



# Payne-Phalen

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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## Minutes for the Community Meeting

Tuesday, August 22, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Welcome:** Introductions and Review of the Agenda **6:00 pm**

**The Payne-Phalen District Plan: 6:05 pm**

**Staff:** Jack Beyers (Executive Director), Robin Horkey (staff)

**Board Members:** Justine LaCroix-Martin, Patricia Enstad, Jessica Haley, Damian Schaab, Janey Atchison, Rebecca Nelson, Sidney Stuart, Marci Exsted, Seanne Thomas, and Reier Erickson

**State/City/County Reps:** Katie Hamerlinck (St. Paul Parks & Rec) & Jimmy Shoemaker (St. Paul Public Works)

**Community Members:** Winona Yang, Rico Durán (Latino Economic Development Center), and Leah Cooper (Wonderlust)

1. Upcoming Event: PPCC at Uniquely East Side, Saturday, September 9th

(Multiple locations along Payne Avenue). Volunteers needed!

- Jack Beyers: figuring out substance of this event (9/9 12-7 pm), 4-5 stations along Payne Ave. Use what we have to explore what else we need to hear about. Not something we need to conquer tonight, just want the board to weigh in and advise on this.

2. Processing Engagement Input: *Community Cookout* held on Saturday, July 22nd at the Lake Phalen Pavilion

See attached data transcript and report.

- Jack: we had approximately over 100 people attend. We're also catching up from April and all the brainstorming sessions from the Earth Day event, including the Design a City online engagement opportunity.
- Damian: it's refreshing to hear about all the people we've talked to and actually see all that feedback. People at the city often will talk about engagement efforts without showing their work. The effort that went into this matters a lot.
- Patricia agreed: community engagement is a desire, often, but it's hard to manifest it.
- Jack: so what should we do with this.
- Marci: recommended doing a "thematic coding" of the data within their associated events

and then cross analyze them in order to look for. The buckets are the “index codes” and then we can look at what the actual statements say and see the larger meaning.

- Damian: sees a journey in this data and talked about how there is a road to get to a destination. In order to do that, we'll have to travel a, perhaps, undefined path.
- Jessica: there are four pages, perhaps we could group into four tables to go through this?
- Patricia: I recall we had a spirited discussion [in her group]...about what is needed to bring diverse groups together in a meaningful way. The PPCC also had a discussion like this a while back. Payne Phalen is very diverse but can be very segregated. Her group discussed playfully expanding people's comfort zones.
- Jack: bringing people together across cultures came up in many conversations
- Patricia: mentioned the Freedom Library previously (pre COVID) having meet-your-neighbor events that were really impactful.
- Janey: feels that these connect with housing. How can people connect with their community if their housing is unsafe, unpredictable?
- Jessica: maybe just asking people what brought them to the Eastside (compared to why people moved here or if they've lived here forever - as this ignores refugee status)
- Reier: one thing that really grabs me - a lot of people talk about diversity...some people choose to live here, etc. Eastside wasn't [our family's] choice but then we visited here and we were totally sold. We wanted to live somewhere diverse, unique. The Eastside has one of the richest histories with the waves of immigrants. This is something we can use to sell the Eastside. We can try to use this to have people come who want this community the way it is and who will invest in it to thrive how it is. Also talked about how he appreciates the input from community. There's so much that's uniquely Eastside.
- Justine: there's definitely a perception problem with the Eastside.
- Patricia: talked about how the neighborhood grew on her over time, committed to it
- Damian: loved seeing people get over the initial hesitancy of not being asked any of these sort of questions before
- Leah: talked about how an emotion that comes up with these conversations, even around bigger issues, are feelings of nervousness/fear and wanting to share those. That is something the PPCC can do.
- Rebecca: saw a lot of community gardens & solar gardens mentioned, importance of connection to the land & connection to land as a cultural dynamic.
- Patricia: mentioned that one community garden she is by has a number of plots and a lot of Karen folks use it, but people aren't usually there together.
- Reier: talked about perhaps a few minutes before our meetings to come and talk about something. A lot of people just need to be heard.
- Damian: what's our social media presence like?
- Patricia: mentioned that some people came because they had trucks parked in front of their house
- Jack: a lot of calls we get are calls from older people, often white, who are having a hard time with their non-white neighbors.
- Reier: wondered if we could phone tree this, just to get people to be listened to
- Jessica: doesn't want to hear people talk about their Black and Brown neighbors, wondering about the purpose of this
- Patricia: mentioned the freedom library neighbors meeting neighbors events again, people telling their stories and the importance of sharing stories. Understanding cultures and where each other comes from.
- Leah: We've held many story circles, some with specific groups, some with a variety of

people. We started looking at peoples dreams for the future and honed in now on some cultural specifics. Less about trash hauling and more about how/where do I fit in? Now we're trying to find the intersections of the big picture and the specifics.

- Damian: some of this means getting a foot in the door of places you might feel culturally excluded & then how do you keep your presence there? (e.g. suggestion boxes) Maybe we can be the 'PR' of sorts for the Eastside.
- Jack: we have a lot of feedback, it has largely formed into thematic groups. One thing we need more of, or more detail on, is location - what changes would you like to see for green space, do you have access to a garden (& where), how can outdoor space be more welcoming? We need a lot more location-specific feedback. Some places might not be coming up because things are going well and vice versa. We have a lot of location-specific things w/MNDOT, the county. We don't know for sure about whether people want more tiny housing communities, like at Mosaic.
- Janey: I feel limited with what is possible on the Eastside (e.g. issues w/MNDOT). When we voice what we want, they still don't do it. Things are done *to* the Eastside.
- Justine: I think people are concerned about finances, as well
- Janey: and two projects were threatened to not be done after we voiced our concerns
- Rebecca: recalled how one of the projects that MNDOT was working on had a 'community engagement' list that had multiple businesses duplicated and one even reported never having heard from them despite 3 reported attempts at outreach
- Seanne: how distribution of resources works is the squeaky wheel gets the oil. Other neighborhoods have the resources and access to these systems and power, have that 'squeaky wheel'. Our community needs to figure out how to leverage this.
- Patricia: even being willing to be unpleasant, being willing to speak our minds
- Reier: there are also political aspects, as well. The way that the districts are layed out makes no sense, and this is being addressed. The City Council in St Paul has more constituents than a representative does, which is wild. It's important to be loud.
- Seanne: went to the aquatic center in Highland Park and someone asked why Payne Phalen doesn't have something like this
- Rico Durán (LEDC): lives on the Eastside, noted that a community commercial kitchen was mentioned. Will have one in the Plaza Del Sol. Will also facade the Bymore Supermercado as well. Brought floor plans for people to view. [Janey asked about timeline] It's a \$9 million project. Working to have community members involved in many parts of the space. Commercial kitchen will be attached to the restaurant and outsiders can use the space via rental opportunities. Will start the project in two months and it will take approximately 10 months.

3. Processing Engagement Input: *Story Circles*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Round, January-August 2023 • See attached data transcript and report.

4. Processing Engagement Input: *Earth Day in 6 Languages*, Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Arlington Hills Recreation Center

- See attached data transcript and report.

5. Processing Engagement Input: *Design a City*: April-July 2023

- See attached data transcript and report.

Small Group discussions: 6:25 pm

6. How to start and continue with processing engagement input? And how to prepare for Uniquely East Side event on September 9<sup>th</sup>?

Transportation, Environment, Economic Development, Parks 7:15 pm

7. St. Paul Bicycle Plan: Proposed Updates to route and Arcade Station  
(Jimmy Shoemaker, St. Paul Public Works)

➤ Please review updated draft at: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/transportation-and-transit/bike-saint-paul/saint-paul-bicycle-plan>

- Mentioned that the PPCC feedback (sent March '22) was received and included!
- Asked for continued feedback (mentioned that, for example, they used to have a plan for Case to have a shared lane but this was removed due to the volume of vehicles on that street & low value for people around shared lanes)
- Winona Yang: is this not available via an app? Would love to be able to use this map b/c she would just use the roads she bikes on.
- Jimmy: this is the planned network and we do have an existing map we'd be happy to share.
- Marci: good idea to integrate into a maps
- Reier: alltrails, Kamoot, map my run, and Strava are all good apps for these as well.
- Jimmy: Strava also tracks data and then planners can look at it
- Jack: has heard that west of Edgerton could have more green space
- Winona Yang: lives by gateway trail, mostly sees people who look like regular bikers. Wants to know about what's being done to normalize biking, addressing barriers (e.g. expense of biking, stolen bikes)
- Jimmy: separated bike areas that we're planning for absolutely help, is much safer. In terms of affordability & accessibility, St. Paul public schools has a lot of resources & programs, including a bike fleet from SPPS. They teach kids safety skills for biking. Met Council just passed something requiring biking & walking safety along with bus safety education.

8. Duluth and Case Recreation Center Play Area Improvements  
(Katie Hamerlinck, St. Paul Parks and Recreation)

- Patricia: asked about 'alternate' aspects of the planned seating
- Katie: clarified that there will be one seating area and two possible ones as funding allows
- Reier: asked about accessible equipment
- Katie: detailed the variation of ADA accessible play options, as well as the surface cover
- Patricia: asked about a sun study
- Katie: this is very sunny, a lot of the play areas are along the perimeter and a lot of the play spaces do have levels and decks that kids can go under to help with shading
- Justine: asked about adding a sail for shade cover
- Katie: agreed that this is a good note
- Jack: asked about the 'mulch' type surface cover, esp as it degrades over time
- Katie: opening date is summer of 2024 and are also planning to incorporate public art - heard a lot about doing a mural. Future of building next door is unknown, so they want to incorporate art/murals into furnishings (e.g. benches, tables, trash cans). Working with

an artists that does mosaics (connected through Indigenous Roots)

- Janey: will this be more at the beginning of the summer, or the end?
- Katie: hope is for construction to take 2 months, so depending on the weather it would hopefully be open by midsummer

#### 9. Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Updates about the Arcade Station

- Jack: in June we walked about the Arcade Street Station - Metro transit is talking w/elected officials. Intending to have an on-site meeting about the Arcade St station in September (not part of the PPCC Sept meeting).

#### 10. Seeking representatives to Station Area Planning teams for Purple Line

### **Business items: 7:45 pm**

#### 11. Approval of minutes from the June 2023 meeting

Reier moved to approve, Jessica seconded. Passed unanimously.

#### 12. Financial Reports

- Janey: we've gotten a number of grants. The things that were a bit over were understandable (e.g. snow removal).
- Janey moved to approve the budget. Sidney seconded. Approved unanimously.

#### 13. Preparation for PPCC Nominations and Elections

- Janey: last few years we moved our elections into Sept to align with the Harvest festival but our bylaws say that they should be in April. Executive committee decided to extend people's roles through April and move elections to match the bylaws.
- Janey moved to shift our elections back to align with our bylaws. Seanne seconded, passed unanimously.

#### 14. Preparation for PPCC Annual Meeting

**Winona Yang had updates:** PPCC is invited to White Bear Ave parade, 9/16. Purple people will be with them. Commissioner will have an event w/local leadership on 9/20. Flyer to be distributed by PPCC. Also, 4th incinerator metro council wants to add - they're watching & will be adding public comment to ensure that the right questions are being asked. Doesn't feel they're doing enough engagement to ensure that people are aware.

### **ADJOURN 8:00 pm**

Janey moved to adjourn, Seanne seconded. Passed unanimously.

> **Next PPCC Community Meeting:** Tuesday, September 26, 2023, Arlington Hills Recreation Center, 1200 Payne Avenue