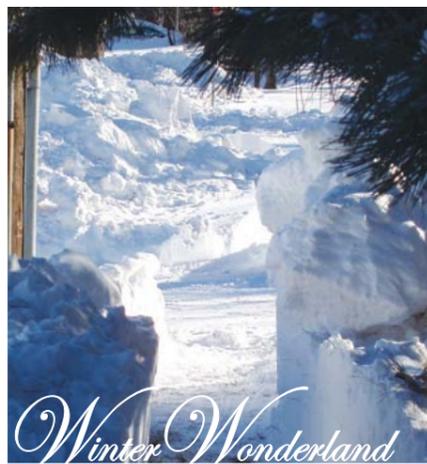


Community REPORTER

SERVING WEST END NEIGHBORHOODS, DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL TO FORT SNELLING SINCE 1972

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Partners for Violence Prevention Comes to an End



West Seventh Family Center parents are active in seeking a new home for the program.

by JERRY ROTHSTEIN

Partners for Violence Prevention (PVP) has provided alternatives to violence through innovative and holistic programs for children, youth and families in the Twin Cities since 1996. With its mission to promote peace, reduce the incidence and impact of violence, and build capacity for violence prevention, PVP used education, resource creation and coalition-building activities to meet its goals. Its commitment to diversity and cultural responsiveness set a standard and resulted in the creation of important resources.

Now, because its sources of funding have been sharply reduced or eliminated, it has ceased operations as of December 31, 2010. As we review PVP's accomplishments the question emerges: "How will these vital services and resources be sustained in PVP's absence?"

PVP was founded as part of the West Seventh Healthy Communities Initiative to reduce the impact and incidence of violence on youth and families. It began in response to a community need to promote safe neighborhoods and provide effective intervention and prevention alternatives. PVP's unique collaborative strategy provided the basis for its success. It received its initial funding from

the United Hospital Foundation and the Allina Foundation, with the United Hospital Foundation serving for years as its fiscal agent.

In 2004, after receiving core funding from Minnesota's Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative program, PVP became a 501(c)3 nonprofit and assumed full responsibility for its programs. As programs and partnerships expanded, PVP was able to attract many smaller grants focused on particular programs, and with its own fundraising efforts was able to sustain itself and grow. But in July of this year the state informed PVP that its core grant would not be renewed. Efforts to reduce costs through staff layoffs, reduced spending, program cutbacks and increased fundraising did not succeed in closing the gap far enough, and the board decided that closure was mandated.

Board chair Connie Walsh, who is the lead patient advocate for United Family Medicine, was emphatic when asked about the sustainability of PVP's programs in the future: "We are determined to do whatever we can to have our programs adopted, incorporated, into other nonprofit organizations. We have had many, many offers of help, and we are discussing possibilities with a number of other agencies." When a nonprofit



PVP's Paws 4 Peace helped to heal children exposed to domestic violence.

organization closes, it must distribute its assets — physical or financial — to other nonprofits. Some assets can therefore be reinvested in a given program in a new organizational home.

The PVP board and staff are justifiably proud of their accomplishments over fourteen years. They invite all members of the community to join them in a closing ceremony at the West Seventh

» Partners, PG 3

Great River Park Task Force Update

by JOHN H. YUST

On December 14, 2010, there was another Great River Park (GRP) Task Force meeting at the Wellstone Community Center. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Review the schedule of future meetings and the results of past planning workshops.
- Present concepts prepared in the workshops and review alternatives.
- Encourage discussion and comment by Task Force members and their constituencies.

For more information refer to the GRP web site: greatriverpark.org.

I want to acknowledge that there is an enormous amount of information to digest, that this is a very complex plan to articulate, and that there are many concerned parties who at times have competing interests. I am pleased to see the progress of the plan, which includes many ideas and concerns (but not all) relevant to the West Seventh community and the City of St. Paul.

From my perspective, here are some of the challenges. These ideas have been

proposed by community members during the GRP process, but as yet do not appear in the draft conceptual plan. They need to be included.

- Obtain a research legacy grant on Dred Scott and his St. Paul home site (currently, there is little attention given to minority issues).
- Offer Victoria Park soccer field alternatives (need a West Seventh Federation study for Victoria Park's highest and best land use).
- Obtain a research legacy grant for Fountain Cave, so that its historical importance and potential can be properly acknowledged.
- Develop Randolph Avenue, the community's "Gateway to the River," with a tree-lined green Parkway from West Seventh to Shepard Road, ending at Island Station and the river.
- Explore the Xcel site under the High Bridge and its potential for visible future experimental and cutting-edge energy research.
- Replace the High Bridge stairway, which was removed with the old bridge.

» Great River, PG 10

Community Visioning Meeting on the Calendar



Since last March, the Community Reporter has received a range of comments on John Yust's article "Clear Vision for West Seventh Community," thoughts which arose out of our first community visioning meeting.

Exploring the question, "In 2020, what kind of community do you want to live in?" remains a continuing challenge, and we look toward planning the second community visioning meeting for March 9, 2011, 6:30 p.m. at the West Seventh Community Center. A planning group is being formed and all West End residents or workers are welcome. Call Jerry Rothstein at 651-587-8859 for further information, or write your thoughts and send them by mail or drop off to Community Reporter, 265 Oneida St. 55102, or by e-mail to editor@communityreporter.org.



Solar panels

RiverCentre and District Energy Begin Largest Solar Thermal Project in the Midwest

by JERRY ROTHSTEIN

Installation has begun at the St. Paul RiverCentre of 144 commercial-grade solar thermal panels, covering roughly half the size of a football field, on top of the 30,000 square feet roof of the convention center.

These panels are equipped with the highest efficiency technology available, enabling them to generate one megawatt of energy and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 900,000 pounds annually, the equivalent to eliminating 90 vehicles per year.

Solar energy collected is used to heat water, not produce electricity. The panels convert up to 80 percent of absorbed sunlight into usable thermal energy, compared to 15 percent efficiency in solar electric panels. The heated water is then used by St. Paul RiverCentre and the downtown St. Paul area for space heating and hot water needs.

The project is made possible by a \$1 million grant administered through the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, with matching funds from District Energy St. Paul.

"Renewable energy and sustainability are not just catch phrases around our convention complex," said Karolyn Kirchesler, President and CEO of Visit Saint Paul. "They are a way of life here, and this solar thermal project is the next major step in our commitment to the environment. The solar project does have an impact on our carbon footprint, but it is largely part of our overall aim to become a regional leader in sustainability."

District Energy St. Paul currently provides heating to the RiverCentre through a combined heat and power plant that utilizes renewable, urban wood residues. It will install and operate the solar thermal array. The installation is expected to be complete and operational early this year, after some disruptions caused by our extreme December weather.

St. Paul and Minneapolis are among 26 major U.S. cities working to accelerate the adoption of solar energy technologies for a cleaner, more secure energy future through the Department of Energy's "Solar America Cities" partnership. This solar thermal installation is one of 40 projects that were selected nationwide and is one of the first to be completed.

This project is the first of many in St. Paul. The City has secured an additional \$1.5 million in federal stimulus funds from the Minnesota Office of Energy Security to install solar on approximately ten City facilities along the Central Corridor, including the Western District Police Station, St. Anthony Park Recreation Center and Rondo Library.

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