

SAPCC Transportation Committee meeting – DRAFT  
May 31, 2022

Present: Scott Jensen, Pat Thompson, Kim Frair, Ray Bryan, Betty Wheeler, Karen Nelson

Guest: Rhandi Nelson (neighbor of Betty Wheeler)

Frair moved to approve last month's minutes. Jensen seconded. **Unanimously approved.**

Members: **Bailey Waters has resigned from the committee** because she will be moving out of St. Paul this month. **Marcus Young is suspending his membership** because he has not been able to attend.

### **Territorial Road June 11 event**

Planning specifics, committee members volunteering 9–11:30 a.m. Studenski (though absent from this meeting) will be there to volunteer. Our guest Rhandi Nelson and Bryan will be there for setup at least. Thompson, Jensen both plan to be there. Frair will be unavailable but will check with some neighbors. Wheeler is unavailable. Jensen will recruit neighbors as well. Karen Nelson was not at the meeting yet at this point; Thompson will check with her and any other members not in attendance.

Setup is from 9–10, event from 10–11:30. The committee will have a table to carry out a survey on pedestrian use of Territorial Road, and hope to have at least one wandering person to get survey responses. There will be a ribbon-cutting at 10:15. CEZ-run mural tours at 10:30 and 11:15. Drain stenciling at 10:45. Evie car demonstration throughout. Lawn games, refreshments, chalk art on the Seal lawn throughout. Sidewalk poetry chalk (run by Jensen) after the ribbon-cutting.

### **Carleton crosswalk area pedestrian count**

As part of the after-action report for the AARP Community Challenge Grant, we want to have a new pedestrian count to see if crossing activity has changed. We will replicate the day of week and time of day, weather. So that's June 7, 4–6 p.m.

### **Cleveland tree removal**

The day after this committee's last meeting, Ramsey County marked the trees it planned to remove for the Cleveland street rebuild and instead of 56 trees as we had been shown in the last plans we were given (October 2020), it was suddenly 167 trees. Much has transpired in the month since then, with the community outraged, the offices of Commissioner MatasCastillo and county public works inundated with emails and calls, and SAPCC's Environment and Transportation Committee co-chairs working to stop the project to get it reengineered without the in-street bike lanes or, at a minimum, save as many trees as possible within the current plan.

A key aspect of how this process failed overall is that the county never considered SAPCC (or the neighborhood in general) a key partner in the process, assuming we were represented by the city, and then even overrode what the City of St. Paul advocated for in the final plan (Option D, which is what was consistent with the St. Paul Bike Plan). Karen Nelson suggested that going forward, small knowledgeable taskforces are an effective way to tell the government bodies like the county what we want on a project. We have intimate local knowledge and often technical expertise as well, and a taskforce format works better with government.

### **Joint District Council transportation meeting**

The second meeting of several transportation committee chairs, executive directors, committee members is June 1 (tomorrow) at 1 p.m. The agenda includes:

- Updates from the various district councils,
- Rethinking I-94/engagement,

- Discussion of demand for traffic-calming, given that one-third of CIB requests were related to that. What other funding is available for requests that don't get funded? Specifically, the new federal Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)—do we have a collective action plan?

### **Capital Improvement Budget proposal review**

We discussed the St. Anthony Park-related proposals (2, 3, 5, 23, 24). PDFs are here:

<https://engagestpaul.org/14520/widgets/43754/documents>. Individuals can also make an account and comment individually. SAPCC will make one comment officially. The total amount of money to be allocated is \$1 million.

- 2: Raymond Ave. street lights. \$30K, three bent straw lights.
- 3: Charles Ave. sidewalk between Hampden and Vandalia. \$460K, some ROW challenges.
- 5: Bike parking at parks and playgrounds that don't have it. \$65.7K. 13 parks, includes College Park.
- 23: Remove train rails from Pelham/Wabash intersection. \$150K for one intersection, just to fill the track areas!
- 24: Robbins/Manvel traffic-calming and lighting. \$315K. Curb construction on north side of Robbins at Manvel, bumpouts into Robbins SW/SE quadrants of Manvel, sidewalk between pedestrian ramps on north side of Robbins/Manvel intersection, reconstruct all ramps at Robbins/Manvel, 1 lantern and 3 bent straw lights on north side of Robbins

The committee rated 2 most highly, then 5, then 24 for the lighting aspect. Discussion focused on the scale of the CIB money available relative to the size of the project budgets, and the CPTED focus, which was not really geared to traffic-calming and so seemed likely to lead to those types of projects being rated lower in the CIB committee. We love the Charles sidewalk, and the traffic-calming parts of the Robbins/Manvel proposals, but between them they would use more than 70% of the citywide CIB budget. Committee rationales were that the lighting proposed in 2 and 24 are both in SAPCC's 10-year plan — and lighting is an important element of CPTED — and increased bike parking generally (which prevents theft, fitting with CPTED) is also in SAPCC's 10-year plan. We will also comment that bike parking should be added to the new park at Westgate as well (the list of 13 parks does not include the new park). Thompson will turn these comments into the appropriate wording and form for the CIB process by the June 3 deadline.

### **Blocked bike/ped access on Territorial at the Minneapolis border**

Territorial Road at the Minneapolis border (west of Berry Street) was vacated in the late 1990s when Hubbard Broadcasting planned to build a satellite broadcasting base adjacent to KSTP. Plans changed and that didn't happen. In 2007, the city rezoned the land from industrial to some form of residential and Pavilion at Berry Place was built. All through this time, the former street was a strip parking lot, with jersey barriers at the Minneapolis border. Car drivers could not cross, but bike riders and pedestrians could. Just recently, either Hubbard or Pavilion has erected a security fence across this access point on both sides of a no-man's land parking lot west of Pavilion. Prospect Park Neighborhood Association requests joint action to complain to Hubbard Broadcasting and they have drafted a letter as such. Thompson checked St. Paul city records and the Park *Bugle* from the time. There was nothing in writing at the time about allowing bike and pedestrian passage, though a lot of talk about pedestrian-friendly and transit oriented development. Karen Nelson suggested involving Towerside, possibly Creative Enterprise Zone as well. She will reach out to Towerside. Thompson will send her the *Bugle* article from 2006 where the conditions for rezoning were mentioned.

### **Resolution re: USDOT Reconnect Communities Program**

USDOT has a new grant program called the Reconnecting Community Pilot Program. As part of giving a full and fair process to the Twin Cities Boulevard within the Rethinking I-94 process, this could provide funds for gathering information needed, such as the number of local vs. non-local trips within the revised corridor (between the current Logical Termini) and how freight traffic could be best accommodated.

Bryan / Frair motion to write a letter to Councilmember Jalali urging St. Paul to apply for this federal grant to study the effects of freeway removal. **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**

Text of letter:

To: Councilmember Mitra Jalali

As we hope you are aware, the St. Anthony Park Community Council recently signed on to the letter supporting the Twin Cities Boulevard as the preferred alternative for truly Rethinking I-94.

We know that getting from A to Z on such a big change is a huge undertaking, and that MnDOT may not be fastest at getting up to speed in what it will take to fairly analyze and consider this alternative.

Toward that end, SAPCC urges the City of Saint Paul to apply for a Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program planning grant (funded in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law through the US Department of Transportation, <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/reconnecting-communities>).

This grant can support planning to equitably and safely restore community connectivity through the removal and replacement of transportation infrastructure facilities that create barriers, such as I-94. Barriers can be due to high speeds, grade separations, or other design factors.

Planning grants can be used to study the feasibility and impacts of removing an existing eligible facility or for planning needed to design a new project to replace an existing eligible facility. We urge Saint Paul to use such a grant to study the impact of reconnection within and among neighborhoods as well as the need for new connections, such as freight connections from the rail yards and nearby freight-intensive businesses like the ones in South St. Anthony Park.

RCPP grants can fund:

- Planning studies of current traffic patterns on the facility proposed for removal and the surrounding street network; transportation network capacity; alternative roadway designs or other uses for the right-of-way; impacts to the mobility of freight and people; impacts to the safety of the traveling public; cost; anticipated economic impacts and environmental impacts both human and natural.
- Public engagement activities to provide the public opportunities to provide input into a plan to remove and convert an eligible facility.
- Other transportation planning activities required in advance of a project to remove or mitigate an existing facility to restore community connectivity.
- There is \$50 million per year available starting this year, so the time to act is soon.

Thank you for your work to make St. Paul a better place for its residents,

### **Semi truck parking on city streets**

As we have seen and discussed in the past, the number of semi cabs and cabs with trailers is increasing and they are appearing on more streets in more areas of the city. Recently there have been numerous complaints of semis blocking egress into loading docks at neighborhood businesses, obstructing visibility at corners where there are stop signs, or even traffic lights. Minneapolis passed a ban on semi parking on residential and commercial streets in late 2021, which may have pushed more of the drivers into St. Paul. While we recognize that this is a larger problem of the trucking industry as a whole externalizing its costs onto the drivers (through outsourcing to owner-operators), that does not compel the City of St. Paul to subsidize their problem.

Jensen / Nelson: Motion to urge the St. Paul City Council ban parking by semi trucks on all St. Paul city streets, and to incentivize and coordinate private parking lots, if possible, to accommodate semi parking. **Approved 4 to**

**1.**

### **Report on health effects of highways event**

Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate and Our Streets Minneapolis hosted a session at St. Peter Claver Church on May 19. Two presenters shared almost overwhelming data on direct health effects, and the

disproportionate effects they have on communities of color and low-income communities. It was well-attended and conversations happened among people who didn't know each other. Thompson got to meet the executive director of Union Park District Council in person for the first time, who had shared that he lives within blocks of I-94 and why he has air filters in his apartment.

### **Summit Ave. bike infrastructure**

There is a public info session on June 6, 7 p.m. on Zoom. This has become a controversial topic with some tree elements as well, but it's important that Summit have safer (protected) and consistent bike infrastructure.

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86823131229?tk=9-w4-SHZSNK34dE2\\_hxhflgqjR9ijDpWpGaDV8VphoY.DOMAAAAUNw\\_YXRZ5bGISLWxXYVN3U2k3T0UwSVZaeXp3AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA&pwd=ZkJHZEJ0VEVqWUJXK29VQ0xha01uUT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86823131229?tk=9-w4-SHZSNK34dE2_hxhflgqjR9ijDpWpGaDV8VphoY.DOMAAAAUNw_YXRZ5bGISLWxXYVN3U2k3T0UwSVZaeXp3AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA&pwd=ZkJHZEJ0VEVqWUJXK29VQ0xha01uUT09)

### **Met Council Transportation Improvement Program 2023–26**

Draft here: <https://metrocouncil.org/TIP.aspx>. Please read this before our June meeting. It includes money in 2026 for removing the left turn lane to Broadway from 280 and adding a traffic signal at the 280 ramps on Energy Park/Kasota. Also "2030 On the Horizon" mention of adding a MnPass lane on I-94 between Cedar Ave in Minneapolis and Marion Street in St. Paul. And overall, just a whole lot of road building for an area that should be figuring out how to decrease vehicle miles traveled. Through the committee (to Executive Committee), we can make official written comments through July 5, so we can do that at our June meeting. If you want to comment as an individual by speaking, sign up to make public comments (online) for June 21 at 4:30 p.m. The link is on the same page as the document.

### **Street-level amenities in South SAP**

Moved to the June agenda.

### **Public Works-related and other topics**

- We should request a No Turn on Red sign for eastbound Como at Raymond because the nonaligned intersection makes it impossible for drivers to see to the left/north on Cleveland/Raymond, and they creep forward through the crosswalk constantly.
- Thompson will email Beth Stiffler (again) about moving the Your Speed sign to Raymond around Standish. Also ask why all of the in-street Pedestrian Xing signs were put up on Como, including one at the Carter signalized intersection, while there are none on Raymond or Territorial. Can at least that one be moved to Blake? And once school is out... can one of the others be moved to Territorial?
- We have a new cache of 20 Is Plenty signs. Jessica plans to distribute small stacks to Speedy Market and Hampden Park Co-op. Pat stores them and can deliver to people who request. We should bring some to June 11 to have at our table!
- We also have small stacks of catalytic converter-marking kits, that in effect put a VIN-like number on the converter. The number is visible to a person who is trying to remove the device, and makes it traceable. The kit can be installed by the car's owner, but most people probably would not be able to do it. Jessica is checking on what she was told, which was that any garage would install it for free, but that has turned out to not be true. Jensen and Thompson have kits available to distribute when ones are requested. If we get this figured out, we could also have these at the June 11 table.

### **Parking topics**

To be discussed in June, as needed. As the various large construction projects finish up in SSAP, it will be interesting to see how/if the parking situation improves. Just from casual observation, it has seemed a bit better in recent weeks.