



THE INTERNATIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Whittier Alliance 2006 Annual Report

Prepared for the Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 29, 2007 6:00 - 9 PM

Whittier International Elementary School- 26th St. & Grand Avenue

Letter from the Board Chair, Paula Horan

The Whittier Alliance 2006 Annual Report is an opportunity to say “thank you” to the people who have built and nurtured the Whittier Alliance not only in 2006, but over the last 30 years.

We thank the scores of volunteers whose participation has made the Whittier Alliance possible. Each volunteer brings unique talents, knowledge and insight. Whether serving on the Board of Directors, a committee or task force, or participating in your block club, picking up trash or stamping envelopes, your contribution brings strength to our neighborhood organization. You teach us, inspire us and support us. The Whittier Alliance is truly a volunteer driven organization.

We thank the dedicated and enthusiastic staff who works to make Whittier a better place. Our Executive Director Marian Biehn, with the aid of Community Organizer, Josie Shardlow, has cut expenses in half over the last five years. This belt tightening was necessary because of slashed NRP Phase II funding and fewer available grants. Despite the challenges of difficult economics, the Alliance staff delivers excellent service to the Whittier community. Whether organizing diverse community groups or serving as our voice to the City of Minneapolis, staff is effective in meeting the growing needs of the organization and Whittier.

We especially acknowledge those who demonstrate their commitment to the Whittier Alliance through financial support. Whittier is a great place to live and work because of your donations. Gifts large and small help ensure that the Whittier Alliance will be able to continue our mission for another 30 years.

Our work must continue. The future is likely to present new—perhaps even greater—challenges for us.

The Whittier Alliance looks forward to another 30 years of growth and change.

Whittier Alliance Executive Director Report, Marian Biehn

In 2006 the Whittier neighborhood continued to showcase its colorful personality. Aptly referred to as “the International neighborhood,” Whittier proudly celebrates the diversity of our businesses and residents, as well as the diverse opinions voiced here. Collectively, that celebration of diversity is what continues to draw people to our neighborhood.

The strong convictions and opinions of our neighbors are key in deciding critical issues facing Whittier. During the past year you have expressed your opinions, debated, and discussed issues affecting your quality of life in the neighborhood. We’ve heard your voice at Community Issues, Business Association and Task Force meetings, as well as via e-mails, phone calls, Whittier Alliance office stop-ins, and casual over-the-counter conversations at any number of nearby coffee shops and restaurants. Your opinions, and your willingness to share them, spark the dialogues that lead to improved safety and continued strategic growth and development in Whittier.

This past year the Whittier Alliance and neighborhood volunteers undertook several initiatives and reviewed multiple projects that will impact the neighborhood for years to come. We successfully updated the **Whittier Alliance By-Laws** to give Whittier residents and neighborhood business and property owners a stronger voice and a more powerful vote. The Whittier Alliance is one of the stakeholders in a collaborative effort to explore ways of improving the condition of **Washburn Fair Oaks Park**. The **NRP Steering Committee**, in accordance with the approved Whittier NRP Action Plan, has begun contracting \$2.4 million dollars of Neighborhood Revitalization Project funds to improve and enhance our neighborhood. Another group of dedicated volunteers and staff have been working on a **Pedestrian Overlay and Development Design Guidelines for Nicollet & Franklin Avenues** to create a friendlier experience for residents and visitors accessing our commercial corridors. In the midst of it all, we continue to build productive communication and positive relationships with developers and our City representatives.

One of the most frequently asked questions in Whittier is, “When can we expect the reopening of Nicollet Avenue at Kmart?” Keep the faith! It is a priority for the neighborhood, as well as for our Council Member. Conversations are in the works, and while we’re confident it will eventually happen, the wheels of progress sometimes turn slowly.

Board of Directors – Serving in 2006

Officers

Michelle Redmond, Chair
Paula Horan, Vice Chair, Chair
Tom Bissen, Treasurer
Jim Roscoe, Secretary

Standing Committee Chairs

Ted Redmond, Community Issues
Erica Christ, Business Association

At Large Members

Felino de la Peña	Paula Horan
Larry Ludeman	Michelle Redmond
Ted Redmond	Destin Nygard
Alex Bauman	Chris Carrow
Tom Bissen	Jim Roscoe
Linda Martin	Bruce Lundeen
Wendy Darst	Damon Nelson
Erica Christ	Alex Bauman

Business Association

Representatives

Andrew Church	Si Nguyen
Lisa Vecoli	Elizabeth Grzechowiak

Staff

Marian Biehn, Executive Director
Josie Shardlow, Community Organizer



I'd like to thank our residents, businesses, and the Whittier Alliance Board of Directors for their ongoing support. You are the ones to thank for the non-homogenous character of our businesses, the variety of housing, and the unique mix of our residents. Thank you for bringing your very individual point of view to the table.

Business Association, Erica Christ, Chair

The Whittier Business Association meets monthly on the second Wednesday of the month. A different business location hosts the meeting each month with the meeting time- morning, lunchtime or late afternoon- determined by the host business. Additionally, the host business takes the spotlight for a few minutes at the top of the meeting. It's a great way to get to know our business neighbors and support common goals for a vibrant neighborhood!

The agendas of our meetings this past year included:

- Visits and words from our City Council representative Robert Liligren
- An informational visit from the Southwest Transitway Representative
- Visits and words from the Inspector, Captain, Lieutenants and beat cops of the 5th Precinct.
- The launching of the Whittier Business Association Website, which lists every business in Whittier at no cost to the businesses.
- Continuous updates on the Franklin/Nicollet Pedestrian Overlay process
- Presentations by a City business licensing inspector and a representative from the Minneapolis Arts Commission
- The successful application for CPED grant funds to help further Whittier Business initiatives such as graffiti removal
- Multiple presentations by developers and Whittier business owners wanting to invest and expand in Whittier

We welcomed the following new businesses to the Whittier Neighborhood:

- Café Thang Bom Bom
- Transcendental Meditation
- 3 Crowns Restaurant and Catering
- Cinema Revolution
- Lulu's Sandwiches
- Asia Gifts
- Center for Training and Careers
- Wendy's

We said goodbye to some long time Whittier businesses who supported the Whittier Neighborhood and Business Association:

- Vino 610
- Whittier Health Care
- First Christian Residence
- Store Nico
- Heng Photo
- Interior Gardens
- Rex Hardware
- The White Lily

We thank our host businesses last year: Minneapolis 1st Seventh Day Adventist Church, Wendy's, the White Lily, Blaisdell Manor, the Gale Mansion, Anemonie, Pancho Villa, NICO, AFC Mortgage, City of Lakes Waldorf School, the Mpls Institute of Arts, Christo's and the Bad Waitress.

Please join us this year! We have many exciting projects in the works! Our group encompasses non-profit and for profit, industrial and service oriented, big institutions and small, family-run stores. Residents and property owners are welcome to attend our meetings as well. It's a great way to get to know your Whittier businesses.

Community Issues, Ted Redmond, Chair

The purpose of the Community Issues Committee meetings is to address issues vital to the neighborhood regarding safety, housing and land use and community building. The goal is to use a "town hall meeting" format providing community members an opportunity to be updated on the full range of community events and news as well as an opportunity to raise concerns or provide feedback and comments to the Whittier Alliance.

The committee format begins with an open forum for community announcements and news. The remaining time is spent discussing property development requests and changes, and hearing from other presenters. The Community Issues meetings have been very well attended in 2006, ranging from 30 to 55 members at each meeting, in addition to a wide range of guests and presenters.

Community Updates and Informational Presentations Included:

Tracy Nordstrom, newly elected Park Representative
Updates from the Mpls Police Department, 5th Precinct
Neighborhood Hennepin County Probation Officers
Friends of Fair Oaks Park
Restorative Justice Community Action
Nominations for Neighborhood Youth Champions
Instant Run-Off Voting and the Better Ballot Campaign
Blake Officer, student ambassador for People to People
MPIRG Take Back the Night Rally/March
Soo Line Garden
Craig Eliason, City of Minneapolis Housing Inspections

NRP grant funds for graffiti/litter and bldg/block club activities
Franklin/Nicollet pedestrian overlay task force
Housing advisory committee
Parade of Community Gardens
NRP Safety Awareness/MCAD project
Midtown Greenway Coalition
CLIC committee
Tom Deegan, Minneapolis Property Inspections
Minneapolis Arts Commission
Southwest Transit Way- light rail proposals



Development and Land Use Proposals Included:

White Lily
Irving Properties, 2325 Grand Ave
Cook Construction Site, 2833 Lyndale Ave
2701 1st Ave S
GFI-Nicollet and Blaisdell Ave at 28th St.
Midtown Greenway Land Use Plan
Salem English Lutheran Church, 610 W. 28th St
2312 Pillsbury Ave
Rex Hardware Building 2607 Lyndale Ave
Minneapolis Institute of Art
2201 Pillsbury Ave
2624 1st Ave S
Pancho Villa, 2539 Nicollet Ave

Old Arizona, 2819 Nicollet Ave S
Lake St. reconstruction update from Hennepin County
2201 3rd Ave S
2807-09 Pillsbury Ave S
2650 Nicollet Ave S
2437 & 2441 Nicollet Ave S
2911 Harriet Ave S
JL Pope Management/Echo Flats
2832 Harriet Ave
Alliance Housing, 2011 Pillsbury Ave
510 W. 27th St
Midwest Machinery Building, 2848 Pleasant Ave S

An Invitation to Participate

The Whittier Alliance Community Issues Committee is a wonderful opportunity to participate in a broad range of topics, as well as to provide input and guidance on all development or land use proposals within the Whittier Neighborhood. The committee provides a great resource to know what is happening in your neighborhood, while your involvement will provide a wonderful and needed resource for the Committee and your neighbors! Please join us!

Resource Development, Marian Biehn, Executive Director

The Whittier Alliance continues to diversify and expand its income sources and reserve funds. On an annual basis, the Whittier Alliance sponsors 2 major and one minor fundraiser. These fundraising events are an important part of our annual budget. They also build community awareness of the resources, advocating and activities provided by the Whittier Alliance. Because Citizen Participation and NRP funding are always vulnerable to budget cuts, successful revenue building through fundraising will continue to be an important function of the Whittier Alliance. We are appreciative for the generosity of our friends and neighbors who financially contribute to the Whittier Alliance, attend fundraising events or give in-kind donations to the organization.

Income from fundraising in 2006:

Fall Fundraising 2005 received in 2006	600
Silent & Live Auction Event	12,373
Minneapolis Institute of Arts Grand Opening Booth	2,175
Hennepin Lake Liquors Multi-Neighborhood Wine Tasting	400
Fall Fundraising Campaign-2006	7,450
Misc. Donations	24
Total	\$23,022

Thank you to our 2006 contributors and supporters

Wayne Anderson, Crawford-Merz	W. John Driscoll	Larry Ludeman	Matt Romain, Burnomatic, Inc
Thomas Adams	Andrew & Harriet Ellis	Bruce Lundeen	Mooney & Ridler
Anthony Arbisi	Maurice Filister	William & Deborah Mague	Jim Roscoe
Steve Batchelder, Lyndale Auto	Trisha Garness	Roger Mayland, North Prairie	Jim Ruben
Andrew Baird	Don Gerberding	Tileworks	Daniel Satran
Ed Bell, Chazin Bell	Dr. Barry Gerst	Linda Martin	Jeff Shade
Susan Bloom	Tina & Andrew Girdwood	Andrew McDermott	Shelly Kehr & Tom Sinas
Roger Brake	Anne & Jeff Gorton	Mary McDill	Chelsea Smith
Tom Bissen	Elizabeth Grzechowiak	Deb Meldahl	Erin Sjoquist
Derf Bistodeau, Romer & Co.	Chuck Gulden	Steve Meyer	Pat Smith
Diane Blomberg, Just in Case, Inc	Alfred Harrison	The Mogendorff Family	Jeffrey Spencer
Peter Bonahoom, Galactic Pizza	Paula Horan	JoAnn Musumeci	Deb Stillwell
Erica Christ	Alvin Huss	Damon Nelson	Marcia Strait
Andrew Church	Fran Killian	David Nelson	Dr. Adiel Tel-Oren
Keith Covart, Electric Fetus	Fritz Kreiser	Jeff Nelson	Mark Trehus
Khosrow Daivari	Victoria Jaskierski	Kurt Nelson	Margaret Vaught
Don Davis	Anne & Jeff Killian	Nick Novak	Lisa Vecoli
Wayne DeLange	Mark Jossart	Destin Nygard	Steve Wellington
Emily Doyle	Katie Kosseff	Michael O'Keefe, MCAD	Tammy Wong, Rainbow
Jim Dowd, Prima Land, Inc	Matt Lokowich, Bulldog Restaurant	Bruce & Martha Rasmussen	

And our contributors who wish to remain anonymous
Contributions are accepted and appreciated throughout the year



Community Organizer Report, Josie Shardlow

The nature of neighborhood community organizing is that of collaborations. I feel very fortunate to have been able to work with such great neighbors and organizations. People are what really make Whittier what it is—a great place to live, work and play. I want to thank the many volunteers who help make my job a lot easier and a lot more fun! While working to improve the safety and livability of the Whittier neighborhood, here are some of the collaborations and events that I was involved with in 2006.

Some of the collaborations the Whittier Alliance was involved with in 2006:

- Residents who walk as Whittier Walkers
- Neighbors in Block Clubs like the Stevens & 1st Ave block club
- Police, SSCO, probation officers, city attorney, CCP/SAFE for Law Enforcement Group meetings and other crime and safety related issues
- MCAD students for the safety calendar project
- Campus Group (Whittier youth serving agencies) & World of Whittier planning group
- Family & Children's Service for Neighborhood Champions, Youth Council and renter outreach
- PPL organizers for outreach to their buildings in the neighborhood

Some of the events the Whittier Alliance sponsored or participated in were:

- Dog Days of Whittier in Fair Oaks Park
- Live/Silent Auction Spring Fundraiser
- Uptown multi-neighborhood Wine Tasting Fundraiser
- MIA Grand Re-Opening Celebration in Fair Oaks Park
- National Night Out events—coordinated an event for 2731/2741 Pillsbury and the 2200/2300 block of Garfield Ave. Also did outreach to all known events in the neighborhood.
- Parade of Community Gardens
- World of Whittier Family Fair
- Neighborhood Clean Up event in October
- Food Drive in November

Steering Committee Report—Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Implementation

Thanks to a dedicated group of Whittier volunteers, the process of getting funds into the neighborhood based on the Whittier NRP Action Plan is happening. The five strategies of Housing, Safety, Youth Business & Local Economy and Community Building were all discussed and continue to be works in progress. The following implementation of Phase II funds was accomplished in 2006.

- **Housing:** The **Rental Rehab and Renewal Loan** (3-R) fund is still active with Rental Property Owners borrowing to make improvements on their properties. The Center for Energy and Environment is still under contract providing funding for **single family home** improvements. These revolving loan programs have been instrumental in making considerable improvements in Whittier's housing stock. The committee also reviewed the current Washburn Fair Oaks **Historic Preservation** guidelines and has received a proposal for strengthening both the historic district guidelines as well identifying other important buildings and features in Whittier that contribute to the broader historic character.
- **Safety:** Funds from the Safety strategy were contracted in a variety of ways during 2006. Improved safety and livability continue to be an important focus for Whittier residents.
- **Police Buy-Backs: \$7680** Our NRP funds helped put additional police on the streets in the early months of 2006 with a focus on the South Whittier areas and the commercial corridors.
- **Block & Apartment Club events: \$4000** The development of block & apartment clubs continues to be important outreach activity. Particular focus was put on outreach to the Hispanic residents to build trust and community participation. There were about a dozen National Night Out events in Whittier in 2006.
- **2007 Safety Awareness Calendar: \$11,077** Over 7500 calendars were distributed to Whittier households and businesses. The calendar offers safety tips and helpful resources both in and outside of the neighborhood. The calendar was a collaborative project with Minneapolis College of Art and Design Students who donated over 500 hours of research, design and illustration talent.
- **Graffiti Removal/Prevention \$27,667:** Funds were made available to subsidize graffiti removal and abatement projects in Whittier with one third reimbursement for lighting, landscaping, murals or mosaics, removal or preventative coating.
- **Whittier Walkers/Citizen Walking Patrols \$2000** The Whittier Walkers walk on a regular basis to help report and deter crime.
- **Youth:** Considerable time and attention was devoted to developing a Request for Proposal for outreach to Whittier youth. **Family & Children's Services** received **\$38,000** as the contract provider for one year with the Campus Group assisting with outreach and recruitment of Whittier youth. The development of a Whittier youth club is open to youth 8-17 and focuses on activities that build leadership and civic engagement.
- **Implementation: \$84,500** NRP Phase II provides funds to assist in the day to day operations of the neighborhood organization. These funds help defer the cost of public meetings, resource and information dispersal, community building and outreach and the nuts and bolts of rent and utilities. All funds are put under contract and reimbursed to the provider after submitting a comprehensive report on the expenses.

The Whittier neighborhood and the Whittier Alliance need your talent. Please consider participating in the Franklin/Nicollet Pedestrian Overlay Task Force, NRP steering committee, as a Whittier Walkers or a block or building contact, etc. Contact the office for more information.

Whittier Alliance
10 East 25th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: 612-871-7756

Keep informed!
For timely updates on neighborhood meetings and events, sign up for the Whittier e-groups by going to the Whittier Alliance website at:

Fax: 612-871-0650
E-mail: marian@whittieralliance.org
www.whittieralliance.org