

SAPCC Transportation Committee  
March 28, 2023

Present: Kim Frair, Scott Jensen, Pat Thompson, Luke Wetterstrom. Ray Bryan, Karen Nelson

Guests: Peter Leete, Jacqueline Bronian (a Como resident)

### **Minutes**

The minutes of February 28, 2023 were approved unanimously. Motion: Frair/Bryan

#### **EV Spot location by the library**

Jacqueline attended to bring her concerns about the locating of the EV Spot chargers on Carter next to the St. Anthony Park library, which is already partially constructed. She asked if we were in charge of the EV Spot and that decision. We informed her that we were not, that it was part of a citywide program (jointly with Minneapolis), which has been in development almost since Mayor Carter has been in office. She had not heard of the Evie car sharing program or anything about it.

She thinks this location is a bad idea. There is no parking lot for the library; you have to carry your books, and these are some of the closest parking spots. Equity and inclusion is supposedly a big deal, but not in this case it seems, she said. The bus does not stop close to her house.

We explained that the EV Spot had previously been planned to be located on the other side of Como east of Carter but was moved because of complaint from the owner of Milton Square, and that there are a lot of constraints about where the chargers can go (electrical capacity access, boulevard curb length must be 80' contiguous, depth of boulevard, and other factors). In general, the chargers are located within the Evie "home" areas, which include most of St. Anthony Park, with North St. Anthony Park somewhat isolated between Falcon Heights and the Minneapolis border. Access to the Evie shared cars is a beneficial thing.

The EV Spot chargers (2 for charging Evie cars and 2 for general use by anyone with a personally owned electric vehicle, likely without access to charging at home) are to be located in neighborhood nodes (which is defined in the city's comprehensive plan: places of greater density, with more transit access), and the North SAP business district is the only node in NSAP, so the EV Spot would go somewhere within the node. The node is centered around Como at Carter and Doswell. (There are also EV Spots in SSAP near the Westgate and Raymond Stations.) Given the constrained amount of space in the NSAP node, someone would be unhappy no matter where it was put.

We were able to clarify that the accessible parking spot and the 5-minute drop-off spot on Carter are unaffected by the addition of the EV Spot chargers.

Jacqueline expressed that only rich people own electric vehicles, so these parking spots are being allocated to rich people. Thompson pointed out that the city is planning for the future, quoting from the EV Spot info: "The major goal of creating the EV Spot network is to make it easier for people to purchase electric vehicles knowing they can charge them throughout the cities. The cost of EVs is dropping fast. As soon as 2024, many EVs will be less expensive than gas-powered cars of a similar model. When prices fall, there will be higher demand for public charging, and this network will help meet that demand."

Jacqueline was dissatisfied with our response overall; she wanted us to agree that it was bad to have EV charging on the street, particularly on this side of Carter next to the library. Whether the Transportation Committee (and every other District Council with street frontage affected) should have been consulted or not is another question, which we did not discuss. We gave her the email for Russ Stark, who is the manager of the program: [russ.stark@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:russ.stark@ci.stpaul.mn.us).

## **Finalize committee goal assignments**

Following up on some of our assignments from last meeting where a person had left the meeting early and we were not able to confirm.

- Midtown Greenway Extension advocate/representative. Wetterstrom – yes.
- Westgate trail connection: Nelson, if there is anything that needs to be done.
- Bus shelters on Franklin: Nelson – yes

## **Street lighting levels**

Since our last meeting, both Leete and Thompson have spoken with Ben Hawkins, who is in charge of street lighting at St. Paul Public Works.

Leete reported briefly about best practices for natural areas and the effect of blue light on sleep. Light is a complex mix of color temperature (K), lux (brightness), and spectrum. LEDs are now 3000K in Saint Paul, which is a good number. But when Leete took his phone-based meter around, he found all the lights on arterials higher than that. Raymond was around 5K, Como over 4K, Cleveland over 3K. (Privately owned lights are often worse, and also more blue.)

BUG standard (backlight, uplight, glare. The pole lights standard in Saint Paul glare into people's yards and houses. These lights don't have uplight, but they do have glare and backlight. Bent straw lights, while less pretty, are better for the BUG standard.

Thompson's talk with Ben Hawkins: he said the Cleveland lights should be 3000K, and the Como lights were either 3000 or 4000 depending on when they were done. The city changed the standard right around the time of that project, and he started with the city just after that. (Leete's finding that the Como lights were over 4K would indicate they are 4000.) The Como poles (west of Raymond) are also taller than all of the other ones, he said, which was a mistake in the specs or plans, at least in retrospect.

Not surprisingly, the spec for spacing lights is closer together on arterials, but it's still inconsistent.

- Como west of Raymond is 80'
- Como east of Raymond (most of which is county road) is 60'
- Cleveland is 60' and appears to be replicating what was there previously, if you compare to the spacing of lights on the still unrebuilt street north of Buford
- Raymond south of Como is 90' (this is also a county road, but the project was done by the city). So while the lights are brighter, there are fewer of them.

Back shields are available to install on individual lights, which should decrease backlight into adjacent buildings by 50–60%. They are installed by SPPW after a project is completely done. We should let people know that, whether on Cleveland or any of the previously reconstructed streets.

Ben Hawkins said he would take a look at what has been done with lights on Cleveland phase 1. We will invite him to come talk to us after he has looked at it, hopefully at our next meeting. Ask the Environment Committee if they want to attend.

## **Transportation Safety Action Plan**

St. Paul Public Works is gathering input on locations in the city that need safety improvement or where crashes or near-crashes have occurred. There is an interactive map tool where you can describe what the problem is or what could be done, or what you witnessed somewhere.

<https://app.publiccoordinate.com/#!/projects/safe-streets-for-all-saint-paul/map>

## **Transit funding hearings at the Capitol**

This Friday, March 31 – House hearing 8:30 a.m., room 120. Senate hearing 2 p.m., Senate building 1150.

### **SAPCC potluck**

All committee members invited and encouraged! Thursday, April 13. Begins at 6:30 pm with some Board business, potluck at 7:00. At the new SAPCC office, which is in the CEZ building, 2171 University Ave. (the former Sunrise Bank branch at the corner of Vandalia). After the brief business, the rest of the time will be to recognize and appreciate all the work board and committees have done and connect over food and drinks!

### **Raymond / Robbins gateway**

The pollinator patch project we have discussed will be getting underway. The dead trees were just cut down with major help from Environment Committee members. Two work sessions are schedule:

- April 16 1:30–3:30 p.m. — digging along the curb to lay pavers.
- May 21 1:30–3:30 p.m. — planting.