

**To:** Nick Cichowicz, Chair, Neighborhood Community Engagement Commission (NCEC)  
and Councilmember Philippe Cunningham, Chair (Need Committee name)

**Fr:** Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association, Inc (MPNAI)

**Date:** March 27th, 2019

**Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association, Inc. (MPNAI) in solidarity with the Neighborhood Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) supports the following:**

- We request a delay in approval of the NCR draft 2020 report of not more than 6 months . Without dedicated funding it is impossible to assess whether or not we would have the capacity to implement neighborhood requirements laid out in this draft.
- We need multi-year funding which is flexible, non competitive, objectively and fairly awarded.
- We need \$6-8 million per year to adequately work towards document goals.
- We believe that base funding should be increased from \$25,000 to \$30,000.

Midtown Phillips has developed outreach partnerships which we believe could serve as a model for other communities. These partnerships have led to great diversity in programs within Midtown Phillips with an expectation that these will develop leadership to take on the operations of our non profit board. This strategy evolved from an asset based community assessment and an organizational belief to invest in organizations already doing outreach and having neighborhood involvement.

Examples of these partnerships are:

- Banyan Community organizes block clubs, holds a monthly block networking breakfast with a speaker to increase our understanding of various city departments and resources and supports annual Midtown Phillips Neighborhood National Night Out parties.
- Bethlehem Baptist had church members living in the community. They assist with information outreach, organizing events, and event donations.
- Minneapolis Mad Dads works with members of our community wanting a different path in their lives. They provide resources and intervention.
- New American Youth Soccer Club, Somali TV, and Somali Radio get city and Neighborhood information out to the community and recruits event participation
- St Paul's and Heart of the Beast puppet and Mask Theatre does youth organizing. Neighborhood restoration thru the Arts can be seen on mosaic murals at Bloomington and Lake and on garbage containers. In 2019 they will partner with MPNAI to develop Art on Utility Boxes.
- Waite House is training youth in media and radio broadcasting and in 2019 will create an issue interviewing project of neighborhood residents.

Within the specifics of the NCR draft document we:

- We believe in an empowering, powersharing engagement model vs the regulatory and top down one size fits all model reflected in the draft 2020 document narrative.
- Support an Elected Neighborhood Community Engagement Commission, leaving the 'N' in the Commission title and support the Recommendation of the Governance Workgroup. We need a Commission which supports, advocates and is accountable to those who elect them to the Commission.



**MIDTOWN PHILLIPS**  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION INC

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- We want the City to recognize that we are legal 501c3 nonprofit organizations compliant to the non profit law on issues of fiduciary responsibility, financial management, program consistent with our stated mission and bylaws, and membership.
- We support local, minority, and women owned small businesses as vendors and as needed to support the operations of our organization vs any 'centralized services'.
- We support a citywide Summit and would assist in the planning but oppose a citywide Annual Meeting and Board election for all neighborhoods on the same date, at one location. We find this in contradiction to the stated goals in the draft 2020 plan.
- We believe in increasing representation of all neighborhood communities and cultures in the programming and activities of MPNAI, as well as the Board. We believe that our partnership strategy, over time, will help us realize this goal.

**In conclusion, MPNAI supports the premise of stated goals in the draft NCR doc but in the spirit of simplicity would restate them:**

- Direct city services
- Build multi jurisdictional Partnerships
- Build neighborhood capacity
- Create a Sense of Place.

This shortened version seems to match the NCR stated goals of 'simplicity in operations so every resident can participate', 'maintain a sense of place and pride for communities', the role between neighborhood organizations and the City of Minneapolis, and accountability to residents. It is what we hear at every meeting - but our proposed language is short and to the point.

We believe that in a common vision of empowerment led organizing we will see greater partnerships, increased involvement, change in the way things are done, and shared power between community and government.

We believe in neighborhood place based organizations which work in partnership with community organizations and government on projects created for the people, by the people, and of the people in those neighborhood. In the spirit of Wendell Phillips and in support of a shared power model, we submit this letter.

Sincerely,

MPNAI  
Midtown Phillips Board of Directors

cc: David Rubedor, NCR Director  
Karen Moe, NCR Deputy Director  
Minneapolis City Councilmembers, Mayor Jacob Frey, and Minneapolis Neighborhoods



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