



January 2011

The Fulton Neighborhood's boundaries are 47th Street to 54th Street and France Avenue to Penn Avenue.

Fulton Neighborhood News is published bimonthly by the Fulton Neighborhood Association (FNA) with funding from the Fulton Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP).

FNA is a nonprofit organization created by and for the residents and businesses of the Fulton neighborhood. Board meetings are held the second Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m., at Pershing Park. All meetings are open to the public.

Fulton NRP is an organization of FNA that implements neighborhood improvement projects. Committee meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m., at Pershing Park.

Fulton Neighborhood
At Pershing Park
3523 W. 48th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55410
E-mail: info@fultonneighborhood.org
Website: www.fultonneighborhood.org

Inside:

Edina Art Fair Call for Artists.....2
Plastic Bag Recycling Primer.....4

Be Snow Savvy

Sign Up for Snow Emergency Alerts

Winter Parking Restrictions are currently in effect in Minneapolis. High snow accumulations can narrow streets, making them harder for fire trucks, ambulances and other emergency vehicles to navigate. These restrictions prohibit parking on the even numbered side of streets designated as non-Snow Emergency Routes until April 1, or until conditions warrant a lifting of the ban.

Should a Snow Emergency be declared in Minneapolis during the time Winter Parking Restrictions are in place, to make the transition from Winter Parking Restrictions to Snow Emergency rules, drivers may start moving their cars off of Snow Emergency Routes and on to EITHER side of the non-Snow Emergency Routes beginning at 4 p.m. on the day the Snow Emergency is declared. Once the Snow Emergency period runs its course, return to Winter Parking Restrictions on 8:00 a.m. on Day 4.

When a Snow Emergency is declared, you may now receive a short, prerecorded voice message. If you have a listed phone number in Minneapolis, you are most likely already on the list.

Did you know that you can sign up for Snow Emergency alerts via e-mail or text message? To register for alerts or to update your phone number, visit our website at www.fultonneighborhood.org and go to the "Resources" tab and select "Government Services" and then "Snow Season Parking."

***Council Member Betsy Hodges
on Property Taxes - see p. 3***

Linden Hills Tennis Courts *Volunteer Fundraiser Begins*

An all-volunteer, grassroots fundraising campaign has begun to rebuild the tennis courts at Linden Hills Park. The courts have deteriorated and must be replaced. They are used by the Southwest Tennis Teams, SWAC, Inner City Tennis and neighbors young and old. The proposed courts will have a QuickStart court designed for teaching children 10 and under the game of tennis. To donate, visit www.razoo.com/story/Linden-Hills-Tennis-Courts. For more information, visit us on Facebook: Linden Hills Tennis Courts or contact Denise Griep at 612-929-0539, denisegriep@earthlink.net.

Volunteers will also be at WinterFest at Linden Hills Park to answer questions from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Jan. 28. Celebrate the season with your neighbors. Bring your friends and family to the park where activities include horse-drawn wagon rides, ice skating, music, sledding, marshmallow roasting and hand-warming refreshments.



Sign up now for our monthly e-newsletter to stay informed about neighborhood and city happenings. Visit www.fultonneighborhood.org and fill in the form on the left side of the page.

West 47th Street

Publication Information

To submit article suggestions, please contact the Fulton Neighborhood Line at 612-922-3106 or send an e-mail to info@fultonneighborhood.org

Editor & Layout
Rhea Sullivan

Copy Editor
Meg Cowden

Contributors
Julie Boehm, Bo Dolphin, Betsy Hodges, Marc Holtey, Nancy Lo, Tom Neiman, Mary Nolte

Proofreader
Jason Walker

Distribution
Liz Froelich & Linda Robinson

www.fultonneighborhood.org

Fulton Neighborhood Communication Disclaimer: FNA publishes this newsletter to enhance public access to neighborhood information. While we try to keep the information timely and accurate, we make no guarantees. Readers should be aware that information in this publication may not reflect official positions of the Fulton Neighborhood Association Board of Directors or its individual members. *Fulton Neighborhood News* does not print unsolicited input from readers, though it welcomes any comments or suggestions readers may wish to provide.

West 54th Street

France Avenue South

Penn Avenue South

From Your Council Member - continued from page 3

funds with the state funds, and to continue to prevail in the lawsuit we have brought against the funds for overpayment of benefits.

In other words, these two problems have solutions. Both solutions must be found at the state level. The city-state fiscal relationship must be repaired, and our remaining closed pension funds must be merged with the state's pension. I have been working hard since I voted on my first budget in 2005 to achieve those goals and I will continue to do so on your behalf.

At the end of the day, that is why I voted to support the budget that passed. It was the best option available in a time of only bad options. I will continue to work to be a steward of your property tax dollars and I will continue to fight for both LGA and pension reform.

Better Than Salt for Sidewalk *Earth-Friendly Alternative for De-Icing*

No one wants to fall on an icy sidewalk, so the solution is to sprinkle salt or deicing chemicals...right?

There is another environment-friendly option: Cherry Stone Traction Grit, which is simply crushed rock. Unlike salt, which can damage cement, harm grass, plants and pets, Cherry Stone Grit is completely safe. It can also be swept up in the spring and saved for the next season, making it very economical. Look for it in hardware stores and garden centers. www.cherrystonegrit.com

Edina Art Fair June 3-5 *Call for Artists*

The Edina Art Fair is celebrating its 45th year as one of the most prestigious outdoor fine art fairs. The Edina Art Fair is the second largest in Minnesota and is held annually in the streets of 50th and France. The Edina Art Fair has 340 jury-selected fine art booths and 90,000 visitors.

Apply online at www.zapplication.org.

Application deadline: Feb. 24, 2011.

For more information on the Edina Art Fair, please visit www.edinaartfair.com.

From Your Council Member

Betsy Hodges - 612-673-2213

On Dec. 14, the City Council adopted the 2011 Budget, reducing the property tax levy increase from 7.5 to 4.7 percent. I want to explain why I voted for this budget and what I did to lower the tax levy and to provide property tax relief for 2012 and 2013.

The budget we passed cut \$6.1 million from the Mayor's recommended budget. That budget already cut 80 positions, bringing the total number of positions in the city to close to 1,000 fewer than existed in 2001. In addition to the additional cuts we made to the 2011 budget, I supported measures to provide tax relief in 2012, 2013, and beyond by consolidating neighborhood funding in order to shrink the TIF district that pays for it at the expense of our tax capacity.

To lower the levy to a level that would show up on your tax bill as a decrease, the Council would have needed to make an additional \$27 million in cuts to property tax supported services. Property tax supported services are only 25 percent of the city's overall budget, and consist primarily of police, fire, road-related services, and the internal functioning of the city enterprise.

Here are examples of the magnitude of cut that would be required to bring a consistent \$27 million worth of savings to our budget: the city could eliminate all street maintenance – pothole filling, seal-coating, snow plowing, etc. – and still need to make another \$3 million in cuts. Half the total budget of the Fire Department is \$27 million. It's a quarter of the budget of the Police Department. The LGA and property tax revenue of all the other property tax supported services combined only amount to \$70 million.

Of course we would not make cuts to only one of those services – it would be a combination of cuts to those services – but the magnitude of even those cuts would increase public safety response times to unacceptable levels, put our road repair and plowing services so far behind that our streets would be in greater disrepair, and cripple the city's internal capacity to do its mandated work.

I want to be clear about the two main reasons we face such a horrendous set of choices, both of which have been my main priorities on the City Council and both of which are out of the city's direct control: cuts to the revenue sharing program known as Local Government Aid (LGA) and the cost of three closed pension funds unique to Minneapolis.

For the last ten years the state has consistently broken its promises to return to us - to you - a fair portion of the income, sales, and property tax dollars we send to them every year. LGA was intended to even out the property tax base statewide so all communities could have excellent services without any one community having to bear too high a property tax burden. That foundational principle remains in name only. The LGA program is broken and needs to be fixed, or discarded for another that is more effective for residents. I ring that bell in every setting I can, and am working with allies across the state to forge a new state-city fiscal relationship.

Some have suggested the solution to our problem is to simply not pay our closed pension fund obligations. Bankruptcy, many say, would be preferable. One problem with this suggestion is that under current state law it is not possible. Because we have a tax levy authority, Minnesota cities are not allowed to go bankrupt. It would not help your property tax bill at all to refuse to pay because it is written in the state statutes that formed these closed funds that if we as a city do not levy the dollars from Minneapolis citizens, the county is required to do so. This obligation you have as a Minneapolis taxpayer to pay the closed funds exists in statute in spite of your lack of meaningful input into how they are managed or administered. Our only choice is to carry on with our work to merge these closed

continued on page 2

Pershing Park Update

Winter Programs – Space is still available in selected programs. Check online for program information at www.minneapolisparcs.org or call us at 612-370-4928.

Winter Activities – Check out citywide activities, events and facility information online at www.minneapolisparcs.org. On the “home page” select *2010-2011 Winter Guide* under “Quick Links.”

Southwest Community Ed Update

Southwest Community Education General Adult Education classes start the week of Jan. 24. You can register by phone, mail, in person or online. We do register people after classes start – we simply prorate the class fee. For information, call 612-668-3100 or visit www.mplscommunityed.com.

Family Sock Hop – Friday, March 4, 2011

Mark your calendar for the annual Family Sock Hop from 7-9 p.m. March 4 at Southwest High School. Enjoy an evening of great music (50s, 60s & 70s), great games, treats and prizes, and lots of fond memories for rock-n-rollers of all ages! The entry fee is \$5.00 per family. Please bring a food donation for the Metro Food Shelf and wear soft-soled shoes or tennis shoes, or be prepared to wear stockings-only in the gym. All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Consider signing up for a winter trip. For example:

Sat., Feb. 5 - Cross-Country Skiing at Mille Lacs Kathio State Park

Enjoy a full day of skiing and catch a nice sunset on the way home. Adults only. You will need a Minnesota x-c ski pass, or you can purchase a one-day pass. The coach bus will leave the Chowen Avenue parking lot at Southwest High at 8:30 a.m., and will return at 5:45 p.m. Cost: \$35, which covers park entry fees, transportation, coffee and rolls from Wuollet Bakery and hot drinks (cider, coffee, or tea) at the park. Call 612-668-3100 for more information.

Plastic Bag Recycling

You Can Recycle More Than You Think

It's well-known that you can recycle grocery and newspaper bags, but did you know you can also recycle cereal bags and wrap from paper products? The program, called “It's In The Bag,” employs disabled adults, who collect the bags from drop-off bins at metro-area grocery stores, sort and then bale the material, which gets sent to Trex to be made into composite lumber.

Here's a full list of plastic bags you can recycle. For more information, visit <http://itsinthebagmn.com/>. For more great recycling info, visit Nancy Lo's blog at <http://trashbasher.blogspot.com/>.

ACCEPTED MATERIALS

Note: All material must be clean and dry with all food residue removed.

Remove any strings or rigid plastic handles.

Plastic grocery bags

Plastic retail bags

Plastic dry-cleaning bags

Plastic cereal bags

Plastic bread bags

Plastic produce bags

Plastic wrap from paper products (paper towels, etc.)

Plastic salt bags

Plastic zipper bags (remove top closing mechanism)

Plastic stretch/shrink wrap

6-pack holder rings

NOT ACCEPTED

Plastic bags with food residue

Frozen food bags

Plastic bags with strings

Plastic soil or mulch bags

Plastic zipper bags with rigid plastic closing mechanism

Plastic bubble wrap

Plastic food containers