

Midtown Farmers' Market,
a project of the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization
3451 Cedar Ave S
Minneapolis MN 55407
Contact: Eric Gustafson, 612-724-7457

5 February 2009

Minneapolis Public Schools board and staff c/o Mr. Steven Liss
City of Minneapolis c/o Mayor R.T. Rybak
Minneapolis Park Board members
Hennepin County Commissioners
State and U.S. lawmakers representing Minneapolis

Re: Community Goals for 2225 E. Lake St



Dear Mr. Liss, Mayor Rybak, and other partners,

Minneapolis Public Schools has signaled that 2225 E. Lake Street, currently home to Anishinabe Academy and the seasonal, outdoor Midtown Farmers' Market, could be disposed of by MPS as early as 2009. We, the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization and our Midtown Farmers' Market and Market supporters, value both of these public assets, and appreciate the school district's generosity in allowing use of 10,000 square feet for Market vendors, in addition to customer parking, at 2225 E. Lake. In exchange, the Market's six seasons represent over \$1,000,000 in small business opportunity and affordable access to healthy, sustainable food for south Minneapolis' diverse, mixed income neighborhoods and the greater metro.

Annual participation by 40,000 customers and 70 vendors, and support from hundreds of local businesses and sponsors, demonstrate that the Midtown Farmers' Market should remain a public asset at 2225 E. Lake St, on a 10,000 square foot portion of the 6-acre site designated as public space.

We urge the School Board and other public representatives to consider the future of 2225 E. Lake in terms of its benefits to the public, not solely as a budget issue, and to work with the neighborhood and other stakeholders through any disposition process to realize the objective stated above, in keeping with the principles stated below.

- Southwest Hiawatha-Lake is a center for public and ecological health, as established by Hiawatha light rail's 20,000 daily riders, the Midtown YWCA's 12,000 health and fitness members, and the Midtown Farmers' Market's 40,000 annual customers and 70 growers and artists from urban and greater Minnesota and Wisconsin, including many new Americans. Future uses of the site should retain, leverage, and reflect these assets and values.
- The neighborhood and the City of Minneapolis share a vision for transit oriented development at and around the site. The Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan, adopted by the City Council as part of the Minneapolis Plan in 2002, calls for public open space including a farmers' market, a mix of diverse housing and retail opportunities, structured

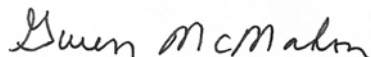
or below-grade parking, with uses stepping down to meet the existing residential blocks. The Plan also calls for sustainable design including buildings that can be adapted and reused or revitalized into the indefinite future.

- At present, economic conditions and other factors may preclude immediate redevelopment of 2225 E. Lake, but the principles stated herein should apply to any adaptive reuse of the existing building (the former Brown Institute) and site amenities.
- In fitting with the Corcoran/Minneapolis Plan, a portion of the site should remain public space, including adequate provisions for no-cost, indefinite use as an outdoor farmers' market.
- There is a need for shared parking at 2225 E. Lake St. Metro Transit presently uses a portion of the site for a Park and Ride lot in order to optimize the use of public transit and protect the surrounding neighborhood from excess commuter parking. In addition, the Midtown YWCA seeks more parking in a shared arrangement to adequately serve its growing membership, and future site uses including housing, retail, and the farmers' market will require shared off-street parking.

The Corcoran Neighborhood Organization plans to explore future uses and redevelopment scenarios for 2225 E. Lake through a series of workshops in early 2009, and invites all stakeholders including residents, the school district, elected officials, the City of Minneapolis and CPED, the YWCA and nearby non-profits, the local business community, the local development community including nearby land owners, farmers' market shoppers, and others to join us.

Our community looks forward to assistance from our public representatives as we work together to preserve and improve 2225 E. Lake Street as a valuable community asset.

Sincerely,



Gwen McMahon
Chair, CNO Board



Eric Lindberg
Chair, CNO Land Use & Transportation Committee

Enclosures

