

Memorandum

To: Policy Board Members and Alternates

From: Robert D. Miller, Director

Date: June 23, 2010

Subject: Neighborhood Comments on the “NRP and NCR: Collaboration, Cooperation and Consolidation Plan (Draft)”

At the April 26 Policy Board meeting I brought a draft of “NRP and NCR: Collaboration, Cooperation and Consolidation Plan” to the Board for review and comment. The draft had been prepared, over several months, by NCR Director David Rubedor and me. The goal was to create a reasonable and comprehensive plan that could facilitate collaboration and cooperation between NRP and NCR, and eventually maximize consolidation of the administrative functions of the two organizations.

At the meeting the Board made a modification to the Completion Date for step 3 of the draft plan and directed that the revised draft be distributed to all neighborhood organizations for their review and comment. The draft was distributed to neighborhoods on April 28 with a letter from Board Chair Ken Kelash and neighborhoods were given a deadline of June 18 for submission of their comments and suggestions.

Four neighborhood organizations and one individual provided written comments and suggestions on the plan. Their submissions are attached.

After reviewing the comments, I have prepared a revised draft of the Plan for consideration by the Board that incorporated points and language from the neighborhood comments. The changes are indicated in the draft. The Plan is now ready for review, comment, modification and approval by the Board. After the Board completes its version of this Plan, I will be meeting with David Rubedor to present the Board’s approach and see if an MOU can be drafted for implementation. I have sent the neighborhood comments and this revised draft to Mr. Rubedor for his information.

A Plan for the Future

Over the next several years, the activities of the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) will be winding down and the City of Minneapolis' Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) department will become operational. The Minneapolis City Council passed a resolution on December 18, 2009 that the NRP and NCR directors "work together to develop and implement a plan to bring the administrative functions of the NRP program into the NCR Department by December 31, 2010". There are legal and practical considerations, however, that will govern the timing and amount of consolidation that can and should occur. This plan will maximize the opportunities for NCR to succeed, ensure that NRP continues to meet its statutory and contractual obligations, and minimize administrative duplication and cost. It will:

- Reduce or eliminate any duplication of administrative expenses
- Maximize funding for neighborhood organizations
- Provide a seamless transition for neighborhoods from NRP to the NCR
- Maintain the integrity of both the NRP and NCR programs.

Background

1. The City of Minneapolis established the NRP pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 469.1831 and Laws 1990, chapter 604, article 7, section 7 (the NRP Laws), which prescribe the parameters of the program, the processes that it must use, the goals that it must meet, the methods by which decisions are to be made, and the uses of the funds appropriated for NRP between 1990 and 2009. The mission of NRP is to make the City's neighborhoods better places to live, work, learn and play by investing in neighborhood-based priority setting, planning and implementation.
2. NCR has been independently created by the City of Minneapolis. A significant amount of NCR's funding will be provided under the state granted authority in Laws 2008, chapter 366, article 5, section 37 (the Special Law). The NCR, in conjunction with the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) and City Council, is in the process of prescribing the parameters of the City's community engagement program, the processes that it must use, the goals that it must meet and the methods by which decisions are to be made. The NCR mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Minneapolis through vigorous community participation, resident involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, and supporting clearly defined links between the City, City services and neighborhood and community organizations.
3. The NRP Policy Board is a quasi-joint powers entity created pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 469.1831 and by a voluntary agreement (the Joint Powers Agreement) between the City of Minneapolis, Independent School District No. 1, the Library Board of the City of Minneapolis (since merged with Hennepin County), the Park and Recreation Board of the City of Minneapolis, and Hennepin County. The NRP Policy Board has the powers and duties authorized under the NRP Laws and delegated to it pursuant to the Joint Powers Agreement. These include the power to employ staff and enter into contracts for

services. The Joint Powers Agreement that created the NRP Policy Board became effective January 1, 1992 and expires December 31, 2011. The Joint Powers Agreement can be extended with the agreement of all parties. If the Joint Powers Agreement expires or is terminated, the NRP Policy Board will no longer be able to contract or employ staff. The advisory roles mandated by the NRP Laws to review and approve neighborhood action plans and evaluate expenditures must be performed by the NRP Policy Board or another entity that meets the compositional requirements of the NRP Laws.

4. NRP and NCR recognize that any consolidation of administrative functions must minimize the adverse impact on neighborhood organizations and their operations. Both programs support neighborhood organizations and encourage resident engagement. Both programs support neighborhood-based priority setting, planning and implementation.
5. The eight current NRP staff are employees of the NRP Policy Board and are not employees of the City. They do not have any bumping or transfer rights to positions in the City or NCR. They are not members of any union and are hired, fired, evaluated and disciplined by the NRP Director and his management team. NRP staff receive their work assignments from the NRP Director and the management team of NRP. The NRP Director serves at the will of the NRP Policy Board. The NRP Policy Board establishes the salary schedules for NRP staff members. NRP employees are, however, members of PERA and have the same fringe benefit package as City employees. The City provides payroll services to NRP and human resources support and guidance. Every NRP employee has been with the NRP for at least 10 years and the average length of service is 16.3 years.
6. NRP funds are finite. The City's authority to provide revenues to NRP under the original statutes ended in 2009 with the transfer of \$20 million from the Common Project and the Brookfield loan repayment. But NRP plan development, implementation and contract management activities will continue for many years into the future. The Neighborhood Revitalization Program and its funds will continue to be governed by the NRP Policy Board, in accordance with the September 16, 2009 legal opinion from Kennedy and Graven.
7. NRP funds have been allocated to neighborhoods for development and implementation of Neighborhood Action Plans (NAPs). Program income generated from the use of neighborhood NRP funds shall continue to be neighborhood NRP income that is governed by that individual neighborhoods priorities and plans, consistent with Ordinance 2006-Or-019 that amended Title 16, Chapter 419 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances relating to NRP. NRP staff currently are responsible for assisting with plan development and providing oversight of plan implementation. Forty-six Phase II Neighborhood Action Plans (NAPs) have been approved by the NRP Policy Board as of March 1, 2010. Most of the twenty-six (26) neighborhoods that do not yet have approved Phase II plans are in the process of developing and obtaining neighborhood, NRP and City Council approval of their Phase II NAPs.
8. Implementation occurs through City contracts. Expenditure of the allocated funds for Phase II will occur as contracts are executed and the required services, activities, programs and projects are performed

9. The City of Minneapolis, as authorized by the 2008 Special Law, has approved a Consolidated TIF District as a source of funding for neighborhood revitalization activities, including operating support for neighborhood organizations from 2011 through 2020. These funds will be administered by the NCR.
10. The NCR will begin adding neighborhood support staff to the Department in 2011.
11. As NRP Phase I and II contracts with neighborhoods are executed and contracted funds are expended, the NRP fund balance and ability to invest in neighborhood improvement will decline. At the same time, NCR's new funding program is expected to become a significant funder of the administrative activities of neighborhood organizations.
12. The timelines in the consolidation plan must be flexible, to allow responses to unexpected or unintended events or circumstances, changes in the implementation environment, implementation delays or problems, and results of implementation that fail to meet expectations. Any dates should be considered targets. The focus and goal of the consolidation effort must be a seamless transition.
13. NRP staff have significant relationships with neighborhood associations and organizations throughout the City. They are respected advocates for, and monitors of, neighborhoods. They provide technical assistance on the processes of NRP and assist neighborhoods with the development, approval, and implementation of their Neighborhood Action Plans. They also provide professional support and advice to neighborhood organizations to help them effectively operate and contribute to the improvement of their neighborhood and the City.
14. It is important to retain the vast knowledge of the City's neighborhoods vested in the current, experienced "downtown" NRP office staff. In addition, their technical and procedural expertise for facilitating contracts and various other mechanisms to support neighborhoods' plans, priorities, and operating processes is invaluable. If individual, effective current NRP staff members wish to do so, they should be encouraged and assisted with moving from NRP to NCR employment, without losing salary, benefits, or seniority. The compensation provided by the City should be at least equal to the compensation of other positions with similar responsibilities.
- ~~13.15.~~ NRP has created and maintained a highly sophisticated and complex data management system to track neighborhood NRP activities and expenditures. This system was established outside of the City's BIS functions so that it could cost effectively meet NRP's program management needs. PlanNet NRP will need to be independently maintained as NRP functions merge into the NCR.
- ~~14.16.~~ Almost 20% of NRP's central office administrative budget is paid to the City for staff support from DFD, CPED and the City Attorney's Office. Another 15% is spent on services that directly support neighborhoods (i.e. audits and insurance).

These factors influence the potential for, and the processes to be used to accomplish, collaboration and consolidation.

This plan is focused on preserving continuity and stability for the primary customers of both NRP and NCR: the neighborhood organizations of the City and its residents. The plan will ensure that the NRP functions will be performed in accordance with the NRP Laws while minimizing duplication of effort and maximizing opportunities for cooperation with NCR. It establishes a relationship between the past and present neighborhood and community empowerment program (NRP) and the City's new community engagement framework (NCR and NCEC) and offers an opportunity for the City to build a successful resident engagement program for the future.

The Plan

1. One NRP staff member was detailed to the NCR in February 2010 to assist with development of the City's new Community Engagement program. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed between NRP and NCR to govern the components of this arrangement. This staff person will remain an NRP employee and will continue to perform NRP related support work for NRP assigned neighborhoods until the MOU ends. The employee will take their direction for the NCR activities they perform during the term of the contract from the NCR Director.

Responsibility: NRP Director and NCR Director
~~Completion~~Target date: February, 2010

2. NRP will determine where older program records should be stored and begin archiving neighborhood files and reducing the records at the NRP Central Office.

Responsibility: NRP Director and staff
~~Completion~~Target date: June, 2010 and ongoing

3. The NRP and NCR Directors will finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that details the agreed upon Consolidation Plan. Both Directors will work with their organizations to review and approve the MOU.

Responsibility: NCR and NRP Directors
~~Completion~~Target Date: ~~May, 2010~~ July, 2010

Note: Target Date Changed to "July, 2010" by NRP Policy Board on April 26, 2010

4. The NCR Director will work with the City Human Resources Department to develop and obtain approval for the position descriptions of the neighborhood staff to be employed in the NCR department. Positions that will be supporting NRP Phase I and II activities shall require prior NRP experience, including direct experience managing the city-level support functions needed to expend any remaining Phase I NRP funds and develop, approve, and implement Phase II NAPs. Hired staff should have: demonstrated competency in administering NRP contracts, shown they can work effectively with neighborhoods, a history of advocacy for neighborhoods, and good references from the neighborhoods with which they have worked.

Responsibility: NCR Director
CompletionTarget date: June, 2010

5. The NCR Director will work with the City Human Resources Department to develop a transfer approach that can be used for NRP employees hired by NCR and that may wish to serve in the new department. The goal is to guarantee that the years of service and seniority earned as NRP employees transfers fully into their employment with the City of Minneapolis and that at the beginning of their employment with the City of Minneapolis their position and grade start at least at the same benefits and pay as their position in NRP.

Responsibility: NCR Director
CompletionTarget date: September, 2010

6. The NCR Director and the NRP Director will review the arrangement in 1 above to determine if the results warrant the assignment of a second NRP staff member to NCR. If so, and a mutually agreeable NRP staff member can be identified and is willing to take the assignment, an MOU for that detail will be prepared and the additional NRP staff member will begin working with NCR.

Responsibility: NCR Director and NRP Director
CompletionTarget date: September, 2010

7. NRP and NCR will coordinate their budget submissions for 2011 to ensure that no duplications of workload, overlap in staffing, or neighborhood support gaps occur.

Responsibility: NCR Director and NRP Director
CompletionTarget date: September, 2010

8. The NRP Policy Board will continue to encourage and support neighborhood submission of Phase II NAP's for approval. The goal will be to have the Policy Board approve at least 8 Phase II NAPs in 2010.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board and staff
CompletionTarget date: December, 2010

9. The NRP Director and his management team will renegotiate existing equipment leases and minimize their terms and costs. No new leases or long term agreements for equipment will be approved by the NRP Director.

Responsibility: NRP Director
CompletionTarget date: December, 2010

10. The NRP Director will review all professional services agreements. Agreements will be terminated, reduced in terms of times of performance, or transferred to other organizations as appropriate.

Responsibility: NRP Director
~~Completion~~Target date: December, 2010

11. The NRP Director will terminate the current MOU between the NRP Policy Board and the City's Development Finance ~~Department~~ Division (DFD). ~~NCR will take over the functions that DFD currently performs for NRP.~~ A new three party MOU will be executed between the NRP Policy Board, DFD and NCR that identifies the services to be provided by DFD and NCR and the basis and costs to be charged to NRP's administrative budget.

Responsibility: NRP Director, DFD Director and NCR Director
~~Completion~~Target date: December, 2010

12. NCR will take over the responsibilities and costs for the neighborhood audit support functions of NRP and work with the Office of the State Auditor to ensure continuation of their role in providing audit and financial management review services to neighborhood organizations.

Responsibility: NCR Director
~~Completion~~Target date: January, 2011

13. NCR ~~takes~~ will take over the responsibilities and costs for the D & O insurance functions that NRP performs for neighborhoods and pay the insurance premium from its administrative budget.

Responsibility: NCR Director
~~Completion~~Target date: March, ~~2011~~2013

14. NRP will initiate a review of the Joint Powers Agreement. The review should include a discussion of the membership of the NRP Policy Board, the functions to be performed by the Policy Board (budgeting, asset management, plan approvals, office and contract administration, etc.), and whether the Joint Powers Agreement should sunset, be modified and/or be extended. Since many neighborhoods have not yet completed their Phase II NAP's, and approved plans from Phase I and Phase II will continue to be subject to modification, the NRP Policy Board should continue through at least 2013 to perform the responsibilities required by the NRP statute and meet the requirements of the September 16, 2009 legal opinion on NRP expenditures after 2011.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board and staff
~~Completion~~Target date: January, 2011

15. NRP will spin off the Minneapolis and Saint Paul Home Tour as an independent organization and turn the operation of this event over to the new organization.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board and staff
~~Completion~~Target date: March, 2011

16. The NCR director will fill a minimum of four permanent neighborhood support staff positions that include support for NRP Phase I and Phase II activities. Funding for these positions is expected to be provided from Consolidated TIF revenues and be part of the Department's 2011 Budget.

Responsibility: NCR Director
CompletionTarget Date: June, 2011

17. NRP Central Office will continue to reduce its Central Office staff in 2011. As neighborhood support staff positions are added and filled at the NCR, and as those positions provide support for neighborhood NRP activities, NRP will change its staff compliment accordingly. If the positions are filled by the transfer of current NRP staff the vacated positions will be left unfilled and deducted from the NRP staff complement in the next budget cycle.

Responsibility: NRP Director and NRP Policy Board
CompletionTarget date: June, 2011

18. NCR and NRP will coordinate staffing changes (upsizing and downsizing) to ensure neighborhood support capacity is maintained and administrative costs are minimized.

Responsibility: NCR and NRP Directors
CompletionTarget Date: June, 2011

19. The NRP Policy Board will approve at least 12 Phase II NAPs in 2011.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board and staff
CompletionTarget date: December, 2011

20. Decisions will be made on the disposition of all remaining NRP equipment, including desks, furniture, partitions, computers and printers, and files.

Responsibility: NRP Director and staff
CompletionTarget date: December, 2011

21. Data needed by NRP for its PlanNet database will continue to be entered by NRP staff and NCR staff with neighborhood NRP support responsibilities. The data will be reviewed by the NRP staff member responsible for PlanNet.

Responsibility: NCR Director and NRP Staff
CompletionTarget date: When ~~90% of the~~ end of fiscal year NRP balance in funds 01CNR and 01SNR totals \$ 5,000,000 or less. as of 3/31/2010 has been expended.

22. The NRP website will be discontinued. The "Neighborhoods" section of the current NRP website contains a great deal of helpful information about the NRP plans/activities of individual neighborhoods in Minneapolis. This section should be maintained and updated by NRP/NCR staff for the foreseeable future, as it provides insights and a good history of Minneapolis' neighborhoods' considerable NRP work. When the NRP website is

discontinued, this section should remain available to the public through NCR. Neighborhoods have used access to this site to learn from each other and this transfer of knowledge and information needs to continue.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board

~~CompletionTarget~~ date: When ~~90% of the~~ end of fiscal year NRP balance in funds 01CNR and 01SNR is \$ 5,000,000 or less as of ~~3/31/2010 has been expended.~~

23. NCR neighborhood staff will perform NRP support activities for the neighborhoods, including assisting with the development and approval of NRP Phase II Neighborhood Action Plans. Decisions regarding NRP plan approvals and implementation oversight activities will be the responsibility of the NRP Director or the NRP Policy Board, as appropriate. Staff working on NRP activities (in either NRP or NCR) will report to the NRP Director, or the Policy Board's designee, regarding all NRP Phase I and Phase II related activities.

Responsibility: NCR and NRP Director and NRP Staff

~~CompletionTarget~~ date: To be determined by the NRP Policy Board.

24. The future support for and residence of PlanNet will be determined.

Responsibility: NRP staff and Policy Board

~~CompletionTarget~~ date: When ~~90% of the~~ end of fiscal year NRP balance in funds 01CNR and 01SNR is \$ 5,000,000 or less as of ~~3/31/2010 has been expended.~~

25. The NCR director will fill additional permanent neighborhood support staff positions, based on available funding and workload needs, that include support for NRP Phase I and Phase II activities. Funding for these positions is expected to be provided from Consolidated TIF revenues and be part of the NCR Department's Budget.

Responsibility: NCR Director

~~CompletionTarget~~ Date: To be determined by the NCR Director.

26. The remaining NRP positions will be vacated if the hires in 25 above are from the NRP staff.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board

~~CompletionTarget~~ date: To be determined by the NRP Policy Board.

27. The NRP lease with Welsh Companies for Room 425 of the Crown Roller Mill Building will be terminated.

Responsibility: NRP Policy Board

~~Completion~~Target date: To be determined by the NRP Policy Board. |

Note: Each activity in this plan requires the successful completion of the steps that proceed that activity. If the steps upon which the activity depends are not completed in a timely and successful manner, the timing of each succeeding step will be delayed. |

COMMENTS FROM KENWOOD-ISLES AREA ASSOCIATION
RE: DRAFT TRANSITION PLAN TO MOVE FROM
THE NRP & its POLICY BOARD to NCR & its NCEC
June 18,2010

1. It is important to retain the vast knowledge of the city's neighborhoods vested in the current, experienced "downtown" NRP office staff. In addition, their technical and procedural know-how for facilitating contracts and various other mechanisms to support neighborhoods' plans, priorities, and operating processes is invaluable. Therefore, if individual, effective NRP staff members wish to do so, we support the plan to encourage current NRP staff to move from NRP to NCR employment, without losing salary, benefits, or seniority.
2. As the transition moves forward, it may become clear that earlier-established timelines are unrealistic. The transition process must be done carefully, and timelines should be elongated if unanticipated circumstances arise.
3. Since many neighborhoods have not yet completed their Phase II NRP Action Plans, the NRP Policy Board will need to continue its work through 2011 and possibly into 2012.
4. NRP has provided access to Directors & Officers Insurance for neighborhood organizations' leaders for many years. This function must also be assumed by NCR, with neighborhoods paying for their own premiums.
5. In order to track neighborhoods' expenditures and priorities, and to manage the significant range of neighborhoods' programs, NRP has created an extremely valuable, sophisticated and complex, but very useable data management system: **PlanNet**. This system needs to be retained and independently maintained as the transition process moves ahead. Since this effective system already exists, the City should use it, and utilize the expertise of staff members who know how it works.
6. The "Neighborhoods" section of the current NRP website contains a great deal of helpful information about the NRP Plans/activities of individual neighborhoods in Minneapolis. This section must be maintained and updated for the foreseeable future, as it provides insights and history of Minneapolis' neighborhoods' considerable NRP work. If the NRP website, as such, is discontinued, at least this section should remain available to the public through NCR. Neighborhoods have learned from each other through access to this site.
7. NRP has always had very few "downtown" admin staff. NCR's staffing should also be small, with as few staff positions as possible. Given the funding decisions made by the Minneapolis City Council, funds to implement neighborhood priorities and programs in the new NCR/NCEC arrangement will be much less than they were in NRP. NCR should not focus on functions such as PR, "marketing" or "outreach". In addition, close to 20% of NRP's central administrative budget is being paid to the City for staff support from City departments: Development Finance, CPED, and City Attorney. The transition into NCR should reduce the percentage of those "in-house" charges. **Every dollar spent on administration & bureaucracy is one less dollar to implement neighborhood priorities and improvement.**

Carsten Slostad

Attachment B

From: Rita Ulrich [rulrich@nokomiseast.org]
Sent: Friday, June 18, 2010 3:58 PM
To: Miller, Bob; NRP Policy Board c/o Carsten Slostad
Subject: Comments on NRP/NCR Consolidation Plan

Dear Policy Board Members:

Noltomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) believes strongly that the Neighborhood Revitalization Program and its funds must continue to be governed by the Joint Powers NRP Policy Board. This is the structure established by state law and it should be continued. If the administrative functions of the NRP office are to be transferred to a city department (NCR), we have some concerns about how this is accomplished. These and additional comments on the NRP/NCR Consolidation Plan follow.

1) We support Item #4. NCR should hire NRP staff who are experienced in administering contracts, supporting neighborhoods and helping neighborhoods in many aspects of planning and implementing their NRP plans. NCR should not hire any additional staff except candidates who can demonstrate competency in administering NRP contracts, have shown they work effectively with neighborhoods, have a history of advocacy for neighborhoods, and have good references from the neighborhoods with which they have worked.

2) Item number 8 is probably a good goal, but NRP has limited control over the outcomes. Neighborhoods can be encouraged and supported to complete their Plans, but not forced.

3) With respect to Items #10 & 13, we are grateful that D&O insurance has been secured for neighborhoods. Providing D&O insurance for neighborhoods is extremely important and if NCR take over this function, it should be continued indefinitely, and reviewed periodically by the NRP Policy Board.

4) Regarding Item #11, DFD has done a fairly good job handling NRP contracts and financial tracking. It performs very complex work, and NCR does not appear equipped to take over this function.

5) If Item # 12 is referring to the functions currently performed by the Office of the State Auditor and others. we disagree with this goal. The State Auditor's Office has been an excellent resource for neighborhoods and does an outstanding job of preparing financial statement, and/or performing audits. In working with other accounting firms, NENA has come to appreciate the experience and common sense approach of the State Auditor's Office. The loss of their services would be a disservice to neighborhood organizations and anyone concerned with good financial management of NRP funds.

6) Regarding Item 14, as stated above, we believe the NRP Policy Board should continue to govern NRP funds. It only make sense to extend the joint powers agreement.

Finally, the timeline in the Consolidation Plan seems overly ambitious. NCR does not appear to be ready to take on the level of responsibility that NRP has managed for 20 years in such a short time period. In addition to NRP functions, NCR will be working on the new citizen participation program and has much work to do before even that one new program is ready to function.

6/21/2010

Thank you for your time and attention, and for your service to Minneapolis neighborhoods and the residents they serve.

Sincerely,

Rita Ulrich

Rita Ulrich
Executive ~~Director~~ **Director**
~~Nokomis~~ **East** Neighborhood Association
3000 East 50th St
Minneapolis MN 55417
612-724-5652
ru.rich@nokomiseast.org
www.nokomiseast.org

6/21/2010



NEIGHBORHOOD

June 15, 2010

Mr. Robert Miller, Director
Minneapolis NRP Policy Board
Crown Roller Mill Building, Suite 425
105 – 5th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Mr. Miller,

I am writing on behalf of the Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc. (EPNI) Board of Directors in response to the draft "NRP and NCR: Collaboration, Cooperation and Consolidation Plan." We discussed this at our June 14 board meeting.

First, the EPNI board would like to convey their appreciation for all the work that you and Mr. Rubidor are doing to ensure a smooth transition between the NRP and the new NCR department. As the NRP has been critical to the success and accomplishments of our organization for the past several years, we sincerely hope that city staff can continue to work with us in a way that builds on all the momentum and expertise that has developed since the inception of NRP.

Of interest to us are the staff change-overs from the NRP to NCR. We have developed effective and knowledgeable relations with NRP staff and encourage you to do all you can to ensure continuity and retain the expertise embedded in the staffing. The NRP staff know our neighborhoods, know the complexities of the NRP processes and have provided invaluable assistance in the development and implementation of our NRP Plans. As many of us are still implementing our plans, let's continue this good work.

We also believe that the transition timeline must be flexible and not fixed, as a flexible time line would accommodate a much more seamless transition. This is tough work out in the neighborhoods – dealing with complex issues, multiple partners and diminishing resources. Every effort to work together to adapt to the new circumstances and honor the incredible history of the NRP and the neighborhoods will be much appreciated and provide continued benefit to the entire city.

We are pleased to see that support functions and expenses for D&O insurance and neighborhood audits will continue within the new arrangements.

Again, thank you for your work on this

Sincerely,


Millie Schafer
EPNI President

719 South 10th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-335-5846
612-370-3950 fax
www.elliottpark.org

Date: June 18,2010

To: Robert Miller-NRP
David Rubedor-NCR

From: Marian Biehn, Exec. Director
Whittier Alliance

Re: Response to NRP & NCR Collaboration, Cooperation and Consolidation Plan

The Background:

Comments:

#1 & #2: In each of these paragraphs, the missions of each organization/dept is stated. Both are noble and hopeful but the NRP mission more clearly supports the neighborhood autonomy and priority setting. The NRP mission supports investment in neighborhoods. The NCR mission is more top down supporting linking City services to neighborhoods.

The NRC mission should reflect more of a neighborhood serving department – more confidence and investment in n'hoods. As citizens of the City of Mpls, we are already "linked" to the City services. NCR needs to more overtly state that they support n'hood vision, decisions and improvement goals outside of the "links" to the city services.

#3 The NRP Policy board and by extension the NRP staff and neighborhood specialists, foster and encourage neighborhood partnerships with the MP&R, Police, Mpls Public Schools, Hennepin County. With City tensions with some of the other jurisdictions, how will the NCR encourage and fund collaborations and expand the possibilities of those collaborations? Will reps from those entities be on the NCEC or a governing/advisory body?

#7 #8 #11 The existing contracts that n'hood have for loan programs and the funding that is linked to those contracts should remain in place and untouched as the NRP & NCR consolidate. The fund balance(s) in the contracts should not positively or negatively impact the funding allocations from the City to the neighborhoods as the NCR assumes the funding process. Program income from NRP contracts should remain under the purview of the neighborhoods. (I know this is a current ordinance — but it needs to be in the written agreement as well in the consolidation.)

#12 The relationships between the neighborhoods and their NRP neighborhood specialist has years of history, experience, knowledge, trust. More NRP specialists should be assimilated into the NCR dept rather than hiring new staff unfamiliar with NRP. New NCR staff should be trained to return phone calls—a professionalism that many city employees do not have or do not exercise. (In my experience). A "shadow" employee with no NRP experience should be assigned to facilitate future retirements or job changes.

#13 The PlanNet SU7-10-11 are extremely helpful to the neighborhoods. If the system can not be efficiently transferred to the NCR, as each n'hood is rolled into the NCR, a financial audit of the remaining funds in NRP 1, 2 and the program income should be done, recorded and signed off on by each of the entities. Active and closed contracts should also be identified, itemized and agreed upon. That will give the n'hood and the City solid data on the amount of funds remaining in the n'hood action plans and outside of the NCR funding or City access. Do not merge NRP funds with NCR funds.

The Plan:

General Comment: Adjust the transition & consolidation time line to a reasonable time line to get it right. Twenty years of experience and multi-layered activities and contracts can not be successfully transitioned in 15 months.

Comments:

#2 See #13 above

#3 See General Comment

#4 See #12 above

#6 See #13 above

#11 See #3 above

#12 #13 #14 The neighborhoods are financially support by and gently guided by the services of NRP and the policies implemented by the Policy Board and delivered via the NRP specialist. This structure has been very effective. NCR needs to support neighborhoods with:

- * Annual financial audits of the programs and at least bi-annual state audits
- * D & O insurance functions for the neighborhoods
- * Discount access to or cover the expense of workman's Comp and liability insurance
- * An NCR-NRP specialist assigned to each n'hood to oversee contract management, contract balances, new contracts, etc.
- * On-going training and education. Neighborhoods have benefit of partnerships established with the U of St Thomas and other organizations offering training and educational opportunities. As well as free seminars offered by NRP by trained staff and contractors on management and financial issues, long range planning, retreats, volunteer recruitment, etc

#16 See #12 above. Are 4 NCR permanent n'hood support staff sufficient? What was the staffing number of NRP specialists when NRP was at optimum performance? The NCR will be overseeing 2 programs — the new NCR offerings and the rollover NRP contracts and programs. Staff needs to be knowledgeable and staffed at a sufficient level.

#21 See #13 above

#22 The NRP website is a valuable and comprehensive tool for n'hood comparisons, activities, maps, etc. This website should be maintained. It is much more informative and accurate than the City's website on each n'hood. Keep this website

#23 See #13 above

Other:

N'hood budgets should function on an annual basis but the funding to the n'hoods should be on a 2-5 year cycle. It is a waste of time and efficiencies to have to submit a budget to the City each year.

**COMMENTS REGARDING
TRANSITION FROM
NRP TO NCR/NCEC**

In addition to the comments submitted by the Kenwood Isles Area Association, I am providing some personal comments and observations:

1. The Background section of the draft Plan document is very important. All persons who have either staff or policy responsibilities for shaping this transition process must endorse and "buy into" the background statements.

I also suggest adding 4 more words at the end of item 12 (about NRP staff) in the background material: "and the larger community." With this addition, the final sentence would read: **"They also provide professional support and advice to neighborhood organizations to help them effectively operate and contribute to the improvement of their neighborhoods and the larger community."**

2. For a long time, I have believed that citizens are suspicious of, and confused by, the term "**engagement**". Its definitions range from *an agreement to meet at a specified and limited time and place*; to *a period of employment* (such as for a performer or consultant); to *a betrothal*; to *the state of being in gear*; to *a hostile encounter between opposing military forces!*

Surely someone in the city network can come up with a better term for this effort into which we are transitioning. Or maybe, city wordsmiths prefer the ambiguity of the chosen term! I urge a search for a better label that suggests working in partnership with our city's neighborhoods for the betterment of the city as a whole.

3. If a willing, and not begrudging, buy-in from neighborhoods is desired, then the City Council & Mayor must be VERY clear about disavowing any "hands-on" meddling by elected officials and their office staff in determining the neighborhoods' local priorities and projects. In this new funding and administrative setting, elected officials and their office staff also must refrain from telling the NCR staff what they must, or must not, do with regard to their work with neighborhoods. Without this kind of clear understanding and independence from the outset, I believe a city-run effort will lack credibility, will fall apart and fail very quickly.

4. Knowledgeable citizens are very concerned about the seeming dysfunction of the NCEC. What has this group accomplished during the past year? Who is helping them figure out what they need to be doing? Does the basic, mandated composition of this group make their tasks impossible? How can this group possibly provide credible policy guidance to NCR as the transition from NRP marches ahead? In my opinion, the current situation with NCEC is not only disappointing, but also truly scary. Perhaps the NCEC concept needs reexamination and some radical alteration.

Submitted 6-18-2010 by Pat Scott, citizen
Board Member and NRP Committee Chair, Kenwood-Isles Area Association (KIAA)