

St Anthony Park Community Council  
Environment Committee  
22 May 2019; Nico's on Como

Members present: Karlyn Eckman, Lisa Habeck, Stephen Mastey, Michael Russelle, Steve Yetter, Betty Wheeler.

Guests: Terry Cheney, Center for Energy and Environment; Pat Thompson, SAPCC Transportation Committee

**Center for Energy and Environment:** Terry Chaney presented a little about the history of CEE and the Neighborhood Energy Connection and their merger in 2017. Terry is an Outreach Specialist (tchaney@mncee.org; 651-328-6226); his office is located in the former NEC location (1754 University Ave W). The Home Energy Squad continues to conduct energy audits on single family homes and in buildings of 1 to 4 units. If given permission, they could engage with residents in Hampden Square Apartments. Another program deals with multifamily buildings. It may be possible to include Seal Hi-Rise, providing the property owner agrees. An example is a 300-unit facility in Hopkins where there were insulation problems throughout; the City helped buy down the cost of energy audits, and improvements were made to several units. The Energy CENTS Coalition is a CEE partner that offers support for low- and fixed-income households in single-family and small multifamily (2- to 4-unit) buildings.

One way SAPCC can help is to connect CEE with low-income renters and owners, and with property owners of subsidized rental housing. According to Terry, Xcel Energy can target areas with emails and CEE will use door hangers. SAPCC could help get the word out at Hampden Park Coop Movie nights, for example. In larger apartment buildings, CEE could connect us with Xcel Energy to conduct energy audits. Terry is willing to be a presenter at a Board meeting or in a workshop for the public in fall. Perhaps the theme of ice dams will capture attention and promote attendance, since they were so prevalent last winter. Might Emily help with these activities?

**Cleveland rebuild:** Pat Thompson described the County project in some detail and presented the five options under consideration. We agree with the goals she listed, which largely are reflected in the draft 10-year plan. The summary table showing widths of the street, crossing, pavement, and the west and east boulevards was excellent. The Committee recognizes that Option D will require more trees to be removed and will result in loss of parking on Cleveland. Based on a view toward the future, the desirability of reducing private vehicle parking, and the need to provide safe and accessible routes for bicycles and pedestrians, Steve Yetter moved to support Option D; Stephen Mastey seconded. The designs apparently do not address habitat and aspects of storm water control, the Betty moved that the Board request that we be allowed to stay involved with further development of design specifications. **Motion passed unanimously to support Option D, for the reasons put forth in a draft resolution Pat shared, and requests that the Board forward that decision to Ramsey County and request that the Environment Committee be engaged as the County considers design details.**

**Como Avenue tree replacement:** Stephen has worked with Jon Schumacher on the question of whether much larger trees might be used in this project. Funds were raised very quickly through crowd sourcing and the SAP Community Foundation. Stephen made sure that each location was excavated to remove the poor fill left there by the City contractor, Thomas and Sons, that drainage was provided to the underlying sand, and that a proper soil mix was used to fill the sites. The Committee expressed our deep gratitude to Stephen for his conscientious dedication to the community.

**MWMO:** Apparently District 12 has not had active representation on the MWMO. District 12 is allowed one Board member and an alternate. Representatives need to reside in our District, understand watershed issues, and have a perspective larger than our neighborhood. Board meetings occur every other month from 3 to 5 pm. The position involves review of documents and plans between meetings. To avoid conflicts of interest, representatives are not allowed to be employees of either city or the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The process is that the SAPCC Board forwards approved applicant names to the Saint Paul City Council, which forwards the names to Mayor Carter for appointment. Moved by Karlyn, seconded by Lisa, and **approved unanimously that the Environment Committee will review applications and recommend one or more applicants to the SAPCC Board.** We expect the representative to be connected to SAPCC so that communication lines are established. Karlyn will draft a description of the position and circulate it to contacts at the U of MN Landscape Architecture program, Water Resources, and others as she sees fit.

Michaela Neu, Youth and Community Outreach Specialist, is available to present information on water quality and watershed management to youth. The MWMO publication "Good Neighbor Guide" is available on request for this purpose (<https://www.mwmo.org/learn/good-neighbor-guide/>). This could be an excellent way to engage with local youth and promote direct action, such as District 10's leaf raking program. Lisa is willing to work with elementary age children at Langford Park on this topic. Jim Schrankler at SAP Elementary School should be contacted to determine his interest.

**Gateway Park:** This mini-park is located across from Bruegger's Bagels. Karlyn's neighbor has been cleaning up trash and litter for several years, because he thinks the City has not kept up with it. Some of the material originates from homeless people who camp out near this location. He has received no response from the City and is no longer willing to continue this cleanup work. We do not know which entity was designated as responsible for this park, but think it should be indicated in the original documents. Does the Council have this material in its files or are they in the paperwork now at Ramsey County Historical Society? Public Works may have copies of the original documents. Steve Wellington also may remember, so Lisa will contact him.

**Kasota Ponds:** Stephen received the paperwork needed to close out the first grant on invasive plant control and is ready to begin the next phase. He has arranged to work with Jennings Community School students on rain garden maintenance on May 28 to 30. Ten Scouts worked for one hour on the gardens on May 4. The Kasota Ponds Cleanup was well attended and included an educational tour.

**Air Quality concerns:** Lisa wrote to Councilperson Mitra Jalali Nelson, requesting that more air quality details be included in the Comprehensive Plan. We will include that item in the revised draft of the Community Plan.

Betty reported that the MPCA will not locate the air quality monitoring equipment at Bang Brewery because some aspect(s) of the site did not meet their specifications. They likely will select Urban Growler for this purpose.