

**Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association**  
**Meeting notes, November 5, 2015**

**Meeting hosted by Tom and Marit Brock, 74 Garfield Street, 7:00 PM**  
Chaired by Lindsay Kimball

**Update on LBNA bike path.** Planning for Phase 2 to start at January LBNA meeting. Phase 2 planting to begin May or June 2016.

- \*Ask neighbors for early design input for phase 2. This will be Western to Banfil. Can we split the path, with seating along the top side?
- \*Larger community input to happen January. This gives us plenty of time to get some conceptual work completed. Feel free to ask for and send any preliminary design ideas to Jen Gelhar (jen@mnnature.org, or via Facebook).
- \*Phase 2 planting event will be May or June. It may include re-planting some of the trees in Phase 1 that were damaged.
- \*Preferences on dates?
- \*Remaining 2015 work
  - Replace tree water bags with trunk protection - **Sunday November 15**, noon to 2:00 PM. This fall, we may need to fill the water bags 1 or 2 more times. Later, replace the water bags with wrap and trunk protection (this should take about 1-2 hours, preferably shortly before Thanksgiving).
  - Weeding and trash pick up along the wall - **date?** This is from BK to Western. Operate independently, or set up joint times to do this? Weekly or monthly volunteer calendar? Set up maintenance plan within neighbors for phase 1: start a sign-up list for “sponsoring” areas along the path in 2016, either on a weekly or monthly basis (something to try out to get consistent maintenance attention along the path).

Annual maintenance work looks kinda like the following for the next few years:

- Jan-March: watch to make sure trunk protection stays on and report any concerns/damage to LBNA ... pick up trash
- April-May: rake and bag leaves along sound wall (we have mulch there) ... remove trunk protection and wrap, put on tree water bags ... fill water bags regularly, as needed (have fire department sponsor this job for 2016?) ... pick up trash ... prune trees (special pruning event with U of M)
- June-Oct: fill tree water bags as needed (weekly or biweekly when no rain) ... pick up trash ... pull weeds
- Nov-Dec: water as needed ... replace water bags with trunk protection and wrap ... pick up trash ... pull weeds

We may need multiple sponsors (maintenance partners) at any given time to break up work demand. Journeys is still interested in DNR Forestry in the Schools program which would fit perfectly with the maintenance goals for phase 1 AND the environmental/conservation education goals of Phase 1. Jen has met with Journeys and the DNR, and will provide more information and community input opportunities as things (hopefully!) progress.

How about an overall volunteer calendar, to include Pleasant Place trash duty, tree care, watering, weeding, etc.—all the volunteer opportunities we have during the year? Opt in? How about bi-monthly service hours? Possibly both.

### **LBNA bike path vandalism.**

\*Share anything and everything you may have seen on the night of vandalism, October 19—call 911, it can even be anonymous.

\*Damage report: in October, several trees that were planted during Phase 1 were severely damaged. Sounds like word from the district (MNDoT) is that they would like to hold off on any replacement or supplement trees until next spring. Has there been any additional neighborhood insight about who the culprit(s) may be? What MNDoT will probably do is design into the plan the replacement trees and we can see how things come back in the spring. Then, either leave the trees where they are planted or replace the damaged trees with the new trees and replant the damaged trees within the Phase II area. This will require a little more work and coordination, but we'll want healthy trees with decent form along the trail. Gary Johnson at U of M Forestry Dept. has offered some assistance for pruning and reviving the trees back to normal growth come spring.

**Journeys Green Space.** Jen followed up with St Paul Parks and Rec about acquiring the green space along the west side of Journeys (Western Ave) for city park designation. There is a way to do this. There is a person responsible for the decision at both Parks and Rec and SPPS. Parks and Rec are responsive to our desire to have this area preserved and enhanced, and said the decisions that influence their motivation to acquire land include:

- Proximity to other public green spaces (i.e. St Clair Community Center, Dousman Park, and Irvine Park)
- Community need - established by current users like Kelly's daycare, MacDonald Montessori, etc. Are there others? Salvation Army day care?
- Potential to fit niche needs that park system has. Currently dog parks and skateboard parks top the list.

Thoughts? Suggestions? Do we want to set up a meeting with Parks and Rec to explore options with us? When? Jen will set it up. Tom Brock, Meg Sisk and Nikki Nolen have connected with the school staff already, and need to be involved. Add to the January brain-storming exercise?

**Planters and benches.** Marit noted that some neighbors have gotten flyers offering cedar benches and planters for sale. These are built by Journeys students, and all proceeds to purchase more materials. Marit will post information on the Web site.

**Update on housing renovations.** The West 7<sup>th</sup>/Fort Road Federation is in an 8-house deal with the Housing Redevelopment Authority:

\*29 Douglas is done, sold and occupied

\*280 Forbes is done. They may have a purchase agreement in hand and are working toward a closing soon.

\*284 Forbes - still being rehabbed; should be listed soon

\*286 Forbes - listed for sale this past weekend

\*288 Forbes - should be listed soon

\*Future Work with the Fort Road Federation: 326 Harrison, 301 Sturgis and 457 Smith are still owned by the HRA, but are part of the deal. The Federation is getting ready to begin these projects. Their start timing is dependent on getting a sale (or two) out of the present batch.

\*Regarding 314 Harrison and 376 Sturgis (the 'vacant lots') via the RFP we received proposals for both of these lots, which would entail building new single-family homes on each, also for owner-occupancy. But, the subsidy request for each was greater than the \$150,000 limit imposed by HRA policy. Therefore, we are discussing internally whether we should proceed, and if so, these will require special waivers of the policy by HRA Board. To be determined soon.

\*HRA properties - 69 Garfield, 47 Douglas: based on the most recent Inspiring Communities Request For Proposals, we are bringing recommendations to the HRA Board on November 12, including the following: HRA should enter into a development agreement with Robert Engstrom Capital Management, LLC for the rehabilitation of 47 Douglas Street and 69 Garfield Street (sale of both properties and provide development subsidy). Rehab may begin in spring. These will be sold for owner-occupancy.

\*Progress is underway at 41 Douglas. This is an empty lot that HRA sold to Charlie Browning (aka Charlie's Angles). Mr. Browning moved a house there, which he is expanding and rehabbing. I haven't been in touch with Mr. Browning for a couple weeks, so I don't have a specific update on his progress. I will try to visit him at the site next week and I can send you an update then.

**Parking concerns on Sturgis.** Jen has petitioned for permit parking on Sturgis (currently it's open parking). A critical mass of neighbors must agree.

**December meeting:** Social event! Thursday, December 3rd at 7:00 PM at Bad Weather Brewing. Lindsay will circulate information about a potluck.

**Current problem properties/safety concerns.** Rental properties on Smith are creating difficulty: residents are parking in the alley behind Douglas. Space is limited and there are lots of cars, spilling into the alleyway itself. Landscaping for the Douglas homes' back yards is being destroyed. There may also be trash being scattered around. Could we get Public Works to put out more than just a couple of concrete barriers?

The people at 276 Forbes are creating difficulty by parking in a driveway that doesn't belong to them. There are also some problems with shady visitors. Sharon has a good relationship with relevant City officials, and will see about getting some help for this situation. Sarah Gleason has experience here too, and should be consulted.

Remember to call 266-8989, and report nuisance properties to the City! *Be sure to report the address of these properties, so that the authorities don't record **your** address as the problem.* There is value in having neighbors in a small area exchange phone numbers and work together on reporting nuisance properties. This helps the City recognize that it's more than a personal disagreement.

The next LBNA business meeting will be held in January 2016. Send agenda ideas to [info@littlebohemianstpaul.org](mailto:info@littlebohemianstpaul.org)

If you find glaring errors in these notes, please send corrections to [sisk@macalester.edu](mailto:sisk@macalester.edu)