

# **University Northside Partnership Community Affairs Committee Meeting December 10, 2008 2-3:30 pm**

Minneapolis Urban League

## **In attendance:**

### **Community Affairs Committee Co-Chairs:**

Makeda Zulu-Gillespie, UNP-UROC Community Liaison  
Raymond Dehn, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council

Martin Adams, Project Coordinator FIPSE-UROC  
Patricia Anderson, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council  
Bill Barberg, Consultant for Insight Formation  
Kathie Doty, Liaison, Hennepin University Partnership  
Fred Easter, City, Inc.  
Sandy Holmes, Resident & Meals on Wheels  
Reverend Carl Joyner, Holsey Memorial CME Church  
Geoff Maruyama, Co-PI, FIPSE-UROC  
Irma McClaurin, Executive Director, UROC  
Kris Nelson, Director, Neighborhood Programs, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs  
Scott Redd, College of Liberal Arts Departmental Community Coordinator  
Hawona Sullivan Janzen, University Liaison & Communications Coordinator, UROC  
Sherrie Sullivan Pugh, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council  
Katrina Uhly, Research Fellow, UNP Workgroup  
Stephanie Wilkes, Administrative Assistant, System Academic Administration  
Deborah Powell Porrazzo, Assistant to the UNP-UROC Community Liaison

## **CAC Interim Co-Chair**

The meeting began with a request from Makeda Zulu-Gillespie for the members of the group to volunteer or elect others present to serve as interim co-chair of the CAC; Sherrie Sullivan Pugh nominated Raymond Dehn, who accepted.

Makeda Zulu-Gillespie shared that one of the reasons she felt the election of an interim co-chair was necessary was to help plan the first few CAC meetings of 2009, in which she proposed the CAC could discuss the University Northside Partnership, where it should go in the future, and any additional questions raised by the CAC. She distributed a draft letter that would go out to all who are on the CAC listserv inviting them to attend in order to answer the questions:

Who will the UNP serve?

What does the community value?

What are the intended results/impacts of the UNP?

## **Clarification of UROC & UNP**

In addition to the question above, the group brainstormed other possible questions to address at these future meetings, and discussed their own views on the UNP, often in relation to the UROC.

Sherrie Sullivan Pugh thought the proposed discussion was an excellent idea. From the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council's position, the UNP was seen as the larger partnership, and the UROC is one piece of that partnership (a piece that will soon take a physical presence in the Northside). She feels it is a good idea to distinguish the roles, especially around the Community Benefits Agreement, which she believed was focused around the UNP and not the UROC.

Irma McClaurin shared her views on the UROC, and what she likes to call "the shape of the elephant" (meaning that UROC means different things to different people), and what she sees as the potential for the UROC to become a delivery mechanism and a potential coordinating body for the University around outreach and research in the Northside.

## **University Northside Partnership Community Affairs Committee Meeting December 10, 2008 2-3:30 pm**

Kathie Doty shared her understanding of the history of the UNP, which was that the University of Minnesota created a platform for the development of the partnership, rather than simply creating the partnership itself. She also inquired about the existence of an oversight committee at the beginnings of the UNP.

Irma McClaurin said that she was aware of some sort of oversight committee like this, and that it included Gary Cunningham and Stella Whitney-West.

Sherrie Sullivan Pugh clarified that the committee developed during the time the University was recruiting Dante Cicchetti, and included Gary Cunningham and later Stella Whitney-West, along with others like Clarence Hightower, and a few neighborhood groups.

Raymond Dehn indicated that once Dante was brought into the mix, a lot of the discussion then became about the Child & Family Center and his research, and less about the larger UNP.

Kathie Doty agreed with this statement.

Geoff Maruyama clarified that within the University, there did exist an oversight committee, made up mostly of UMN representatives, and was organized into subgroups like communications, finances and buildings—that executive group still exists.

Irma McClaurin asked if Geoff Maruyama was thinking of the UNP Executive Committee (he said he was), and indicated that this UNP Executive Committee, is now the UNP-UROC Executive Committee, and is made up of top administrators; it generally discusses internal University issues such as budgeting and other related administrative issues, and has met twice in 2008.

### **Group Brainstorming – where do we go from here?**

Makeda Zulu-Gillespie asked the group to begin brainstorming questions about the future of the UNP – where do we go from here? Do we need structures in place; a governance structure? She said she did not want to steer the group's questions, and asked for input.

Irma McClaurin shared some of the key questions she has heard since joining the U – how does someone partner with the UNP, and what does it mean to be a UNP partner? She explained the importance of answering these questions with the example of the Park & Recreation Board, which had wanted to partner with the UNP in the past. Yet there was no system in place to allow for the inclusion of new partners; she did recommend that they work through the Community Affairs Committee and present their grant idea to them, which they did. Although the grant was not funded, the Park & Recreation Board found the process helpful).

Sherrie Sullivan Pugh brought up another question – how does the community become a learning community? And more importantly, what is the process when the University comes to the community to partner? What is the process when the community comes to the University to partner? In response to a question about the name (University Northside Partnership), she shared that the University's name provides a different kind of validation, which may benefit the community when trying to implement policy changes or in other initiatives.

Makeda Zulu-Gillespie expressed that these process questions raise a whole other level of questions – what is partnering? She said it is not for the University to define the process or criterion.

Sherrie Sullivan Pugh added that we all need to define these together, and that we all need to do them in the same way (the community can't use one process and the University another).

Raymond Dehn said that the University has good resources for the community to engage, and that the community has good resources for the University to engage. He expressed that the key is how you set up the structure and process for this to happen.

## **University Northside Partnership Community Affairs Committee Meeting December 10, 2008 2-3:30 pm**

Geoff Maruyama brought up the importance of considering the semantic meaning of “equitable,” rather than “equal,” which many people use when describing good partnerships. He suggested using equitable because while it can mean equal in many ways, sometimes in terms of money, sometimes not, it left open the possibility of those with greater resources being able to give more and those who have smaller resources would give in accordance with their ability, rather than equal which implies that everyone give the exact same amount.

Hawona Sullivan Janzen identified a challenge with that idea – it is easy for someone who has a lot to give to ask for someone else to give. She expressed that the challenges we will have will be trying to get the community involved – what does that mean? And when will we know that we have accomplished it? She said this will forever be something challenging for us.

Irma McClaurin expressed that it is these very questions that sparked the idea to use the next few CAC meetings to explore the meaning of the UNP; it is an opportune time, and that she thinks we should take as long as is necessary.

The draft letter of invitation to follow this plan was distributed to the group, and feedback was asked for. One question for feedback was the following: should the letter include the questions just brought up by the group?

Patricia Anderson brought up the importance of maintenance of information, in exchanging and disbursing this information to different cultural groups within the community. She shared the challenges the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council has faced in connecting with the South Asian community – and how they had to use different approaches to engage this particular community.

Scott Redd talked about the UROC coming out of the University of Minnesota’s ROC (research outreach center) model, and about exploring their model of communication.

Irma McClaurin expressed that the ROCs were not created as engagement centers, but rather outreach centers; UROC has this added engagement component. She explained that the ROCs were created out of the land grant mission and used the expert model with farmers in rural areas.

Geoff Maruyama shared that when the ROCs started, those at the ROC were the holders of expertise in the community. UROC is based more on an exchange of expertise from both the university and community sides.

Sherrie Pugh Sullivan pointed out that sometimes the issue is just the PR of the university – there is a strong presence of the University of Minnesota in the Northside community already, but the community doesn’t always see the presence, nor does it always accept the presence that exists and the positive relationships that come with it. She gave the example of CURA – many people in the community think good things about CURA, but they do not necessarily think of it as a part of the University of Minnesota; this is something she thinks we need to change. She expressed that one way to do this might be to create large posters for the walls of UROC, talking about the work that has happened and its effects. She also said that the problem may also be that the community knows about the University, but they may not know how to connect with it or are scared to try to connect with it. She brought up the model of the University of Minnesota’s Landscape Arboretum – a University building located off campus that is warm, inviting and attracts people for many other reasons besides just connecting with the University. She wants to think about how UROC can model that atmosphere in some way.

Martin Adams stated that there will always be complexities in place as we go about this work, because there are so many different levels within a community – residents, organizations, etc. He also expressed that to succeed; the UROC has to be accessible to all of these levels. In the rural areas, there were fewer players and levels, so it was just simpler, but here in the urban context, it is just more complicated.

Irma McClaurin added that these different levels could also mean different kinds of partnership. She sees the UROC and the UNP representing paradigm shifts – a type of institutional delivery, rather than the old model of pieces of the University going out into the community separately at different times. She also brought up the point that a lot of that engagement with the community was through community organizations; how do we involve the residents? She said that there are around 110 nonprofits in the Northside currently – how many does the University need to work with to be engaged? Is 25 enough? 50? And where are the opportunities for individuals to be involved?

## **University Northside Partnership Community Affairs Committee Meeting December 10, 2008 2-3:30 pm**

Kathie Doty shared that she read somewhere once that partnering was the least effective way to get things done. She also wanted the group to think critically about the title of the University Northside Partnership – what does that really mean? Is it the University’s Northside Partnership or the University Northside Partnership?

Sherrie Sullivan Pugh said that from the community’s perspective, it is not the University’s Northside Partnership. She then touched on Irma McClaurin’s point about the number of nonprofits, and said that while all 100 do not need to be engaged, they all need access. She then proposed the idea of creating a list of all the University and community partnerships within the Northside.

Kathie Doty shared that the Hennepin University Partnerships has done this in the past, and that it took six months to gather all the info, but that it was a great resource.

Fred Easter likened the idea of partnership to a horse and chicken stew; even if the University and the community consider themselves equal partners, that may not be completely true, so care needs to be taken to acknowledge this fact.

Irma McClaurin said that all this discussion brings us back to the role and the function of the UNP, and that a list of all partnerships could be a request from the CAC, if it would be useful (Sherrie expressed that it would).

Geoff Maruyama said that the UNP has been a space to talk about big ideas and issues, and sees this as a piece we don’t want to lose.

Deborah Powell Porrazzo shared that she has heard the word engagement again and again, and she has found the best way to engage people is through food. She suggested some sort of an open house that would bring together all parties, to bring examples and information and above all to make it pleasant and festive to encourage participation.

Kris Nelson expressed that he does not think the community wants to partner with the University, at least not with the University as an institution, as a whole. He stated the University is a treasure chest of resources, and the community does not want it all at once; it is more about access to timely resources. He likened this issue to dating – that it is all about timeliness, availability and willingness to bring about a partnership. He also expressed that in his experience, the U is more a set of freelancers than an institution, and as it is ever-changing, it is hard to bring the entire university into a partnership.

Kathie Doty shared that a successful partnership requires that all participating entities are benefitting from the partnership – but how do we define benefits?

Patricia Anderson said that the university needs to identify itself and what it will do; it needs to improve its part in the community and increase its visibility. The University continues to have a semi-tainted reputation, even though it is doing many positive things in the community. She sees the UNP as a way to work on this.

Sherrie Sullivan Pugh identified a lack of access as one of the main things that keeps the community down.

Bill Barberg shared his perspective, that there is a complexity to the challenge; it is the combination of big issues and small details. He sees the opportunity for the UNP to tackle these, as a catalyst for innovation.

Scott Redd spoke about the importance of a communication strategy, whether it be with the city, the county, the partners. He also talked about the importance of ensuring community sustainability; he said he talked to one of the area’s high school principals, who said that having a building in the community was not enough. He also pointed out that people keep talking about holding the University responsible – and asked, who holds the non-U partners responsible?

## **University Northside Partnership Community Affairs Committee Meeting December 10, 2008 2-3:30 pm**

Hawona Sullivan Janzen asked – who holds the residents responsible?

Irma McClaurin pointed out that just because certain groups or populations are not participating may not mean they are not receiving the communication; perhaps they are waiting to see how things unfold before they decide to participate or not.

Reverend Carl Joyner talked about visibility from the community's side and the important issue of shortened access in the community. He brought up the idea of choosing one thing to focus on and developing and growing that one thing. He worked with Lincoln grade school in the past, and just as he began to develop the program he worked on them with, they began to close the school; this gave him a spiritual inspiration to work harder to work against the disparity of the education system. He shared the idea of using educational activities as the single issue to engage the community, and letting the relationships and partnerships follow after.

Sandy Holmes asked why the UNP needs the "University" in the name at all. She also stressed that the University needs to ask residents what they want, and suggested going through the neighborhood organizations and asking them to survey their clientele.

Raymond Dehn stressed the importance for clarity in communication, which we need to talk about all these piece of work going on as pieces of the UNP. He thinks the UNP should operate more as a hub and less linear and hierarchical.

Fred Easter said he is open to the idea of partnering. He also thought that at the next meeting, the group should pick three things to work on, and then move forward on those three.

Irma McClaurin pointed out that UROC already has three priority areas – education, health & wellness and economic development – that were defined by the community through focus groups and community meetings, and that all the programs in UROC must address one or all of these three areas

Irma McClaurin asked the group to consider if they needed to hire a professional (such as GrayHall) to help facilitate the conversation of where the UNP should go in the future.

### **Closing**

Makeda Zulu-Gillespie adjourned the meeting by asking if the group gave her and new co-chair Raymond Dehn permission to send the letter re: the next few meetings out on behalf of the group; the group agreed. She also said if anyone would like to help them plan the upcoming meetings, they would more than welcome the help.

**The next meeting of the CAC is January 28<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm at the Minneapolis Urban League**