

Draft 2/6/21

**SAPCC Environment Committee**  
**Minutes of the January 27, 2021 meeting**  
**Held on Zoom**

Members present: Lisa Habeck, Mohit Kumar, Stephen Mastey (co-chair), Gordon Murdock (by phone), Michael Russelle (co-chair), Betty Wheeler

Members absent: Karlyn Eckman, Steve Ray

Visitors: Rennie Gaither, Manu Junemann

After introductions, ***we unanimously voted to accept Gordon Murdock as a member of the Committee, pending Board approval.***

We applauded Rennie Gaither's article, *Chestnut trees planted in Frogtown garden*, in the Midway, Como, Frogtown Monitor.

We discussed the **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's** proposed **Clean Car Rule** at length. Betty reported that Minnesota is quite behind in reducing carbon emissions to meet its own goals. Transportation is a major contributor of atmospheric carbon dioxide through combustion of fossil fuels. Among other things, the Rule proposes stricter emissions standards, in line with 14 other states, and enhanced availability of battery electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. One of the crucial outcomes of the Rule is improved air quality and traffic noise reduction, both of which disproportionately affect people in underprivileged communities. Many comments against the Rule have been submitted, and we discussed these opposing positions and arguments. Betty shared a draft letter in support of the Rule that was passed by the Transportation Committee. ***We made some minor edits to the letter, it was passed unanimously, and forwarded to the Board for the consent agenda.*** Individuals are encouraged to submit their own comments and to include a personal story, if possible. The comment period ends March 15 at 4:30 pm.

Stephen then summarized the history of community input and current plans that Parks and Recreation have for the **new park at Westgate**. Several of us plan to participate in the public meeting the City organized for February 2. Rennie knows several people who live near the park and will encourage them to express their ideas at the meeting. We may hold a special meeting afterward to determine next steps.

Michael briefly discussed his hope that we work on **wildlife habitat** this year, in particular around Kasota Ponds. A small group of people are planning to install some basking logs next month. Such logs are used by turtles, dragonflies, and ducks.

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At the end of the meeting, ***we unanimously supported the motion to accept Manu Junemann and Rennie Gaither as members of the Committee, pending Board approval.***

Next meeting is scheduled for February 24 at 7 pm on Zoom.