



2017 State of our Neighborhood Recap

On Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2017, the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) hosted its second annual State of our Neighborhood. This event, part of the Night out with NENA series, gathered community members to hear from NENA, our business community, elected officials, and other neighborhood leaders. Our conversations addressed several topics important to Nokomis East.

Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) – Mark Keeler, Board Chair

- NENA is making significant progress on its 2016-2018 Strategic Plan
- In 2016, NENA hired a bilingual community organizer to lead renters outreach efforts in the Bossen area
- Neighbors are invited to join NENA's Housing, Commercial and Streetscape Committee and the Green Initiatives Committee. Also neighbors are encouraged to run for a Board seat at the NENA Annual Meeting on April 27, 2017.

Council Member John Quincy (Ward 11)

- The City Council passed the 2017 Budget which included new hiring goals, new supplier diversity goals and small business support.
- The City worked with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to pass funding for streets and neighborhood parks.
- The Benefitting Bossen Work Group, which brings together city staff, police, schools, parks and NENA, is working with residents and landlords.

Minneapolis Police Department – Third Precinct

- Inspector Catherine Johnson, the new inspector for the Third Precinct, gave an overview of the Nokomis East neighborhoods. The primary concern is property crime including garage break-ins, theft from motor vehicles and occasional home break-ins. There was an increase in criminal activity in the Bossen area in 2016 and the MPD worked with Metro Transit about unwanted activity at 34th Avenue bus stops. The precinct is also hiring more sergeants and officers.
- Lt. Scott Zierden explained that he receives all property crime reports. Based upon the amount of evidence, he will assign the case for follow up to an officer.

- New Crime Prevention Specialist Jennifer Neale introduced herself and stated her goal was to increase the number of blocks in the neighborhood organized into block clubs. Neighbors are encouraged to contact Jennifer with questions about police and safety concerns in the neighborhood. (612) 673-2839 or Jennifer.Neale@minneapolismn.gov

Nokomis East Business Association (NEBA) – Earl Netwal, Board Secretary

- NEBA is made up of neighborhood businesses (storefronts and in-home), houses of worship and neighborhood organizations.
- NEBA had a successful year in 2016 and has great community events lined up for 2017 including the Indoor Block Party (3/25), the Member Picnic, the Summer Music Concert Series, the Outdoor Block Party and the Tree Lighting Ceremony.
- Local businesses are encouraged to learn more about NEBA and to join the business association.

Council Member Andrew Johnson (Ward 12)

- 2016 community highlights include: authorizing state legislation for the Cap's Grille brewery project; new, smaller voting precincts; planning for the 34th Avenue reconstruction; improvements to traffic lights near the Blue Line; retail service will remain at the Nokomis Post Office, delivery service moved to airport facility; funding for Nokomis Healthy Seniors; and new high speed internet service from US Internet - rollout to begin in next few years.

Lake Nokomis Community School – Keewaydin – De Shawn Ray, Principal

- Principal Ray started in July 2016. He previously was a principal in the Chicago Schools.
- His goals are to provide great opportunities to every student and provide a level playing field.
- Keewaydin is a good school and it is going to get even better. Staff is setting the vision for the school and will be announced in the upcoming months.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board – Commissioner Steffanie Musich (District 5)

- The MPRB's 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan includes capital projects for Bossen Field and a new playground at Nokomis Community Center. The City/MPRB funding may allow repairs to be made at other neighborhood parks.
- Data and a racial equity lens will drive all MPRB funding decisions.
- Research results from the Hiawatha Golf Course will be available around July and the MPRB will move into master planning when more information is available about water levels and what is feasible for the area.

Hennepin County Libraries – Nokomis

- Heather Wambach, Patron Experience Supervisor, and Sara Zettervall, Adult Services Librarian, gave an overview of all of the in-person and online resources available from

the library. Neighbors are encouraged to attend classes and events, check out online books and download music.

- There is programming for children, families and adults.
- The Friends of Nokomis Library hosts quarterly books sales which fund many programs at Nokomis Library. They also connect the library to community members and programming ideas. Neighbors are encouraged to participate.

State Senator Patricia Torres Ray (District 63)

- Senator Torres Ray has served for 10 years and has seniority in the Senate.
- Serving on the Local Government, Education and Environment Committees this legislative session.
- She and colleagues organize regular town hall events to keep neighbors informed on important issues. Upcoming – Environmental Issues (2/17) and Civil Rights (2/25).

Questions from the Community

For Principal Ray

What is your matrix for making a great school? How can the community get involved?

To make a place that is safe and welcoming to all. Staff that collaborates with each other and is cohesive. A good school environment. The school always needs community members to volunteer to mentor. Get involved, learn more about the school, attend PTA and Site Council meetings.

For NENA – Becky Timm, Executive Director

How do we get more neighbors from Bossen involved?

This continues to be a challenge. In 2016, two Bossen neighbors served on the NENA Board. NENA staff door knocks on a weekly basis and visits the apartment buildings and meets in the homes of residents. NENA promotes neighborhood meetings and events (English and Spanish), but the number of Bossen neighbors attending meetings outside of Bossen continues to be low.

For Commissioner Musich

How does the MPRB incorporate green initiatives into its project?

The MPRB has net zero goals; energy savings goals; mitigation of storm water runoff; and a new bee lawn project. It will be installing a shade structure at Nokomis Beach with solar panels to offset energy used by the bath house.

For Council Member Johnson

Any news on new businesses and development?

Venn Brewing Co. is moving into a space on 46th Street. Planning is underway for the Creative Kidstuff site in Longfellow, including apartments, retail and a grocery store.

Surrounding neighborhoods by Minnehaha Parkway and Cedar Ave are seeking input from community members about that commercial area and how to make it more pedestrian friendly. News about the Sunrise Inn is expected soon.

For Commissioner Musich

If Hiawatha Golf Course closes, what will go on that site?

The MPRB has not made any recommendations and is waiting until the research is available around July. There are many considerations for the site such as the impact of the water level and pumping.

For Council Member Johnson

How long with the Nokomis Post Office stay in its location?

The Postal Service is looking into long-term options and a more modern building to meet its needs. Working with Johnson to identify spaces on Hwy 55. Changes will happen in the next 3-5 years.

For Commissioner Musich

Does the MPRB have plans to build a rec center at Bossen Field? Offer programming?

The master plan for Bossen Field does not include plans for a community center. Programming is offered through the Nokomis Community Center, including soccer, book mobile and free lunch program.