

SNG Crime and Safety Committee Meeting
March 10, 2008, 7:00-8:15 p.m., Seward Towers West, Community Room

In attendance: Abubakar, Fadumo Adan, Fartun Adem, Fatuma Ali, Nura Ali, Shauri Ali, Shukri Ali, Abdul-Rahim Almud, Amina, Ubah Barrt, Batulo, Stephen Benjamin, Bilat, Faduma Burace, Viola Ellis, B. Eidum, Clem Engen, Fowzia, Ross Gabrick (SNG Board, Committee Chair), Robin Garwood (Aide to Councilmember Cam Gordon), Owen Green, Habibo, Hama Hagar, Fartun Hajjali, Bob Hain, Carl Hanson, Aniso Hassan, Naslo Hasse, Ayana Kate, Lt. Arthur Knight (3rd Prct.), Madina, Ahm Mahry, Maka, Maria, Marian, Marjory, U. Mohammad, Nasra Noor (SNG Towers Resident Facilitator), June Prange, Amal Qassim, Aman Saie, Hadia Sandid, Carolyn Schurr, Kathy Sikora, Shun Tillman (3rd Prct. CCP/SAFE Liaison), Helen Suichued, Ann Risch, Hali Seed, A. Sekri, and Dorothy White. Note: Apologies to those whose names have been mis-spelled.

Welcome and Introductions — Chair Ross Gabrick welcomed all to this special meeting of the SNG Crime & Safety Committee, held in the Community Room at Seward Towers West in order to gain a sense of the crime and safety issues of the residents, who are about 5% of the Seward population. Self-introductions were made, though many Towers residents arrived after the meeting began.

Approval of Meeting Minutes — The minutes for the February 2008 meeting were approved.

Announcements

- Ross talked about his attendance at the monthly 3rd Precinct Advisory Council (3PAC) meeting, and distributed information on the Minneapolis Crime-Alert Email Broadcast System. (To sign up, go to <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/crimealert/signup.asp>.) He found 3PAC to be a good way to keep in touch with activities in the Precinct. He asked whether others would be interesting in attending the 3PAC meetings on behalf of the Committee. (Owen Green expressed interest; he and Ross will discuss the process.)
- Ross noted that Keith Hagen, a Seward resident and representative of Lloyd Security, has agreed to be the Committee liaison with the Seward Civic & Commerce Association (SCCA).
- Franklin Avenue Planning was introduced as an important means by which Seward residents can address crime and safety issues as they pertain to Franklin Avenue. Ross noted that information on Franklin Avenue Planning meetings will be publicized once dates are set. He also told of a possible grant to combat graffiti working with students at the MTS Charter School.

3rd Prct. Update — Shun Tillman, 3rd Prct. CCP/SAFE, introduced himself and newly appointed 3rd Prct. Lt. Arthur Knight. Shun first talked about a recent Towers issue: parking in the fire lanes. Because the Towers parking ramp is separate from the building, many residents park in the fire lanes to unload people and groceries. Shun noted that not only is it illegal (with tickets being issued and cars towed) to park in the fire lanes (marked at the Towers by yellow curb and lot lines), it is dangerous, as that's where Fire and Emergency Services vehicles need to park when there is an emergency at the Towers. He also distributed a flyer containing information on fire-lane parking violations. One resident suggested that additional signage be put up to remind residents that they cannot park there. Dee Minogue, Property Management, noted that the Towers security staff will enforce the no-parking rules and that management will work on informing residents via the Towers newsletters and postings.

Shun passed out information on calling 911 and 311. He noted that residents should contact, if possible, the Towers' security staff, as they would be able to respond quickest, but that residents should call 911 when there is an emergency. In response to a question, Shun described the priority listings of 911 calls. The Police respond the quickest to calls that concern life/death, next quickest when the caller has information about something that just happened that could result in the Police apprehending a suspect, and slowest to a call concerning a crime that happened a while ago about which the caller has information but that information will

not help the police catch the suspect right then. It is important, though, for people to call 911 when necessary. Kathy Sikora noted that in the past 6 months, 911 calls have been made to the Police about robberies and burglaries, but also for people who were hurt or for people who were drunk and bothering other residents. There are many reasons to call 911. When the security staff is there, they can help with some of these incidents, or call 911 for the residents when necessary. Some residents were confused about whether they were charged for making 911 calls. You do not get charged from making 911 calls from your "home" (land) phone or your cell phone, though there is a small charge on your monthly phone bill that helps the City pay for 911 services.

Resident Concerns

- One of the residents' concerns involved safety going from the building to the parking ramp. Management will discuss possible ways to make crossing to the lot safer.
- Many Towers mothers were concerned about safety with regard to Triangle Park. Some mothers wanted more open/close gates in the park, so that children would not be able to run out of the park. (Kathy Sikora noted that she would bring this concern to the Towers Board.) Some were concerned about inebriates in the park, and others mothers were concerned about the danger of crossing 26th Ave to get to Triangle Park. Shun noted that it is illegal (jaywalking) to cross 26th in the middle of the block. Robin Garwood said that there can't be a cross-walk put in, as the curve in the road makes it dangerous: cars would be around the curve and into the crosswalk before they'd really see it. He noted that Councilmember Gordon's office and others are trying to get the traffic patterns changed so that it will be easier for Towers residents to access their parks, but he noted that that would take a long time to achieve. He noted that the City had put in crossing lights with countdown timers at 26th Ave and Franklin and at 25th Ave and S. 9th. Although it is inconvenient, it is safer for residents to cross over to the park at the corners. Bob Hain noted that this is an issue that should be brought up at Franklin Avenue Planning.
- Other residents noted the problem of people entering the Towers who don't live there. Some would like all visitors to sign in, feeling that that would be a deterrent to those entering for wrong-doing. Some residents noted strangers trying to get into apartments or knocking on doors late at night. It was suggested that residents call security if they are on duty when such things happen, call 911 if they feel in danger and report such incidents to the office the next day. It was noted that there are cameras in the entry way, so that it may be possible, if the security staff, the police or the office is informed of such problems, to identify who is causing the problems.

Wrap-Up

- As Lt. Knight left, he seconded Shun's advice to residents to be the eyes and ears of the building, to get to know neighbors, and to call 911 for any suspicious or potentially harmful activity. He also suggested that residents keep a list of valuables, or to participate in Operation ID, in case they are burglarized. Residents thanked both Lt. Knight and Shun for attending the meeting.
- Ross thanked everyone for attending and noted that the next meeting will be held on April 14, 2008, at Matthews Center. The speaker will be Paul McDonald, who will talk about Child Protection Issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

The next Crime & Safety Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 14, 2008, at Matthews Park Center.

Minutes approved by vote at the C&S meeting held on April 14, 2008.