

**ViNA Meeting
February 25, 2009
www.victoryneighborhood.org**

The meeting was held at St. John Missionary Baptist Church and called to order at 7:020 p.m. by Chair Matt Massman. The agenda and the minutes from the January 28, 2009 meeting were approved by consensus.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Business. Board member and committee chair Matt Massman reported that the \$30,000 Great Streets Phase II Grant was approved. The committee will now be seeking grant funding for landscaping design assistance and also marketing assistance for Penn/44th.

Events. Board member and chair Ann Kaari reported that the events committee will look at partnering with other neighborhoods on events. This year Victory will be an official stop on the city bike tour. She reported that the farmer's market will be back this year.

Livability. Board member and committee chair Kris Brogan reported that the committee is moving ahead on the food co-op to serve Victory and other Camden neighborhoods. The topic at the March 14 committee meeting will be "restorative justice."

Environment. Board member and committee chair Diane Spector noted the upcoming February 28 rain garden party pre-workshop. She also reported that the committee is working on submitting a grant to help expand recycling opportunities, and that the National Park Service has awarded ViNA a \$7,600 grant to fund lighting for the trail under the Osseo Road overpass.

Sustainability. No report.

Housing. ViNA chair Matt Massman reported that the committee is finalizing the new loan programs.

Community Engagement. Board member John Trombley provided a brief report on the City's efforts on the new Community Engagement process.

CITY OF LAKES COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Jeff Washburne was scheduled to appear but was unable to attend so the item was tabled.

311 – VICTORY REPORT

Don Stickney, Assistant Director of the City's 311 Call Center, appeared to provide an update. He noted that last year the call center processed 175,000 requests for service and about 70,000 emails. They are hoping to maintain the center's hours of service even with the proposed budget cuts for 2009 but noted that the center is available 24/7 on the Web. He reviewed the top 5 service requests for the past four months in Victory, the service goal and the percent meeting goal. His operating goal is for all persons answering the phones to be professional, courteous and helpful. They may not know the answer but every call is investigated. He noted that about 15 percent of the calls result in request for service, while the balance is referrals. He relayed a number of stories about 311's role in managing the 35W bridge collapse, serving as an interface between the city and people desiring a variety of information.

VICTORY MEMORIAL DRIVE STREET CLOSINGS

Chair Massman introduced the discussion, saying that the Board is concerned about the potential to close the Penn Avenue Crossing and whether that would conflict with the proposal to close the north leg of Penn and 44th as part of the project to improve the Penn/44th/Osseo Road intersection.

Councilmember Barb Johnson appeared to discuss the proposal to close some of the east-west crossings, which is different than the Victory Memorial Drive Master Plan. The new plan is to close every two of three crossings, rather than every other crossing. The roadway would be removed but the right of way

would not be vacated. The Webber-Camden Neighborhood Association has reviewed the plan for their part of the Drive and is supportive. The City also plans to vacate the Queen Avenue triangle north of the Drive. The Xerxes crossing between 45th avenue and the Drive is also proposed to be closed. The Board expressed concern that not everyone that would be affected by the closures has been notified. There was concern about impacts on school buses. The closures are being contemplated for this summer. There will be a public meeting before considering the closures, and that meeting will also serve as the public hearing for the vacation of the Queen Avenue triangle right of way. Councilmember Johnson assured the neighborhood that notice of the meeting would be made to whomever the neighborhood designates.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rain Garden Pre-Workshop. Diane reiterated the reminder of the upcoming workshop at The Warren on February 28.

Victory Food Drive. Kris announced that in observation of March's Food Drive month, Victory will conduct a month-long food drive to benefit Northpoint. Various local businesses have volunteered to be collection points.

Thomas Avenue Paving. Debbie reported that the community meeting on the proposed project will be April 20 at Webber Park. Information will be available on the proposed special assessments. The hearing will be April 28 at 9:30 at City Hall.

Target Best in Community Award. Debbie reported that ViNA member Lara Bollweg, who among other volunteer activities chairs the Farmer's Market committee, has been recognized by her employer, Target Corporation, for her community service. She was one of 35 people recognized from around the country. The neighborhood recognized Lara and thanked her for her efforts.

Minneapolis Advantage Program. Debbie reported that the city has undertaken a \$500,000 program for people to buy foreclosed houses. They have received 700 applications for 50 grants. Round 2 will be an additional \$1.5 million in foundation funding added to the \$500,000 from the city. Participants can purchase foreclosed or vacant and boarded houses.

Metro Paint-a-thon, Brush with Kindness. Debbie announced that paint-a-thon applications are due May 8 for senior or disabled participants. Brush with Humanity takes applications year round and is affiliated with Habitat for Humanity.

North Housing and Improvement Fair. Board member Gary Mortensen reminded all that the Housing Fair at North High School is coming up on March 21 and that volunteers are needed to help staff the event.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Spector, Secretary
March 25, 2009