



Payne-Phalen COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Community Meeting

Tuesday, March 22, 2022, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Online via Zoom Conferencing

Welcome: Introductions and Review of the Agenda

6:30 pm

Context: Many organizations are confronting how to manage the need to host virtual board meetings and elections when current bylaws do not allow for this activity. Following the lead of the St. Paul City Council, in April 2020, the PPCC Board adopted the following language (and a series of other measures to manage the organization through this challenging time): *"In-person meetings, or meetings conducted under Minn. Stat. § 13D.02 of the City Council, are not practical or prudent because of the COVID-19 health pandemic emergency declared under Minn. Stat. Chapter 12 by the Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter. In light of the COVID-19 health pandemic, members of the City Council will participate in City Council meetings by telephone or other electronic means."*

Staff: Robin Horkey & Jack Byers

Directors: Dayna Wolter, Rebecca Nelson, Damian Schaab, Lynette Harris, Janey Atchison, Kelsey Canaday, Seanne Thomas, Justine LaCroix-Martin, Patricia Enstad, Carolyn Keeton, Marci Exsted, Julia Wilcox

Community Members: Don Lorr, Nicole Peterson

Developing the Payne-Phalen District Plan:

6:35 pm

1. Progress report and discussion: *Developing our community engagement strategy for 2022*: Discussion and organizing session led by the Engagement Subcommittee (Julia Roberts & Justine Martin-LaCroix)
 - Julia: mentioned plan to have folks conduct 'listening' sessions w/community partners. Requested insights & reflections from these...
 - Janey: didn't go to the Eastside Freedom Library b/c Peter is retiring so they're in the process of hiring a new ED. Imagine the 'vibe' will change once that transition happens. Mentioned previous events there, working history day. Will set up time in the future.
 - Rebecca: encouraged Janey to go ahead & touch base w/staff rather than waiting for a new ED.
 - Seanne: they represent a large swath of the community (housing justice folks, weavers, etc.) and a lot of their work is engaging & educating the community with community as educators themselves
 - Janey: will reach out to Clarence.
 - Marci: talked about Arlington Hills Community Center:
 - Julia: YMCA - reflected on the diversity of folks that use that space. Struck by # of people (day care & afterschool programs). Talked about engaging folks not just through language (e.g. surveys) but also through things like storytelling.

- Patricia: was going to go to PABA meeting but had to stay at home. We're a member of PABA, so we can certainly join for a meeting. Payne Avenue businesses know each other, like each other. Also connected w/America Indian Family Center: went to meeting about Hillcrest w/folks from there. Patricia plans to go to a staff meeting. America Indian Family Center is 'squashed' in their location, serve a lot of folks. Hopes for Hillcrest location didn't work out. Thinking about land acknowledgement & "land back" but not *that* land back.
- Lynette: appreciates that Patricia connected w/AIFC, as the Native orgs tend to be 'separate', or [a bit on the outskirts] of the Eastside community.
- Damian: he is also a co-chairperson on Railroad Island Neighborhood group. Difficulty to point of reconnecting with community & one another. Events have been difficult. (lots of cancelling, delayed). Feels 'sense of community' has diminished. Community services are still doing fairly well. Struggling as community orgs with no services to find that maintaining momentum in some ways.
- Julia: good point that we need to think of how to engage with those folks who don't provide a service in creative ways.
- Damian: agreed. Wondered what obligation we have to support other organizations, help, and prop one another up.
- Lynette: thinks a lot of this is approachability – as an org are we approachable? Railroad Island has been around for quite some time...I always thought of RRI as being more of an HOA for the community & when it's approached in that way, people don't know it's more than just a bunch of homeowners that got together to form it. Talked about previously doing urban farming & getting renters & homeowners together. I think for all of us, it's the approachability. How do we become approachable, so we reach out community effectively?
- Patricia: How do we make sure we're not blaming other people for not being connected? Reflecting on our own processes & making sure what we're doing is being effective. Reflected on missing some of the informal ways of connecting. Seanne brought up that the city offered up special training for BIPOC folks in housing & development & just a handful of people came. The old way would be "I guess they're not interested" rather than recognizing maybe [the gap in outreach methods] and...possibly a combination.
- Damian: agreed that it's easy to find fault in others rather than ourselves
- Patricia: it's all of us, we have to find better ways
- Lynette: I don't think things have to be so hard, though. Was in a business meeting & talked about how things can...just be simple. Let this be as simple as possible, let things flow. Mentioned how even before COVID we were thinking about how to get people in the community meetings

- Rebecca: agreed w/Lynette, also some folks don't want to be connected. As board chair of AIFC, Rebecca has been trying to bring that org into the community but they don't necessarily want to be involve. They have cultural barriers they're working through. Native folks see themselves as different, distinct. Rebecca mentioned she is also supposed to connect w/Hmong American Partnership & [is looking forward to it].
- Julia: purpose of the listening sessions is part of learning these things, such as honoring if folks don't want to participate. Mentioned adding notes to the current list of community partner outreach.
- Justine: do we want to also add a tab for ideas for questions? (start w/top 20 and go from there)
- Julia: hopefully we'll be able to create that list & align on them (hopefully) by our next meeting. Engagement committee will work on that list in the meantime.
- Rebecca: for those who haven't picked a community partner – you should because this is the community council but also a bunch of us know somebody/have connections in case you're having trouble connecting.
- Jack: offered words of encouragement. This conversation gives so much more dimension to everything we've been talking about.
- Julia: reflected on ongoing outreach that will continue & questions list to be worked on prior to next meeting.

2. For consideration: *Community engagement possibilities for 2022*

- Jack: when engagement committee met last fall they brainstormed ideas for types of engagement & how to do these things. Now, Winter has past & orgs are starting to schedule events. We have an idea about updating our District Plan. Things are lining up with movement on the board, Spring, a 'respite' with COVID right now (at least). Displayed organizational events and potential outreach activities/tools. Arcade Street Walking Event in April – getting folks together to see the proposals MNDOT is putting forward. 4/16 is a placeholder. Payne Arcade business association is hosting a clean-up on 4/23 (also city-wide clean-up). 5/13 is the EV Mobility Project Launch – mark your calendars. [Jack details a number of community events coming up through the end of year, see board packet.] Ideas/possibilities included pop-up events w/the EV cars.
- [Rebecca reflected on positive experience trying EV; Lynette mentioned piloting a transportation partnership with them for her homecare business]
- Jack: talked about some of the engagement ideas, such as a 'meeting in a box' for neighbors to connect about this.
- Don: Railroad Island talking about doing a movie night, truck-r-treat. Would love to have PPCC as a partner at those as well.
- Rebecca: how many people do you have at those?
- Don: last year we did movie & truck-r-treat & we had about 100-150 people. Different years anywhere from a few dozen to a couple hundred in non-COVID, non-cold years.

- Seanne: went last year & it was gorgeous. Food trucks, hay bales, etc.
 - Damian: talked about making sure it's safe & accessible, because it did/has created a large amount of traffic.
 - Jack: we could think about movies that look into the future & get folks to think about looking into the future.
 - Lynette: list of events seems pretty much 'country living meets urban living'...thinks this is a good thing. Bringing a more 'quiet lifestyle' into the urban setting. Not just focus on what we should be doing but slows us down as well. Lynette will send some stuff out that her company is doing on National Night out, as well as Mom's Food Shelf.
3. Follow-up from the Land Use, Transportation and Environment Committee: [Arcade Street Redesign](#), Recommended comments for submission to the Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Jack: MNDOT had online community meetings in February (not a lot of notice but okay attendance). Had to go through things pretty quickly. Jack put together summary from subcommittee & notes taken from these public meetings. MNDOT would like to meet with the PPCC & next month seems like the right time. Questions of whether we think [all this development] is a good idea but there isn't enough information about a number of pieces the board expressed interest & concern in. Jack recommends PPCC get active w/MNDOT rather than waiting to be told how it is.
 - Janey: I live on Hawthorne & there's a lot of mentions. Last time Maryland was closed, Hawthorne became Maryland & it was a 'free for all'
 - Julia: mentioned understanding bus call out, people swerving around buses & thinking about safety, definitely stood out.
 - Damian: thinking about segment A – trying to set a course toward more walkability. That area has two bridges, one that spans a major highway and another that spans a railroad track. If there were small businesses built & brought into that area you could extend walkability from downtown to Eastside. Mentioned current businesses closing (Red Savoy) or being closed for certain meals (dinner) due to lack of foot traffic.
 - Patricia: Interested in how we have impact on urban planning. Referenced daycare recently discussed with the PPCC> this isn't necessarily just up to zoning. This is a significant part of the Eastside that could & should be a great place.
 - Don: asked whether there was anything related to public art along that corner like what's along Nicollet in Mpls?
 - i. Jack: hasn't seen or heard anything like that
 - Seanne: what about the bike-sharing hubs? Is that included now or could it be?
 - i. Jack: city's bike plan doesn't include Arcade due to it being too narrow. MNDOT has bike lanes in some stretches, not others. In those meetings someone brought up that it's good to have bike lanes where you can but if it's not clear what a biker should do, that can make it more dangerous (due to ambiguity). MNDOT & the city don't seem to be coordinating together well. Not that

they're covering their ears but not necessarily paying attention/applying themselves to community questions.

4. Follow-up from the Land Use, Transportation and Environment Committee:
[Update to the St. Paul Bicycle Plan](#), Recommended comments for submission to the City of St. Paul Public Works Department

- Jack: similar thing. Bicycle plan adopted by city 3-4 years (or so) ago. Spending some time to look at this, fine tune it, make additions, etc. Jack drafted language for PPCC to consider that reflects other language where [the PPCC] talks about this. Recommendation that these plans consider 'hubs' like the EV hubs. EV hubs are intended to be located next to buses/transit for accessibility. Additional recommendations include 'legibility' for bikes (having lanes & transitioning to sidewalks where needed), connecting bike routes with bus mass transit.
- Damian [in chat]: I have a dream where the State would permit use of the property it currently owns along the north side of 7th street (currently used as a surface parking lot for gov. employees and the like) to be repurposed as a transportation hub that includes a multi-story parking facility for state employees AND the public, a bus turn-around, an HOURcar hub, designated parking for electric scooters and shared bikes, perhaps even a secure pick up area for use by ride sharing contractors (see: uber, Lyft), as well as making space for food truck parking to serve the swarms of commuters that could and would utilize this hub to get to and from downtown. It would also create a natural launchpad for the rapid transit lines (like the one that will be routing through the East Side).
- Seanne: everywhere else has that bike-sharing feature, why are we excluded?
- Jack: agreed this is a good question, especially as we have so many that are transit-dependent.
- Damian [in chat]: Railroad Island doesn't even have a USPS mail box.
- Jack: if the board wants me to submit this, I can.
- Rebecca: thinks it's important we submit something. Like Seanne said, it's important that we get things like this.
- **Seanne: moved to send this Biking & the Arcade Street letter in.**
 - i. **Patricia: seconds the motion.**
 - ii. **Passed unanimously.**
- Nicole [in chat]: Great comments Jack! Goal to develop a well-connected, continuous, multi-modal system that provides dedicated space for pedestrians, bicycles, buses, and automobiles and easy transfers between modes.

Business items:

7:45 pm

- Jack: The city has the capital budget improvement process, where they spend money to make improvements across the city (very common thing). In St. Paul they have alternating years. Every other year community groups propose projects & do the work, even though it's the city's budget & they have staff. There is a community group that has put together a game field (for Sepak Takraw) now they are seeking

support from the PPCC for funding for lights to be put up in the park. Also interested in installing a windscreen.

- Seanne motioned to support this.
- Marci seconded.

Discussion:

- Patricia: any reason/input from community around there (e.g. is it a residential neighborhood)
 - Jack: knows that there are residential neighborhoods on North & West, close to Hmong Village. This is support of the proposal & it's presumed that there will be a public process during the implementation.
 - Julia: used to live over there & if there were lights, she didn't feel that it would disturb anything. Sees benefit to having light in that area.
- **Passed unanimously.**

5. Public meeting venues and meeting times: Considerations for 2022
6. For the record: 2021 Donor Lists: Monetary and Non-Monetary
 - Jack: shared Goods & Materials Donations list from 2021
7. PPCC Monthly Financial Report and Status (Janey Atchison, Treasurer)
 - **This month we took in \$22,000 and spent \$11,000.** This is great because most of our events happen during the summer months. **We're in the positive for retained earnings, as well.** We got \$2,000 from the fire department, unannounced, which was nice.
8. Approval of minutes: (Marci Exsted, Secretary)
 - **Seanne: moved to approve the finances & minutes.**
 - **Kelsey: seconded.**
 - **Anonymously passes.**
9. Announcements (Rebecca and Jack)
 - Jack: a few board members, other folks trained in on the equity project. 5 community trainers who will be recruiting families of Color. Also, Jack has been talking w/Springboard for the Arts & things are moving along for finding an artist collaborative for our engagement process for the District Plan.
 - Rebecca: is anyone up for meeting in-person?
 - Jack: rec center is booked in April, so that won't work, but Robin booked the space from May-Sept so we can use the space if we want it.
 - Rebecca: the space is good for social distancing & you're welcome to wear a mask.
 - Patricia: great idea to plan to return to in-person in May & see how things go. Mentioned we could see about doing hybrid (possibly).
 - Damian [in chat]: One of the biggest problems with hybrid is getting the sound to work for people on line when people in-person are talking.
 - Jack: mentioned the "Owl" app & details that supposedly help with sound issues. Expensive though. [Robin in chat: basic is \$999]
 - Mention of Molly from PABA having one, maybe we can borrow?

Adjourn

8:00 pm

- ***Next PPCC Community Meeting:*** Tuesday, April 26, 2022, 6:30-8pm