

Saint Anthony Park Community Council

Environment Committee

Meeting Minutes, June 23, 2021

Members present: Ben, Lisa, Manu, Clara, Karlin, Aaron, Stephen (for a portion of the meeting)

Following Lisa's land acknowledgement, each person introduced themselves briefly.

Jumping Worms:

Karlin led a discussion on invasive jumping worms brought to MN by anglers. The jumping worm is moving through the neighborhood, and the DNR has released a fact sheet on the jumping worms. The jumping worms damage the soil by preventing plant growth, and it is best to kill them if you see them by stepping on them very hard.

This led to a discussion of the city's soil standards compared to neighboring cities, and the possibility of leveraging the DNR to increase the city's soil standards. Betty raised the idea of talking to the U of M, since Cleveland is getting torn up and the University may have an interest in the type of soil used in the project. The Committee decided to further discuss at the next meeting what such a conversation/proposal to the city could look like.

New Park Update:

Stephen provided a print-out of an email from Liz Hixson of the City of St. Paul. The city has not provided many updates on progress, but they are bringing an engineer in for stormwater analysis. Stephen will provide Liz Hixson with the details of our next meeting to see if she can attend and provide an update. Kathryn is leading a statement drafted to the City about the park's naming process.

Kasota Ponds:

Karlin and Aaron have been there and chipping away at buckthorn. Another concentrated effort may be needed soon, or the committee could consider applying for a grant.

100 Tree Initiative:

Manu and Ben B spoke about helping with watering the trees before a permanent irrigation system was set up. There was some worry that we would lose many of the trees, but have not had any updates from Ben S. since the irrigation system was set up.

Betty proposed writing a bugle article to ensure people were aware that the trees would be available. The Committee also discussed creating an educational information sheet so that those who wanted a tree would understand how to care for it. Manu volunteered to talk to Ben S. about a potential informational sheet.

Betty has reached out to someone about potential youth volunteers to help install the trees. The Committee discussed ideas on how to ensure the experience is meaningful for any youth volunteers, including an educational component or a letter of recommendation.

Transportation Meeting:

Next transportation meeting is June 29. A MN DOT representative will be there to discuss 280 and raising the speed limit. The speed study has already been completed, and the plan is to increase the speed limit from 55-60. The Committee opposes the increase. Union Park and Prospect Park councils have passed resolutions against the speed increase.

On 6/29 from 10:30-12:00, a meeting on health/air quality. Betty will send information to committee.

Betty introduces the re-thinking I-94 project. If you have any ideas for what you'd like to see in the future, please send to Betty. Manu sent information about similar projects in other countries, and how we could implement that here.

The Committee also discussed potential safety issues in redirecting traffic resulting from the 280 project.