

8/21/23 Livability Committee Meeting Lee Todd (Chair), Bobbie Keller, Adam Olson, Molly Downey, Caren Dewar (EBMSNA Board); Cuyler (EBMSNA Staff); Judy Shields (Uptown Association Board); David Ratner (Safety Walks); Residents (~20 attendees)

1. Update on Seven Points: Lee, Judy

- a. Lee reached out to Seven Points group (in Chicago), no response.. Also reached out to John Ferrier (Duran Const.) who'll be doing the actual work: "We're still excited with the project, but viability is being configured with the City. A Zoom call would be premature." Sounds like they're unsure, not a lot of progress on that front.
 - i. Judy (UA): Haven't heard anything, you probably know more than us because you pushed harder. As a realtor, the financing these folks can get is way easier to get for an apt dev vs. a condo—they'd need 30-50% of condos sold ahead to finance the dev, which is why these people are building apts rather than condos.

2. Discussion of Uptown Business Changes (Collab, Sooki & Mimi > rebrand, others?): Judy

- a. Judy: Focus on concerts and entertainment might be our new norm, we all hope it would be good for the community. I personally think that if we can get folks coming back into the Uptown zone in a collected way, that's a good thing.
- b. We're keeping in touch with the people trying to make things work, as UA, but we're all in the same boat having a lot of big spaces empty. There are young folks trying to do things
- c. Urban Markets are happening, folks on Irving nearer the lake are trying things
- d. **UA Art Fair Eval:** Hard to tell, no hard data yet. We felt it's growing, getting better from 2019. Friday good, Sat/Sun were better attended. Creating a big event with a small budget (due to covid years off) was tricky, but we feel good about it.
 - i. Lee: Quality was good. Not as extensive as pre-covid, but still very large.
 - ii. Judy: We'll report back how the artists felt, that will make/break the event
- e. Adam: [Scout](#), [Legacy](#), and [Les Sól](#) have all opened in Uptown, which were all previously in Edina. What drew them in? We'd like to support them.
 - i. Judy: As someone who owned a gift store, if the bottom line rent in one zone is lower than the other, that's a real draw. They all said, "We think this area is coming back." And frankly, I want everyone to join them. I shop Legacy and Les Sol, all three have great stuff.

3. Safety Team Updates:

a. Safety Walks: David

- i. Inaugural Safety Walk was 10am this past Saturday, we had walkers from others in the City's Safety Walk Network and a MPD P5 officer to assess potential areas for safety improvement in EBMS. Walks will continue each Saturday, 10am from St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church's north parking lot!
 - 1. Keith: I was surprised what folks from other neighborhoods say, that it isn't actually about reducing crime. EBMS doesn't have much trash either...
 - 2. David: I'll push back—statistically, areas that do this DO see a decrease in crime overall. It's not because they see folks in orange that crime is prevented. It's by connecting with each other to create a larger safety net in the community. Also it was 10am. We picked up 6 buckets of trash.
- ii. Caren: I was on the walk too. I agree, it was a positive experience. And some neighbors came out and said they were glad to see us. We should flyer.

1. When walking, don't look down at your phone. Don't sit in the car and look at your phone. Being distracted attracts bad behavior.

b. Block Captains / Security Comms: Thang (absent) - Post-Meeting Follow-Up

- i. [Block Captain Guide \(PDF\)](#) as reviewed and discussed at July meeting.
- ii. [Click this link](#) for people to volunteer for your respective blocks!
- iii. Based on the guide and past conversations, we'd love to nail down volunteers to serve as Block Captains for their blocks between now and 9/15 - as has been discussed with the Board at the August Board Meeting. After that, the thought is to gather all Block Captains for an introductory meeting at the end of September to lay out an actionable plan for implementation. With the committee support, we can communicate this to the Board at the September board meeting.
- iv. During this entire implementation process, Thang and the Board are open (and welcome) your feedback, participation, and contributions. You can send those thoughts and feedback to info@eastbdemakaska.org.

c. MPD Buy Back / Alternatives: Thang (absent), Lee, Cuyler

- i. [Overview of the MPD Buy Back Program \(PDF\)](#)
 1. Off-duty police are for hire at \$112 hourly patrol, as available.
- ii. Lee: Thang had the update on this, but I believe it isn't happening due to it being cost-prohibitive and unlikely to be approved by the City Council.
- iii. Cuyler: We've also heard from Lowry Hill that their Buy Back program hours aren't always met, and officers are frequently pulled away to address 911 calls in the rest of Precinct 5—they police 19 other neighborhoods with 100,000+ residents.
- iv. Thang (post-meeting follow-up): I would just add that in addition to the lack of value in actual results from Lowry Hill's buy-back program and the inequity press that we'd potentially get, there is also the very real concern that we'd be asking neighbors to pay towards the program to enlist overworked and exhausted MPD officers who may or may not be able to give their best for this investment.
- v. We've been referred to Violence Interrupters, who've been used at recent events to great results. They stay in one area, and are skilled at violence intervention and de-escalation. Waiting to hear back from them.
- vi. **Lois (34th & Humboldt)**
 1. Anonymous flier in my mailbox claims CM Chughtai installed this program in EBMS. No idea where it came from, it's not legal to flier mailboxes.
 - a. EBMSNA should message "It's beyond CM to instate a BB Program without NA contracting," in the next Safety Update.
 2. Whole idea of doing this program gives a bad feeling regarding equity of other neighborhoods being able to afford a Buy Back...
 - a. Cuyler: I've also heard from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ neighbors, asking to look at Buy Back alternatives, as they've had extremely negative interactions with MPD, echoed by the Justice Dept's report this summer. Again, assessing Violence Interrupters.

4. Discussion of Hill & Lake Press Coverage/Advertising: Lee, Bobbie, Adam, Cuyler

- a. Lee: There's an idea that we approach Hill & Lake Press to extend their coverage into EBMS, so we can advertise with them. They're a local paper that delivers to every mailbox in Lowry Hill, East Isles, Cedar-Isles-Dean, and Kenwood—including renters, who we need to reach
 - i. Cuyler: I also work for East Isles, who's been running ads with them since January. 1 year of ads can be \$3–5K, unsure if we'll be renewing, as funding for all neighborhoods was significantly cut at the new year. I also reached out to SW Connector as another option last week, but haven't heard back.
 - ii. Lee: We had a fair amount of NRP money, shouldn't be that hard to move around...
 - 1. Adam: Most NRP is already reallocated to avoid City clawing back, into Admin, Park Improvements, Safety programs. There's a few items we could still redirect (Transportation Assessment, etc), but it definitely wouldn't cover costs of this ad campaign + unknown circulation expansion cost
 - iii. Bobbie: Maybe we get someone from HLP to address the cost of opening up circulation to EBMS. We've heard they were contemplating it
 - 1. Cuyler will reach out to HLP through East Isles President, who sits on HLP Board

5. Upcoming Events: Cuyler

- a. [Neighborhood Super Sale](#): Sept. 9 (Register by Aug. 30)
- b. [Sail Bde Maka Ska](#): Sept. 16
- c. [Annual Meeting & Fundraiser](#): Nov. 9 (Save the Date!)
 - i. Resident: Are you saying it will cost money to enter the Annual Meeting?
 - 1. Cuyler: Nope! All can enter and participate for free, there will just be different ways/activities to support EBMS within the event
 - 2. Bobbie: Silent auctions, raffle, etc.