

# CLOSE TO HOME

THE FIELD REGINA NORTHROP NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP NEWSLETTER

January/February 2016

## Call for Local Artists for Utility-box Art

By Lindsey Feiner, Member, Greening Committee

Have you noticed the three utility boxes in the neighborhood with beautiful new artistic wraps? These wraps are just the beginning and in 2016, the neighborhood group hopes to complete nine more at various locations around the area.



Utility-box wrap at Cedar Avenue and Minnehaha Parkway.

The three new wraps all use art that was chosen from a selection that was pre-approved and provided by the City of Minneapolis and voted on by community members at our 2015 annual celebration last May. For future boxes, however, we want to recruit local artists from Field Regina Northrop to help us. These boxes should reflect FRN's values, history, diversity and strengths.

*Continued on page 2*



Utility-box wrap at 46th Street and 4th Avenue South.



Utility-box wrap at 46th Street and Park Avenue.

## Changes at McRae Park

By Chris Schommer, Chair, Communications Committee

On December 8th, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) published the first concept design for a future re-design of McRae Park. This process is separate from the field redesign that has been funded for 2016-2017. The scope of this project would encompass the play area, pool, basketball, tennis courts, sidewalks and parking area at the park and is scheduled for funding some time in 2019-2020. The MPRB is doing planning now as part of the "South Side Service Area Master Planning Process" and wants to hear what you want McRae Park to become.

The major changes in this concept call for replacing the current wading pool with

*Continued on page 2*

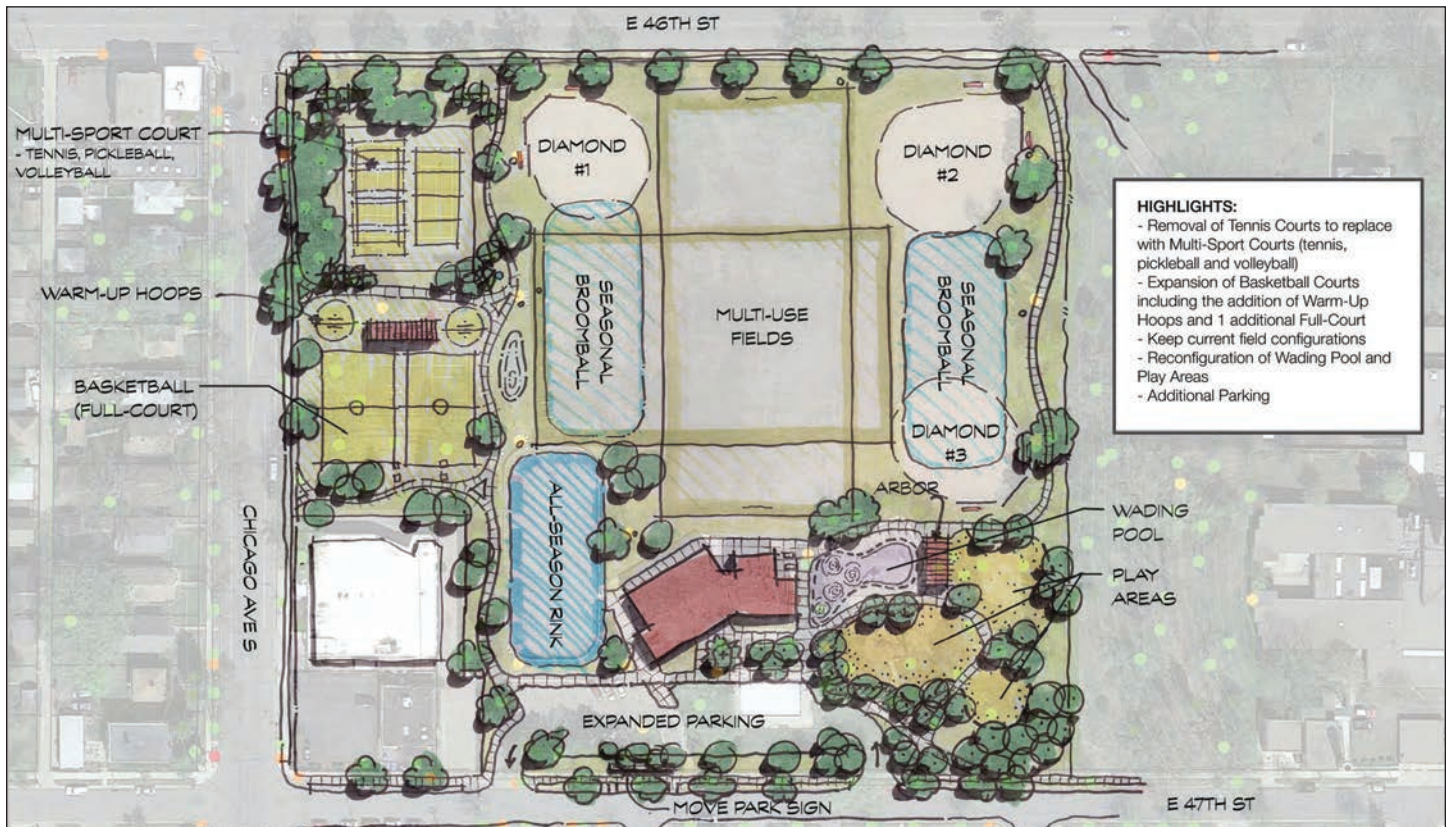
## President's Letter

Hello Field Regina and Northrop:

I want to thank you all for everything you have done for our community. You have thoroughly supported and participated in each of our community events. You've participated in Clean Sweep, attended meetings regarding both the redesign of 46th Street and the redesign of McRae Park Field, and you've attended the events that we had for our "Night on 48th" get together. You've either volunteered to

*Continued on page 3*

Photos: Sue Filbin



The master plan for the renovation of McRae Park (above) shows expanded parking and basketball courts, reconfiguration of the wading pool and play areas, and replacement of the tennis courts with multi-sports courts for tennis, pickleball, and volleyball.

Changes at McRae, continued from page 1 a new zero-entry-style wading pool with shade that would be ADA compliant and a complete replacement of the play area. The current tennis courts and basketball courts would be updated and replaced with full-court basketball areas and multi-sport courts that can accommodate tennis, pickleball and volleyball. An expanded parking lot is also in the new design. If you have questions or comments about this major change to the park, please contact project manager Adam Arvidson at: 612-230-6470 or

[aarvidson@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:aarvidson@minneapolisparcs.org)

Call for Local Artists for Utility-box Art, continued from page 1

The term “artist” is broad. If you have experience with painting, woodworking, graphic design, quilting, needlepoint, ceramics, photography, metalwork or any other visual medium, we want you to apply! Artwork needs to be something we can scale and reproduce in the utility-box format. For instance, if you are a sculptor, we may be able to use a photograph of your work on a wrap.

Any local artists interested in learning more about our utility-wrap project can apply by emailing [greening@frng.org](mailto:greening@frng.org). Please tell us about your artwork and how the neighborhood’s values and strengths are displayed in it. You may submit information about an existing piece or something you create just for this project.

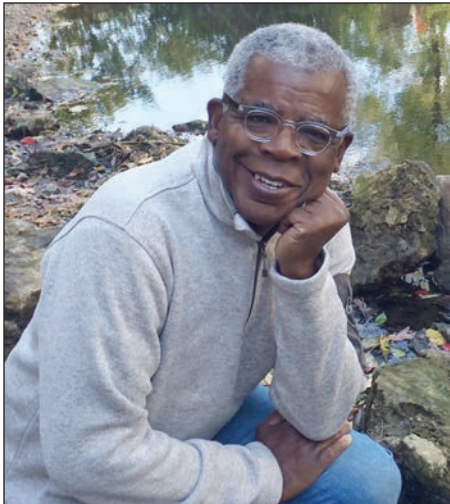
While FRN artists are encouraged to submit their artwork, we will consider

artists from outside the neighborhood as well. Once we compile a list of artists, we will hold a meeting in late January or early February to discuss the project. Artists will be compensated with a stipend of up to \$200 and a description of the box along with artist information on the FRNNG website.

If you are not an artist, we can still use your help. We want to collect your ideas of what values, history and strengths you see in FRN to help guide the selection process. If you have ideas for what you’d like this artwork to represent and reflect about our neighborhood, please email [greening@frng.org](mailto:greening@frng.org)! ❖

*Check out the map for future utility-box locations on page 12 of this newsletter.*

.....  
After many years as park director of McRae Park, Anne Kegley is moving on to manage a new location. Heather Susag will take over in the new year. FRNNG thanks Anne for her many years of service to the neighborhood, organizing youth activities, managing the park, and playing an instrumental part in organizing our annual neighborhood celebrations. We warmly welcome Heather to the position and look forward to seeing her vision for our neighborhood park. ❖



Willie Bridges, President, Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group (FRNNG)

help with the bike race, or you may have participated in it. You've pulled weeds and planted flowers along 2nd Ave, along with the Greening Committee. You've written articles for our "Close to Home" newsletter. You've attended meetings on matters that affect our neighborhood. You've participated in discussions about the Tilsen homes, and you have volunteered and participated in the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of our FRN organization and you have helped clean Minnehaha Creek.

I want to thank our Business Community for all their contributions and their participation in our many events.

We are beginning to plan for 2016 and I would encourage you to be part of any committee that interests you. Coming up in this new year, these are the committees that need additional volunteers: Housing, Greening, Community and Safety, Education, Business, Communication, and Events Coordinator. You can learn more about these committees by calling the FRN office at (612) 721-5424 .

On behalf of your FRN board of directors, we all wish each and every one of you a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Willie, President, FRN

## 46th Street Update

By Chris Schommer, Chair, Communications Committee

The 46th Street resurfacing project has slowly been moving forward toward its final goal of a Summer 2016 resurfacing and restriping of the corridor. To date, Hennepin County has recorded 236 comments from our October open house, online comments, email, social media, and phone calls. The most popular comments represent roughly 70% of the comments received. Here is a summary of comments that received eight or more similar comments:

**Concerns about traffic speed (32 comments)**

**Desire for safer design for cycling (24 comments)**

**Expressing approval for the 3-lane conversion concept (22 comments)**

**Interest in improved crosswalk elements beyond striping (14 comments)**

**Comments related to areas outside the 46th Street corridor (14 comments)**

**Expressing the difficulty in crossing 46th Street (11 comments)**

**More "No Parking" restrictions on 46th Street (10 comments)**

**Appreciation for the review process (10 comments)**

**Parking on 46th should be retained for local uses (8 comments)**

**Sidewalks are too close to the street; no boulevards (8 comments)**

**Concerns about heavy commercial vehicle traffic (8 comments)**

The remaining 75 comments vary from concerns about access, bike-lane location, long-term strategic planning, transit access and specific areas of confusion and concern.

The next step in this process will involve Hennepin County taking the initial concept plan, along with the large amount of public feedback they have received, and moving it all through the official engineering process. The engineered plan will also take into account the fine details of construction such as variations in street width and required size and spacing guidelines for street elements. Hennepin County is also still actively tweaking computer models to predict the impact of some of the design elements. If any of these look to be way out of line, then those may

force some hard questions as well. So far, their projections have not been cause for concern.

The county aims to have this design work completed by early February, and then a final vote for a "Recommendation of Support" from the FRNNG board in March or April. From there, the county will move on for approval from elected officials and then, barring any setbacks, onto construction this summer. There will be another public display and public-comment period for the official Hennepin County draft plan prior to the final FRNNG vote for support. However, for this issue of *Close to Home*, that date and location have not been finalized. Look for a postcard in your mailbox outlining this event, follow us on Facebook and Twitter, and check our webpage for follow-up information with details and dates.

For more information about this project, and to submit comments directly to the Hennepin County project manager, please see the Hennepin County website at: [www.hennepin.us](http://www.hennepin.us) and in the search box, type "46th Street Study" or visit directly at: [www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/46-street](http://www.hennepin.us/residents/transportation/46-street) ❖

# Update: Neighborhood Community Solar Garden Initiatives

Tim Price, Co-Chair, Greening Committee

Several neighborhood groups co-sponsored an informational meeting about the growing interest in developing Community Solar Gardens and how neighborhoods can take an active role in bringing these opportunities to Minneapolis communities. Minnesota's solar garden initiatives come under the auspices of Xcel Energy.

## About solar gardens

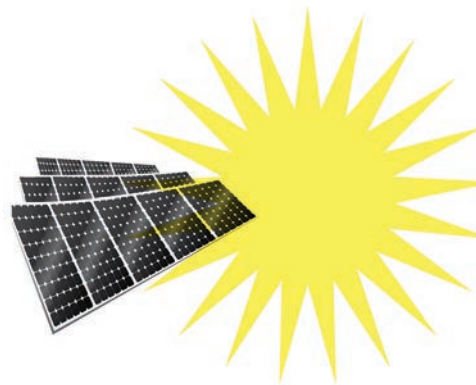
What are “solar gardens” and what are the goals? Community solar gardens allow you to use solar power without installing panels on your own roof. Basically, the solar garden concept is about finding a suitable plot of land, roof or other large structure for placement of solar panels. Residents and businesses can subscribe to a solar garden connected to the Xcel grid, then get reimbursed for their panels' production as a credit on their Xcel bill. These options would be available to both renters and homeowners.

Most of the owners or developers of these solar gardens will be private entities that solicit residents, neighborhoods or communities to become subscribers. Individuals or organizations can subscribe to the solar garden with a variety of financing options, with an upfront fee or monthly dues. Over time, subscribers will not only make a significant impact on climate change but they will also be able to save up to 10 percent on their energy costs.

The solar garden system has potential to achieve economies of scale across the city, providing local jobs for individuals living in the communities directly affected by climate change and improving our carbon footprint. Hennepin County has the highest number of electricity users by population size and volume but also has limited land availability which is why residents are seeing the creation of separate businesses and organizations working in partnership

to develop “solar gardens” with subscriptions from individual neighborhoods and residents.

What was the purpose of the November 12 informational meeting at Mayflower Church? A packed room of neighbors attended the meeting that provided an opportunity to learn about this new energy program and what neighbors can do to evaluate solar garden options. In addition



to providing information, presenters asked residents for their input and feedback.

Xcel Energy formally rolled out the solar garden initiative in December 2014. Solar energy is booming in Minnesota and Xcel has received several hundred applications, each of which has to be reviewed by Xcel. While the Tangletown Neighborhood Association has expressed interest, residents were informed that there is also a pilot solar garden project in the planning stages in Linden Hills. The Linden Hills Co-Op has officially signed on as a host for a community solar garden. Linden Hills Power and Light will be the administrative body for this initiative. Residents can purchase one share (by subscription) to offset their home's energy use through Xcel Energy bill credits.

There are currently two payment options to buy solar garden subscriptions including a one-time upfront cost or monthly payments. The Linden Hills subscription

cost is \$1,700 per share as well as an ongoing annual fee; the cost to reserve a share is \$100. This community solar project is a unique program in that it is a partnership between Sundial Solar (a private company) and Linden Hills Power & Light (a non-profit).

## Closer to home

A report on the community meeting at Mayflower Church was made by Greening Committee co-chairs Lindsey Feiner and Tim Price at our November 18 monthly board of directors meeting. FRNNG was a co-sponsor of the informational meeting at Mayflower Church and, with board approval, had mailed a notice about the meeting to all residents. In summary, while the community solar garden program makes sense for residents, generally speaking, it will be a number of years and require substantial work by FRNNG or other community groups to realize its benefits.

The Linden Hills pilot project will serve as a good incubator of how solar garden initiatives might work effectively at the community level. One important and distinguishing point about the Linden Hills project is that the neighborhood already had in place the non-profit Linden Hills Power and Light organization that signed on as a project sponsor and administrator. This allows for that organization to take on the administrative, organizing and marketing work. FRNNG would have to seek additional funding or identify funds to staff a solar initiative within our community. Residents should stay tuned to receive additional and updated information in the future through FRNNG's *Close to Home* newsletter, our website and through social media.

For more information, go to: [www.xcelenergy.com](http://www.xcelenergy.com) and search for “Solar Choices.” ❖

# Pick Up a Free Home Radon Test Kit

By Chris Schommer, Chair, Communications Committee

FRNNG, in partnership with the City of Minneapolis, is offering residents free radon test kits during February for "Radon-Awareness Month." The neighborhood group has received 100 kits on a first-come basis. The tests will be available for pickup at two times and locations. If you cannot drop by during these times, please contact the neighborhood office: [frnng@frnng.org](mailto:frnng@frnng.org) or (612) 721-5424.

## Sovereign Grounds Coffee Shop

813 E 48th St.

Saturday, February 6, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

## Turtle Bread Company

4762 Chicago Avenue

Saturday, February 20, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

## Radon Cancer Risk

Radon is a health concern and is the

second-leading cause of lung cancer. When breathed in, the radioactive particles from radon gas can damage the cells that line the lung. Long-term exposure to radon can then lead to lung cancer. Radon is found in nearly all soils and gets drawn into the home as a colorless, odorless gas that passes through a building's foundation and can accumulate in the house.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends taking action to reduce radon in homes that have a radon level at or above 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). If your free radon test kit measures above this level, you might want to consider a follow-up long-term test to confirm your results or contact a radon mitigation specialist. The Minnesota Department of Health has more information on radon and mitigation specialists on their radon information webpage: [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/indoorair/radon](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/indoorair/radon) ❖

## Cookbook Creates Fun and Funds

By Stearline Rucker, Program Manager

This winter and spring, your neighborhood board of directors, along with its office staff and volunteers, will be collecting your best recipes!

Our goal is to publish both a print and online cookbook of recipes submitted by Field Regina Northrop residents, local restaurants, businesses and churches. Proceeds go directly to your neighborhood projects and events.

Help us by submitting your favorite recipes to our office at [frnng@frnng.org](mailto:frnng@frnng.org).

Along with your recipes, please list your name as you would like it to appear in the cookbook (Cathy Smith, The Smith Family, Smith Studios, etc.), along with the neighborhood in which you live.

Please let your neighbors know about the Great Cookbook coming fall 2016. The more recipes submitted, the better the cookbook we will have. ❖



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*Building lifelong relationships one smile at a time*

## Close to Home

*Close to Home* is the official publication of the Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Group (FRNNG) and is published six times per year by the FRNNG Communications Committee.

### Editors

Sue Filbin, Chris Schommer, and Carrie Shidla

### Layout

Smiling Dog Design

### Contributors

Council member Elizabeth Glidden, Willie Bridges, Lindsey Feiner, Sue Filbin, Steffanie Musich, Tim Price, Stearline Rucker, Carrie Shidla, Chris Schommer, Mike Vanderscheuren, & Adam Webster.

Articles, photos, and announcements are welcome. Please email: [communications@frnng.org](mailto:communications@frnng.org) or call 612-721-5424

### [frnng.org](http://frnng.org)

The deadline for the next issue: Friday, February 5, 2016

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Program Manager: Stearline Rucker

### 2015 FRNNG Board

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\*President: Willie Bridges

\*1st V.P.: Tom Powers

2nd V.P.: Ted Moe

\*Treasurer: Shannon Guernsey

\*Secretary: Emily Poskie-Wilson

\*Field Neighborhood Rep: Barbara Harris

\*Regina Neighborhood Rep:

Shelley Nystrom

\*Northrop N. Neighborhood Rep:

Matt Steele

\*Northrop S. Neighborhood Rep: Mike Lyon

Business: Karen Young

Communications: Chris Schommer

Community and Safety: Ben Elliott

### Education: Open

Greening: Lindsey Feiner & Tim Price

Housing: Ian Campbell & Nate Lansing

### Parks: Open

### Programs: Open

# Neighbors Celebrate Night on 48th

By Sue Filbin and Stearline Rucker

“It was fabulous.” “What fun.” “The food was so good.” “I saw neighbors I haven’t seen in a long time and met new ones.” These comments were overheard while a festive capacity of about 125 neighbors and friends socialized at the seventh-annual Night on 48th fundraiser and celebration.

Turtle Bread Company – located at the corner of 48th Street and Chicago Avenue – once again generously hosted the event. Volunteers decorated the restaurant with streamers, bunches of balloons, and attractive centerpieces. Others welcomed guests, cleared tables, and guided the bidding and awarding process for the wine raffle and silent auction.

## What’s It All About?

Guests enjoyed an evening of visiting, listening to appealing music, and bidding on affordable, desirable silent-auction items donated by businesses and individuals. Many remarked on the endless, flavorful pasta, salad, breads, and spreads from Turtle Bread Company and pizza from Pizza Biga. The accompanying wine and beer were served at reduced prices by gracious Turtle Bread staff.

One highlight of the evening was the wine raffle. Our neighborhood board of directors and committee chairpeople purchase bottles of wine at a discounted price from Cork Dork, located at 47th Street and Cedar Avenue. When a guest’s raffle-ticket number matches with the number called, the lucky winner takes home two bottles of wine. About 30 such prizes were happily received.

Equally exciting are the results of the silent auction of diverse materials and activities that are liberally given by neighborhood businesses and individuals. Please see the list below that includes several businesses that aren’t even located in our neighborhood!

The band – Akouo – was well regarded and greatly appreciated, especially when it

was learned that they charged a very nominal fee, basically donating their time and skills, because the event was a fundraiser.

## Herding Details

The person who again coordinated the details and volunteers for Night on 48th was program director Stearline Rucker. The event is not unlike a military operation or a small version of hosting the Super Bowl – minus the athletic aspect, of course. Otherwise, food, donations, decorations, entertainment, and hospitality all must occur flawlessly. Stearline, board president Willie Bridges, and board members and volunteers accomplished it all with aplomb.

## The Outcome

The board of directors is always considering methods for making our neighborhood more welcoming, attractive, and safe. The approximately \$5,000 that was raised at Night on 48th will be applied to future projects.

## Some projects that have recently been accomplished are:

Field Middle School, 46th & 4th:  
Electronic bulletin board and the black aluminum fence

McRae Park, 47th & Elliot:  
Remodeled kitchen and flat-screen TV

Business nodes of 4th Avenue, 46th and Bloomington, and along portions of Chicago Avenue:  
Decorative pots designed and installed by Tangletown Gardens

Production of “We Love Our Neighborhood” lawn signs

Grants for security lighting for homes and garages

Rain-gardens design and partial installation in partnership with the Minnehaha Watershed District

Landscaping along 2nd Avenue through the Greening Committee



Photo: Sue Filbin

Turtle Bread Company hosted a capacity crowd of neighbors and guests who enjoyed good food, beverages, music, & prizes.

## Next Time

If you’re disappointed that you missed the fun and the chance to contribute to our community, volunteers are always needed and welcome – for this event and others. Contact the office for information: [frnng@frnng.org](mailto:frnng@frnng.org) or (612) 721-5424.

Night on 48th will be celebrated again on Saturday, November 5, 2016! We look forward to seeing you there! ❖

*Thank you to our volunteers, board members, individuals, program director Stearline Rucker, and these generous businesses and individuals:*

Ba-Gu Sushi  
Bone Adventure  
Caribou Coffee  
Cork Dork  
Lisa Curski  
Dick’s Metro Flooring  
Family Dental Clinic  
Jones Financial Group  
Karen Ruth Massage  
McRae Park & MARC Council  
Nokomis Cycle  
Perfectly Polished  
Red Wagon Pizza Co. (54th & Penn)  
South Chicago Avenue Business Alliance  
Salon 45  
Southside Chiropractic  
Southside Community Clinic  
Spa Sweet  
TA’s Automotive  
Turtle Bread Company  
Wells Fargo Bank  
Ray N. Welter Heating Company  
Wings Financial Credit Union

# Girls' Fastpitch League Launches with Club 612

By Mike Vanderscheuren

A series of five winter skills clinics starting in January are the next opportunity for girls ages nine and older to learn and improve their fastpitch softball skills without leaving the city of Minneapolis.

In the fall of 2015, Field resident Bruce Okeson teamed up with Washburn High School varsity softball coach Greg Berg to create a new non-profit organization: Minneapolis Girls Fastpitch Association, Inc., (a.k.a. Club 612), whose goal is to create a broader range of fastpitch softball opportunities for the girls of Minneapolis.

For Okeson, it represented a chance to bring higher-level, competitive softball closer to home for his two soft-ball playing daughters and their friends. For Berg, it was an extension of his role as Washburn's varsity softball coach. The opportunity at hand was to use Berg's years of coaching and program-building experience to level the playing field between the talent-rich and resource-abundant suburban programs and those in Minneapolis.

The program's official start was last fall when Berg and Okeson leveraged relationships within Washburn's Softball Booster Club, the athletic department, and other softball contacts in Minneapolis to form a fall player-development league under the name Club 612. The program, which was open to girls city wide and in all schools—public and private—attracted around 100 girls, many of whom had never been exposed to traveling softball. The focus of the fall program was one-hundred percent player development.

With elbow grease, financial support, and the know-how of skilled volunteers, the club put together its first board of directors, player- and coach-development committees, and finance and fundraising teams. Volunteer David Genrich generously set-up 501 (c)(3) non-profit-organization status for Club 612 while volunteer board members such as Marc Thompson earnestly advanced the goal of making

Club 612 a true city-wide program. This focus ensures that all girls who want a chance to play and learn the game will have opportunities to do so.

Armed with decades of coaching experience, unbridled enthusiasm for the game, and hundreds of dollars of second-hand, donated equipment from Berg's contacts in Hudson, Wisconsin's softball program, Okeson, Berg, and a small army of volunteer coaches had girls practicing a couple of nights a week and playing doubleheaders each weekend for seven weeks. If growth wasn't evident in the club's wins and losses, each team became more competitive during those seven weeks of ballgames and many girls made solid improvements to their game.

Okeson reflected on the fall league: "Our hopes were to get two teams playing in the fall league. We ended up with two 12-and-under, two 14-and-under, and two 16-and-under teams. There is a great interest for traveling ball in Minneapolis. Although many of the girls had never played at a higher skill level, we were playing competitively at the end of the season. It will be fun to watch the girls grow and play together without having to go to the suburbs to find competitive ball," he concluded.

With the board in place and the by-laws and mission approved, the club is ready to push the program further in 2016. Attorney and volunteer Joni Thome is spearheading the club's fundraising efforts. Softball director, Janis Stephan, and other board members are reaching out to athletic directors in Minneapolis schools to raise awareness. It will be a busy winter for Club 612 when their series of Winter Skills Clinics kicks off in January. Tryouts for spring and summer traveling teams are slated for late February.



Photo provided by Club 612

Girls ages 9 to 18 who live in Minneapolis now have an opportunity to compete with suburban girls in competitive fastpitch leagues.

The clinics are designed to be affordable at just \$50 dollars for five weekend sessions. This is an especially good opportunity for girls, including those who have never played fastpitch previously, to learn the game in a fun and supportive environment.

Berg, who turned 59 in November, has been coaching and developing players for more than 30 years. It's clear he loves the game and has a knack for working with the girls from the youngest players to the oldest. He, like Okeson, is excited about the potential for the club, despite the challenges and lean resources of a start-up organization.

On the field, Berg and Okeson share player-centric coaching styles, focused on learning and getting maximum effort from players regardless of skill level. They both keep the atmosphere for practices and games loose and relaxed, but focused. With that style and a well-defined mission and vision, they are both determined to grow the program substantially during the next few years. But for now, they are focused on the task at hand.

"2016 promises to be a great year of opening up more traveling fastpitch opportunities to the girls and young women of Minneapolis," said Berg. For more information about Club 612 and the winter clinics, visit [club612.weebly](http://club612.weebly) ❖

# 8th-Ward Update

Council Member Elizabeth Glidden



Council Member Elizabeth Glidden

Dear Neighbors,

Thank you for this opportunity to update you on City and neighborhood issues.

## Reopen Nicollet

For many years, I have been working with key city staff and Council Members to develop a city strategy for reopening Nicollet Avenue at Lake Street. These efforts were reinvigorated some years ago by Council Member Robert Lilligren.

Now, after significant efforts, the City has taken a major step forward in efforts to reopen Nicollet and seek development for that location that better serves community needs.

On November 30, 2015, the City Council authorized the purchase of 30 W Lake St. (the former site of Sullivan's grocery store) for \$5,275,000. The Council also authorized a Purchase Agreement for 10 W Lake Street (home of K-Mart); the agreement is for a purchase price of \$8 million, with 10% or \$800,000 due within 90 days of the city approving the purchase agreement. The City will have a purchase option for 10 W Lake Street for a period of between 1.5 to 2 years (terms still being negotiated).

While this is a major step forward in working to reopen Nicollet, obstacles also

remain. K-Mart (Sears holdings) retains rights to a lease on 10 W Lake Street for 37 more years. As well, original agreements in place between property owners of 30 W Lake and 10 W Lake prevent either property owner from building a new development on what is today a large shared parking lot, unless both parties agree to that development.

We will continue to keep the public updated on this major initiative, with the goal to reopen Nicollet at Lake Street.

## Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership

The Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership, a partnership between the City and its two energy utilities – CenterPoint and Xcel Energy – was established in late 2014 and began meeting in 2015. The Clean Energy Partnership has now adopted its first set of metrics for its first two-year work plan (2015-16). To find out more about the Clean Energy Partnership, go to [mplscleanenergypartnership.org](http://mplscleanenergypartnership.org).

Among other things, the Partnership will track citywide greenhouse gas emissions, the number of people subscribed to clean energy (like community solar), and the number of energy- efficiency improvements made to multi-unit buildings (through a new multifamily energy efficiency program) and Home Energy Squad visits.

Many of these metrics will be measured at the census-tract level, ensuring that efforts made to reach low-income communities and communities of color with energy improvements can be tracked on a long-term ongoing basis.

Minneapolis is working with community partners and the EVAC (Energy Vision Advisory Committee, which advises the Clean Energy Partnership) to design better ways to reach all community members,

including renters, with information about energy-improvement programs. -We will continue to provide updates as the Clean Energy Partnership continues its work.

## City Adopts 2016 Budget

On Dec. 9, the City Council unanimously approved the 2016 City budget. The \$1.2 billion budget includes a 3.4 percent increase in the overall property-tax levy. (Still, more than half of Minneapolis homeowners will see decreases in the City portions of their property taxes.) Just a few highlights of the 2016 budget include:

\$13 million in affordable housing. This includes investments in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund: \$1 million in flexible spending to help create affordable housing options for large families.

\$305,000 for additional and accelerated training for Minneapolis Police officers in implicit bias, procedural justice and crisis intervention; \$140,000 for municipal criminal-justice reform including tripling the City's investment in restorative justice; \$1 million for officer-worn body-camera technology.

\$350,000 for 30 TechHire Initiative scholarships that will give women and people of color job training to meet employers' growing demand for a workforce educated in technology skills.

\$200,000 in funding for the Minneapolis Fire Department to implement innovative new programs to get youths and high school students of diverse backgrounds into pipelines that become jobs in the emergency medical technician and firefighter fields.

Ongoing funding for the first-in-the-nation Clean Energy Partnership that will expand its ability to execute the 2016 work plan and meet goals to decrease greenhouse gas emissions in Minneapolis.



Council Member Glidden, continued from page 8

I invite you to contact me at (612) 673-2208 or [elizabeth.glidden@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:elizabeth.glidden@minneapolismn.gov). As well, I host community office hours every Monday, 9-11 a.m., at Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38th Street, at a table in the first-floor hall closest to the parking lot. Please just drop by or call our office for a time-certain appointment. ❖

## Open Streets on Chicago Avenue?

By Stearline Rucker, Program Director

We are working with other neighborhoods along Chicago Avenue to explore bringing an Open Streets event to the neighborhood in 2017. Open Streets started in 2011 by closing Lyndale Avenue to all vehicle traffic between 42nd Street and 22nd Street for four hours on a Sunday morning. Now Open Streets runs six very popular events a year all over the city and is looking to add more. Businesses and performers turn these streets into open-air festivals that stretch for miles where people of all ages can walk, bike, and shop.

Want to help make this a reality? Consider volunteering your time! For more information, contact the FRNNG office at [frnng@frnng.org](mailto:frnng@frnng.org), or call (612) 721-5424. ❖

## Snow Emergency Info



Call 348-SNOW (7669)

The city will notify you when a Snow Emergency is declared. Sign up for a text message, email alert or phone call: [www.minneapolismn.gov/snow](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/snow)

# McRae Park Master Plans: Construction Update

The 2016 park budget focuses on sound fiscal management, addresses increased park use and demands for programs and services, is responsive to changing demographics and needs of the community, and maintains the park system within available resources. As part of the budget process, an additional \$150,000 was allocated to McRae Park to allow the delayed athletic field renovations to proceed in 2016. The project is being bid out for construction this winter and a construction schedule will be communicated via the project page and my newsletter, when available. Construction and field establishment are anticipated to take approximately a year with field use resuming in the late-summer/fall of 2017. While this project is underway, McRae teams will be relocated to other athletic fields nearby for practices and games.

Draft Neighborhood Park Master Plans were unveiled in early December and



Steffanie Musich, Commissioner, 5th Park District, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

several changes are recommended for McRae. All draft plans are available on the project page, which you can see at [www.minneapolisparks.org](http://www.minneapolisparks.org) and search for “South Service Area Master Plan.”

I send out a newsletter by email a few times a month. Residents can read archived copies and subscribe to receive future emails at [http://eepurl.com/QZ\\_-9](http://eepurl.com/QZ_-9). ❖

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# New Italian Restaurant Opens on Cedar Avenue

By Carrie Shidla, Member, Communications Committee

The weekend after Thanksgiving, ie – short for Italian Eatery – opened its doors at 4724 Cedar Avenue. This welcome new addition to the growing food scene in south Minneapolis has created a lot of buzz in the neighborhood.

Owners Eric and Vanessa Carrera closed on the property in the fall, and managed a complete remodel to the building that formerly housed Cork Dork and Carbone's, which moved just across the street. The space, created in collaboration with Shea Design, is now a sleek, modern space along the lines of a stylish downtown restaurant, with the warmth and coziness of a neighborhood joint. According to Eric, "We wanted to create a place that people in the community could come to for a date night, or right off of a walk along the parkway."

The Carreras have been grateful for community response. "We wanted to be a neighborhood place, but we've been blown away by the support we've received. So many people have come, and introduced themselves as our neighbors, and brought their friends," he says.

Dishes are Italian-inspired, seasonal dishes at approachable price points. Early favorites on the menu include dry-rubbed beef short ribs, a wild boar meatball and garganelli baked pasta, and charred octopus appetizer. There is also a small-but-mighty dessert list and a full bar, including specialty cocktails, and an extensive beer and wine list.

The Carreras are feeling satisfied about the launch of ie, and are already planning for new ways to serve the community, including weekend brunch service starting in January, a special Valentine's Day menu, and hint at more to come, "We've got big plans for the spring and summer that the neighborhood will love!" ❖

For more information, visit [www.italianeatery.com](http://www.italianeatery.com) or call (612) 223-8504



Eric and Vanessa Carrera, owners and operators of restaurant ie on 47th and Cedar Avenue.



Provided photos

4 Questions—with Northrop neighbor and author,  
Mark T. Scannell

## The Gratitude Element: A New Look at the Serenity Prayer

By Adam Webster

### 1. Not that many authors live in our neighborhood. Why have you chosen to call Minneapolis home?

I grew up in Oak Park, Illinois, and was drawn to Minnesota in order to join the Dominican community in the late 1970s. After years in the ministry, I left the priesthood to marry my wife in 1985. We've lived in this neighborhood for 30 years now, and it's been a great place to stay active. In fact, I'm one of the block-party coordinators for our street!

### 2. You've just published a book on the Serenity Prayer. What is it, and what led you to focus on that particular prayer?

Some readers will recognize the Serenity Prayer as a central practice within addiction-recovery programs:

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
The courage to change the things I can,  
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

I've been a member of a Twelve-Step group for twenty years now and have drawn strength and wisdom from these words. Reflecting on them, however, I felt that they were missing one particular element: gratitude. I looked into the extensive research on giving thanks and considered how this already-powerful prayer can be enhanced by the inclusion of gratitude. Over time, this has taken the form of a one-line addition at end of this prayer, "I am grateful for the serenity, courage and wisdom you have given me." A book seemed the best way to explore and share these findings.

### 3. "Prayer" is a word that means different things to different people. What do you think gives it such power?

No matter the faith or practice, I believe the act of praying promotes mindfulness in each of us. Prayer forces us to slow down, and it aligns us in such a way that we live purposefully and with balance. It's for this reason that I took a deeper look at how the Serenity Prayer itself might become even more enduring. In reminding us to be thankful, I think my modifications add a fourth dimension that helps close a loop that I feel exists in the original and speaks to all people in terms they understand.

### 4. Who could benefit most from reading your book? What audience did you have in mind?

My book is meant for adults, of course, and certainly people with experience in Twelve-Step programs will gain much from this book. But one doesn't need to be a churchgoer or in addiction recovery to find something to grab onto here. The research is pretty clear that gratitude leads people toward happier lives. The book is available on Amazon at [www.thegratitudeelement.com](http://www.thegratitudeelement.com) so go check it out! ❖

FIELD  
REGINA  
NORTHROP



## FRNNG Meeting Information

### Full Board

3rd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.,  
Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church (LNPC)  
17th Avenue and East 46th St. The full  
board does not meet in July or December.

### Business Committee | [business@frnng.org](mailto:business@frnng.org)

1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., Sovereign Grounds,  
48th and Chicago

### Community and Safety Committee | [communityandsafety@frnng.org](mailto:communityandsafety@frnng.org)

4th Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m., McRae Park Rec. Center

### Housing Committee | [housing@frnng.org](mailto:housing@frnng.org)

1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m., Town Hall Tap,  
48th & Chicago

### Education Committee | [education@frnng.org](mailto:education@frnng.org)

1st Thursday of each month beginning in October, at 6:30 p.m., LNPC

### Parks Committee | [parks@frnng.org](mailto:parks@frnng.org)

1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m., McRae Park Rec. Center

### Greening Committee | [greening@frnng.org](mailto:greening@frnng.org)

2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m., Turtle Bread Company,  
48th and Chicago

### Communications Committee | [communications@frnng.org](mailto:communications@frnng.org)

2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m., Sovereign Grounds, 48th  
and Chicago. (Note the changed day of the week from Wednesday.)

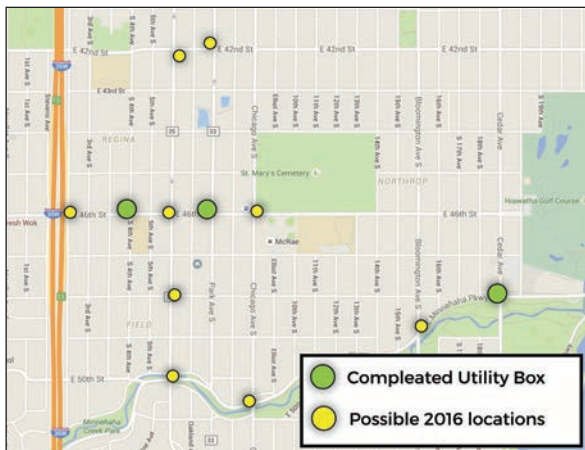


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January/February 2016



**Possible future locations for additional utility-box wraps: (See article page 1.)**

42nd Street: Portland & Park Avenues

46th Street: 2nd, Portland, & Chicago Avenues

48th Street: Portland Avenue

Minnehaha Parkway: Portland, Chicago, & Bloomington Ave's

## Inside this issue

Art Needed for Utility-box Wraps Page 1

Changes at McRae Park Page 1

46th Street Update Page 3

Solar Garden Initiative Page 4

Club 612: Girls' Fastpitch Softball Page 7

New Nearby Italian Restaurant Opens Page 10

Close to Home is written for neighbors by neighbors.  
The next deadline is Friday, February 5.

We welcome your comments, articles, and photos.  
Please contact us by email: [communications@frnng.org](mailto:communications@frnng.org)