



Property Manager News

November/December 2006

Community-Oriented Policing Unit Staff Transitions

Key City Contacts

C.O.P. Unit
Officer Breth
763.493.8354

Officer Burstad
763.315.8472

Officer Swarhout
763.493.8292

Calls for service info
Connie Siulstad
763.493.8283

Housing Inspectors
Rodney Beystrom
763.493.8071

Steve Tiedman
763.315.8449

Environmental Health Manager
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Kaydee J. Kirk
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The police department's Community-Oriented Policing (C.O.P.) Unit is going through some new staffing transitions. Officer Tony Weeks has accepted another position within the Brooklyn Park police department as part of the Detective Unit. Officer Greg Burstad, who has been with the C.O.P. Unit since January, will be joining the Metro Gang Strike Force. He says he has learned a lot in his time with C.O.P. and is now very excited about this new adventure.

The two newest members of the C.O.P. Unit are Officer Bill Breth and Officer Janese Brown. Officer Breth began his new position October 30 and Officer Brown will begin her position January 1, 2007.

Officer Breth started working for the City of Brooklyn Park in December 1993 as a Community Service Officer (CSO). While in college he worked as a CSO and also as a Detention Officer for the city. In December 1999 he was sworn in as an Officer. Most recently Officer Breth gained experience working in Investigations. He is taking Officer Weeks's place which includes apartment communities such

as Brooks Gardens, The Regents, Point of America, and Kensington. He looks forward to assisting apartment complexes with any issues they have and also to be a presence in these areas to help prevent problems from arising.



Officer Brown began with the police department as a police cadet in 1998, and was sworn in as an Officer in November 1999. During her time on patrol she worked as a field training officer and cadet advisor, and spent some time working in the Safe Streets Unit. Up until the end of this year she will be finishing up her one-year rotational investigative assignment before she joins the C.O.P. Unit.

Welcome aboard Officer Brown and Officer Breth!

Change a Light, Change the World

During the months of October and November, Americans are challenged to change five standard light

bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL) during the "Change a Light, Change the World" campaign. Not only will this reduce household energy bills, the savings will also have a huge multiplier effect. In fact, if every household in the U.S. replaced their five most-frequently used bulbs with CFLs, it would forestall the building of 21 coal-fired power plants and prevent the production of greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions from more than 8 million cars.

During the "Change a Light, Change the World" campaign, participating retailers have agreed to offer instant rebates of

CHANGE A LIGHT...



\$2 on ENERGY STAR qualified CFL bulbs - reducing the price to as low as 99 cents per bulb. ENERGY STAR® qualified CFLs are up to 66 percent more efficient than standard incandescent light bulbs. Replacing a 100-watt incandescent bulb with a 32-watt ENERGY STAR qualified CFL will provide the same light "output" and last up to 10 times longer and save \$30 over the life of the bulb. Although there are other CFL products on the market, purchasing an ENERGY STAR qualified CFL means that it is not only energy

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Update on Brooklyn Park's Multicultural Work

By Robin Martinson, Multicultural Liaison

I look forward to meeting all of you at the January meeting, but wanted to update you on some of the activities I have been involved in. It's hard to believe it has been a little over a year since I started at the police department. The work I have been doing is a collaborative effort with Hennepin County and Brooklyn Center police department. As the Community Liaison one of the initiatives we worked on was holding a "New American's Academy". This is similar to the police department's Citizen Academy, but is geared for newer arrivals to Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. We had 11 people in our graduating class! The classes were held over a 6 week period and covered topics such as Police Services, Who are the Police, When to call 911, Role of Law Enforcement, City

Codes, Crime Prevention, Fraud, Personal Safety, Domestic Violence, and Child Abuse. We received extremely positive feedback on the classes and plan to hold another Academy in early 2007.

We have also held numerous community meetings and attended several English Language Learner (ELL) classes which allow people to meet the police and ask questions. Reaching out to the Community and Building Bridges leads to good Police Community Relations.

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City Targets Challenged Neighborhoods for Improvement with Neighborhood Action Plan (NAP)

Many Brooklyn Park neighborhoods have increasingly seen over the past few years rises in crime, disorderly conduct, property code violations and other problems that affect neighborhood health, stability and livability. Just a few years ago these problems were primarily seen in larger apartment communities, however today they are very prevalent among single family residential neighborhoods. Due in part to the comprehensive apartment licensing program implemented a few years ago, the larger apartment communities have shown improved stability; in contrast however, the single family residential neighborhoods are now experiencing increases in crime and instability.

This summer the city has experienced an increase in neighborhood crime, which may be weakening the stability of the community. From 2005 to 2006 (through the third quarter) non-apartment residential areas saw an 11.4% increase in crime and nuisance calls, whereas the large apartment communities saw a 7.5% increase. The citywide figure for the same time period was an increase of 11.1%. Since 2000 the city has also seen significant growth in individual licensed rental properties by investment owners. In addition, there are numerous unlicensed rental properties that are continually being discovered by Code Enforcement and Public Health (CEPH), Police and Rental Housing Inspections. Despite city efforts to address the problems, these trends do not show any sign of slowing and are anticipated to worsen over time given current resources. These myriad issues have created a situation where stability and livability are increasing concerns of residents in Brooklyn Park neighborhoods.

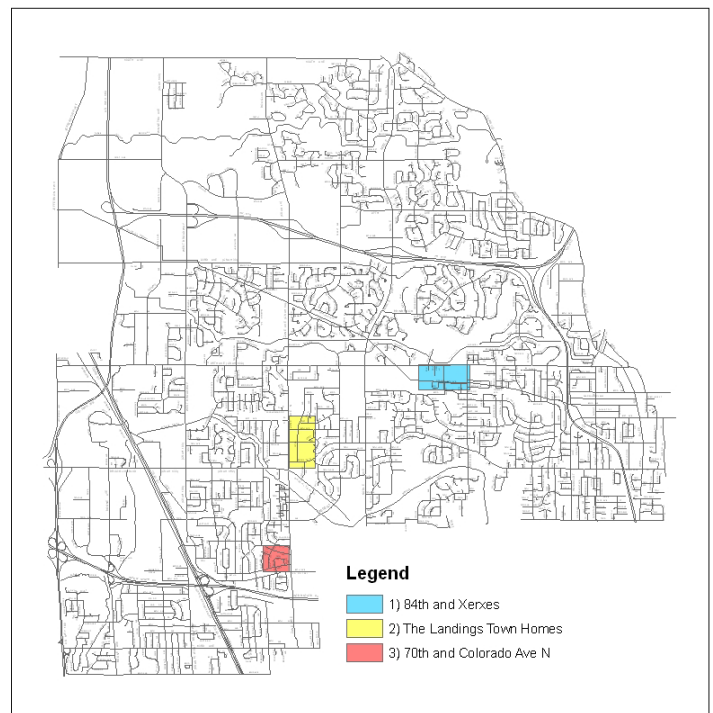
In response to these complex problems, Brooklyn Park initiated a Neighborhood Action Program (NAP) Task Force in August comprised of an interdepartmental group of staff. The purpose of NAP is to identify areas most in need of improvement and to develop strategy recommendations to substantively address neighborhood improvement, preservation and stability in these target areas. Specifically the Task Force identified:

1. **Criteria:** Identify objective criteria for determining which areas are challenged and distressed: reported crimes, property code violations, owner-occupied units converting to rental, foreclosures.
2. **Target areas:** Identify the most challenged and distressed areas.
3. **Strategies:** Develop both short-term and long-term strategies and actions to improve the stability and livability of target areas.

The NAP Task Force met several times to address these items and have made recommendations for a Neighborhood Action Program. Initial implementation of NAP focuses on the areas most in need of improvement and preservation. The three initial target areas selected were:

- 84th Avenue near Xerxes
- The Landings Town Homes
- Colorado / 70th Avenue / Douglas Avenue

Neighborhood Action Program
Target Areas



To effectively achieve neighborhood improvement and stability a collaborative, targeted, and sustained effort over a number of years is needed. Therefore, increased staffing resources will be needed over time in order to successfully carry out the actions and strategies to accomplish the goal of neighborhood improvement and preservation.

NAP was presented to City Council in October and the program was met with much support. The Council will now determine the allocation for NAP as next year's budget is being finalized.

Initiative for Smoke-Free Apartments

Representatives from the Initiative for Smoke-Free Apartments will be joining us for the next Property Manager Coalition meeting to share information on this effort. Here is a preview and background on the initiative:

The Case for Smoke-Free Apartments

Movement of cigarette smoke in apartment buildings

Anyone who's taken high school physics will remember that gases expand to fill a space. In addition to small particles, cigarette smoke contains a number of gases. An apartment is not like a sealed box. Between each apartment unit and the adjacent unit are many spaces around pipes and electrical conduits, and between walls and floors or ceiling. As the gases in cigarette smoke expand they expand into these spaces and into units where tenants do not smoke. The path smoke takes through a building is unpredictable. Generally it will move into units above the one in which it was generated. However, research conducted in typical Minnesota apartment buildings shows that it may move into adjacent units on the same floor or even into units below.

Unwanted smoke: a common problem

It is not surprising, therefore, that a survey found that almost half of rental households in Minnesota multifamily buildings say that at times tobacco smoke odors get into their apartment from somewhere. Thirty-seven percent of those experiencing others' smoke, say it bothers them "a lot" or "so much I'm thinking of moving." Those with health problems or children with asthma are also likely to be concerned about the known harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

Changing the Face of Housing in Minnesota 5th Annual Event

December 1, 2006, 9:00-11:30am

O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of Saint Catherine, St. Paul

Changing the Face of Housing in Minnesota marks its 5th Annual Event by bringing renowned actress and playwright Anna Deavere Smith to the stage at the O'Shaughnessy. Hailed by Newsweek as "the most exciting individual in American theater," Smith uses her singular brand of theater

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efficient but that it has met other quality standards including a longer life span, better light quality and no noise issues.

ENERGY STAR qualified CFL bulbs are now also available in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, including floods, spots, dimmables, capsules, 3-ways, decoratives, and even different colors. They will fit nearly every kind of lamp or fixture, and some can even be used outdoors. Check the package to be sure you have the right bulb for your intended use.

In addition to changing light bulbs, consider upgrading to a new EN-

Fire damage and death

Another reason for owners to be concerned about smoking in their buildings is that twenty-three percent of the fire fatalities in Minnesota in 2001 were attributed to cigarette-caused fires. Cigarettes are designed to burn even when no one is drawing on them. This means that they will not go out when they are resting in an ashtray. It also means that they will not go out if someone falls asleep or passes out while smoking, allowing the cigarette to fall into upholstery or mattresses. There it may smolder for several hours before causing the materials around it to burst into flames.

Market advantages

Because the housing market is much slower than it was a few years ago, landlords are looking for incentives to entice renters to their property. Adopting a smoke-free policy is a way to attract tenants, a way to make a property stand out. Nearly half of renters reported that they are very or extremely interested in living in a unit free of smoke. Many of them are willing to pay higher rents or live farther from work or a bus line to enjoy this amenity. Owners with smoke-free policies are overwhelmingly happy with them. If you are interested in providing a no-smoking building, consult *Adopting a No-Smoking Policy in Apartment Buildings: A Guide for Owners and Managers*, available on the web site of the Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota: www.ansrmn.org, smoke-free apartments.



to explore issues of race, community, and character in America. Best known as the author and performer of two 1-woman plays about racial tensions in American cities (*Fires in the Mirror* and *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992*), Smith also played the National Security Advisor Nancy McNally on "The West Wing." RSVPs are required. To RSVP or for more information, visit www.changingthefaceofhousing.org or call the Family Housing Fund at 612-375-9644.

ERGY STAR qualified fixture. The average home has approximately 30 light fixtures; replace the five most frequently used light fixtures with models that have earned the ENERGY STAR to save more than \$60 each year in energy costs.

[Click here](#) to find a list of participating dealers or visit the MN Department of Commerce website listed below.

For more information about the "Change a Light, Change the World" campaign, visit www.energystar.gov, go to the Energy Info Center link at the MN Department of Commerce website: www.commerce.state.mn.us or call 800-657-3710 or Twin Cities, 651-296-5175.

Upcoming Property Manager Coalition (PMC) Meeting: Tuesday, November 21, 2006, 9:00 a.m.

Brooklyn Park City Hall, 5200 85th Ave N (85th & Regent Ave), Council Chambers

Topics: Community Mediation Services, Initiative for Smoke-Free Apartments, Osseo Area Schools Enrollment Center update

Refreshments provided

The official newspaper for the City of Brooklyn Park is the Sun Post. For circulation contact 952.392.6860 or www.mnsun.com