

DRAFT MINUTES

SAPCC Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 30, 2022

Hybrid meeting via Zoom and in person at Berry Place, St. Anthony Park

In attendance: Michael Russelle (co-chair), Rennie Gaither (co-chair), Ryan Murphy, Corey Butler, Manu Junemann, Karlyn Eckman, Patricia Ohmans, Kerry Morgan

Regrets: Val Cervenka, Lizzy Logas-Lindstrom, Lisa Habeck

Visitors: Mike Lukes, Caroline Gaither

Meeting called to order

Land acknowledgment - Michael

October minutes – Patricia Ohmans moved approval, seconded by Kerry Morgan, approved with an abstention from Karlyn.

Brief updates:

SAPCC Annual meeting with SAPCF - Michael

- Joint meeting, highlighted things we have worked on over the past year
- EC accomplishments will be sent into January Bugle article; Michael will send out a current version; please provide him with feedback ASAP

Raymond rain gardens - Kerry and Michael

- We satisfied the CRWD maintenance grant for year one; reimbursement request for \$2K paid to Matt Wildenhauer is due to CRWD on Dec. 1.
- Michael, Rennie and Kerry met with our CRWD coordinator, Rachel Funke, to look at the two rain gardens in person
- Asked Rachel to look at the original planning as there was concern that perhaps the inflow and outflow design were not calculated correctly; she checked and both gardens were designed with a ponding depth of 6” so she thinks both are, in her words, “functioning correctly,” and encouraged us to get a couple of bids from contractors like Landbridge Ecological to replant the Ellis garden
- Michael explained that the Ellis garden is storing very little water and therefore not really infiltrating water as a rain garden should be doing
- Matt Wildenhauer was already consulted about the Ellis rain garden; he suggested removing 6 in. of seed bank, put in mulch and revegetate for \$15-20K
- Michael suggested we seed it with plants that can be wet/dry prairie and mow weeds and see what can come up
- Patricia: suggested that CRDW might be able to cover the high cost; CRWD paid for their new garden for \$22k in Frogtown

- Kerry: We will resume monthly maintenance (the third Sunday of the month, 1-3 p.m.) in April, continue until November

Chimney Swift tower – Karlyn

- It is done, Bill Delanis did amazing work, we should nominate him for a local award
- If a report is needed Karlyn is willing to do that
- Bill needs to submit receipts; Karlyn is not sure whether or not he has been paid
- Need to put up sign, near the commercial building and one for people in the grass
- Discussion of incident that happened during the installation of the chimney swift and response to it; Aaron has resigned from the committee; Rennie plans to step away at the end of 2022

100 Trees Project - anyone?

- Patricia – does not know what they are doing; not sure why there are still gator bags around the trees
- Soil frozen now, but we can keep tabs

Raymond/Robbins grant proposal - Kerry, Rennie, Michael

- Pat Thompson (co-chair of SAPCC Transportation Committee) and Michael looked at the site and Pat has created a design for the plantings
- Site needs to withstand lots of foot and car traffic
- Might need to take down a few trees; two that are on the slope could be taken to Kasota Ponds, removed, or left in place
- Would be nice to have a resting place at this corner, but the county does not want anything
- New plantings need to be installed by June 2023

Kasota Ponds - Michael, Karlyn, Kerry

- Several EC members met with Tory Christenson, runs Landbridge Ecological, a local restoration company
- Tory raised concerns about who owns the property in relation to getting approvals and outside funding; he thinks that around the East Pond, by 280, a mixed prairie species might be good way to revegetate and create more habitat for animals; he will work on plans to share with EC
- We have opportunity to apply for another grant, ask for up to \$50k, need to get it in asap
- We could hire contractors to do different things, but \$ cannot be used to pay for design
- Karlyn would like to see us go for this!
- Goal: trap salts, use plantings to absorb salt and provide good infiltration rates and not run off into the water; provide nesting habitat, feed nectar; might be possible to make it more accessible to people, a pullout perhaps, do not want people to cross the railroad tracks; place for students to do research
- Karlyn: West Pond is full of concrete, has a sandy bottom, would be beneficial to establish sandbar willow; would be good to see frogs
- Mike: he would like to see if MWMO might be able to pay for a designer; wondered if the DNR could be involved?
- Karlyn: She has been doing water monitoring since the 1990s, then MWMO has been doing it since 2011

- Committee members who want to be involved in applying for the grant: Michael, Kathryn, Manu, Mike

Important new business

What else could we complete in December? - Review the 2022 goals

- Rennie: would like to encourage composting activities of businesses in the neighborhood
- Rennie: should we focus on *CC4.3: Provide written recommendations for how to respond to an emergency, in appropriate languages and with assistance to convey the information orally where necessary.*
 - Karlyn: Create a “go” bag; if you need to evacuate quickly, what do you need to take with you?, maybe we could host a meeting about it? Useful info for people to have.
 - Michael: Transition Town held a meeting in 2016 about this topic, how to get your house prepared, wrote a newspaper article; put out to SAPCC list-serve
 - Karlyn will send list to Rennie and he will write it up
- Kerry: Would be interested in pursuing *WSA5.7: Encourage use of quieter and less polluting landscape maintenance equipment than two-cycle lawnmowers, leaf-blowers, and similar equipment.*; she wants to work on noise pollution issue, start to track sound levels; write an article letting people know about the problem with gas-powered leaf blowers that are also being used for blowing snow
- Manu: concern about air pollution, does not like idling cars, terrible for walkers

What should our goals be for 2023? (Reference: 10-Year Community Plan)

- Patricia: 1) Political advocacy goal would be to continue funding the Legacy Amendment; do not want it to lapse; write a letter to our state representative; 2) Act for the Earth, campaign about plastic, create a series of tip sheet to reduce plastic over a three-month period; put it out in the SAP ListServ
- Manu: programs for pollinators?
- Rennie: would like to promote clean-up, railroad at Eustis and Wabash, back area near The Lab Brewery, commercial public storage, loaded with debris and junk; he cleans there, unbelievable amount of junk
 - Michael thinks DNR and city are thinking of making it a bicycle route; might be slated for major clean up
 - Kerry wonders if we could be hosting monthly clean-ups around the neighborhood, pick a different location each month; encourage students, schools, churches, etc. to participate
- Karlyn: 1) Lead walking tours of the chimney swift tower in early April, there is another roosting site near Jimmy Johns; gather and watch, and 2) Get a camera inside the tower, do a live feed; she will research with Audubon
- Karlyn: Turtle basking logs
- Mike: Ask MWMO “Green Team;” they might be able to help out; Green Team is made up of high school students and interns
- Patricia: Concentration on committee growth! Disseminate the EC brochure
- Michael: Wants to do work on air pollution

- Patricia: \$ coming down the pipeline with the Inflation Reduction Act, do people in SAP know this? Will need to be implemented over time.
- Patricia: Host an Alternative Energy Discussion? Co-sponsor with Frogtown & SAP event at Rondo Library?

No other business

Adjourned

Next meeting – Wednesday, December 28, 6 to 8 pm at Rennie's

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kerry Morgan