff development for the teen center. And the U students get to do field research.

She said Fleming and Avira will be doing some outreach over the summer, contacting various youth organizations and letting them know the North End Center is open for business.

In the front of the center a loggerhead turtle, a polar bear and a camel lie in repose. They are the creations of Lourdes Cue, a local artist who shares her time between here and her native Mexico.

Cue said she was invited a couple of years ago by Park and Recreation to work with a group of area youth to create the artwork.

"It was a very diverse group of six or seven of us, working for three or four months," she said. They chose to build animals that

represent an endangered species, from different parts of the world.

"The kids absolutely contributed ideas," Cue said. She started a series of different workshops, working with two-dimensional collages and symbols, then three-dimensional recycled objects.

"We salvaged stone from Minnesota," Cue said. The artwork is made of earth and stone. Cue said the stone comes from a place in St. Paul that keeps pieces from old buildings that have been torn down.

"We are using St. Paul recycled architecture," she said. "It restores the memory of St. Paul, the city. It is a welcoming place, a place to be."

The teen center is just starting to schedule hours. It will be open Wednesday through Friday, 2-8 p.m., and Saturday from 1 to 6 p.m. The center is open on nights when the library and rec center may not be. It is designed to complement their hours, so that all entities are not operating at the same time.

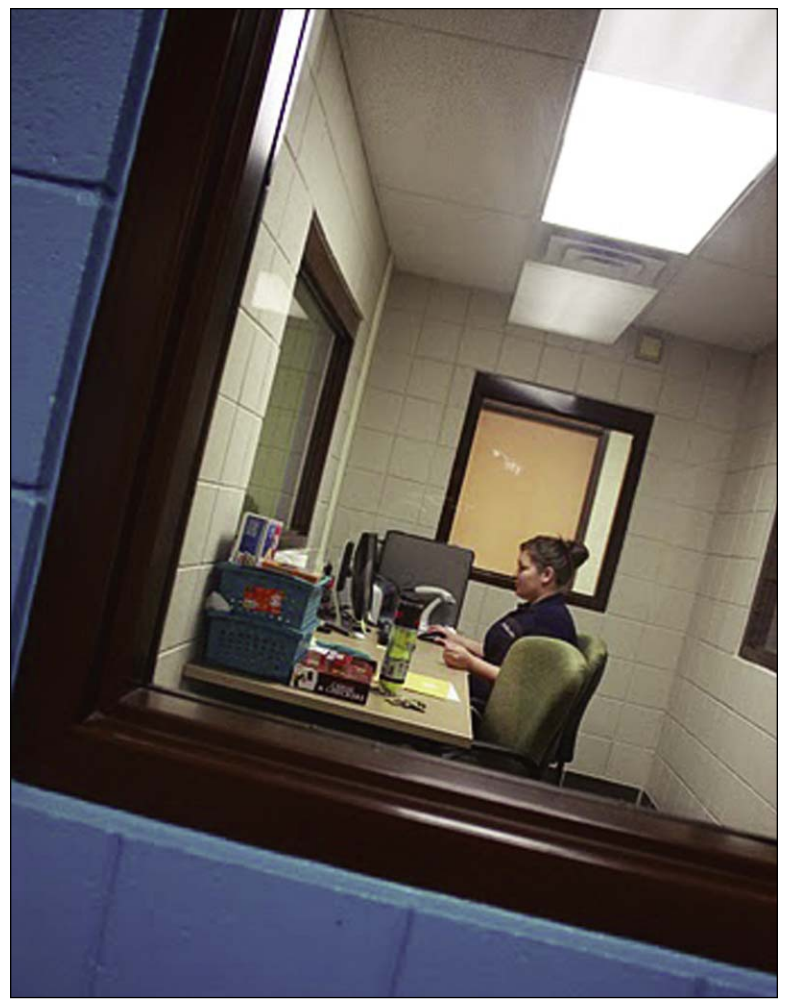
One youth who has already started using the North End Teen Center is 16-year-old Tines Yang.

"I come here for the break dance program," he said. The break dancers meet twice a week to practice their moves.

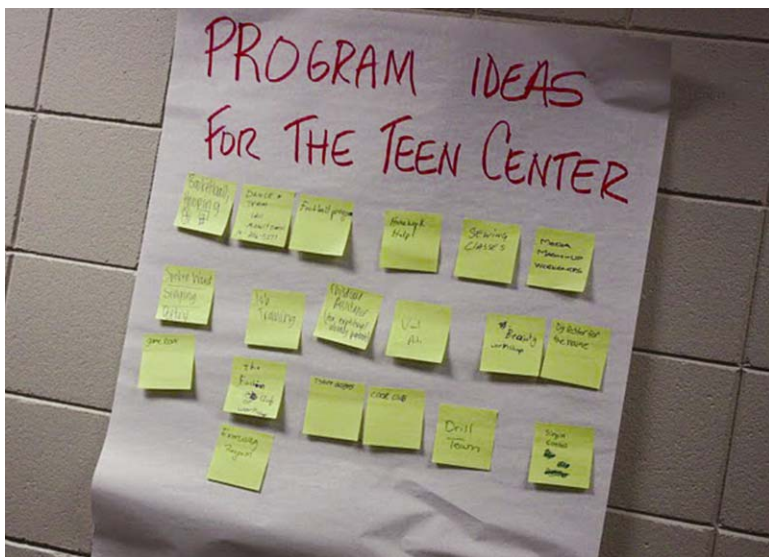
"You can come whenever you want," Yang said. "I come here to hang out with my friends, too."

"What I like best about this place is that the community here is really clean and friendly," Yang continued. "They let us use the rooms and make programs for us so that we can learn more. I'll stick around here for awhile."

Jane Eastwood, an education policy director for the Mayor's office, said she wasn't around when the plans were first being formed for the teen center, but she can well see its worth.



The teen center is just starting to schedule hours. It will be open Wednesday through Friday, 2-8 p.m., and Saturday from 1 to 6 p.m. The center is open on nights when the library and rec center may not be. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)



Whereas the rec center is designed for kids through adults, this center is aimed towards youth ages 12-17. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

"I have learned it's pretty essential for teens to have their own space, be creative, hang out and feel ownership. Plus they don't have to spend money to be there," she said.

Korum said she is waiting for things to start happening. "I would love to see this place busting out with creativity," she said.

And for Youngquist, it all goes back to the beginning in 2007.

"Back then, there was a lot of anger and frustration with the young people," she said, noting how much better things have become. "But underneath, there was a tremendous amount of care and concern about them. It says a lot about the nature of this community, and its drive to be thoughtful about that part. The community's clear desire to be supportive of its young people has been so evident."

Central Corridor

Continued from page 5

The report contains other information beyond the business gains and losses. One is statistics on construction-related complaints in May, which totaled 137 in May. It also describes how quickly each complaint was resolved. Most were answered within 24 hours.

Other parts of the report detail how impacts on businesses are being mitigated. The mitigation efforts are being overseen by Metropolitan Council, the city of St. Paul, Central Corridor Funders Collaborative and other groups.

The mitigation is being done through a number of measures ranging from signs directing customers to businesses to a detailed marketing program that helps businesses promote themselves. A centerpiece of the marketing effort is the Discover Central Corridor program, a card program which provides discounts for visiting businesses. Businesses are also getting help with marketing, façade improvements and improvements to shared parking areas.

The full business mitigation report is tinyurl.com/3ozop5r.

UABA also has been tracking businesses, doing its most

recent survey in May. UABA is tracking individual storefront vacancies in St. Paul, not openings and closing. Interim Executive Director John Vaughn has worked on the counts of vacant storefronts in May and December. His numbers show that of the 398 storefront businesses, 86 or 22 percent were vacant this spring. He plans to recheck the same areas quarterly.

By Vaughn's estimate, storefront businesses make up about 30 percent of Central Corridor's total commercial space. "Although storefront businesses on University Avenue are just a portion of the Central Corridor's total overall commercial space, they are what the world sees as the avenue's face and are what the public will, in part, judge LRT on," he said.

UABA is concerned that too many vacant storefronts can be a sign of blight and can harm the city's property tax base. UABA volunteers will not only continue to do the surveys on a quarterly basis, they will also contact businesses to find out why they closed or moved, said Vaughn.

Vaughn does add a caveat to the survey, noting that there is a need to establish a base number storefront turnover rate. That and more direct contacts with businesses could better establish why businesses move or close, and whether the Central Corridor project is a factor.

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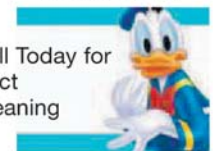
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The District 10 Como Community Council, Northwest Como Rec Center, Chelsea Heights PTO, the Coffee Grounds and the Como Park Block Nurse Program are working together to bring you a fun-filled family weekend. Family activities galore! Spots are still available for vendors at the flea market, and participants in the talent show! For more information, visit www.district10comopark.org/staycation.html or call Jessica at 651-644-3889.

Rein In Sarcoma 'Party in the Park' July 25

Come enjoy a fun family night with a silent auction, lots of entertainment and activities for kids while helping to raise money for sarcoma cancer research. Sarcoma is a rare aggressive cancer often striking children and young adults. Also, you may win \$1,000 or an Apple iPad in the RIS Raffle. Celebrate life, honor those who have not lived, and support cancer research. Volunteers are needed! There are many fun jobs for both adults and youth. For more information or to volunteer please check our website at www.reininarscoma.org or contact Nancy Hendrickson at 651-214-5821.

Nutrition and Weaning discussed August 9

Nutrition and Weaning is the topic of the meeting of the Como-Midway La Leche Group on Tuesday, August 9. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

Yoga in the Park

Join the District 10 Como Community Council and Bliss Yoga Studio for Yoga in the Park, offered every Saturday through Labor Day weekend. All are welcome, novice to advanced! The practices of Yoga improve balance, strength and flexibility, as well as calm the mind. Sessions begin at 8:00 a.m. in Como Park, near the "Torpedo" southwest of the Pavilion and south parking lot off Lexington Ave. Each session will include simple yoga poses, a breathing practice, and a brief meditation. Bring a towel or mat and water. Dress comfortably and in layers.

Top graduate named at Perpich School

Neomi Dominguez- Nelson, the daughter of Sally Dominguez, has graduated with honors from the Arts High School at the Perpich Center for Arts Education in Golden Valley. Elisa's academic record placed her in the top 20 students in the Arts High class of 2011.

Neomi focused on Music as her arts area while attending the Arts High School.

Neomi graduated June 10th. She plans to attend Northwestern College, where she will study Criminal Justice. Neomi was awarded the Faculty, Pastoral and PSEO Scholarships, which will provide significant assistance in funding her college costs.

The Arts High School at the Perpich Center is Minnesota's public, accredited, residential high school for Minnesota juniors and seniors.



Neomi Dominguez- Nelson

Donations will be gratefully accepted by District 10. Check out www.district10comopark.org for more information or contact the District 10 office at 651-644-3889.

Jehovah Bible Study continues this summer

Pastor Bob Benke leads a study of 1 Corinthians throughout the summer. Classes begin at 10:45 a.m. in the lounge of Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave. All are welcome. More information is at www.jehovahlutheran.org.

July activities at Rice St. Library

The Rice Street Branch Library has many cool events planned for July. Please stop in and visit!

The Mixed Nuts will entertain and delight children of all ages on Tuesday, July 26 at 10:30 a.m.

Chemists in the Library will visit on Saturday, July 30 from 1 to 3 p.m. Stop in and learn about the wonders and excitement of chemistry with easy to do activities.

Family story times will be offered on Friday and Saturday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Join Rice Street's storytelling experts for stories, finger plays, rhymes, and songs.

The Computer Gaming Club will meet on Tuesdays 4 to 5:15 p.m. Try Runescape, Wii, Scratch or other computer games and programs. Bring your friends!

The Collector's Corner Neighborhood Trading Post will be open Wednesdays from 4 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring a tradable natural object to the library and volunteers from the Science Museum of Minnesota will help you learn more about it.

Free Family Friendly Movie Matinees will be shown Satur-

days at 2 p.m. Please stop in or call the library at 651-558-2223 to learn which movie will be shown each week.

The English Language Conversation Circle will meet on Mondays from 4 to 5:15 p.m. The Circle is for adults interested in improving their English speaking skills. Sessions are free and open to the public.

The North End Book Club will discuss Nickel and Dimed by Barbara Ehrenreich on Monday August 1 from 12:45-2:30. For more information or to register, please call Sandy at 651-744-3072. This group is offered in partnership with the Community Education Senior Program.

Free Job Search Assistance will be offered on Fridays from 10:30 to 12:30. A consultant from Goodwill-Easter Seals will provide help with job applications and resumes. Please call 651-558-2223 for more information.

Computer Classes for Older Adults will be offered on Friday mornings from 10:15-12:15. For more information or to register, please call Sandy at 651-744-3072. Classes are offered in partnership with North End Community Education.

The Rice Street Library is located at 1011 Rice Street between Lawson and Hatch. Hours are Monday and Wednesday, 12 pm-8 pm; Tuesday 10 am-8 pm; Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 10 am-5:30 pm; and Sunday 1 pm-5 pm. For more information about the Rice Street Branch Library or any of our programs, please call 651-558-2223.

Zion holds Family Fun Night

Zion holds Family fun night for the kids in the Midway neighborhood every Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Volunteers are needed. And parents are most welcome to join the kids. The kids will be

well fed and enjoy games, crafts and to meet other kids in the neighborhood. It's free.

Zion has its VBS in August 15th to 19th in the mornings between 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Extended day care will be available for the working parents for a minimum cost.

Harmony explosion at Como Park Pavilion

On Monday, July 18th, Como Park Lakeside Pavilion will come alive with the sounds of four-part harmony, when area choruses combine voices for the 4th Annual HARMONY EXPLOSION! More than 150 singers will join together to present a show packed with songs familiar to all generations. Choruses participating in the show are: City of Lakes Chorus from Minneapolis, Lake Country Chorus from White Bear Lake, Minnesota Valley Chorus from Mankato and Vallee de Croix Chorus from Stillwater. Each chorus will perform individually as well as together.

The show will also feature S.A.S.S. quartet, which will be competing in the 2011 Sweet Adelines International competition in Houston, TX.

The show begins at 7 p.m. with no admission charge.

For more information on this event or on barbershop harmony for women, go to www.lakecountrychorus.org.

Women's Drug Center holds class July 26

Women's Drum Center invites women to a Drop-in Drum Class on Tuesday, July 26, at 7:45 p.m. This group will have a chance to learn about and play various drums and percussion instruments. The music focus is mostly from Africa, the Caribbean, and Brazil. Improvisation will be explored, as well. 2242 University Ave. W., St. Paul. \$12.00 at the door. Drums provided. Info and registration at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

Free Health Awareness Clinics

Free blood pressure and nurse consultation clinics for persons 55+ yrs will be held 8/9, 9/13 and 10/11 from Noon-12:30, 1514 Englewood. Enter through south door, handicapped accessible. Questions call Hamline Midway Elders 651-209-6542.

Living Safely at Home

"Safe at Home," by Rebuilding Together will be the topic at a luncheon on August 9 at 11:30 at 1514 Englewood Avenue. The

presentation addresses repairs that can be made to help insure older adults are safe and prevent falls in their homes. A meal is served at 11:30 a.m., a free will donation is requested. The presentation is free and begins at 12:15. Call Hamline Midway Elders to request free transportation 651-209-6542.

Ice Cream Social July 27

Free! Neighborhood Ice Cream Social for All Ages, Wed, July 27, 6:30 - 8 p.m. NW lawn Hamline Church, 1514 Englewood Ave. Event will include music, free blood pressure checks, information booths and "Musical Pass the Plates" game with tasty healthy treat prizes. Call Hamline Midway Elders to request free transportation, 651-209-6542.

Choir performs at Bethlehem Lutheran

Sparbu Songlag, a multi-age, community choir from Steinkjer, Norway, 60 miles north of Trondheim, will be on a week-long Midwest tour the end of July. They will be singing at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in-the-Midway (near Snelling and University) on Sunday, July 31st, at 4:00 pm. Concert is free and open to the public. An American style picnic follows the concert. Attendees are encouraged to wear their Norwegian clothing.

Midway Independent Businesses meet

Sole Proprietors who live and/or work in the Midway area are invited to join Midway Independent Businesses (M.I.B.) The group usually meets 10-11 a.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Hamline Midway library. M.I.B.'s summer meetings are Tuesday, August 16th. We are dedicated to creating a strong presence in the Midway neighborhood and to develop our own business to its full potential. For more information, contact Nancy at nucc50@gmail.com.

Free Community Breakfast

July 24th, and every 4th Sunday of each month, served 8 - 9 am, FREE Breakfast to the community of the North End, North Emanuel Lutheran Church, 301 Hatch Ave. at Matilda Street.

Pastor Kisten Thompson, and the members of North Emanuel welcome all every 4th Sunday. Church phone is 651-489-5611. Questions, you may call Larry 651-373-5797 or Sandy 651-283-1681.

Planning Commission approves four wind turbines for Dale Street

By JANE MCCLURE

Four wind turbines will spin above a Dale Street property, as a result of approval June 24 by the St. Paul Planning Commission. The commission granted a determination of similar use for Capitol Lien and Title and property owner Tony Magnotta, at 1010 N. Dale St. Because no appeal was filed, the Planning Commission decision is final, clearing the way for project construction.

Approval comes at a time when the city is still working on proposed regulations for wind turbines. The largest and most-well-known wind turbine in St. Paul is a small experimental structure at Macalester College. When that turbine was approved a few years ago, city staff indicated that there may be smaller wind turbines in other locations, that have been installed without city permits.

But using wind as a key power source hasn't been proposed on

any building in St. Paul until now. One of the greatest challenges Magnotta's project has had is that the city is only now updating wind and solar power regulations. It may be several months before wind energy regulations are adopted by the City Council and incorporated into the zoning code.

That is why one condition of Planning Commission approval is that the wind turbines be considered as a test. The test period will expire May 27, 2013. Magnotta can then apply for a permanent permit under the applicable zoning code language on wind energy.

The project initially ran into a recommendation of denial before the Planning Commission and city staff decided to look at the issue again. The 1010 N. Dale case could be seen as a test case not just for the North End project but for other projects before permanent regulations are adopted.

The Dale Street building hous-

es Capitol Lien and Title, Minnesota Wind Technology and other businesses. Three wind turbines will be placed on the building roof and one on a freestanding pole. The rooftop turbines will be on poles 15.8 feet above the roof surface. The freestanding pole has a height of 31.4 feet and will be in the building parking lot.

Approval is with eight conditions. One is that the turbines be considered an accessory use, to provide power for the property. The property can have no more than four wind turbines. The roof-mounted turbines can be no more than 15 feet above the rooftop or parapet, whichever is taller, and shall be centered at least 20 feet from the edge of the building.

The wind turbine on the freestanding pole can be no more than 32 feet high. The turbines shall be at least 50 feet from any residential property.

A noise impact statement

must be provided to city staff, completed by an acoustical engineer, to show that the turbines won't violate noise regulations. The final condition sets the test period.

A condition added by the Planning Commission Zoning Committee is that Magnotta monitor the bird and bat casualties during the test period.

Magnotta compared the sight of wind turbines spinning on his building roof to American flags blowing in the breeze. He sees wind energy as a way to provide renewable energy for his property.

The turbines are built to withstand wind speeds of 134 miles per hour and would move would move with the wind, not against it. When wind speeds top 33 miles per hour the turbines would shut down.

No one has appeared at Planning Commission meetings to oppose the project, and no neighbors have written letters of opposition.

The District 6 (North End-South Como) Land Use Task Force recommended Planning Commission approval.

But the issue did provoke disagreement among the Planning Commission Zoning Committee members, who voted 4-3 in May to recommend denial of the project.

Some commissioners saw the request as a way to study the turbines and gather information but others said that until new regulations are written and adopted, they shouldn't approve the project. Other issues the Planning commission debated are the complexity of trying to measure noise and the precedent the case could set. The Dale Street building is in a B3 commercial district, which allows the most intense business uses in the city. The decision made by the Planning Commission could specifically limit wind turbines to those districts, until the permanent regulations are in place.

Fun programming offered this summer at Hamline Midway Library

Cool off in the library this summer with good reads and fun programming!

Jammin' Out with Sam is back this summer on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 in July. Join Librarian Sam as he sings family favorite songs outside on the front lawn. Bring your own blankets and bug spray.

Does your child love dogs? Paw Pals will be at the library on Saturday, July 16 from 1:30 to

3:30 p.m. Call the library to register your child for this opportunity to build reading skills while reading with a therapy dog. Open to ages 6-12.

On July 20 from 4-5 p.m. the library will be hosting an open computer lab for library patrons to ask questions and get hands-on computer help. A staff member will be available to assist you with filling out forms online, creating a resume, and other basic computer

operations. This is a drop-in lab and patrons will be helped on a first-come, first-served basis.

Join our Kids Book Club on July 16 and August 6 at 1 p.m. as they discuss books, participate in reading activities, and eat treats. Open to readers ages 8-12. New members are welcome!

Join our Teen Book Club on July 16 and August 6 at 2 p.m. for lively discussions and good times. Treats and fun provided.

Call the library for more details.

On Tuesday, July 19 at 10:30 the library will host Brodini's Comedy Magic Show as part of our summer reading program. The following Tuesday, July 26 at 10:30 Circus Manduhai will be at the library, featuring juggling, unicycle riding, acrobatics, and hula hoops along with audience participation numbers.

Mighty Midway Storytellers will be in the library on August 6

at 11:15 for a special storytelling event.

Toddler and preschool storytimes are offered every Friday at 10:30 a.m. Bring your child to share in the joys of reading!

Call 651-642-0293 or stop by the library at 1558 W Minnehaha Ave, near the intersection of Snelling and Minnehaha, to sign up for events that require pre-registration. All events are free.

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Central Corridor businesses line up for zero interest loans

By JANE MCCLURE

Small retail service businesses in the Central Corridor construction zone are starting to apply for up to \$20,000 in zero-interest forgivable loans. Although St. Paul city officials said they have already heard from more than 40 interested business owners, some merchants are saying the program may be too little, too late.

More than two dozen business owners attended the first information session on the loans, held June 23. Sessions continued last week. The final sessions are Thursday, July 14 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Tuesday, July 19 – 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and Thursday, July 21 – 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. All sessions are held at the Central Corridor Resource Center, 1080 University Av.

The loan program is for businesses in St. Paul and Minneapolis in the light rail construction zone. It's meant to provide what the Neighborhood Development Center calls a "modest safety net" for businesses that show a loss in sales due to the construction of light rail. For-profit small businesses with no more than \$2 million in annual gross sales can apply if the business is independently owned, with four or fewer locations. Businesses must be in the light rail construction or within one block of the zone.

Businesses must be at their current location for one year or more, and be focused on retail service. Businesses must also be able to show a decline in revenue due to light rail construction.

The loan pot, which totals \$4 million between the two cities, is divided by sections of the construction project. And once the money for a section of other construction area is gone, it's gone.

There is \$2.9 million available in St. Paul in one-mile stretches from Emerald Street to Syndicate Street.

Businesses may apply for up to \$20,000, with the loan amount depending on demand and demonstrated loss of revenue for a particular business. The loans will be forgiven by 20 percent for every year a business remains in place, with the loan totally forgiven if a business stays in place for

at least five years. If a business closes, is sold or moves off of Central Corridor, the loan balance must be repaid.

The loans may be used for basic business expenses, including payroll, inventory, rent/mortgage, utilities, taxes, marketing and insurance. The Neighborhood Development Center is administering the loans in St. Paul; Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers is the Minneapolis administrator.

grams, how to calculate losses during the construction permit and other information. Businesses need to be in good standing, for example, they must not be delinquent on rent when they apply for the loans. A lien will be placed on the business until the loan is repaid or forgiven.

Broyld and Homans said NDC and city officials are con-

businesses along the avenue."

If the St. Paul funds are divided with the idea that each applicant would get \$20,000, that would help 147 businesses. However, there are as many as 600 businesses that could apply for help.

Business owners peppered NDC and City of St. Paul staff with questions about the loan program June 23. Although many said they would apply for help, others questioned whether it would be worthwhile.

Joe Cox's family owns the Strommen Building near Highway 280, which houses the Cox-Olsen Insurance Agency and other businesses. The building's sewer connection was replaced to the tune of \$5,600 because it was more than 40 years old. Replacing the connection was a way to minimize the risk of construction damage and flooding. The building already had one of its large plate glass windows break due to construction vibrations.

Building tenants have left. "We haven't been able to raise rents due to light rail," Cox said. "But our property taxes don't get any cheaper."

John d'Agostino, an owner of Café Biaggio near University and Raymond, said his restaurant's business is down 40 percent at night and 75 percent during the day. "We've taken a big hit at lunchtime," he said. Sales were \$1,000 to \$1,800 before construction.

"No one wants to travel down University of Interstate 94 (which is also under construction)," d'Agostino said. His restaurant has laid off four people and cut the remaining hours of other workers.

Russian Tea House co-owner Nikolia Alenov is considering staying open for just one day a week. "We've been on University

Avenue for more than 30 years and we're going to hang in there for as long as we can," Alenov said. "But it's tough."

"I just don't understand how \$20,000 is going to save any business," said Troy deCoursey, owner of The Love Doctor, an adult novelty gift shop. "We're losing that much in an average month."

His shop near University and Snelling lost on-street parking. DeCoursey had to say off four employees and is running the shop with one other person. Because of the city's zoning regulations on adult business, his potential new locations would be limited. "We don't have any place to move to even if we did want to move."

"With a seasonal business, average monthly sales don't mean anything," said Mary Leonard, owner of Chocolat Celest. She moved her business to Transfer Road. She was told by NDC staff to explain the seasonal nature of her business when seeking a loan.

One group is asking the City of St. Paul to reconsider the loan program. Tom Devincke, attorney for the NAACP and ten other groups and individuals who have challenged the light rail project, said the loan program terms and conditions need to be reconsidered. To apply for a loan, a business owner must submit three years of tax records and other financial information. He and some of the business owners have questioned whether the loan program focus is more on collection of funds rather than mitigation of the rail project's impacts.

Homans said the information is needed so that the city can collect outstanding loan balances if needed. "Our goal is to stabilize businesses along the corridor," she said. If a business doesn't stay for five years the city would like to have the resources available for other businesses.

Some business owners said they would prefer to have straight grants, or to have property tax relief. But Homans said the city of St. Paul isn't in a position to do that.



Loan applicants can apply online

or in person, said Isabelle Broyld of the Neighborhood Development Center. Documentation needed includes three years of tax records, monthly financial statements and other information. NDC and the U7 group of seven community development corporations along University Avenue have been urging businesses to start gathering that information for many months, as part of the Ready4Rail program.

"We've been telling people for the past five years to prepare, prepare, prepare," said Homans.

Broyld and Brian Singer of NDC explained the loan pro-

gram, including to seek other resources to help businesses, including funds for more marketing of businesses. Some business owners said there needs to be an advertising campaign to tell people to come back to University Avenue when construction is completed.

"Yes, this is a crummy time," said Nancy Homans, senior policy director for St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. She is the mayor's point person on the light rail projects, which is slated to be start operations in 2014. "But we're making a major capital investment that's going to increase the value of

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Wagner's Pet Sitting. Walking - Day and Overnight Care. 651-771-0421. 7-11

SERVICES

Need a handyman?? Any job, big or small plumbing? Remodeling? Decks? Etc. Call Dave 612-701-2272. Competitive prices! 12-10

Paisley Garden Design - Natural garden maintenance/design, planting, mulching & trimming; U of MN Horticulture Graduate. 651-600-1678. 7-11

SHOES

Your shoes need a vacation too! We can restore them for you! HartlandShoes.us 651-646-4326. 8-11

TUTORING

Help children learn to read. Wanted: caring adults (50+ yrs) to tutor K-3 students in Mpls and SP schools 4-15 hrs/wk Sept-June. Training provided. Small stipend available for those who qualify. See www.experiencecorps.org. Contact now for fall placement: awoodworth@voamn.org or 952-945-4166. 7-11

VACUUM CLEANER

Vacuum Cleaners: Sales, service and supplies. Experts since 1952.

666 University @ Dale. 651-222-6316. www.a-1vacuum.com BB-10

WANTED TO BUY

Top Cash Paid! Older Furniture - rugs - sports items - wood ice boxes - bookcases - advertising items - Beer items - Miscellaneous Antiques - 651-227-2469. 6-11

WINDOWS/SCREENS

Custom making/repairs. Thermal windows; fix frames, glazing. Kendall's-651-489-3210, 651-776-6996. BB-10

WANTED TO BUY

Paying the most for your furniture, dishes, glassware, knick-knacks, costume jewelry, antiques, pictures, lamps, household items etc. I make housecalls. Call Mary Anne. 612-729-3110. 8-11

Mayor Chris Coleman enjoys Lunch on the Avenue with St. Paul Midway Chamber



Recently, Mayor Chris Coleman joined members of the Saint Paul Midway Chamber and local residents for "Lunch on the Avenue" at Fortune Wok in the Griggs Midway Building. Lunch on the Avenue and Brew on the Avenue are efforts organized by the Midway Chamber to promote Central Corridor businesses. The series encourages its participants to eat and drink at specific locally-owned University Avenue restaurants every other week.

Making streets friendlier to transportation

Have you seen increased traffic on side streets from light rail construction? Your input is needed to help make Edmund, Charles, and Sherburne Avenues friendlier to all modes of transportation. Join Hamline Midway Coalition and your neighbors at an upcoming block party where you will be introduced to a variety of techniques to make streets safer for

all. Come to share your ideas, participate in creative place-making activities, and enjoy food from local vendors! Friday, July 22 from 3:30-7:30 p.m. hosted by Kimberly at 1414 Charles. For more information contact: Michael Jon at michaeljon@hamlinemidway.org or Lily at lily@hamlinemidway.org or call our office at 651-646-1986.

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HAMLIN UNIVERSITY Upcoming Events

Author Sheila O'Connor—Public Reading

Friday, July 15

6:30 p.m.

Giddens Learning Center, 100E

The celebrated author of many beloved books for young readers, including *Sarah*, *Plain and Tall* and winner of the Newbery Medal gives reading of her work.

Free, open to all.

Author Patricia MacLachlan—Public Reading

Saturday, July 16

6:30 p.m.

Klas Center, Kay Fredericks Room

Author of *Tokens of Grace*, *Where No Gods Came*, and most recently, her new young adult novel *Sparrow Road* gives reading of her work.

Free, open to all.

Hamline at the Minnesota State Fair

August 25-September 5

It's that time again—Be sure to visit the Hamline booth at the Minnesota State fair in the Education Building.

Contact: Tracy Sparby at 651-523-2707 or tsparby@hamline.edu

Campus Improvement Projects for Summer 2011

Curious about the campus improvement projects underway for Hamline buildings and grounds this summer? From construction of the University Center to upgrades to classrooms, residence halls, and grounds, Hamline's facilities services is making progress. Visit www.hamline.edu/offices/facilities/ for more information on the projects.

 HAMLIN UNIVERSITY