

Community Participation Program 2013 Annual Report

Neighborhood Organization: Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association

Contact person: Sean O'Neil

Date of Board Approval: July 17, 2014

1. Stakeholder Involvement

Reviewing your CPP activities in 2013, Please provide information about:

- What outreach and engagement activities did you carry out in 2013?

HNIA conducted numerous outreach initiatives in 2013. The four most notable outreach initiatives were the 1.) Holland NRP Phase II neighborhood survey, 2.) Medallion Public Arts Connector (MPAC), 3.) Hotdish Revolution, and 4.) Holland Small Area Plan. HNIA engaged hundreds of Holland and Northeast residents through these initiatives and involved many stakeholders in the activities of the organization. Approximately 250 residents completed the neighborhood survey to provide input on their priorities for the NRP Phase II Action Plan. We distributed over 600 medallions to MPAC participants—the vast majority of which were Holland or Northeast Minneapolis residents—to support local businesses and raise funds for public art in NE Minneapolis. Between 350-450 community members attended the 2013 Hotdish Revolution, an annual community cook-off event. Finally, dozens of Holland residents attended two Holland Small Area Plan community meetings in 2013 where residents were able to provide input about their priorities for the Small Area Plan--a project that is directed by a steering committee composed of residents, business owners, and other community stakeholders.

- How did you reach out to and involve under-represented communities in 2013?

HNIA involved under-represented communities primarily through direct outreach strategies. For instance, the NRP Phase II committee held a focus group meeting, facilitated by NCR Neighborhood Support Specialist Jack Whitehurst, to engage Holland business owners and employees in the development of its NRP Phase II Plan. HNIA also recruited Spanish-speaking and Somali-speaking residents to help us conduct door-to-door outreach, an outreach event at the NE Library, and an outreach event at a local restaurant to increase participation for the NRP Phase II survey. HNIA also attempted to recruit Edison High School ESL students to help with door-to-door outreach.

- Did you find any strategies to be particularly successful? Why?

The most effective strategy proved to be door-to-door outreach at an apartment building where many of Holland's Somali residents live. HNIA staff

joined a resident of the building to go to each apartment unit and ask the residents to complete the NRP Phase II survey. We received over a dozen completed surveys from households in that building and were able to introduce HNIA to many residents who were previously unfamiliar with the neighborhood association. Following this event, the resident who helped with outreach in the building joined the HNIA board of directors.

- What did not work so well? Why?

The NRP Phase II committee recruited four Edison High School students to help conduct door-to-door outreach for the neighborhood survey. HNIA staff person, Sean O'Neil, attended a class session at Edison High School to explain the NRP Phase II initiative to the students. Four students signed-up to help with outreach in the neighborhood. The students who signed up, however, did not show up for the outreach event. The event was scheduled during the students' spring break and no adult representatives from the school were at the event to help follow up with students. In the future we will try to schedule events to take place when the students are already at the school, and we will involve Edison staff in the outreach events so the students are more comfortable participating in the event.

- How many people did you reach through direct contact (door knocking, meetings, one-on-ones, etc.)?

300-400 people

- How many individuals volunteered in organization activities?

30-40 different people (many of whom helped at multiple events)

- How many individuals participated in your organization's activities?

500-700

- How many people receive your print publications?

We send monthly postcards to each household in the neighborhood (approximately 2,000 households) and send quarterly newsletters that are placed as inserts in the Northeaster Newspaper. The newsletters are only included in the papers that are distributed to Holland addresses.

- How many people receive your electronic communications?

Approximately 200 people are on Holland's resident email list and there are approximately 500 people in HNIA's total email database.

2. 2013 Highlights

Please describe one or two major highlights, and if possible, please include digital photos or illustrations:

- What was the issue or opportunity the neighborhood was facing?
- Who was impacted?
- What steps did you take to address the issue or opportunity?
- What was the outcome?

In November 2013, the Northeast Green Light Project was installed at the Edison High School parking lot. This project, which combines public art and environmental sustainability efforts, is part of a larger renovation of the area referred to as the “Holland Commons” or “NE Green Campus” (the area of contiguous public spaces from Central Avenue to Washington Street and from 23rd Ave NE to 19th Ave NE). The project was funded mostly through a \$50,000 grant from Center for the Energy and Environment (CEE) and was supplemented by Holland NRP funds. The installation consists of a core of six light sculptures ranging in height from 10 to 12 feet on the SE corner of the Edison High School parking lot at 22nd and Quincy St NE. They connect to a wireless data management system, and the color of the lamps change to represent energy conservation data. The end goal of the project is to conserve the equivalent amount of energy needed to power Edison High School. Once this goal is reached the lights will turn green.

HNIA recognized the opportunity to address several neighborhood priorities at once by revitalizing a heavily-used public space, engaging community stakeholders, reducing neighborhood energy consumption, and incorporating an educational component at Edison High School. Through the Medallion Public Arts Connector, we are able to inform community members about this project and keep them updated about energy conservation progress as CEE tracks energy use in the neighborhood. HNIA utilized its NRP funds to buy-down the cost of [Enhanced Home Energy Squad](#) visits through the Center for Energy and Environment. Residents can play a direct role in “turning the lights green” by receiving a Home Energy Squad visit. Each visit earns the neighborhood a credit toward the Green Light Project. The entire community interacts with this demonstration piece, as they watch the lights change color based on how much energy has been conserved in the neighborhood.

Learn more about the NE Green Light story in this short documentary, filmed by local videographer, John Akre: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApWRgdx-iBQ#t=826>.

3. 2013 Accomplishments

Please provide information about your other accomplishments in 2013:

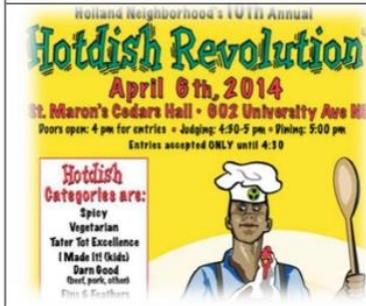
- What were your organization's major accomplishments?

HNIA YEAR-IN-REVIEW 2013- 2014

Here are some of the activities HNIA undertook in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Community Events

- 10th Annual Hotdish Revolution
- NE Green Light Iron Pour Event
- All Northeast Community & School BBQ
- Open Eye Theatre Puppet Show in the Basin
- Soup for Art fundraiser and Future Tommie Night



NRP Programs and Projects

- NE Green Light Project (pictured)
- Holland Rain Garden Program (pictured)
- MWMO Phase I renovation at Edison parking lot (pictured)
- Small Area Plan
- NRP Phase II Action Plan Approved by Neighborhood and City
- Holland Economic Mainstreet Initiative (HEMI) — Commercial Loan Program
- Home Energy Squad enhanced visits and building partnership with CEE
- Chief sponsor Edison Garden Project
- Shoreham Community Gardens



- How were individuals in your community directly impacted by your work?
 - Ten residents received raingardens at a reduced price through the Holland Neighborhood Raingarden Program.
 - Over twenty individuals received plots at the Shoreham Community Gardens.
 - Residents and stakeholders contributed to the completion of the Holland NRP Phase II Action Plan, which allocates over \$450,000 to projects and programs that will directly benefits neighborhood stakeholders.
 - HNIA helped fund programming and community events at Jackson Square Park, which served youth and families throughout Northeast Minneapolis.
 - HNIA helped build a sense of community through the Hotdish Revolution, Central Avenue Open Streets, its monthly General Meetings, the Holland Small Area Plan, NE Green Light Iron Pour Event, Northeast Community and School BBQ, and other community engagement activities.
 - Seven residents received low-interest or forgivable home improvement loans in 2013.
 - HNIA began developing a commercial loan program to serve neighborhood businesses. This was facilitated in part due to the feedback received through the NRP Phase II focus group meetings and survey. The commercial loan program is expected to begin in 2014.

4. *Housing*

What percentage of time did your organization spend on housing-related activities?

HNIA spent about half of its time on housing-related activities. Much of this time was attributed to developing strategies for the NRP Phase II Action Plan.

5. *Financial Reports*

Please provide an income and expense report for your organization for the year. (Please include all funding sources).

In addition to your annual report, please take time to describe your interactions with City departments and other jurisdictions.

1. *Impact*

What interactions with City departments occupied a major part of your time? What worked well? What could be improved?

HNIA received much assistance from Neighborhood Support Specialist, Jack Whitehurst, to manage NRP contracts and activities and to complete the Holland NRP Phase II Action Plan. We also interacted frequently with the Development Finance Division to manage NRP and CPP contracts. The staff at these two departments were consistently helpful and responsive in assisting HNIA. We also received helpful support from the 2nd Precinct Police and 1st Ward City Council Member.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate your overall experience with your interactions with the City? 5

2. *City Communications – effectiveness*

Is the information that you receive from the City understandable and useful?

The majority of information that we receive from the City is very understandable and useful. The only exception to this is notice of public hearings, particularly related to zoning changes or ordinance changes. These notices often do not contain any descriptions of the proposal; rather, they include only the technical language and ordinance numbers.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate overall communications from the City? 4

3. *City Communications – timeliness*

Do you receive adequate notice of City activities in your neighborhood? If not, did your organization inform somebody at the City of this? Did the City respond in a positive manner? Please explain.

We receive adequate notice on most City activities. However, we do not receive sufficient notification for graffiti enforcement. HNIA regularly has to abate graffiti at a playground that we manage, and we often learn that we only have a 2-3 days to remove the graffiti by the time we receive the letter. We have not informed anybody at the City about the insufficient notice for graffiti enforcement.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the timeliness of communications from the City? 4

4. City Departments

How can City departments improve the way in which they function in your neighborhood?

The City can continue to streamline its services and increase the simplicity of carrying out neighborhood improvement projects. Assistance from the NCR has been very helpful in this regard. This is something that could be improved in other City departments.

5. City Assistance

How can the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department improve the assistance it provides to your organization as a community participation group?

The NCR has been very helpful in assisting HNIA to carry out its NRP and CPP activities. One way that the NCR could improve assistance is by providing clearer guidelines regarding eligible/ineligible uses of CPP funds. Though there are some clear guidelines in place (e.g. any food expenses are ineligible), there are other expenses, such as sponsorships for outreach-related events, that are more difficult to discern. A document explaining eligibility of CPP funds in greater detail could help neighborhood boards of directors make funding decisions. Additionally, it would be very helpful to have a funding stream that does include food as an eligible expense. Providing food at community events is one the most effective ways to engage stakeholders. Local businesses have helped meet this need by donating food for events. However, this can be very time consuming for the neighborhood and can become burdensome of businesses as well.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent, how would you rate the assistance provided to your neighborhood by NCR? 5

6. Other comments?