

NENA 2002 Annual Meeting and Elections Held

This year's NENA Annual Neighborhood Meeting, held April 11, was both productive and a lot of fun for the 100 residents and volunteers who attended.

Neighbors had a chance to socialize over a dinner graciously donated by several of the neighborhood's best pizzerias. They also bid on silent auction items donated by Nokomis East and Twin Cities area businesses. The auction raised close to \$1,400 for NENA programs and events. Fun was had during a hot bidding war over St. Paul Saints tickets, passes to see *Triple Espresso* at the Music Box Theatre, and a CD player disguised as a New Beetle.



Keewaydin residents holding elections for neighborhood representatives to the Board and Steering Committee.



NENA Board Chair George D. Jelatis was honored at the Annual Meeting with two awards for outstanding service to the neighborhood, one from NENA, and one from Council Member Sandra Colvin Roy.

Participants at the meeting mingled around displays of NENA's projects and talked to volunteers about the work NENA is doing in housing, environment, people services and economic development. Everyone received a copy of the 2001 Annual Report, giving them a chance to peek into NENA's inner workings and progress made over the past year.

Near the end of the evening, NENA volunteers received a small gift in appreciation for the time, energy, expertise and enthusiasm they bring to the organization. Volunteers who have been with NENA for over a year received a travel coffee mug with NENA's logo and the

2001 Annual Report

Released just in time for the Neighborhood Meeting, NENA's *2001 Annual Report* contains a wealth of information on what your neighborhood association and volunteers have accomplished to date, what's currently in the works, and NENA's vision for the future.

The following sections are summarized from the full report. Printed copies of the *2001 Annual Report* may be picked up at the NENA office or you may call us to arrange mail delivery.

A Message From the NENA Chairman and President

NENA has grown, since I first joined in 1995, from a small, purely volunteer organization with town meetings and a tiny budget, to a large, vigorous organization with many volunteers, an office and staff, and a significant budget from the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). Today, NENA has over twenty neighborhood improvement projects in progress, and opportunities for more.

2001 in Review
2001 was an interesting and busy year for your neighborhood association.

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inscription, "Thanks for being a Volunteer!" Volunteers in their first year with NENA received a T-shirt printed with the Nokomis East neighborhood sign.

Election Results:
NENA's annual elections resulted in the reelection of several incumbents and the addition of new volunteers to NENA's Board and Steering Committee. Newly elected to the NENA Board were



Neighbors look over some of the 83 items up for bids during NENA's first silent auction.

Laura Bishop, representing Keewaydin, and Henry Peterson, representing Morris Park. Newly elected to the Steering Committee were Marc Farley Zilka representing Keewaydin, Kent Knopp Schwyn representing Wenonah, and Melody Swor and Bob Wied as at-large representatives.



The brains behind the evening's event. From the left: Rita Ulrich, NENA Executive Director; Jennifer Arlen, Associate Director; Krista Hong, event coordinator.

12th Ward Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy and residents look over an upcoming Economic Development project display.



2002 Minneapolis Aquatennial

and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board



Festival of Neighborhoods

Bring your family and join with your neighbors at the Nokomis Community Center for the 2002 Minneapolis Aquatennial community picnic.

Free music, food, and family activities throughout the evening will highlight this year's outdoor community event.

Friday, July 26, 5-9 P.M.

Nokomis Community Center
2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy

- Live Music
- Moon Walk
- Showmobile Stage
- Dog Obedience Show
- Preschool Dancers
- Children's Drama Group
- Pony Rides
- Ball Crawl

Entertainment schedule for the Showmobile stage:

- 5:00-5:45 - Performer Will Hale
- 5:45-6:00 - Dance or Drama
- 6:00-7:00 - Sanok Dixieland Band
- 7:00-7:30 - Dog Obedience Show
- 7:30-9:00 - Looking Glass Band

For more information, or for last minute schedule updates, call Nokomis Park at 612-370-4923

NENA Review

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Several projects, such as the home loan program and the Blue Water Commission, progressed very well. NENA has been making good progress on its Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) Full Plan, with over 20 projects underway and many others completed.

Major events:

- Changes in tax law put future NRP funding in question
- Site plan reviews conducted at City request generates controversy
- Gathering Grounds coffee shop closes and Marimar Cafe is established in its place
- Nokomis Village [business] Association suspends operations and discontinues Nokomis Days
- NENA Board begins long term strategic planning
- The second Night Before New Years event is held.

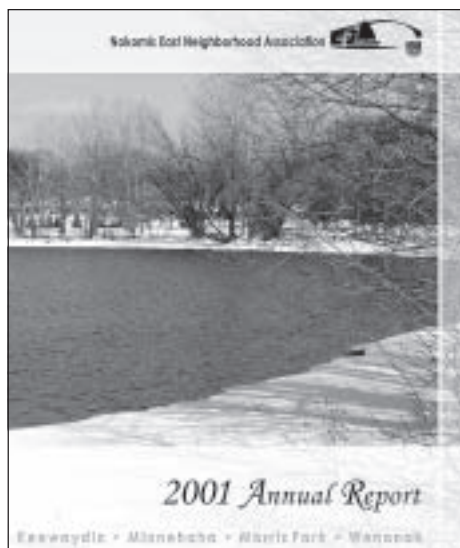
Looking Forward

While we all agree that our community of four neighborhoods is the best in the city, there are still lots of opportunities to make it better. NENA's biggest challenge over the next few years will be to use our NRP funds well, and at the same time, decide what we want NENA to do for our community, and to find other sources of funding.

2002 will be a year of assessment and planning. NENA has NRP phase 1 funding for 2002, but phase 2 funding levels are still uncertain. If we have a clear vision of what we want to do to improve our community, I am confident that we will be able to secure funding through grants and fund raising.

All of which takes us back to what NENA is: NENA is first, an association of neighbors, volunteering to improve

their local community; it is also an independent 501(3)(c) non-profit corporation; and it is a grouping of four neighborhoods, three grade-school attendance areas, three community centers, several small and one good sized business node. NENA serves as the planning, contracting and fiscal agent for NRP projects; a communications channel from members to city government; and a vehicle for neighbors working together to improve their community.



NENA's mission was recently restated by the Board as:

The mission of Nokomis East Neighborhood Association is to better the quality of life and build a sense of community pride by sponsoring actions that help people, businesses, homes and the environment. NENA creates and manages solutions by leading a community-based process that advocates for the neighborhood and empowers members of our community.

NENA in the future can be whatever its members want it to be, so long as they are willing to participate, to listen, to speak, to express their concerns, to volunteer, to make a difference.

George D. Jelatis
NENA President and Board Chair

2001 Highlights

Your neighborhood association started 2001 with one staff member, a group of enthusiastic volunteers, and very ambitious plans. By the end of the year we had added two people to our staff and found that, while we are getting more done, everyone is still very busy. Here are some highlights of NENA activities for 2001:

Meetings and Events:

- NENA hosted nine town meetings and special events
- Held over 60 board, committee, and task force meetings and six zoning variance and site plan review meetings
- Participated as a sponsor of the South Minneapolis Housing Fair
- Attended numerous community meetings on issues such as LRT, affordable housing, Highway 55 landscaping, and the future of NRP

Projects:

- NENA implemented eighteen new and on-going projects: seven Housing programs, six People Services programs, three Environmental projects, and two Economic Development projects
- Began planning four new projects
- Won the NRP Best Environmental Project Award for our work at Lake Nokomis
- Conducted a lottery for the housing programs
- Reviewed the status of all our NRP projects, and developed an evaluation form for completed projects
- Redesigned the Children First initiative to make it more responsive to community needs

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Organizational:

- Developed a new logo for NENA
- Produced four *NENA Review* newsletters
- Wrote twelve columns for the *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger*
- Developed an email list to notify volunteers and residents of upcoming items of interest
- Amended the bylaws to expand membership to include people who own property, own or operate a business, or work in the neighborhood
- Welcomed 25 new volunteers to the organization
- Held a training session for volunteers on running effective meetings
- Adopted a conflict of interest policy and a task force organization and process model
- Remodeled the office
- Networked the office computers
- Completed our 2000 financial audit by the State Auditor with excellent results

Housing Programs

Perhaps the most noticeable of the Housing projects in 2001 was the addition of Nokomis East neighborhood signs to NENA's borders. These signs, designed and voted on by the community at a series of town meetings, were posted at entryways to the neighborhood in the fall. NENA continues to compile and distribute Welcome Wagon Packets as part of its housing program. NENA offered \$600,000 in 2001 for



Low Interest and Deferred Home Improvement Loans, Emergency Repair Grants, and Deferred Loans to Augment the Part 150 Sound Insulation program. Over 300 residents entered the lottery which determines the order in which applications will be processed. Approximately 75 homeowners have been offered loans.

People Services and Safety

The People Services and Safety Task Force oversaw six ongoing NRP projects that serve children, youth, families and seniors. The Children First program was redesigned into a Mini-Grant program that allows organizations to use funds for projects that best meet the needs of the children and youth they serve.

In September, the new Keewaydin Playground was officially opened and dedicated. The project, which was several years in planning, was jointly funded by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, NENA, and Minneapolis Public Schools.

NENA has been providing funding to the Nokomis Healthy Seniors (NHS) Program since 1997. NHS was very active with their outreach last year including a board organized direct mail campaign. NHS received the news last year that

they were not chosen to receive another round of State funding, but they will be receiving an additional \$8,000 in NRP funds from NENA.

NENA continued to work with Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) staff and the Hiawatha YMCA to offer parenting classes in the neighborhood.

2001 was the last year of the NENA-YMCA Youth Drop-In Center. The center, located at Minnehaha United Methodist Church, offered youth ages 9-14 a place to go after school. The center provided games, sports, homework help, crafts, fieldtrips and other activities to 127 youth.

Another program supported by NENA is the Minnehaha Falls Athletic Council (MFAC). MFAC organizes athletic programs for youth ages 5-16, in cooperation with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Task force members are currently looking into the possibility of having a Police Buy Back program. The project would "buy back" hours of a police officer's time to monitor the neighborhood on the days and times we specify. Such a program would

allow us to target specific locations and add extra police presence on higher crime days.



Don Generoux, Principal of Keewaydin School, officiated the opening of the new playground at a special ceremony.

Environmental Programs

The work of the Blue Water Commission, a joint neighborhood project working to upgrade the water quality



The Naturescape Gardens, four years old last summer, are a collaborative effort on the part of many volunteers.

of Lake Nokomis and Lake Hiawatha, continued to proceed this past year in the formation of the *Blue Water Association*, a nonprofit organization in support of the goals and recommendations of the Commission's report.

The Blue Water Association's mission is to implement the recommendations of the Blue Water Commission and thereby improve and protect the water quality of Lakes Nokomis and Hiawatha.

Great progress was made this year in implementing several recommended projects:

- Three wetland ponds and plantings were completed
- A weir and grit chambers were installed
- The prairie naturescape shoreline restoration was constructed.

The number of volunteers helping with the upkeep and maintenance of the Naturescape Gardens is on the rise with the newest group, *The Wild Ones*, adopting the Hillside garden. Many volunteers worked tirelessly to keep the gardens in good shape in the face of a not-so-good growing year and troublesome weather.

Tree Trust and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board - Forestry Division, through a federal grant, started a partnership with NENA and 19

other neighborhood groups to inform citizens about urban and community forestry.

This partnership has fostered the development of "Tree Keepers" workshops being held in 2002 to provide residents with the tools to implement and maintain their urban forests. In addition, over 150 boulevard trees were planted in the neighborhood as well as some additional trees at the Oak Point Arboretum.

Economic Development

2001 was an active and transitional year for Economic Development. Starting the year with Cynthia Coleman as its new Chairperson, the Economic Development Committee realized an expansion of the volunteer base, the initiation of several new projects, and a greater sense of purpose. By year's end, the Committee was transformed into the new Economic Development Task Force, functioning under a different, more open and flexible operational model.

The year 2001 was also a time of learning and development. In a series of seminars, Economic Development members furthered their skills in prioritizing projects and creating action plans. A City planner reviewed the process for commercial site plan reviews and walked through a current proposal. Economic Development invited a planner from the MTC to discuss future bus route expansions

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The Economic Development Task Force is incorporating elements from the Nokomis East Streetscape Plan into an upcoming Commercial Facade Design Guide.

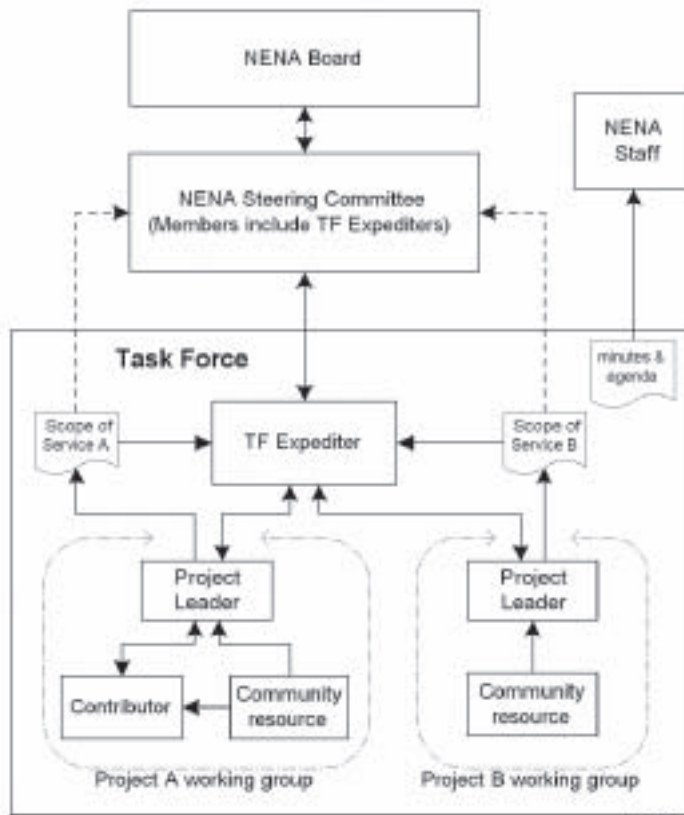
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and other transportation issues related to the LRT. Economic Development members also took part in a series of City Planning sessions and a public forum on parking and traffic concerns near the Minnehaha and Veteran's Administration LRT stations.

Economic Development had several projects moving through the various planning and approval stages during the year. The Neighborhood Bikeways Project designates several streets to be marked with bicycle awareness signs along with official status and marking on recreational maps (See Page 7).

With the opening of LRT and the ambitious 46th Street commercial redevelopment on the near horizon, Economic Development has been pursuing several avenues to improve and strengthen our neighborhood's business climate. The first such project, nearing readiness, is a program designed to provide matching funds to commercial property owners to improve their building and business facades. A commercial façade design guide is being produced to aid property owners in planning the restoration or modification of existing building facades.

Economic Development's new Task Force model represents a positive change in the way the group functions. Foremost, it opens the process up, making it easier for qualified residents, neighborhood workers, and business and property owners to join the Task Force or one of its working groups. An advantage is that it allows any serious party to initiate a project by



Task Force and Working Group model showing the communications flow of two projects being developed simultaneously.

forming a working group. Economic Development has several strategies and goals for the future. A major goal is to increase communications with the neighborhood's business and commercial property owners. Another is to increase the attraction to shoppers for those services and goods that they might otherwise be traveling out of the neighborhood to purchase.

2001 Contributors

NENA would like to thank all the individuals and organizations who contributed grants, or donated funds and in-kind contributions of goods and services in 2001.

- Bergan's Super Valu
- Best Maid Cookie Company
- Bill St. Mane's Sporting Goods
- Carbone's
- Fat Lorenzo's
- Ginelli's Pizza
- HealthPartners
- Johnson Brothers Meats
- Diana Larsen
- Marimar Café
- McDonald's Liquor Store
- Metropolitan Council
- Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods
- Minnehaha United Methodist Church
- Mississippi Market
- Morris Park Neighborhood Center
- Nokomis Beach Coffee Shop
- Nokomis Branch Library
- Nokomis Community Center
- Old Dutch Potato Chips
- Olson's Ace Hardware
- Pan-O-Gold Bakery Shop
- Pizza Hut
- Sanok Dixieland Band
- Scandia Bake Shop
- Skylane Bowl
- Super America
- TNT Video
- Rita Ulrich
- Village Hair
- Doug Walter
- Wells Fargo
- Linda Wogstad

Thank You!

Making Nokomis East Bicycle Friendly

NENA will soon have official bicycle routes directing bicyclists through and around the neighborhood. Volunteers from NENA’s Economic Development and Environmental task forces began working on the project a year ago when the city asked neighborhoods to consider designating routes to become part of a citywide system.

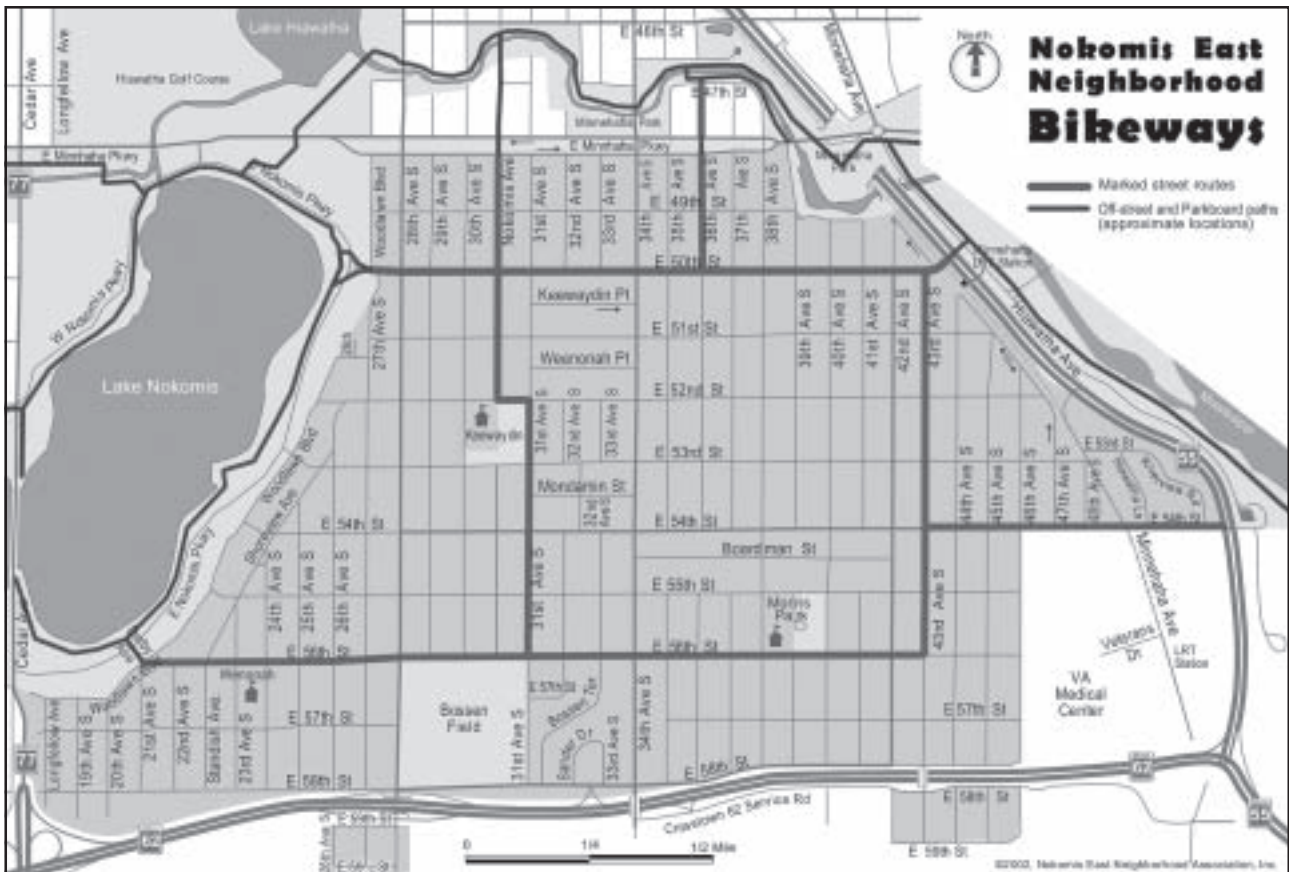
Working with the City of Minneapolis Public Works and a member of the Minnesota Bicycle Advisory Committee, the group chose the routes shown below based on traffic levels and safety considerations, access to popular commercial and recreational destinations, and connections to existing bike routes and LRT stations. The routes will be marked with signs.

Why signs? There are several options for creating bike routes. In areas where there is sufficient space, a separate path can be built. In built-up areas like NENA, routes need to go on existing streets. A route can be created by adding a bicycle lane or it can be designated by signs on a street. Adding bicycle lanes requires wide streets and even then may involve removing parking on

one or both sides of the street. Most of the streets in NENA are not wide enough to add a bike lane, and the few that are, such as 50th Street, would have to eliminate parking on one side of the street.

Designating routes by signs is the least expensive of the options. Signs point bicyclists to the most direct and safest routes through the neighborhood. They also remind motorists that they may see a bicycle on the road and that they should be cautious. The routes are not mandatory, of course, and the rules of the road don’t change for bicyclists or motorists.

The signs were planned to go up this summer. However, in response to residents’ concerns, the city is re-designing the residential bike route signs. The original, bright yellow “Share the Road” signs will now be used only on heavily trafficked streets such as 1st Ave., downtown. For residential neighborhoods such as ours, the city is planning a modest green sign with a white bicycle symbol to be paired with a modest circular marker specific to the neighborhood. It will say “Nokomis East Bike Route” or something similar. The signs are expected to go up later this year.



Imagine 30,000 Minneapolis residents taking to the streets to join 32,000,000 other people across the country to celebrate neighborliness, safety and community. That's what will happen on August 6. This year National Night Out (NNO) will be 19 years old and it's expected that 1,800 Minneapolis block clubs will host more than 800 block parties. Some will be as simple as neighbors sharing lemonade while others will have music, dancing, pot-lucks, games, and other events. "Get Out; Get Acquainted" is this year's NNO theme. CCP/SAFE, a unit of the Minneapolis Police Department, is coordinating the event.



and to encourage inactive and new clubs to organize, CCP/SAFE is promoting the 4th Annual NNO Planning Week, June 24-27. Block clubs holding a planning meeting between 6/24 and 6/27 will qualify for a drawing for special prizes.

Street Barricade Deadlines:

- **July 9** - Free barricades for applications received or postmarked by July 9th
- **July 10-23** - \$15 fee for applications postmarked between July 10 and July 23rd
- **July 24** - All requests for barricades will be denied for applications postmarked after July 23rd

Applications can be gotten through the City Clerk's office by calling 673-2114.

NNO Planning Week June 24-27

Every year, when block clubs get ready for NNO, many clubs scramble at the last minute to get their parties together. In order to help active block clubs prepare for NNO

If you have planning questions call the NNO Hotline at 612-673-3568. For information about NNO or about starting a block club, call 612-673-3568.

NENA Review

Nokomis East Neighborhood Association
 3000 East 50th Street
 Minneapolis, MN 55417

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June / July 2002

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