

Community Safety meeting minutes – July 24, 2014, 6:00 p.m. at 1925 Nicollet Ave.



Present: Ken Strobel and Michele McGaughey, co-chairs; Anne Forsyth-Gillette, Hennepin County Community Probation; Todd Loining, Chelsea Adams, Aimee Colegrove, Brianna Garman, Roosevelt Walls Jr, and Troy Dillard, Minneapolis Police department; Jennifer Saunders, City Attorney's office; Tracy Fuller, Minnesota Teen Challenge; Mary Gunderson, CVS; Dave Hautman, Franklin Nicollet Liquor; Aaron Szczech, Laura Blue Bird, Amanda Hilligoss, Jerry Paulson, Jill Ferguson, Matt Gerard, Emma Erspamer, John Champe, Dakotah Johnson, Christina Kramarevsky, David Fox, Robert Kneviel, Sara Hylwa, Rebecca Konietzko, and SSCO safety coordinator Dave Delvoe (dave_ssc@yahoo.com)

Note: A sheet with some of the information presented at this meeting is available from SSCO on request. Contact the safety coordinator at dave_ssc@yahoo.com or 874-2840.

Agenda item	Notes/decisions	Follow up
Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Stevens Square farmers market takes place every Wednesday from 2:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the Plymouth Church parking lot on the northwest corner of Franklin & Nicollet. ▪ The Red Hot Art festival in Stevens Square Park is set for 7/26 and 7/27. Staff from Minneapolis 311 will have an information table thanks to event organizer John Louis. ▪ Everyone is invited to attend the Stevens Square – Loring Heights National Night Out party on 8/5, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., in Stevens Square Park. The event is being organized by staff and volunteers from Historic Abbott Apartments, The Apartment Shop, MN Adult & Teen Challenge, and SSCO. Other sponsors include Stevens Community Apartments, Rand Management, 1920 4th Ave Resident Council, Kleinman Realty, Copenhagen Enterprises, and Mint Properties. 	Next Community Safety meeting: Thursday, 8/28, at 6 p.m. at 1925 Nicollet Ave
Updates from law enforcement partners – Inspector Todd Loining, CPS Chelsea Adams, Officers Aimee Colegrove, Brianna Garman, Roosevelt Walls Jr, Troy Dillard, Community Attorney Jennifer Saunders, Probation Officer Anne	<p><u>Presentation</u> by Chelsea Adams: A list and map of Part 1 crimes reported in the neighborhood during the past month showed one sexual assault (involving a known suspect), three robberies of person at gunpoint (6/29 at 18th & 1st, 7/9 at 137 East 17th St, 7/18 at 300 Ridgewood Ave), one garage burglary, one motor vehicle theft, four thefts from motor vehicles, and six other incidents of theft.</p> <p><u>Presentation</u> by Jennifer Saunders: 5th Precinct CLEAN list. The list was recently updated to remove those who are no longer offending here and to add others who are causing problems in the community. Saunders provided updates on eleven offenders frequently arrested in the neighborhood. Staff made available the results of five criminal cases SSCO has been tracking.</p> <p><u>Presentation</u> by SSCO staff: From January through June, violent crime in the neighborhood was down 24.2% and property crime was down 3.5% compared to last year. This includes an 83.4% drop in incidents of criminal sexual conduct/rape, a 53% decline in burglaries, and a 14.3% decrease in aggravated assaults. The number of robberies and motor vehicle thefts remained the same as last year.</p> <p>SSCO staff reported that, in a phone conversation on 7/16, Mike Gephart, the program manager for Hennepin County Community Corrections' Adult Field Services – which includes Neighborhood Probation – stated that the County's commitment to maintaining the Stevens Square Probation office is as firm as it's ever been. (The office started here</p>	<p>Chelsea.Adams@Minneapolismn.gov 673-2819</p> <p>Crime Prevention Resources</p> <p>911 / 311 information</p> <p>CRT line (to report suspected drug and prostitution activity at specific addresses or locations): 673-5716</p> <p>Jennifer.Saunders@Minneapolismn.gov</p>

Forsyth-Gillette	as a pilot project for neighborhood-based probation in 1998.) Gephart stated that there are no plans right now to move that office, and that if there were such plans, SSCO would be consulted and included in the process. Gephart stated that if the County were to move the office in the future, priority one would be to keep it in the Stevens Square – Loring Heights neighborhood or at least in the 5 th Precinct. Gephart affirmed the County’s ongoing partnership with SSCO.	673-5402
Neighborhood-related safety ideas and concerns	<p><u>Community concern</u> Drug-dealing and related loitering and traffic at three addresses: 1820 Stevens Ave, 1721 3rd Ave, 1801 3rd Ave. SSCO staff will follow up with the property owners. Call 911 to report incidents in progress; callers may ask to remain anonymous if they fear retaliation by those involved. Make sure to provide the address or location of the incident and a description of the suspects and the activity. If the situation changes, call 911 with an update. Call the 5th Precinct Community Response Team (CRT) at 673-5716 to report details of ongoing activity (who, what, when, where) so that they can gather evidence to open a narcotics investigation. Ask property managers to post MPD-issued No Trespassing signs, which provide officers with probable cause to stop and identify persons loitering at a property and to send or cite them for trespassing if they don’t belong there. Another option is for managers to give keys to the building to officers – contact Chelsea Adams to arrange that.</p> <p><u>Community concern</u> Drug-related loitering and traffic in the Clinton sector (3rd Ave to 4th Ave, I-94 to Franklin Ave), especially at 19th & 3rd. In addition to the addresses above, there have been complaints about suspicious loitering at 19th & 3rd and at an apartment building on the 1900 block of 3rd Ave. There was one police report in this area in the past month, a damage to motor vehicle incident at 18th & Clinton on 7/1.</p> <p>Arrests for drug offenses in the larger area from Lyndale Ave to 4th Ave, I-94 to 24th St, are down 38.1% compared to last year.</p> <p><u>Community concern</u> Illegal consumption of alcohol in the neighborhood. Arrests for alcohol offenses in the area from Lyndale Ave to 4th Ave, I-94 to 24th St, are down 36.8% compared to last year. Total arrests in this area for alcohol, drug, and prostitution offenses are down 37.6% compared to last year. Alcohol arrests in Stevens Square Park are down 73.4% compared to last year.</p> <p><u>Safety ideas</u> A community member presented information about the Green Dot violence reduction strategy which targets power-based personal violence such as stalking, violence against a partner or a child, and sexual violence. The idea is for bystanders to confront, interrupt, or prevent such acts rather than ignoring them. If a bystander concludes that he or she can safely intervene in such a situation, three main techniques have proved effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distract either or both of the people involved in order to interrupt the situation; or ▪ If it proves unsafe to act alone, get others involved, such as friends or persons in authority; or ▪ Confront either or both of the people involved directly and take charge of the situation. <p>The premise is that if a bystander sees or hears something alarming, there are ways to take action safely and effectively to prevent violence from occurring or to stop violent incidents in progress. If one person takes the initiative to act, others are likely to step up and give support. The Green Dot approach has been adopted in a variety of school and community settings.</p>	
Block Patrol news – Ken	<u>Presentation</u> by Ken Strobel: From 6/27 to 7/24, 10 Block Patrol volunteers participated in 17 shifts, contributing 45 hours. Probation Officer Anne Forsyth-Gillette came along on two of the shifts. 3 new members joined Block Patrol.	

<p>Strobel</p>	<p>During the past month, Block Patrol teams: conducted surveillance at six addresses where there have been complaints about suspicious traffic and possible drug dealing; gave Block Patrol information to eight neighborhood residents; called 911 to report two offenders trespassing on the steps of a condo building – and cancelled the call after the suspects moved along; watched a person throwing rocks at an apartment building to get the attention of someone inside – the person stopped after seeing the team; watched an offender wandering through alleys pushing a baby stroller containing an open twelve-pack of beer; spoke with the owner of Scratchy’s Book Box – a little free library dedicated to the resident cat – who was sitting on the front porch, reading a book; took information from a person who had repeatedly witnessed drug dealing behind an apartment building and suggested that the person call the 5th Precinct Community Response Team at 673-5716; came across three intoxicated people camped out on a mattress on MNDOT property along I-94; reported to Xcel Energy two pairs of shoes hanging from a power line; picked up trash in and along the streets, including a cement block and a light fixture; noticed a number of restaurants and coffee shops closed during daytime hours due to Ramadan; saw the aftermath of a vehicle break-in in the parking lot of a condo building; found a pair of downhill skis and poles in an area of overgrown weeds near a parking lot; encountered a certain offender five different times – and in possession of a different bike each time; spoke with a well-known neighborhood gardener, off-duty Block Patrol members, a mother and her three daughters who were fascinated by a team’s canine volunteers, and about three dozen other community members; gave directions to a person looking for Franklin Ave; watched an offender loitering at Franklin & Nicollet three hours after he had been released from jail following an arrest for disorderly conduct at the same location; participated in a spontaneous dog meet-up involving a half-dozen canines and their owners; spoke with a group of student volunteers who were making landscape improvements to a residential property; stopped at a rental property office several times for treats for canine and human volunteers and to share information with rental staff; checked numerous times on the status of the Family Dollar store in the Mall Center – the “opening soon” sign is gone; spoke with a local business owner who was carrying an “I Love Stevens Square” tote bag; thanked a civic-minded young boy who gave the team an unidentified object which he found on the sidewalk and thought might be dangerous.</p>	<p>Join Block Patrol – it’s an easy and fun way to get to know people in your neighborhood and find out what’s happening here. Contact: dave_ssco@yahoo.com or Dave at 874-2840</p> <p>Application and guidelines are at the SSCO web site.</p>
<p>Community Safety plan</p> <p>Results of the Block Patrol program evaluation</p>	<p><u>Presentation</u> by SSCO staff: Copies of a summary of the Block Patrol program evaluation were distributed and a copy of the entire report written by Aaron Szczech for a graduate class project at Metropolitan State University was passed around. (Contact SSCO to receive a copy of these documents.) The summary covered the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose of the evaluation: to understand the effectiveness of Block Patrol in meeting the needs of the community and how the group can be enhanced to improve its performance and better cope with those needs within the framework of SSCO’s strategic plan. ▪ Overview of the program: its primary goals, strategies, and intended beneficiaries. ▪ Evaluation methods: a survey completed by 25 of 41 current and past volunteers (61%) from 2009 to 2013. ▪ Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Background information: 12 current and 13 past volunteers completed the survey. ○ Recruitment strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 20% recruited from door-to-door campaigns, 20% from street walk-ups, 16% from Safety meetings, 8% from community events, 36% from other methods (saw a flyer posted in a building, spoke with friends or neighbors who were involved, looked up information on their own). ▪ 76% were renters, 24% owners. ▪ Stevens Community Apartments’ rental subsidy is an effective incentive to recruit and keep volunteers. 	

- Overall volunteer satisfaction:
 - The survey posed eight statements with responses on a one-to-five scale with one being “strongly disagree” and five being “strongly agree”: satisfied with volunteer service; satisfied with shift availability; satisfied with the mission of increasing safety; satisfied with the mission of working with police; feel that volunteer service was worthwhile; feel that volunteer service has made a difference in the neighborhood; feel that Block Patrol is meeting the needs of the community; satisfied with communication about shifts.
 - An analysis of the responses showed that 20 of 25 volunteers agreed or strongly agreed with all of the statements, 4 averaged in the middle of the range, and 1 disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements. This means that the majority of current and past volunteers feel very satisfied with the aspects of the program which were evaluated. Both current and past volunteers share the same attitudes toward the program and feel equally satisfied.
- Volunteer suggestions and comments.
 - What is working well with Block Patrol? The majority of responses related to the value of having a close relationship with police. Other responses related to community building and organizing, the flexibility and leadership of the program, and team spirit.
 - How can Block Patrol be more helpful to the community? The overall breakdown of answers indicates that the program does not need any changes to make it more helpful to the community. Some respondents did suggest that additional work on cleaning up the neighborhood as part of the overall mission could be beneficial. Others liked the idea of increased organizing and outreach.
 - How can Block Patrol be made more attractive to join? Broadening the incentives, such as the rental subsidy, would help recruit more volunteers. More outreach would help potential volunteers understand the program.
 - Should Block Patrol dedicate shifts to neighborhood beautification? Is this type of service something Block Patrol should or should not be taking part in? 9 volunteers were in favor, 10 were opposed, and 2 were unsure. If you believe that Block Patrol should be engaged in beautification projects, what type of project would be most helpful to the community? 10 of 11 responses suggested cleaning up trash and/or graffiti.
- Discussion:
 - The current recruiting strategies appear to be working both to entice new members and keep them volunteering.
 - The majority of current and past volunteers believe in the program’s mission. They view their experiences as rewarding and believe that they are making a difference in the community. They also believe that Block Patrol is making a difference in the community. They expressed views that Block Patrol’s main mission is working well for the community. Suggestions for how to improve the program involved minimal tweaks and not major changes to the overall structure of the program. They saw incentives as important in recruiting volunteers and that outreach activities should be increased on all levels.
 - Support for expanding the mission to include beautification activities was split about 50/50. However, it may be worthwhile to test such an idea; the suggestion appeals to some and not to others. A mandated program change might not be wise and could potentially harm the program.
- Conclusion: From the point of view of current and past volunteers, Block Patrol is meeting the needs of the community and very few enhancements are needed to cope with those needs within the framework of SSCO’s strategic plan. Final recommendations for enhancements:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase outreach and focus more efforts on meeting with community members where they live and on talking with them about issues. ○ Expand efforts to pass out flyers at all apartment buildings. ○ Increase awareness of residents of Stevens Community Apartments about the incentives available to them. <p>The evaluation was well received by the group, who thanked the author of the study. There was a discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of adding late night Block Patrol shifts to the schedule; ways to persuade other rental property owners to provide subsidies for their tenants to participate; and conducting surveys while door-knocking.</p>	
Review of SSCO's strategic plan	Copies of a summary of SSCO's strategic plan were distributed, which highlighted the sections related to Community Safety. The committee had studied the plan in detail over the course of several meetings last winter. The group reviewed the plan and, in light of the Block Patrol evaluation results, suggested one amendment. On a motion by Mary Gunderson, seconded by Aaron Szczech, the committee recommended that the Board remove "Create SSCO ambassadors type program" as a strategy from the Safety section of the plan and replace it with "Implement the recommendations of the Block Patrol program evaluation".	
Election of committee co-chairs	<p>The SSCO Board has instituted two-year staggered terms for committee co-chairs, so that one would be elected each year. In order to implement this change, the committee was asked to elect one co-chair for a one year term and another for a two-year term.</p> <p>Staff explained the duties and responsibilities of the co-chairs and the election procedures, and conducted the election. The election for the one-year position took place first. Ken Strobel was the only candidate. The committee elected Ken Strobel to the one-year co-chair position by acclamation. Strobel will serve as co-chair through July, 2015.</p> <p>Laura Blue Bird was the only candidate for the two-year term. The committee elected Laura Blue Bird to the two-year co-chair position by acclamation. Blue Bird will serve as co-chair through July, 2016.</p> <p>Staff conducted the election to choose a committee representative to report to the SSCO Board. Ken Strobel was the only candidate. The committee recommended by acclamation that Ken Strobel represent the committee on the Board of Directors.</p>	

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Meeting minutes prepared by Dave Delvoye.