

DRAFT

Environment Committee Meeting Notes

April 26<sup>th</sup> 2023

Online Via Zoom (Secretary- Joy Gerdes)

**In Attendance:** Alex Bajcz, Kelsey Boeff, Joy Gerdes, Mike Lukes, Michael Russelle, Kerry Morgan, Corey Butler, Val Cervenka, Ryan Murphy

Regrets: Karlyn Eckman, Lisa Habeck, Manu Junemann

**Land acknowledgement-** Ryan

**Minutes adopted :** Val moved, Michael 2<sup>nd</sup>; no abstentions

**Add new members** (Alex Bajcz and Kelsey Boeff): Moved by Michael, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Val; unanimous

**Formal recognition of Mike Lukes as a member of this committee** [with caveats due to possible conflicts of interest because of UMN and Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) and St Paul Commissioner affiliations]: Moved by Michael, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Corey; unanimous

**Resignation of Lizzy Logan-Lindstrom -- Michael**

- She is resigning due to health reasons
- If we are working on any waste reduction projects she would like to know and possibly help out

**City Wide Cleanup April 22 recap-**Kerry

- The weather not great, so not as much turnout as we wanted but still had participation
- About 30 bags filled

**CEZ — fellows selected; 100 Trees April 29 2-5 pm – Michael**

- 2 Full Time fellows were selected: one starts in May-July and the other is full year starting late summer
- We need list of things that need to be done for them to work on/projects especially in the Fall when there no field work
  - Please send ideas to Angela and Michael
  - One or both will help with 100 Trees initiative
  - Tree mapping data collection (R-Shiny Web App) idea from Alex aka like a neighborhood i-Naturalist (ID trees and condition score)
- Trees need to be watered once a week or more therefore need ongoing volunteer support

**Buckthorn tags, Homegrown National Park-**Kerry

- Catherine Reid Day has tags if you would like to help

**Heavy trucks in SSAP letter -**Michael

- A letter was sent to Mitra Jalali requesting something to be done about idling and parking of trucks in SSAP
- Mitra said i helps her talk with other representatives to explain the issue and get something done. She said to watch for the vote.

#### **Kasota Ponds Cleanup - THIS SATURDAY April 29** — Joy and Kerry

- Keep the Saturday date even though small amount of rain is forecast.
- Setup starts at 9 am but come whenever
- Safety orientation (revised by Michael)
  - Wear your vest and gloves.
  - MCR are the only set of tracks we should cross, but do not cross them unless okayed by the Minnesota Commercial railroad rep flag person. Stay away from all tracks - they are busier than you think.
  - People drive fast on Kasota Ave and the 280 ramp, so stay off the roadway and keep track of people in your group for safety
  - Unless you are prepared (e.g., are wearing waders), do not go into the water! It has a deep silty base and you can get stuck
  - When in doubt don't pick it up. If you question whether you should pick up something because it is broken, really heavy, or potentially hazardous, don't.
  - Ask for help with heavy things and advice about hazardous items. (You might ask if anyone present can help make those decisions.)
  - There are lots of buckthorn so be careful about thorns.
  - You may want to work in pairs along the steep slope to the West pond — one of you can help the other climb back up.
  - Do not go on railroad side of the West pond and stay away from the road, especially near the highway ramp
  - Leave bags on west side of the J Barrier at North Pond and by NAPA sign for West pond
  - Keep recyclables and trash in separate piles so it's easy for the City to pick up.

#### **Basking logs** — Michael

- We will work on this later in May and get logs into the water

#### **Rain garden at Ellis and Raymond** — Kerry

- Capital Region Watershed District needs to do the plan for it. We are waiting on that.
- The one across from Hampden Coop is going good (Bayless/ Raymond site)

#### **Robbins and Raymond pollinator garden installation** — Kerry

- Thank you to Pat Thompson who came up with plan
- We prepped the land on Sat (funding through Good Neighbor Fund). We created a trench and added hardscaping and pavers to prevent truck gouging
- May 21<sup>st</sup> planting/garden installation ~1:30-3:30pm via SignUp Genius
- Matt Hass- at Hampden Co-op might be interested in helping Environment Committee

#### **Chimney Swift Tower** — Kerry, Val (any sightings?)

- Signage is in process. We just got the proof back so it should be done in the next 2-3 weeks

- Unclear if chimney swifts are back yet

#### **WestRock tour — Manu**

- Manu will confirm with Mike Gunderson about tour on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm
- 10-12 people can come on the tour

#### **Westgate Commons Park — Joy**

- Met with Planning Committee and there were lots of ideas and Rennie Gaither has been doing a lot of work helping get apartment buildings involved. The next meeting will be May 4<sup>th</sup> and will be the start to detailed planning.
- \$5,000 left for Art and we requested 5,000 more from Good Neighbor Fund
- Dave Wellington- community link for Wellington Management

#### **CURA researcher update / UMN Good Neighbor Fund grant — Kerry**

- Applied for and received CURA community outreach focused person (20 hrs per week, specifically for Westgate Commons Park)
- They will be working closely with Westgate Commons Park Planning Committee etc
- Researcher will be working at CEZ with Kathryn and Kerry

#### **SAP Art Festival — June 3 — Michael - theme, volunteers, leader**

- We need someone to lead and volunteers to spend time at booth 9-2pm
- New organizers are happy to have us
- Ideas for tabling:
  - Where storm water goes Twin Cities (cap region database)?, Adopt a drain?, Neighborhood interactive (Chance to learn about neighbors and who's doing environment stuff in neighborhood)
- Alex and Kelsey agreed to help Kerry with ideas and possibly lead it

#### **UMN Tree Campus Advisory Committee**

- Members of our committee were invited to apply to or suggest others who might apply to be members of the UMN student advisory committee

#### **Mini-Forest in SAP — Kerry**

- A local school-age child contacted us to ask about doing this in St. Anthony Park
- The idea is to use a small amount of space to create dense tree canopy, aka forest, to increase tree population (it can be as small as 6 parking spaces).
- This has been done worldwide to buffer against climate change and its effects
- This is in addition to movement in our area that is already going on. Others want to do 4 of these in Rondo/Frogtown/Summit University and are engaging the community currently.
- Both Langford Park and College Park are [Official School Forests](#).

#### **BizRecycling initiative**

- Initiative to have businesses adopt compostable to go and organics more widely
- There are grants/funding to do so
- Do we want to start this in SAP?

**\*Next meeting - May 24, 6:30 pm**

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.