

DRAFT
Saint Anthony Park Community Council
Environment Committee
Zoom meeting minutes, March 31, 2022

Present: Bill Anderson, Corey Butler, Val Cervenka, Rennie Gaither, Manu Junemann, Lizzy Logas-Lindstrom, Kerry Morgan, Michael Russelle (co-chair)

Visitors: Patricia Ohmans (lives in Frogtown and owns a home in South Saint Anthony Park), Ryan Murphy (UMN Urban Forestry), Aaron Hinz (UMN grad student with focus on hydrology), From Parks & Rec: Ellen Stewart, Anne Gardner, Dave Ronzoni

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Michael Russelle We have a quorum.

Land acknowledgment – No one volunteered; Michael acknowledged that we are on native land.

Introductions – Patricia’s second meeting, Rennie to complete CERT training, Ryan’s second meeting; he mentioned that there is a training for pruning in St. Paul on May 14.

February minutes - No edits; the motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded, and approved with no abstentions.

Discussion with St. Paul Parks & Rec about the new park project: Ellen Stewart, Anne Gardner, and Dave Ronzani (landscape architect and the new project manager)

- Park Design update and timeline
 - JL Theis is the contractor
 - Construction schedule – permitting wrap-up (April)
 - Construction start – late April; end date late July (4 months); encountering supply chain issues
- Play equipment
 - Structural piece, singular piece, center of park
 - Three structures, good for ages 5-12 years, fit goal and within budget
 - All similar, have not yet decided on colors; 6 ft high
 - SAP Environment Committee members preferred the two curved form options
 - All are good products; ropes will be taut; these are easy to repair; meet qualifications of maintenance
 - These equipment pieces and installers ensure they meet play safety guidelines; Dave also trained in playground safety
- Naming of the park – Ellen provided update
 - Four new parks are currently in the works, no process for naming parks with Dakota names so need to look at each one carefully.
 - St. Paul Parks & Rec is trying to strengthen relationship with Dakota and a Memorandum of Agreement is necessary so they know who to approach when things are happening in St. Paul Parks.
 - As with maintenance, there is a need to establish protocol for naming and make sure the four Dakota tribal nations are in support.
 - SAPCC EC had provided some park name suggestions, committee had met with Jim Rock and Ramona Kitto Stately.
 - St. Paul Parks & Rec consulted tribal preservation leaders; proposed name “Chekpa” was discussed but it was not something they felt strongly about anymore; different conversation emerged; too many layered meanings to the word and too sacred.
 - Need to name something that reflects essence of the place, Maggie, Jim, and Ramona offered further feedback; notions of boundaries and property are at odds with Dakota

way of life, so looking at other criteria for naming: Does it have a Dakota name already? If not, then maybe do not give it a Dakota name. Name site only if it has been brought forward by Dakota people.

- St. Paul Parks & Rec are moving forward with the name “Westgate Park” – received 50% of community’s vote
- Michael: Disappointed. Should survey the neighborhood again
- Art – small budget \$5,000
 - Next step is sending out invitations to artists for a proposal
 - Received list of names from SAP Environment Committee – indigenous artists and leaders; they will pull from that list.
 - Bill: He is member of SAPCC Equity committee, that group would like to be involved in the opening event if possible, want to coordinate.

Election of co-chairs

- Michael: Need one person to be a co-chair. Only one of the co-chairs has to be a member of the Board. Roles: Organize the meetings, make sure things get done.
- Bill nominated Rennie. Need experience that he has done in Frogtown. Has good knowledge, good connections.
- Rennie accepts the position.
- No other nominees.

Action> Bill: Made a motion to elect Rennie as co-chair; seconded by Val; unanimous vote.

Old Business Topics:

Kasota Pond Cleanup, Saturday, April 9, 10 am to 2 pm: Kerry, Lizzy

- Need to work on getting volunteers. Send the link to as many people as possible: <http://sapcc.org/kasotacleanup/>
- Jessica made the flyers; Karlyn reached out to businesses
- Refreshments, we provide protection, two different colored bags for recycling, city will pick it up; meeting in the Napa parking lot; city is providing thin plastic gloves so bring good work gloves
- Access to bathrooms; wear good shoes!
- Wear a vest for safety; by the railroad; not heavily used
- Cannot recycle Styrofoam! Has to go in the trash.
- Electronics – Should try to pick up; take them in to be recycled.
- Careful – lots of broken glass, special bag for hazardous materials
- Kids can participate; big trucks on the road; have to be careful; stay away from ramp
- Margot Monson, entymologist, will be there – an educational aspect
- MWMO will have 1-2 employees gather water samples
- Bill suggested that someone give a safety speech the day of: Michael offered to do that.
- Kasota Ponds background, check out this info page: <https://sapcc.org/kasota-ponds/>
 - Owned by City, MNDot, Napa, PK, dividing lines through the three ponds
 - Why is it the responsibility of the neighborhood?
 - Done it for 30-40 years, every year, sometimes get Avalon students, employees of the businesses assist

Citywide Spring Cleanup, Saturday, April 23, 9 to 11:30 am- Val, Kerry, Rennie

- Please promote the site (stpaul.gov/citywidecleanup) and Facebook event <https://fb.me/e/1qVAI3WwQ>
- Looking for a lot of volunteers; CEZ sign-up to assist with set-up and booth is here: <https://signup.com/go/qNPL0vd>
- Is the sandwich board at that intersection already? Location: 2378 W. Territorial Rd, Saint Paul, MN 55114 (Look for the CEZ booth at the SE corner of Raymond Ave & Territorial Rd.)

Chimney Swift Tower update: Val

- Looking to establish one at St. Anthony town homes (on Seal Street between Territorial and Ellis) by a rain garden and green space
- Val: wrote up proposal, question came up, worry that it would be a town association expense if it needs to come down; will maintenance and upkeep be covered? Well received overall.
- Aaron: it will have a concrete base; 9 cubic feet of concrete; 1300 lbs; four posts, wooden interior with cap on top that is used for venting and entrance; vinyl siding
- Maintenance: It will need to be cleaned; depends on final materials; wood might need to be replaced; If faded, then vinyl siding to be replace; pressure-treated wood so it does not rot. It will be vertical, so will not hold water.
- Timeline? Karlyn is the lead. Bill and Aaron will make it happen.
- List of materials might be at Habitat Reuse.
- Michael: What will happen with the concrete? Size? Depth? Can it be pulled out/removed?
- Aaron: they are designing it, would be possible to just see poles and not the cement; it will be difficult to remove;

100 Trees Initiative update - Corey, Rennie, Michael and Patricia

- Rennie: Most recent info is in the previous meeting minutes; Corey provided list of climate hearty trees; still in planning stages; might not happen this year? He will meet with Ben to get details. Things still up in the air.
- Michael had sent out the website that documented the tree plantings and there were some suggestions.
- Bill: Do something on Robbins, around bridge
- CEZ led:
 - Blue stars = already planted
 - Green stars = intern has suggested
 - Darker green = Michael's suggestions
- Needs soil; need to develop canopy to reduce heat island; interest in the business community;
- Choose species in those 100 spaces; have to get them ordered
- City forest service has helped.
- Rennie: what about the watering? Ongoing problem for communities; Partnership for watering?? How to do it? Boulevard trees? What is the plan?
 - Patricia: talked to Ben about gravel bed at Fair State on Transfer Rd
 - Youth brigade would have to be orchestrated? Need forestry dept. insight
 - Trees in other neighborhoods are all going into residential sites.
 - Michael: Climate impact core – not heard anything for a couple of weeks
 - People hired could help manage the watering?
 - Patricia: story about Port Authority to fund the Forestry Dept. for the removal of trees and the replanting/ somebody should write to Todd Hurley, how about use \$ to create this urban youth watering brigade
 - Bill: Get it out asap, Port Authority needs to be reminded that watering will determine the value of their investment! Success of the investment hinges upon this.

Action> Michael: Motion on the floor to write letter to Todd Hurley, seconded by Rennie; he is going to be on a panel talking about planting trees – need to highlight this! Motion approved unanimously.

- Manu: Dominion property trees also need to be watered; Rennie: Dominion are required to do this
- Corey wrote up list of climate change hearty trees; focus on shade trees, not ornamental, native trees; Any omissions? Updates?
 - Patricia: Gravel bed or bare root?
 - Corey: Not sure if they would be good for gravel beds or not.

- Patricia: If to be used in gravel, some sort of treatment is necessary; we have a lot of maples already (overplanted)
- Ryan: add honey locust, good for boulevard trees, American elms need maintenance but need to be pruned; Accolade elm has resistance to Dutch Elm disease; oaks not good for gravel beds; purple catalpa, not native; shagbark hickory can be difficult to source; native birches are good; blue spruce not good, firs are worth a deeper dive
- Bill thinks the firs will not be thriving in next 20-30 years; periods of drought are stressful for the evergreens and firs; really challenging to keep them alive
- Val: maple was the second most common after ash, then spruce
- Corey's list has already sent to Ben at CEZ; this list is something for the SAPCC to send out to the community and put on our website.
- Plant them! Not necessarily to do with gravel beds; make a picture book; DNR resources with photos
- Ryan: plant database on the forestry website is available here: <https://trees.umn.edu/plant-database>; make it exhaustive; deciduous only; fewer conifers in this area

Rain garden maintenance: Michael

- CRWD – keep storm water out of river; but finally providing funds; have to split cost
- Kathryn Murray has drafted application, due in a week and a half; looking for \$ for mulching and sediment; we need to provide volunteer work; keep track of the hours that you spend cleaning up
- Along Raymond; lots of other small ones by the co-op?; provide it as a match! Talk at next meeting
- Val: Also, need to keep out invasive trees, weeding 3x a year, trash, pruning on dogwoods (might have a dogwood fungus—need to check that out!)
- Rennie: Community clean up; should we keep track of any hours used for end-of-year report.

Stormwater runoff from alleys

- Heard from Matt Loth and Ian McRoberts about PaveDrain and infiltrating hard surface (see EC February meeting minutes).
- Patricia: 2199 Buford (by Murray Jr. High) and is an unpaved alley! Perhaps the only one that is not paved. They have been pumping out water from the basement, using a sump pump to drain yard and basement; what they are doing is what should not be happening; do not put dirt into the storm sewers
- Matt, Ian, and Steven Massey also had comments; how to do it more cost effectively, do it in locations where you can
- Would the committee be interested in exploring it becoming a CRWD?
- Bill: Clean Water Action comes up in the fall
- Michael: city will call it an improved alley and people might get charged; City does not like permeable pavers; engineers are slow to change; could be a good model
- Patricia: Alley is only 6 houses long.
- Bill: make sure in a budget request include line item for design (not for free)

Climate Impact Corps update?

- Michael has not heard anything new

Funding opportunities: Bill

- Three evergreens planted 30 years ago; two are dead; shrub taken down by a vehicle; invasive elm; corner looks ragged; redesign of Robbins, an important corner, want it to look better; apply to the “Good Neighbor” fund for removal of trees, buckthorn; new planting of drought-tolerant species; fix it up! Currently an eyesore. Have 29 days to submit.

- Timeline: would be site visit required; competing with a dozen organizations; history of funding SAPCC events; it is a gateway; high visibility
- Accidents are happening; going to try to add some sort of boulders to keep people from going downhill.

**Action> Bill: moved to apply to the “Good Neighbor” fund from the UMN: \$5-10K to do tree removal, buckthorn removal, clean-up and planting of new trees; seconded by Corey
Vote on motion to rehabilitate corner of bridge on Raymond; approved with no abstentions.**

EC Membership

- Patricia and Ryan are invited to become members; both accept.

Action> Bill: motion to recommend to the Board that the committee include these two new members; seconded; vote was unanimous.

No Other Business

Adjourn at 9:01 p.m.

Next meeting: April 27, 7pm, presumably by Zoom

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kerry Morgan.