

SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • MARCH 3, 2022 • VOL. 1 • NO. 5



GET FREE
TAX PREP,
ADVICE
ABOUT
MONEY

▶ 6

12 Felines find 'forever' homes thanks to nonprofit

2 1,250 residents file ethics complaint against Mayor Frey

4 Meet the carriers who make sure you get the newspaper

10 Andrew Degerstrom helps lead four neighborhoods

MORE THAN JUST ANOTHER AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILDING



Melo founder and principal architect, Damaris Hollingsworth, is working to design a space at 3030 Nicollet that incorporates community input. People have stated they are concerned about the long-term impacts and how it will affect both nearby neighbors and those who live in the new building. "We kept hearing that people wanted a space that makes them feel welcome," said Hollingsworth. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Wells Fargo site project at 3030 Nicollet will include affordable housing and commercial space that entrepreneurs will own

By **Iric Nathanson**

An ambitious plan to redevelop a vacant block at Lake and Nicollet received a major boost from the city of Minneapolis earlier this year when the city allocated \$3.3 million for an affordable housing development on the former Wells Fargo Bank site.

The project, a joint effort of Wells Fargo, Project for Pride in Living and the Cultural Wellness Center, will provide 110 units of affordable housing on the Lake Street block caught up in the civil unrest following the death of George Floyd in 2020.

The 3030 Nicollet project will serve individuals and families with a range of incomes. Twenty-four of the 110 units will be affordable for people making up to 30% of the median income or \$25,200 for a two-person household. The remaining units will be available to individuals and families making up to 50% of the median income, or \$42,000 for a two-person

family. The project will include a mix of two-, three- and four-bedroom units.

PPL had the option of increasing its income limit to 60% of area median, but chose to keep the cap at 50%, according to Senior Vice President Mike LaFave. "We wanted to make sure that 3030 Nicollet will serve large, low-income families whose housing options are very limited in today's market," LaFave said.

WOMAN, BIPOC-OWNED PARTNER

PPL is partnering with a local architectural firm, Design by Melo, to build the 110-unit project. Melo's founder and principal architect, Damaris Hollingsworth, said the partnership was a good fit for her minority and women-owned firm. "We knew that PPL shared our values. That was an important plus for us," Hollingsworth said.

Before the firm began its design work, Hollingsworth was part of a six-month community engagement process facilitated by the Cultural Wellness Center. "All three of our agencies recognized that the traditional model of engagement did not always work," LaFave said. "We needed to hear from people who are not able to come to evening meetings. So, the Wellness Center used its staff to move through the community talking informally with people who live in the area in order to get their input."

"Our aim was to expand the scope of

the 3030 Nicollet project beyond physical development to include enhancement of human capital," said the Wellness Center's Anthony Tayler. "Through our engagement process, community members told us that they wanted more than just another affordable housing building on the Wells site. They wanted a broader effort to that could reach people and families living in surrounding neighborhoods."

"Community members told us they were not all that concerned about the color of the bricks and other design specifics," Hollingsworth added. "They were more concerned about the long-term impact of the project and how it could affect nearby neighbors as well as the people who will live in the 3030 building. We kept hearing that people wanted a space that made them feel welcome, so the design of the community spaces was an important part of the project."



Ownership is important for these emerging entrepreneurs because it will help them create intergenerational wealth for their families while they are growing their businesses."

Anthony Tayler

AFFECTS OF REDISTRICTING

Representative Hornstein will move instead of running against Representative Long, and Representative Agbaje will move to follow her district

By **Cam Gordon**

Thousands of Southwest residents will be in new legislative districts for this year's elections, including two sitting state representatives in the area.

Because the state legislature was unable to agree on new boundaries for state and federal legislative districts by the required date of Feb. 15, that responsibility fell to the five judges appointed by the state supreme court, whose map includes new boundaries for all state and federal legislative districts in the state.

The new boundaries will be in effect until the next census, in 2030, including for this year's election where every state legislative seat will be on the ballot. This includes all 67 districts for the State Senate and all 134 seats for the House of Representatives. These boundaries also helped refine the Minneapolis ward, park district and voting precinct boundaries and precincts that will be finalized in March.

▶ 3

CLINIC HELPS CLIENTS NOT JUST LIVE, BUT THRIVE

First free PrEP clinic opens in Minnesota at Aliveness Project

By **Chloe Peter**

The Aliveness Project Thrive Clinic (3808 Nicollet Ave.) recently opened to help stop the spread of HIV through PrEP, a pre-exposure preventive measure.

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, there is currently a HIV outbreak in Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Although cases trended downward in 2020, the five-year average is still at the higher end and has been continued to be classified as an outbreak. Eighty-four percent of these cases are people who are assigned male sex at birth, and 69 percent are communities of color.

"We find that people who are most at risk for HIV already have an intersection of barriers to care," said Dylan Boyer, events and com-



Dylan Boyer

▶ 7

▶ 5