

SAPCC Environment Committee Draft Minutes
October 27 2021

Present: Michael Russelle (co-chair); Stephen Mastey (co-chair); Karlyn Eckman; Betty Wheeler; Val Cervenka; Renoir Gaither; Manu Junemann

Visitors: Tim Wulling; Lizzy Logas-Lindstrom; Kerry Morgan

1. Solar on Saint Paul Schools.

Tim Wulling discussed an initiative by several partners: MN 350, Impact Power Solutions (IPS Solar) and Cooperative Energy Futures. This initiative is looking for school sites for solar installations. Tom Lucy from the Saint Paul Federation of Educators (SPFE) intended to be here tonight but was unable. The partners hope to persuade the school board to install solar systems on schools via a petition that is being taken up by several Saint Paul districts. The link to the petition is:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfMWwA0wSWcstzpv11i6gG6ez4slhydP2z0mcUp0-96gOO_6Q/viewform

SPFE and MN350 are asking the Environment Committee to recommend that SAPCC prepare a letter in support of the initiative. Co-chair Russelle noted the importance of educating the next generation on energy conservation. Wheeler noted that local storage for solar energy is coming on line. There is strong interest in light of technological advances.

Committee members expressed a need for a 1-2 page fact sheet or background sheet; Wulling will discuss with Tom Lucy.

Action: Mastey moved that the EC fully support this initiative. A letter should be prepared for the full council. Seconded by Gaither. Passed unanimously. The Environment Committee to prepare a draft within the next week, prior to the next full council meeting.

2. New park update.

A tribal historic review panel (HPO) is reviewing the proposal for the name (Chekpa) submitted by SAPCC to the Parks and Rec Department as suggested by Jim Rock and Ramona Kitto Stately. Meanwhile, Wheeler has compiled a list of about 230 Minnesota artists with legitimate Native heritage. In contrast, the City's list of approved public artists includes only one who has Native heritage. The Environment Committee has previously stated its strong preference for an artist of Dakota or Anishinaabe heritage to interpret the site and park name. Eckman noted that Wheeler's list may have wider relevance and utility. Kerry noted that the Minnesota Artists Coalition is working on a database of BIPOC artists, especially muralists. There was discussion about whether to include artists on such lists without their permission. Wheeler noted that her list was compiled from public information available on the Internet, and that Native artists often use their gallery as a contact. Saint Paul Parks and Rec has \$5100 set aside for public art at the site, which is an insufficient amount for either materials or a living wage for an artist. We are awaiting notification about a grant request for additional funds.

Russelle reported that there is no new information on soils or site condition.

100 Trees Initiative

SAPCC, the Good Neighbor Fund, Bailey Nursery, Landbridge Ecological, and Davey Tree are collaborating in this CEZ project. Trees donated by Bailey Nursery were transplanted in early October by about fifty volunteers. There were about ten species of trees (mix of native and non-native). Russelle and Aaron Hinz planted nine sub-standard trees at the west Kasota Pond and two near the north pond. He reported that it was very difficult work due to infilled material and debris.

CEZ is contracting with Davey Tree to water transplanted trees until they go dormant. Next season Ben Shardlow will seek ways to get neighborhood engagement. Russelle noted that CRWD has a RFP due on Sunday October 31, and a successful proposal could pay a contractor for maintenance. Each tree is labeled with the name of a sponsor or donor. CEZ will prepare a map showing the location of each tree. There was discussion on whether a contractor would be sufficient. Russelle will pursue a grant.

The City was not able to assist with digging holes or other tasks despite agreeing to do so, because they have no personnel to do the work. Cervenka asked whether tree gators and mulch could be used; Russelle concurred if a CRWD proposal were funded.

PK Property Services and Kasota Ponds

There was a question about ownership of the pond shoreline, and what buffer distance around the ponds can be delineated. It was noted that there is a need to treat stormwater runoff, especially at the west pond, where PK Property Services plows and applies de-icing chemicals. Mastey noted that MWMO should work with PK to redesign stormwater and to highlight wetland rules.

PK has not responded to the letter sent by SAPCC on conservation measures for the ponds, and the suggestion to attend an MWMO "smart salting" workshop. A follow-up letter is needed. MWMO has added another workshop on November 17 from 9:00am to 1:30 (on-line). The link is:

https://www.mwmo.org/events/mpca-smart-salting-for-property-managers-training/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

MWMO has a community grant opportunity due November 11 which does not require matching funds. Russelle suggests it support research by Aaron Hinz on desalinization of pond water. Eckman will discuss this with Hinz.

Chimney swift towers

SAPCF has not yet announced whether a proposal submitted by SAPCC will be funded. Mastey noted that a likely volunteer will be Dr. Bill Delanis.

Recycling, organics, and trash

Michael noted that there is an active group call Zero Waste Saint Paul that, among other things, has developed a useful website showing places to purchase bulk items, and to drop off recyclables or purchase recycled goods. The website is:

https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1IQRae-JCB4H2eDdp26Z_a1Fnj0twZxS6&ll=44.96661744951491%2C-93.17518723441627&z=14

He noted that TerraCycle is a global company that recycled seven trillion tons of materials. TerraCycle collects many materials that cannot be recycled locally. Lizzy Logas-Lindstrom noted that the Newport facility receives trash from Washington and

Ramsey Counties; it is a waste-to-energy facility. It can pull out #1 and #2 plastics and organic recycling. They will have the capacity in about a year for curbside organic recycling. Logas-Lindstrom noted that November 15 is America Recycles Day. Russelle and Logas-Lindstrom will write an article for the SAPCC enews and the SAPark listserv.

2495 Kasota Avenue Development

A developer has a plan for a 64-unit building targeted toward UMN students. Russelle reports that there has been no news, no action, and no site plan or request for variances submitted to the City.

Union Flats

Junemann reported a long list of issues experienced by tenants at this property, including sanitation, property theft and unresponsiveness of the property managers. A letter from SAPCC to the City is in the works.

West Rock

On the odors from West Rock, Russelle noted that Junemann had heard from Mike Gunderson, general manager of West Rock, who said that supply chain problems have delayed replacement of water cooling and recycling equipment, which they think has been the source of the odor. The current date of completion is April of next year. They would welcome a tour of the facility once COVID restrictions are past.

New business (to discuss in the future):

- Day and overnight truck parking on Hampden in posted areas
- Constant one-note hum of unknown origin in South Saint Anthony Park