

St. Anthony Park Community Council
Environment Committee
 Wednesday June 28, 2017 Agenda
 Stephen Mastey, co chair

In attendance: Stephen Mastey, Steve Yetter, Tim Wulling, Betsy Hjelseth, Sarah Goodspeed

Guests: Megan Kuhn (Eureka), Zach Jorgensen (City of St. Paul Forestry)

7:00	Introductions, approve agenda and previous minutes	Motion to approve minutes as written, all in favor.
7:10	<p>Sustainable To-Go Packaging</p> <p>City of St. Paul introduced Sustainable to-go food packaging ordinance, required to be reusable, recyclable or compostable, helps get St. Paul closer to zero-waste. How to support businesses in transition? Products often more expensive, large transition regardless of cost. Cooperative buying via business associations helps reduce cost. DSI Dan Zelick (?) fostered work group, close with Dan Huff from Mpls, suggests resolutions are very helpful. Previous conversations included lawyers from DART, industries claiming recyclability of products just lack of process. MG and UP councils both passed resolutions, HM in process. Concern that state level aims to restrict local ordinances like this through preemption, parallels Minneapolis ordinance enough to avoid preemption. Only differences defined recycling categories, plan to be more flexible. 1-year phased implementation provision, financial support to businesses in transition from Ramsey County business recycling/composting, will be more closely identified for this particular transition, must offer recycling and composting on site potential sticking point, needs county to get aligned as well, also need to address city delay in rollout of mixed recycling and residential composting to support program. Education needed for restaurants, distributors, "green" etc. packages aren't necessarily compostable, etc. vendor fair and cooperative buying can help.</p>	Motion to fully endorse resolution in support of ordinance as drafted. All in favor, no opposed, no abstentions.
7:30	<p>Tree Preservation Ordinance</p> <p>We have many beautiful oak and legacy trees, no protections or recourse for new development. Aim to implement tree preservation ordinance education which is not being taken into account as seriously as other cities. Example of residential site in another city that had to go through hoops for buckthorn removal, St. Paul has no such restrictions. Luther Seminary has beautiful trees on 12% slopes that are not being considered within preservation ordinance. Exempt within 10 ft of building, driveway, parking surface etc. for regrading, weakens protections. Ideally would like a strong preservation policy for remaining trees, 12% idea good, hope to add additional qualifiers for trunk diameter, 100+ year old oaks, etc. written into local and city plans. Looking for benchmark statistics to help identify value of trees. Most of protections in SE city around Battle Creek, intent to preserve bluffslands from development, SAP has done fairly well holding onto oaks. Zach on site planning review committee for Luther Seminary, familiar with challenge for protecting trees. With 12% slopes triggers site plan review, then still weak. "Should" not "shall" language in historic preservation district plans and small area plans only consideration not a restriction. Landscape requirements in site plan reviews of development, ch 176 street tree protection (boulevards) has greater replacement requirements, not many other requirements. Landmark Tree program is recognition not protection. No tree canopy requirements/goals associated with planning. Some large trees are even dangerous in storms for example and should come down. Goal to get tree preservation into 10-year plan, what is our ability to have special rules local to SAP, or even to challenge developers to be more creative or thoughtful in process if not a hard line. Enforced through safety and inspections, limited resources, Forestry resources also stretched. Tell Councilmembers these departments need more help, these issues are important to us. Overlay district protects construction projects, canopy a nuisance if grass is goal, intersection of private property and good of community. Strong language in SAP may be most enforceable option, limited other mechanism or recourse. Anecdotal evidence that trees get cut before they get to protected size or years in anticipation of potential enforcement or review. At last meeting discussed Xcel removing trees in ROW near line corridor, even though conflicts with 12% slopes, bank east of 280 faces mass cut should be discussed with city for alternatives, no response from Xcel, can city reach out, throw some weight? Xcel heavy handed around distribution lines for utility clearance, sending huge machines to mow down asap, St. Paul checks that cuts are consistent, can rep from city please check out location. Important tree barrier for residents along railroad very concerning to residents, including trees on private yards. Also bluffland rules along river, do they include historic bluffslands? Area along 280 also existed in past, any DNR or city recognition of historic river bluff? Infrequent dealing with that rule. Contact Carlyn from UMN fmi (forestry and watershed management phd and env committee</p>	

	<p>member). 12% and 18% rules would apply if so, until flatland setbacks. Another property that cut down trees already walked away from development. SAP has some of densest residential canopy, can consider part of character. Oaks also high pollinator attractor, Linden trees and maples early season pollinators, many reasons to value trees. Intent to include pollinator, canopy, other language as part of 10-year planning, feed into City sustainability planning, want language that is mutually supportive, enforceable and makes sense from coding perspective. Recommend to have definitions, identify responsibility, increases enforceability. Main thing to define tools appropriately, torn on private property issue, emphasize benefits and value for private parties if not enforceable. Ordinance flexible on ROW, dependent on forestry supervisor, get buy in from other departments, touch points from DSI on zoning, with PW on construction, permitting for information, outreach/education, can specify procedure for planning process to at least consider options. Rapid Green line development needs particular focus. Tree protection mainly above ground, doesn't consider underground portion, soils, compaction, etc. another opportunity to develop parameters. What other ideas can committee consider from here? Tightly define what we want to protect, whether blanket or specific preservation, control within our own 10-year plan, work with CM Stark (very supportive) for city level connection/assign to PED may influence small area plan, city staff need direction from above, helps for call from community via CM, via Parks (Mike Baum), talk with zoning, support and technical expertise from Forestry. Tree Advisory Panel represented by Ward 4 on website, contact her as resource. Additional concern on public property related to tear-downs, requirements related to existing footing, possible creative solutions and new policies that could limit that risk.</p>	
8:15	<p>10-year planning and map requests</p> <p>Obtained 12% slope maps promptly from city. Request for map of all "green space." What definition to use? Publicly held by city/county parks, water resources ponds, what else? Boulevards quasi-private, if undefined what is city definition what are their available GIS layers? A number of trees have been nominated to heritage program, want them on map as well. College Park Oak, what else designated, find whatever database geotagged to GIS group. Does city have recycling companies mapped? RockTenn, etc. West Midway Industrial Study didn't necessarily include recycling businesses, check for business clusters, how to use in 10-year plan? Water flow map, hydrological maps? Not just watershed boundaries, how to map direction of flow, and sewershed, can influence where to put raingardens? Water infiltration project at Hampden Park, tried at College Park, in progress at SSAP with Capitol Region Watershed District, there's a 27-inch pipe through northern park, can athletic field host project with CRWD, PV, JOTP, capture 30 acres of currently untreated stormwater? Similar project at Como High School under fields capturing 50 acres, CRWD contributing \$600k. Some mapping included in Kasota Ponds study, from when Langford Park had a lake, look for daylighting opportunities as exist to west of us. Huge tunnel under Hampden Park too deep. Tunnel under SSAP could be daylighted but conflicts with soccer fields. Consider MPCA maps for known pollution sources/sinks in neighborhood, Amanda's GIS work, interesting data points but what would we say about them? Maps of current pollution permits in neighborhood, can City standardize? Air quality? Can we get MPCA modeling here. What can we ask about for climate change, renewable energy, any related ideas? Existing solar installations? Acres of flat roof space that could be opportunity to develop, incentivize. Google sunroof can estimate solar potential, would be helpful to incorporate into City map. Viable community solar gardens need at least 200,000 watts, 30,000 square feet, appx 2/3 acre, there are tons of roofs that big and bigger here. Why not include requirement for development to add solar on roof? Great disappointment for midway stadium redevelopment underengineered, cannot take load for rooftop solar. Small portion of roof engineered just enough for LEED points and common electric usage, now it's too late costly to retrofit. Missed opportunity, but port authority looking to redevelop other industrial facilities, need to be solar ready. Require in plan. Transportation has asked for bike path/walking map.</p> <p>Survey opportunity to confirm or deny trends in neighborhood, prioritize program areas, demonstrate community input and get more ideas for 10-year-planning. Is this the same survey to use at movie night/co-op? Can be attached with links to surveys on seed packets as incentive/advertisement. Pending approval from board for survey link.</p>	<p>Map Request from city via Mike Richardson at PED requests to GIS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Green Space -Recycling facilities -Water flow/hydrology/storm sewers and surface flow - pollution map sources and air modeling (available from MPCA) -Any renewable energy (solar/wind) installations? -Flat roofs
8:44	<p>Other</p> <p>Are we meeting in July? Can weigh on JOTP via email, what on 10-year plan needs to keep moving? Can keep working on getting seed packets ready to go. Get volunteers to help hand out. Tentatively push to August pending emergency.</p>	
8:46	<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>Motion to adjourn.</p>