

## Fearful and Frustrated – North End

A little over three years ago the cop shop left the Rice Street area and took with it a significant amount of police presence, and left a sense of abandonment in the hearts of the community.

The cops working that beat are clearly dedicated and very capable but the reinforcements are not there. Central District Crimes Against Persons went up last year 4%. Robberies and Firearm Discharges had drastic increases. There isn't enough time for adequate proactive law enforcement.

Last year community members rallied on the East side and Rice Street demanding more cops and a return of a centrally located district office. No one from city hall appears to be reacting in an urgent or public safety educated manner.

The recent triple homicide sounded an alarm. On Wednesday night (3/28/07) people gathered at the Rice Street library. The same library that was originally slated to co-house a new central district years ago, but the cop portion of the deal fell victim to the then "image police." The night before this gathering a man was witnessed firing rounds a few blocks away and just hours before the meeting's start time, another youth was shot in the leg, just two blocks away. Neither of these incidents were addressed at the Councilmember Helgen led neighborhood meeting. Very few of the 150 concerned citizens were given a chance to speak. A Hmong business owner was cut off by the councilmember and not allowed to tell his crime victim story.

Drive up Rice Street. Look at the number of for-sale signs. Look at a crime map. Something needs to be done now.