



**Stevens Square Community Organization**  
**(612) 874-2840**  
<http://www.sscoweb.org>

**Community Safety meeting minutes – September 28, 2017, 6:00 p.m. at 1925 Nicollet Ave.**

Present: Corwin Morton and John Littlejohn, co-chairs; Eric Dison and Carl Valdez, Minneapolis Police department; Matt Wilcox, City Attorney’s office; Drew Kirch, Hennepin County Neighborhood Probation; Emily Venell, Plymouth Congregational Church; Rob Helmerichs, Rand Management; Jerry Paulson, Ken Strobel, Jill Ferguson, Leslee Jackson, John Ryser, Kayla Mark, Jessica Ross, Terry Folz, Neil Burnett, and SSCO safety coordinator Dave Delvoeye ( dave\_ssco@yahoo.com )

**Note: A sheet with some of the printed information presented at this meeting is available at this [link](#) or upon request.**

Agenda item	Notes/decisions	Follow up
Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stevens Square Farmers Market: Wednesdays, 2:00 to 6:30 p.m., in the Plymouth Church parking lot on the northwest corner of Franklin &amp; Nicollet.</li> <li>▪ SSCO is co-sponsoring a forum with candidates for Minneapolis Park &amp; Rec District 4: 10/11, 6 to 9 p.m., at Loring Park Community Center, 1382 Willow St.</li> <li>▪ Next Community Safety meeting: 10/26 at 6 p.m.</li> </ul>	Next Community Safety meeting: Thursday, 10/26, at 6 p.m. at 1925 Nicollet Ave
Updates from law enforcement partners – 5 <sup>th</sup> Precinct Sgt Eric Dison, Chaplain Carl Valdez, Community Attorney Matt Wilcox, Probation Officer Drew Kirch	<p><u>Topic:</u> Loitering and criminal activity along Groveland Ave between Nicollet and LaSalle, especially on Plymouth Church property and outside the Groveland Food Shelf. Community Attorney Matt Wilcox stated that the recent problems in Stevens Square are a result of enforcement actions taken by MPD and MNDOT at the "triangle" area where Hennepin and Lyndale merge, north of Franklin Ave; the problem has been effectively displaced to Stevens Square. The City Attorney's office, with the help of MPD, has identified 13 offenders associated with the group causing the problems; 9 of them are already on CLEAN lists and the other 4 will be added. Offenders on the CLEAN list are put on supervised probation when convicted of any crimes. Wilcox and another prosecutor from the City Attorney's office will handle the cases of all 13 of these offenders. This strategy is a way to crack down on those causing problems in the area. Sgt Eric Dison said that the group has moved from the Plymouth Church property along Groveland Ave to the bus stops at Franklin &amp; Nicollet and has now established a camp on MNDOT property between 1<sup>st</sup> Ave and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave, near the Overlook garden along 17<sup>th</sup> St. MNDOT is considering a number of possible responses, from posting No Trespassing signs on the freeway fence to cutting back trees and shrubs to erecting a noise wall in order to deal with the problem. A community member stated that residents of that part of the neighborhood did not support a MNDOT proposal a few years ago to erect a noise wall along 17<sup>th</sup> St and suggested that MNDOT not pursue that strategy. SSCO staff reported that, for a week or so, the group causing problems tried camping at two locations on the vacant block between Nicollet Ave and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, from I-94 to 18<sup>th</sup> St. The two property owners of the block responded quickly, trimming and cutting down trees which provided shelter and hiding places, cleaning up trash, and posting No Trespassing signs. SSCO staff also acknowledged the quick and effective response by Plymouth Church to the problem on their property: hiring a private security guard for four hours on weekday mornings for three weeks and issuing trespass notices to those who failed to comply with orders to leave the property. The church safety manager said at the last meeting that over the winter, when the activity subsides, the church and its partners will evaluate the strategies and come up with a plan for the spring. Emily Venell, the ministry assistant for hospitality at the church, said that the area has been much quieter since the security guard was hired.</p>	<p><a href="#">Crime Prevention Resources</a></p> <p><a href="#">911 / 311 information</a></p> <p>Matthew.Wilcox@Minneapolismn.gov 673-5402</p> <p><a href="#">CRT</a> line (to report suspected drug and prostitution activity at specific addresses or locations): 673-5716</p>

	<p><u>Report by Community Attorney Matt Wilcox:</u> Update on recent cases of interest to the neighborhood:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ William Nabors (12/10/70) had his probation revoked for a gross misdemeanor trespassing case from 2/11/16 and is serving the remainder of the sentence in the workhouse, with release set for 2/18/18. A 5<sup>th</sup> degree assault case from Wedge Community Co-op on 7/19 was dismissed along with five other cases.</li> <li>▪ Melissa Bringsthem (6/12/77) is on probation, with 80 days stayed, for trespassing from 6/28/17. An open bottle case from Starbucks Coffee, 2000 Nicollet Ave, on 5/5/17, was dismissed.</li> <li>▪ Ellery Charging Thunder (2/20/54) is on supervised probation in HOMES Court, with 180 days stayed, for three cases, including open bottle at 2020 Nicollet Ave from 7/31/17. Two other cases from the area (1/23/17 consuming alcohol in public at 1907 Lyndale Ave and 6/20/17 open bottle at Plymouth Church) were dismissed along with six other cases. Charging Thunder, who is part of the group causing problems in the neighborhood, is restricted by court order from the area from I-94 to 24<sup>th</sup> St, Bryant Ave to Clinton Ave. He has already been cited twice for violating that order.</li> <li>▪ Rachael O'Gorman (12/24/76), who is part of the group causing problems in the neighborhood, was convicted of trespassing at Plymouth Church from 9/1/17 and sentenced to 90 days, stayed for one year, with conditions including stay away from Plymouth Church and remain law abiding. She is on supervised probation.</li> <li>▪ Mohamed Ahmed Abdikarin (4/15/93) and Mohamed Hassan Ahmed (12/20/92) pled guilty to felony theft which was deemed a misdemeanor for a robbery of person case at 2012 Nicollet Ave on 3/9/17. They were each sentenced to 365 days, with 335 days stayed for two years and placed on supervised probation.</li> </ul> <p>Wilcox reported that there were no significant changes regarding other offenders on the <a href="#">5<sup>th</sup> Precinct CLEAN list</a> in the past month.</p> <p><u>Topic:</u> Robberies of person in the area. There have been 12 cases of robbery reported this summer involving a perpetrator who approaches victims from behind, chokes them until they pass out, and then takes wallets and cell phones. The incidents have happened between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. Four of these incidents occurred in Stevens Square – Loring Heights during July and August. A community member who was the most recent victim reported on the incident, which occurred in the Loring Park neighborhood. The person is working with an investigator on the case and recalled that two East African males – the person heard them talking – were involved, although there is no physical description of the suspects. Wilcox said that there will be no public information available about these cases during the investigation. Dison said that there have been no recent similar incidents and that Park Police have a couple of photos of possible suspects and are trying to identify them. SSCO will track any cases from the area if a suspect is arrested and charged. Dison said that there has been only one major crime reported in the area in the past month, a rape which happened near MCAD and for which a suspect has been arrested.</p> <p>No map or list of Part 1 (serious) crimes in the neighborhood for the past month was available. Part 1 crime numbers for the neighborhood for August are not yet available on the MPD web site.</p>	
<p>Neighborhood-related safety ideas and concerns</p>	<p><u>Community concern</u> Drug-related loitering and traffic in the Clinton sector (3<sup>rd</sup> Ave to 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, I-94 to Franklin Ave), especially at 19<sup>th</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup>. There were 11 police reports in this area during the past month, compared to 7 during the previous month. There was one narcotics- and weapons-related arrest: 9/4 at Franklin &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup>. There was one aggravated assault (9/21 at the BP Service Station, 2000 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave) and one motor vehicle theft, at the same address on 8/30. No robberies of person were reported.</p>	

	<p>Year to date, in the larger area from Lyndale Ave to 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, I-94 to 24<sup>th</sup> St, there have been 32 narcotics-related arrests compared to 34 in 2016. Alcohol-related arrests in the same area are down 39.8%, from 68 in 2016 to 41 this year.</p> <p>A community member reported that, late at night, Somali criminals often come into the neighborhood in vehicles and try to sell drugs (crack and meth), solicit females for prostitution, and rob people on the street. A second community member disagreed and said that there was no such activity after 10 p.m. The first community member suggested that Block Patrol organize patrols at night to combat this activity and that SSCO hold a fundraiser (pancake breakfast) in partnership with Plymouth Church to purchase and distribute whistles and key ring flashlights to community members who are out late at night. Other community members liked the idea of providing whistles to residents so that they can signal if they are in trouble and perhaps deter assailants – one could use them regardless of the time of day. The first community member also asked about whether free self-defense classes are available.</p> <p>There was a question about whether the City has responded to complaints about the condition of a sidewalk at an address near 17<sup>th</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup>. Staff will try to follow up with 311.</p>	
<p>Block Patrol news – Ken Strobel</p>	<p><u>Presentation</u> by Ken Strobel: From 8/25 to 9/28, 13 Block Patrol volunteers participated in 23 shifts, contributing 76 hours. 4 new volunteers joined Block Patrol.</p> <p>During the past month, Block Patrol teams: spoke with dozens of community members on the streets; spoke with our Franklin Nicollet beat officers; frequently patrolled the park, LaSalle Community Garden, Groveland Ave by Plymouth Church, and the parking lot by the Third Avenue Market; visited Scratchy's book box; spoke with the owner of the Third Avenue Market several times about loitering, trespassing, and other problems in the parking lot on the south side of the building; on 8/31 reported to 311 a futon mattress in a bright red cover abandoned on the sidewalk at 1700 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave – it took over ten days to get the problem resolved; on a rainy evening, encountered a professional photographer at 17<sup>th</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> who was taking photos of the downtown skyline – he said that he was born in Paris and has been in Minneapolis for about two years; on 9/1, called 911 to report chronic offender R.O. trespassing at Plymouth Church with a group of intoxicated males – and cancelled the call (after 35 minutes) at the end of the shift because no squads were available to respond; on 9/14, called 911 to report chronic offender R.O. trespassing at Plymouth Church with a group of intoxicated males – she also had a bench warrant for trespassing – and cancelled the call after 40 minutes because no squads were available to respond and she left the area; on 9/15, called 911 to report a group of eight intoxicated people loitering under a tree and confronting passersby at the north end of the parking lot near I-94 between Nicollet Ave and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave – and cancelled the call (after 70 minutes) at the end of the shift because no squads were available to respond; on 9/21, called 911 to report chronic offender D.B. who was passed out, face down, on the ground at this same location, which is posted for No Trespassing – an ambulance and squad responded and eventually got him on his feet and told him to leave the area; called 311 to report the lights out at the pedestrian crosswalk at 17<sup>th</sup> &amp; 1<sup>st</sup>; called St Stephen's Street Outreach regarding A.A., who was sitting on the front steps of a business on Nicollet Ave, chain-smoking cigarettes and obstructing the path of customers trying to enter or leave – a Street Outreach team responded and spoke with him for over 20 minutes; checked on the same person a week later – the temperature was over 90 degrees and he appeared to be passed out on the ground on the east side of Nicollet Ave between I-94 and 18<sup>th</sup> St, near the chain link fence – he got up, spoke with the team, and walked away; found a liter bottle of Phillips vodka on Franklin Ave – miraculously, about two thirds of the contents were still in the bottle; spoke with a Park Police officer patrolling the park – he said that they were understaffed and he had been called in to work overtime to cover the area, which is outside his usual patrol district; watched a crew trimming trees on the east side of Nicollet Ave</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 at 874-2840 or dave_ssco@yahoo.com</p>

	<p>between I-94 and 18<sup>th</sup> St in order to prevent people from hiding or lurking under them; harvested zucchini and hot peppers grown by Block Patrol volunteers at a plot in LaSalle Community Garden; admired the murals being painted on the walls of the markets at Franklin &amp; Clinton and 19<sup>th</sup> &amp; Nicollet; frequently stopped at Boiler Room Coffee and spoke with the owner; picked up trash and litter, including empty liquor bottles in the park; listened to a resident on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave who complained about problems – including trash and litter, disrespectful people, vandalism, and suspicious traffic – at a newly restored and reopened apartment building in the area; noted on 9/22 that, with the temperature at 94 degrees, the fall equinox felt like the summer solstice; on 9/25, conducted an inventory of street lights out in the neighborhood – of the 25 reported to 311 on 4/25, 13 were still out – plus 3 other ones had now gone dark.</p> <p>Regarding the street lights mentioned above, SSCO staff reported that an aide from the Ward 6 City Council office called today with an update. It appears that Xcel Energy's contract with the City for maintenance and repair of street lights will expire soon. Staff from the City and Xcel are meeting and will try to determine the status of the lights out in Stevens Square. Perhaps City workers can fix the simple problems and determine, with Xcel, how the more complicated problems can be resolved. This is a public safety issue and it's been five months since SSCO reported the problems to 311. SSCO initially requested the Council Member's help on 6/21.</p>	
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*Meeting adjourned at 6:58.*

*Meeting minutes prepared by Dave Delvoye.*