

Northeast Arts Insights

The Arts at Work

- The Anchor Fish & Chips**
- The Barber Sharp**
- Clay Squared to Infinity**
- Language Central**
- Siwek Lumber & Millwork**
- Two12 Pottery & Gifts**

- A Architectural Antiques
 B California Building
 C Casket Arts Buildings
 D Grain Belt Complex
 E Jackson Flats
 F Northrup King Building
 G Q.arma Building
 H Solar Arts Building
 J Thorp Building
 K Waterbury Building



Creative Sustainability Forum: The Next Step — It's Your Move

Say the word “Gentrification” and you’ll get various reactions, from passive acceptance, to rebellious anger, to dollar signs. The Northeast Minneapolis Arts District (NE MplsArtsDist) is at the tipping point, and we need to take action now.

Over 100 residents, artists, and community leaders gathered at Solar Arts by Chowgirls on June 6 for the NEMplsArtsDist Board of Directors public hearing on Creative Sustainability. Informative—and at times lively—discussion yielded a number of critical issues.

How can we pull together to support and sustain our creative community?

Minneapolis City Council Members, Jacob Frey (Ward 3) and Kevin Reich (Ward 1) each outlined their goals and means of support to build on our current success and avoid future displacement of the art community.

According to arts advocate and artist Aldo Moroni, artists need living and work space that is clean, safe, and supportive. Artists have made a major impact on raising property values in the Arts District.

The costs to restore and maintain old buildings continues to go up. Debbie Woodward, Northrup King Building Manager, emphasized, “Artists need to be intentional about what they are willing to do to support (the District).” Woodward also mentioned the need for building owners who support and lease space to artists to get financial incentives to assist in building repairs and maintenance.

Myron Orfield, Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, University of Minnesota Law School, was invited to speak about subsidized

housing projects. Professor Orfield questioned the viability of so-called “artist lofts” and revealed that Minneapolis has a history of disbanding efforts to decrease segregated housing and schools, especially compared to cities such as Seattle and Portland. Orfield also noted that tax credits should be extended for private developers who build affordable housing for artists. Artists need affordable live/work space beyond the current 14-year tax credit time line. More information on studies conducted by the Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity is available online.

Several key strategies surfaced during the forum, including:

- establish zoning laws and tax incentives for affordable live/work spaces for artists and flex spaces for larger short term projects
- establish a community art center
- raise the bar on artistic quality through education, public recognition, and increased exhibition and performance opportunities
- create a marketing strategy for NE Minneapolis and the Arts District to attract more affordable housing, businesses and consumers to the area
- create a gallery owners’ network to improve marketing to potential clients, particularly the higher net worth art collectors

Arts District Board member Tom Borrup cites a cautionary story on how Los Angeles failed to protect industrial space for artists, allowing its touted arts district to become little more than a high-rent district. http://www.planetizen.com/node/86558?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=05312016

Borrup warns that “It WILL happen here too, unless: 1) there is strong action in public policy, and 2) major investment by the public and/or nonprofit sector, or 3) [we experience] another major economic downturn.”

“Strategies to get #1 and #2 to happen include community/political organizing, and building the case through data and stories of how critical a creative cluster like Northeast Minneapolis is to the broader economy of the region,” explains Borrup.

Josh Blanc, artist and Arts District Board Chair, noted that the creative sector is an economic powerhouse, contributing \$831 million to the Minneapolis economy (The Creative Vitality Index 2014 Update).

What’s Next?

We encourage everyone committed to defining the needs of our creative culture and sustaining the vitality of the Arts District to form working groups now and develop a plan of action. Send your results to info@northeastminneapolisartsdistrict.org by August 10. The Board of Directors will review proposals and publish a report on the next steps forward.

Some sample questions for your discussion groups: Who is our community?

How can we make the changes to the Arts District beneficial to artists?

How can we work with property owners, developers and Minneapolis city officials to ensure the sustainability of the Arts District?

What is most desirable for artist workspace? Examples: long term leases, flex space, loading docks, cranes.

What changes in the city zoning

laws would most support our creative community?

What changes in the tax abatement laws would be most beneficial?

How can art galleries in the Arts District and NE Minneapolis become more sustainable?

NEMplsArtsDist

Resources:

<https://www.facebook.com/northeastartsdistrict/> <http://northeastminneapolisartsdistrict.org>

Contact community leaders:
 Jacob Frey, Minneapolis City Council Member, Ward 3: 612-673-2203 jacob.frey@minneapolismn.gov

Kevin Reich, Minneapolis City Council Member, Ward 1: (612) 673-2201 kevin.reich@minneapolismn.gov

Diane Loeffler, State Representative, District 60A: 651-296-4219 rep.diane.loeffler@house.mn

Gulgun Kayim, Director, Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy, Minneapolis City Coordinator’s Office, 612-673-2488 gulgun.kayim@minneapolismn.gov

Brandon Hallstrand, NorthEast Investment Cooperative (NEIC): 612-562-6342 info@neic.coop

The NEMplsArtsDist Board of Directors wishes to thank the above-mentioned participants, as well as Tricia Khutoretsky, Paul Ostrow, Loretta Bebeau, and many community members in attendance for their contributions to the discussion on Creative Sustainability in the Arts District.

—**The Northeast Minneapolis Arts District Board of Directors**

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Browse the newly-designed website, northeastminneapolisartsdistrict.org!
 You'll find a map and studio building information, artist stories, News from the District (our email newsletter archive), archives of the Northeast Arts Insights page, and more