



**Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association**

**03/18**

**6:30pm - 8:30pm**

**Hybrid (In-Person @ Scout Workshop + Zoom)**

**Board Members:**

Elise Moore - President  
Pete Boisclair - Vice President  
Anna Berglund - Treasurer  
Valerie Blomberg - Secretary  
Cate Bosserman -  
Martha Burkett  
Jackson Hampton  
Alexander Johnson  
Michael Byrd  
Joshua Christensen  
Eva Ortiz

**Staff:**

Jack O'Shaughnessy

**Officer:**

Jordan Peacock

**Guests:**

Ethan Knight - I-94 project  
Keiko Miller- Community Solar Program  
Ellie Perra- Sustainable Resource Center  
Morgan Luzier- Lynlake Art  
Will Stancil- Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association

**Meeting Agenda:**

- Review Board Packet
- Call to Order & Welcome - *President*
  - Welcoming statements
  - Ice breaker
- Approval of Agenda and Rules of Order - *President*

- *Approved*
- Approval of February 2025 [Meeting minutes](#) *Approved*
- Treasurer's Report
  - **Motion:** Treasurer's [report](#) for February 2025 *Motion passed*
  - We need to have a financial management policy, we can adapt it from the one created by Bryn Mawr which meets the requirements of the city/county
    - [Sample financial management plan](#)
  - Required for documentation requested by the organization funding Food Share (Hennepin County). Could be a tremendous amount of work, but Dennis (our accountant) has given us behind-the-scenes access to Bryn Mawr's plan which they recently completed. Alexander suggested using the April Committee Workshop night to review the management plan and roll it into discussions about

Jordan notes – And I'm still working on a Draft Data & Privacy Policy that the board can review and edit with a view toward hopefully approving something by next month; also needed for the food share grant/county reporting

- Annual Meeting - *Valerie, Anna, Pete*
  - **Motion:** Spend \$100 to book the Phoenix Theater for the May 3 event.
  - Phoenix seats 150 people, nice division between the lobby (for the social hour) and the theater space for presentations. We get access to the tech booth. The entrance is easy to find and the space is accessible. Jackson noted that it will be just south of Hennepin construction so we should note that in the newsletters, etc. *Motion passed*.
- Presentation - Rethinking I-94 with Ethan Knight - *Alexander Kurt Johnson*
  - How the I-94 project will impact our neighborhood  [Whittier I-94 Presentation](#)
  - Ethan Knight presentation: TCDSA is stepping into a role getting neighborhoods involved.
  - Originally started in 2016, the corridor included the Wedge, but now we've been removed. It doesn't mean that the future of the project won't affect us, it just means we won't need to be consulted.
  - The corridor is at the end of its life. They aren't just going to tear it up, they have to re-do the sewer lines and everything underneath. That gives us the opportunity to rethink.
  - However, the Lowry Tunnel has been scratched from the scope of the rethinking I94 project.
  - Lowry Tunnel can't be widened. It serves 170,000 vehicles per day. It's the highest density urban tunnel. Original MnDOT was going to look at 10 options and take 3 options to move forward with for community engagement. The tunnel is at capacity. Any change will only cause greater backup at the tunnel. A reduced freeway is considered, with an EZ pass dedicated lane which would only/primarily benefit commuters from Brooklyn Center to Woodbury and vice versa.
  - At grade alternatives (currently not considered by MnDOT). Reason they've been taken off the table is actually pollution, because they claim that tailpipe emissions from idling cars in a slower bottleneck at-grade area would be worse than freeway emissions.
  - There is a letter expressing concerns about removing the at-grade solutions from the scoping period. Letter has been written by a member of the Seward neighborhood group and has been signed by many. It is addressed to the MnDOT commission and to the governor.
  - Alexander – if the Lowry Tunnel is not included in the Rethinking I94 corridor anyway, then why would we hope to gain insights from the traffic study that would lead to the outcome of at-grade alternatives.

- Martha – recommends reading through other reports such as the dynamic modeling study that was part of the Our Streets report.
  - Ethan notes that the MnDOT traffic study would be much more comprehensive.
  - Jackson – There is a smaller study/planning session that was going on for the “elbow” area that was cut out of the MnDOT study. Question: for the at-grade alternatives, is there any option that would look into selling off parts of the land that would increase right-of-ways and improve walkability?
  - Ethan – Yes, functionally it's possible but would happen after the traffic study we are requesting.
  - **Ethan will provide us with the letter and other relevant studies to review and will come back to the April 15 board meeting for a decision.**
- Community Solar Program- Minneapolis Climate Action- *Elise & Keiko Miller*
  - Pilot initiative offers Minneapolis neighborhood organizations the opportunity to co-own a community solar garden
  - Anyone with an Xcel account can subscribe (renters, homeowners, etc.)
  - Once you sign up, set it and forget it. You get monthly savings on your electricity bill. MCA's goal is at least 30% savings for LMI (low-moderate income), they are guaranteed at least 10% savings.
  - Looking to work with neighborhood orgs in two ways: 1) outreach and events 2) orgs can use available NRP funds to commit startup funds and become a co-owner of the solar garden. (With NRP funds getting returned to the neighborhoods as unrestricted funds.)
  - Martha to follow up with the Environmental Committee to make sure that this opportunity is included in their newsletter.
  - Jordan – How much funding does a typical project cost?
  - 25-year lifespan of a garden. Estimate that 30% of a project cost comes back within a year of when the solar garden is completely built.
  - A 500KW project would need \$1mil to build. You can't really do an entire solar garden for less than \$350,000 for the economies of scale. They focus on urban rooftops and the rooftop has to be in Minneapolis for NRP funds to be eligible. A couple sites are identified, but they are hopeful that once a coalition of neighborhoods is formed there will be some doors opened through neighborhood connections.
  - Current modeling suggests about a 5% annual return. Total return over the lifetime is about 160% (simple math, not adjusted for inflation). Not including the possible tax kickback if eligible, which was projected at 30%.
  - Jordan noted: Using that example, if, for instance, LHENA decided to go all in on something like this instead of pursuing a building project, LHENA could fund approx 50% of the cost
  - Jordan noted: So, using the simple math: for a 500k investment, you get 150k back from the tax and 25k/year
  - Next step: Keep the conversation going. Optimistically-speaking, the project build could start in a year from now. Possibly 2-3 years.
  - Valerie noted: Is there competition from other groups like yours that could beat us to the chase and drive down the returns by increasing the supply or solar energy for the demand?
  - Yes, there are other groups but they are almost all for-profit so they have less benefit to the consumer. There is plenty of space and opportunity to benefit every single person who has an Xcel account.
- Conversation with Sustainable Resources Center (Ellie Perra)- *Elise & Ellie Perra*

- Adding them to our resource page, renter focused, lead poisoning van (Uptown Farmers Market?)
- Fiscal sponsorship request- Lynlake Art Street Series/VA Art Gallery- *Elise & Morgan Luzier*
  - [Grant application](#)
  - Requesting fiscal sponsorship for a May 2 grant application for \$35k to fund some new murals in the LynLake area and along the Greenway.
  - Jordan – We have a fiscal sponsorship policy. Notes that LHENA is on the hook for how the funds are spent. Also notes that an administrative fee should be assessed. Notes that the agreement needs to have a reporting structure agreed to so that in the case of an audit we have proper documentation to share.
- Partnership: Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association- Holidays on Hennepin- *Elise & Will Stancil*
  - LHNA is planning an event centered around promoting businesses at the Hennepin reopening next December.
  - Goal of LHENA involvement: participate in a joint committee with members from multiple boards to help plan and coordinate the project, including by obtaining some city funding potentially
  - Piggybacking on the trend we already see happening with Nico's Tacos and Red Cow in Uptown creating all-out holiday decorated restaurant spaces.
  - Hennepin businesses could use all the help they can get. Even a low-attended event would be a success.
  - Opportunity to re-introduce the public to the possibilities of this neighborhood highlighting “this is where to park, this is how to take transit.”
  - Elise – we’re working on the Wedge Adventure Book (a coupon book). Once we have these business relationships we’ll be even better set up to support this event.
  - Jackson – do we know the date of the end of construction?
  - Sure, it would be challenging if Hennepin was still closed, but hopefully it will be re-opened.
  - Cate – Excited for a tie in with the LHENA decorations stroll/ contest!!
  - Alexander – Sees a tie-in with the CED and would like to be part of the working group, just not in the next 2 months.
  - Cate – I am interested in potential for collaboration with the Uptown Farmers Market.
  - Valerie – Notes that LVN recently formed a subgroup specifically for planning social events.

Next steps: Wants to have monthly meetings starting in April, which would accelerate as we get closer to December

Will wants to explore city funding before asking neighborhood orgs for a financial commitment.

**Motion:** LHENA will fiscally sponsor Morgan’s project should she move forward with applying for the grant. Motion passed.
- Let’s talk \$\$!! *Elise, Anna, Valerie, Alexander*
  - What LHENA has in the bank and what our plan is for it- \$804,000
  - What needs to happen before 4/12 (if we want to reallocated > \$25,000). We need to give 21 days notice to the neighborhood.
  - Alexander – There are some funds that we want to prioritize planning how to spend so that we don’t lose it (about \$45,000). Secondarily, there are the NRP funds that are sitting around in different buckets.
  - Elise – Bob Cooper informed us that there are some things we can do to spend down funds before they expire, and that he could help us make those decisions (for example,

paying a year ahead for office space upfront). About \$8000 allocated to very specific projects that no longer exist. It would be beneficial to clean this up.

- Jackson – Asks if you can bypass the limits and move \$25,000 one month and another \$25,000 the following month.
- Alexander – Talking to other neighborhood associations, yes.
- Elise – A big question to ask is how are we building revenue streams. Top priority is to free up money that is currently locked up in funds for projects that don't exist anymore.
- Alexander – Recommend creating a working group of people who want to help decide how to spend money.
- Lots of interest and raised hands to the idea of helping decide how to spend money.
- Martha – Suggested community engagement on how we should spend money.
- Pete – Is there a document sharing all of these small and big pots of money?
- Elise – Yes, it's in our drive but our goal is to make a version that's easier to absorb at a glance.
- Alexander – You can also go online to Lowry Hill East > NCR > click the link to the funding.
- **Next step: We'll discuss at the committee workshop.**
- Transition Documents (2 months until new board!!) - *Elise*
  - Please create a transition document for your position
    - [Transition Document Project](#)
    - Pete – Does everyone know if their seat is up for re-election?
    - Valerie and Martha to nominate themselves as part of the upcoming election in May.
    - Anna has put together a preliminary draft of an Equitable Hiring Practices document and will continue to refine.
    - Pete and Jackson will be working on a bylaws update and will have a draft ready to review before the next board meeting. They will try to have one ready by the Committee Night, but that might be overly ambitious. They already have a good working document that was provided by NCR.
    - Cate – What is the timeline for sending out recruitment materials.
    - Valerie – So far, the biggest effort planned to support equitable recruitment is flyering and coordinating with the LVN team to specifically target the buildings north of Franklin and south of 28th Street.
- Committees, Projects, Work Groups and Programs
  - Community Development - *Alexander Kurt Johnson*
  - Currently reaching out to property owners to gauge interest in a rent subsidy program for engagement/volunteering following a Stephens Square model.
  - Also working on starting a building ambassadors program.
  - Jackson mentioned he lives at Lime apartments.
  - **Alexander recruited Jackson as the building ambassador for Lime apartments.**
  - Annual Meeting - Valerie, Anna, Pete
    - Project needs outlined in Discord (8 areas of responsibility include: Venue Selection, Food Donations, Board Recruitment, Presentations & Schedule, Organizations Tabling, Wedge Adventure Book, Activities, and Coordinating with LVN)
    - Boludo will be a food sponsor again this year.
    - Still in the works, but Uncommon Grounds might be a coffee and treats sponsor.

- Pete – Recommendation on board recruitment: When you're going to businesses and restaurants, remember to pitch the Annual Meeting and board service. You can ask “do any of your employees live in the Wedge?”
- Alexander – Requested that someone bring a stack of flyers to board meetings as a SOP going forward.
- LynLake v2 -
- Feeling out what it would look like to buy out buildings. Looking at a \$25mil project through partnerships and collaborations.
- Jordan – the commercial real estate problem is significant and not solvable by any one thing.
- Wedge Point Park - *Cate Bosserman*
  -  [WPP Community Engagement Findings](#)
- LHENA Volunteer Network
  - Updates
- Uptown Farmers Market - *Cate Bosserman*
  - Currently fundraising to prepare for June 12 market start. Have secured grant and sponsor funding, as well as donations from all surrounding neighborhood associations.
  - Hiring a Market Manager for the 2025 season. Share job listing: <https://uptownmarket.org/>
  - Applications open for market vendors.
- Environmental Committee - *Martha Burkhat*
  - Taking on the Swap Meet organization
  - Earth Day pickup will start next month and then monthly litter pickups thereafter.
- Welfare & Safety Committee -
  - Updates
- Technology Committee - *Pete Boisclair, Derek Nelson*
  - Pushing back some of the website feedback efforts to April.
- Administrative - *Jack O'Shaughnessy*
  - Updates
- New Business & Announcements
  -

Adjourn