

# District 10 Como Community Council

www.comopark.org

Neighborhood News

Autumn 2008

## Taking the Plunge: City to Form Como Pool Task Force

*Suburban-Style Water Park or New and Improved Urban Pool? City Will Solicit Residents' Concerns*

**By Sharon Frisell**

**District 10 Board Member**

You may have received a flyer, completed an online survey, or overheard neighbors talking about the public pool in St. Paul's Como Park. Como Pool closed one week early in the summer of 2007 because of maintenance problems. St. Paul's Parks and Recreation Department was able to get the pool re-opened this summer, but it's in disrepair and needs a major investment if it's to remain open after this year.

The city received a planning and design grant from the Metropolitan Council to develop alternatives for updating the facility, and Parks and Recreation will convene a task force this fall to recommend renovation options. Task force members will include residents from District 10 and District 6 - the pool's two neighboring planning districts - and other neighbors.

The grant from the Met Council will only fund the planning and design process. Money for building a new pool has yet to be allocated. In 2007, Parks and Recreation submitted a \$4.2 million 2008/2009 Capital Improvements Bonding (CIB) request for a "Como Park Aquatic Facility." The CIB board did not recommend funding and Mayor Chris Coleman did not include it in his budget. Coleman's 2008 CIB budget targets the pool request for possible funding in 2010 and 2011.

**Como Pool, continued on Page 3**



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## October Elections

Nine of our 15 board positions will be up for election in October, including Vice President.

The effectiveness of the Council as a voice for the community has suffered in recent years because of member turnover.

If you would like to run for a Board seat, please keep in mind that we would love to have you for two years!

If you live or own a business in District 10 and want to run for the Board, call the office and register as a candidate at least three days before the October 21 meeting.

## **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE**

Editor - John Marino  
Chair, Communications Committee

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# Neighborhood

## Can You See Me Now?

By Luke Kuhl

Chair, Land Use Committee

St. Paul and the cell phone company T-Mobile continue to negotiate regarding placement of a possible light and cell phone tower at North Dale Community Center.

The city hopes T-Mobile will help with funding the lighting of several fields at North Dale, in exchange for placing a T-Mobile cell tower on one of the lighting towers. District 10's Land Use Committee hosted one community meeting at North Dale. If the city and T-Mobile reach an agreement, T-Mobile will apply for a variance and more community meetings will be scheduled.

## Free Shuttle Coming to Como Park next Spring

By Chai Insook

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman budgeted \$150,000 per year for the next three years for the Como Park Circulator. This total can be used to leverage up to \$1.6 million in federal grants over the three years.

In 2009, the City will provide two or three buses with adequate seating and open space to accommodate strollers, coolers, picnic baskets, and the like. The shuttles would circulate every 10 to 15 minutes between a parking site nearby and the Park's Visitors Center.

Other drop-off and pick-up points could be added later, based on neighbors' and riders' input. The free ride service could begin as early as April 2009. As a start, the shuttle would offer weekend only service through the summer, with the option of expanding the service to some weekdays if demand is high.

# National Nights Out

*District 10 Site of Two Big Events*

By Marc Prokosch

Chair, Neighborhood Safety Committee

National Night Out, America's night out against crime and one of the best neighborhood awareness events of the year, was celebrated throughout the Como Park area on Aug. 5 and 6. Block parties were held at dozens of locations throughout our district.

Events ranged from a dozen lawn chairs in a front yard filled by neighbors, to block parties where streets were blocked off and children could

**And just by getting to know their neighbors better, people made their neighborhoods safer.**

District 10 had a table at Northwest Como Community Center (on the site of Chelsea Heights elementary school at Hamline and Hoyt) where hundreds came. For those who wanted a second dose of fun, the North Dale Recreation Center at the corner of Dale and Arlington hosted an event on Aug. 6. The weather was beautiful, neighbors gathered to chat, and children had fun!

And just by getting to know their neighbors better, people made their neighborhoods safer by creating a community that knows each other and keeps their eyes out for each other.

It's not too early to start thinking about next year's national night out party! If you and your neighbors want to host a block party, city permits to block off a street usually require 60 days notice. With sufficient notice, your block party might even get a visit from a police officer and squad car. The District 10 Board and Neighborhood Safety Committee can also provide helpful block party planning hints.

Finally, neighborhood involvement is not just a once-a-year block party. If you don't know your neighbors yet, get to know them. If you want to get involved in neighborhood safety issues, come to a District 10 Board meeting or a committee

## City Will Form Pool Task Force to Seek Input

There is strong competition for CIB funds, and to secure CIB funding it will be important that there be strong public support for a new pool. The design will need to be one that the community and city government stakeholders can all agree upon and support.

Questions have circulated for more than a year now about the future of Como Pool and the city's plans for renovation. Saint Paul contracted for a citywide analysis of the city's aquatic facilities in 2005, and the resulting feasibility study recommended Como Park as a site for a new regional multi-phase aquatic park. Features include a wave pool, sand beach area, splash pool, spray deck, sand tot lot, melting waterfall, inner tube slides, "lazy" and "crazy" rivers, vortex pool, teen island, body slides, plunge activity pool, sandlot volleyball, rental pavilions, merchandise sales, and a concession/grill. Estimates for additional parking spaces range from 110 to 550 cars.

Neighbors living near the pool and Como Park voiced concerns that the city would proceed with that study's recommendation without community input or analysis. They also are wary of the impact a water park of this size could have on Como Park including increased traffic congestion, air pollution, noise pollution, and increased parking in the park and surrounding neighborhood streets. Neighbors who swim laps in Como Pool were concerned they could lose their neighborhood pool, and that the proposed replacement facility would not include a lap swimming pool or children's pool.

In 2007, Parks and Recreation held two community meetings, at North Dale Recreation Center, and at the District 10 Board and Community meeting in October. Director Bob Bierscheid assured the Board there will be an open planning process for the pool that will include input from the community. The task force will convene this fall once the city has received the Met Council grant.

The Como Park Alliance (CPA), a neighborhood group, produced and is currently distributing a survey about the pool. The group wants to keep neighbors informed and gather feedback on the issue. The District 10 Board reviewed and contributed to the survey as it was being drafted. In late July, CPA members distributed copies of the survey in District 6 and District 10.

**The survey is also available online at [www.comoparkalliance.org](http://www.comoparkalliance.org).**

The District 10 Como Community Council will continue to provide updates to the community regarding the plans for Como Pool. Visit our website for updates and contact the Board with your questions or concerns about this ongoing process at: [board@comopark.org](mailto:board@comopark.org). We would like to enter the planning process this fall fully informed of our neighborhood's wishes and concerns regarding the future of Como Pool.

**Visit Our Website:**  
[www.comopark.org](http://www.comopark.org)

Keep in touch with your community, or volunteer to work on a committee: Communications; Environment; Events & Institutions; Land Use; or Neighborhood Safety. Or get on our e-mail newsletter list by e-mailing us at: [district10@comopark.org](mailto:district10@comopark.org)

## Residents Concerned about Future of Sholom Home Site

Several residents who live near Sholom Home attended the Board and Community's monthly meeting on Aug. 19 to express their concerns about a "sober house" moving into the neighborhood. RS Eden, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation agency might make a purchase offer in June, 2009, for the Sholom Home site.

Board Chair David Arbeit and Board member Tony Hainault, Land Use Committee, assured residents they will be heard in the planning process. RS Eden has agreed to an October public meeting and has said they would not move into the neighborhood if they are not wanted.



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**Saint Paul, MN 55103**

## **Betty McCollum Visits Job Corps Campus**

**By Cate Edlund**

**HHH Job Corps Community Liaison**

In our Summer column, we gave our Head Start partners the chance to update you on their enhanced childcare center. There are still some places available if your child qualifies. U.S. Representative Betty McCollum visited in April and she was impressed with the wonderful learning games and projects. One two-year-old girl presented Ms. McCollum with a beautiful painting of her own creation. How sweet!

So much has happened at Humphrey Job Corps since Spring. In August, Russell Anderson, just retired Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court, delivered the commencement address at our graduation. Many of our grads will be job hunting in a tough economy so if you have an opportunity, please call me, Cate Edlund, at 651-642-1133, ext. 104. Paid and unpaid projects are good opportunities for students to gain valuable work experience. Nursing students get their experience at Sholom Home, Regions Hospital and United Hospital. Our Business and Finance students would appreciate more local assignments that hone their office technology skills.



Our students have had a busy Spring and Summer with lots of volunteer hours in the community. They put in many hours at the Festival of Nations in late April/early May. They volunteered for the Wildlife Refuge at the Teach Kids to Fish event. They also worked for Special Olympics at the University of Minnesota's Bierman Fields and found it a rewarding experience. There is a new fitness push on campus and students are encouraged to start taking those 10,000 steps every day. If you see them out and about, please say hello and urge them on.

On September 19, we will be hosting a visit from the 1959 class of Bethel College. The Humphrey Job Corps now sits on what used to be the Bethel College campus. It's their 50<sup>th</sup> reunion and it's this campus that's nostalgic to them. We're planning a welcoming ceremony and tours of their old haunts. Let us know if you have any old photos to share!