

DRAFT SAPCC Environment Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 22, 2023  
Online via Zoom

Attendees: Michael Russelle (co-chair), Kerry Morgan (co-chair), Val Cervenka, Manu Junemann, Joy Gerdes, Lisa Habeck

Guests: Angela Casselton, Mike Lukes, Catherine Reid Day, Conner Beck

Not attending: Corey Butler, Ryan Murphy, Patricia Ohmans

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

**Land acknowledgement:** Michael read the land acknowledgement he authored. Our committee uses a land acknowledgement to keep us aware; it's an acknowledgement of wrongs and the intention to do something about it. SAPCC board meetings also use a land acknowledgement.

Introduction of Connor Beck and guests

Motion to approve February minutes made by Joy and seconded by Manu. They were approved with no abstentions.

### **Cooperation with others**

Catherine Reid Day - Focused on two ideas around cooperation among district council environmental committees; not sure how much progress is being made:

1. A "guerilla" campaign to encourage buckthorn control. Catherine and Pat Thompson developed a tag with a lighthearted message with cartoon images meant to teach homeowners what buckthorn is and why it would be helpful to remove it. They are in the process of preparing the tags, which will be fastened to buckthorn hedges at the edges of yards, etc. with twist-ties. They were going to be laminated, but Catherine will explore other possibilities. Discussed whether to acknowledge Environment Committee (EC) or SAPCC's involvement; decided no. There is a photo of buckthorn on the tag, but would it be better to use a line drawing? Once concerns are ironed out, Catherine will share her idea with other districts around the city. **Tell Catherine if you'd like to help distribute these tags.**
- Adopt Homegrown National Park – This is a nation-wide initiative that aims to rewind landscapes, create greater biodiversity by doing what national parks cannot achieve. Catherine still working on an op-ed piece to encourage individuals to sign up. Connor Beck offered to talk about it outside the meeting, as he has had experience with the program.

### **Cooperation with the Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ)**

Angela Casselton – Creating more tree canopy in south St. Anthony Park. Committed to new trees for two years. **CEZ was granted TWO AmeriCorps Fellows!** The Forestry and Climate Impact Fellow position runs from August 2023 – July 2024. Now looking for applicants for the position. There is another 40 hours per week position for a Climate Resilience Fellow for May 22 – July 31, 2023; the applicant for this position can be as young as 17. The fellows will be housed at CEZ and Angela will be the supervisor.

The fellow will be helping CEZ plant, water, and inventory trees, could assist with cleaning up Kasota Ponds or rain gardens. More projects are needed. **Please send ideas for projects (especially winter activities) to Michael as soon as possible, and Michael will compile before our next meeting.**

**Please spread the word and recruit anyone you know that might be eligible. Salary for the 12-week position will be \$1,100 every two weeks.**

### **Kasota Ponds**

*Basking logs* - ice no longer thick enough to put basking logs on Kasota Pond. Michael will work with Alex to fell and cut up trees near the ponds and bring them close to be ready to haul after ice-out with a canoe.

*Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO)* - Michael will work with others to apply for grant in September 2023 for major vegetation renewal for the Kasota east pond banks. The area will be heavily managed after buckthorn is removed.

***Kasota ponds clean-up, April 29, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.*** - Joy and Kerry are leading the clean-up. She needs help with flyers. Staffing booth on the day-of is covered. There will be gloves, vests, bags, etc. Meet in the NAPA Auto Parts parking area just west of Hwy 280. Transition Town newsletter article and in the Park Bugle will advertise the clean-up. Rain date is April 30.

### **Air quality letter**

Manu hasn't heard back since the letter was sent. Michael may hear something at the next board meeting.

### **Chimney swift tower**

Swifts return beginning in mid-April. Looking forward to tours Karlyn is planning. There are five pairs of binoculars at the Community council office that may be loaned to neighbors. Kerry is in the process of getting a sign for the tower; a graphic designer is working on a sign used elsewhere and getting bids in the next 2-3 weeks. Kerry will have more info at our next meeting.

## **Upcoming events**

**Westrock tour - May 23 or 25 after 6:00 p.m.** Can accommodate 8-10 people for a 1-1.5 hour tour. Kerry will send a Doodle poll to see who is available to go.

*Westgate Commons Park* – Joy and Jessica W. are working on the new park celebration. Construction must be completed by the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2023. Because there were too many conflicting events this spring, **they are now planning to hold the celebration on September 17.** There is a planning meeting on April 1. The Environmental and Equity Committees are partnering to have this as a combined celebration and ice cream social. Want to include more community engagement. Kerry is exploring ideas for a public art piece or interpretive signage about the history of the site. Budget is \$5,000.00. Catherine asked about indigenous people having a role in the signage and story of the park.

**Please let Joy know if interested in help with celebration planning, beginning the first week of April.**

**St. Anthony Park Arts Festival – June 3, 2023.** Do we want to staff a booth? We would need to apply by March 27. We need an activity. Suggestions: a survey, petition, pennies in a jar, etc. Map of the SAP neighborhood where residents color in their houses based on the kind of environmental activity they are doing (this would exclude residents outside the neighborhood). Use tallies to mark what people are doing to help the environment and make badge for the activity. Lisa possibly providing a canopy; need chairs, table, and people to staff booth, set up and take down. Sign up for 1-2 hours and work in pairs.

*Eco Fair and 5K run – June 17, 2023.* Jennifer Victor-Larson organizes the event. Last year Rennie staffed a booth. It wasn't well-attended. We need to let Jennifer know by March 31 if we are going to staff a booth.

We need to choose either the SAP Arts Festival or the Eco Fair, not both. We get more bang for our buck at the Arts Festival. Lisa may be able to staff a booth, and Manu also volunteered. Michael will send an email to sign up volunteers.

## **Robbins and Raymond Avenue corner improvement**

Michael will work with Alex to see if some of the trees here could be used for basking logs.

## **Ellis and Raymond Avenue rain garden**

Kerry has no update; no response from interested parties. Capital Region Watershed District wants to fund.

## **Next meeting, April 26 at 6:30 p.m.**

Adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Val Cervenka