



Payne-Phalen

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Minutes of Community Meeting

Tuesday, November 28, 2023, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Arlington Hills Recreation Center, 1200 Payne Avenue

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

Board Members: Sid Stuart, Patricia Enstad, Damian Schaab, Reier Erickson, Emma De Vera, Lynette Harris, Julia Wilcox, Jessica Haley, Janey Atchison, May yer Thao, Ramona Banks, Seanne Thomas.

Staff: Jack Byers, Robin Horkey

Community Members and Guests: Adam Olson and Darin Broton (MPCA), Nicole Peterson and Jessica Degan (St. Paul PED), Jennifer Lor (Ward 6 Council Aide), Winona Yang (Assistant to Ramsey Co. Commissioner Xiong), Josh Markham (Ramsey County), Caley V., Heidi S.

The Payne-Phalen District Plan: 6:05 pm

1. Progress Report: Jack Byers, Executive Director
Jack updated on status with Wonderlust Productions. They are in the process of sharing Google drive with data from the whole project and wrapping up the 5th artist session. Jack preparing for all of us to turn work into document.

Discussion items:

2. Northern Iron and Metals: Updates and Question & Answer Session (Adam Olson and Jose Luis Villasenor, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency) 6:10 pm

Jose Luis recapped last meeting discussion from October. He explained informing community & environmental justice. Darin Broton: working with community office & county to get new permit for Northern Iron. Will be sharing draft of new permit & schedule for public comment. Committed to working with PPCC as a partnership to make sure comment meeting.

How will this work? How will the new cumulative impact law work? Cumulative impact law goes into effect outside of the window of permit renewal. Northern Iron's permit will expire after another 5 years. Jose Luis wants community involved in implementing cumulative impact.

LH asked about risk factors with cumulative impact & recent penalty. Penalty money will go back to state legislature to allocate. New law allows 40% to go back to community if fine is over \$200,000. *LH explained her business. Is testing a partnership MPCA is interested in?* Potentially.

JL circled back to the penalty, make sure we're engaged with community so they can speak to legislators.

Why such a long waiting game? Why can't they be earmarked back? The fine was because of equipment violations.

Doesn't seem like much for 15 years of violations. Is that a deterrent? Our air quality on East Side isn't good either. How does the money/penalty get parsed out? History of violations is part of determining the fine. They didn't find emissions violations. This is an administrative fine. The equipment they brought in actually improved emissions. They made changes to equipment without notifying MPCA of their plans first. They are to submit paperwork of what changes they want to make so MPCA can tell them if this will work or if different equipment is needed. Once changes are approved the updated permit is issued and the company can make the planned changes. This is a settlement agreement. Didn't find deliberate deception. Otherwise, it would've been brought to court with National environmental agency. This doesn't negate our commitment to emissions concerns.

To clarify, the tracking isn't related to emissions violation. This is a paperwork fine? Both JL & DB affirmed.

What audits or process changes is MPCA doing to ensure this doesn't happen again? Numerous inspections. Staff didn't know to check that.

Why not? Why does inspection rely on business honesty? And what is threshold for violation of pollution? There's a national standard. We cannot go over that. Minnesota's regulatory structure is trust & verify. Part of that is inspection. Scheduled or compliant-prompted inspection.

WY: How did this inspection get prompted? Commissioner Yang is concerned about emissions/violation impacted an entire generation's childhood. Noticed during an inspection for permitting.

This leaves our most vulnerable more vulnerable if you're relying on them to complain.

How many inspectors do you have? We have 9. EPA requires a certain amount of inspections per year. More than 200 facilities to inspect. Then we look at complaints & scheduled inspections. We have asked for additional funding for more inspectors. This isn't an excuse. We're looking more closely. We want continued dialog with community.

How can you assess safety in a neighborhood? People don't know this is happening. Is it safe in a densely populated area? Cumulative impact not settled in terms of process.

Working on modeling their particulate matter (PM) 10, PM 2.5, and lead. These three pollutants must be modeled for. Modeling info is sent to MPCA and MPCA runs the modeling too. Modeling is labor intensive, is important for identifying problems. We are using worse case measurements to model. We're looking at model with 10 years of meteorological data for air quality. This is extremely labor intensive.

How accurate is it? Within EPA Standards. So you're both doing modeling? We compare & communicate. Models will be public.

Is there money invested by EPA? Mostly concerned about airports. No dollar amounts were committed. We can give you an EPA contact. We're mostly concerned because of airport over so many schools.

How long will monitors be in place? 3 years. Review to see if some need to be moved or if need to stay. *Why not longer? Should be 15.* We appreciate that.

Is install done of new monitors? Certified install required. Specifically the fans that suck air

in (hood certification). They've gotten that done now.

It sounds deliberate to me. We take violations seriously. We didn't find emissions violated. Still seems deliberate. This could've been worse. Check "What's in my Neighborhood" link on the MPCA site; it gives details of facilities. The new permit lets us tighten up with community need.

Are inspection report available to the public? All facilities that get inspected have inspection reports on the website; search by type of facility (waste water, air, trash).

We can't wait until permit inspection. What more can you do? Have you looked at stricter states for their guidelines? Yes. We look at different EPA regions. We are in continuous improvement.

Would you recommend your family move? No. I live less than a mile with a baby, won't & haven't moved.

I'm glad this is an expiring permit. I think there's reason to be concerned about fine. Our opportunities are involvement with permitting and how will data be shared? What access will we have? How were emissions verified? All data will be online. We can follow up on verification. Permit process timeline will be shared. We will continue to come back when you want. By January 1 there will be a web page with detailed info. We will still be here. *What's the cost of getting a permit? What would be the benefit of not going through processes? They should've known.* Fine factors in cost of permitting. It is around \$15,000. *How did this impact their permitting?* They had a non-expiring permit since 1950. Now it will expire.

What are we doing to prevent these deficits moving forward? We are evaluating what we need to change, and looking at legislative and federal regulatory changes. Looking at finishing modeling and draft permit within next few months. Community members make this possible by contacting their legislators.

What's Northern Iron's requirement with community engagement? Part of the permit.

Why aren't they (Northern Iron) here? I don't know.

Jack Byers explained his role and PPCC. *Please keep in mind PPCC doesn't have the money to be demanded for community engagement. What expectation should we have that MPCA will inform the community? We also have language barriers in our community. We don't want to burden you. We want to collaborate. On the MPCA website translation option in 50 languages. Can you get press release to everyone before the new year?* We'll come up with a plan.

3. Update from the Executive Committee:

Discussion of PPCC current projects, priorities, and next steps:

7:25 pm

Priority projects with deadlines in the near term:

- The Payne-Phalen District Plan
- Arcade Street Station on the Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Working to get Arcade Purple Line BRT station back to the location proposed in the environmental assessment.
- Arcade/East 7th Project - Jack provided updates on MnDOT and Arcade St.
- Creation of Arcade/East 7th Business Mitigation Fund - Working to support business on Arcade. St. Paul denied request for support. Looking to Ramsey County.

- Eastside expansion of EV Spot Network and Evie Carshare - Working on expanding Evie with EPA.

Ongoing projects requiring attention in the coming months:

- Northern Iron and Metals/MPCA
- Hamm's Brewery Redevelopment
- Capital Region Watershed Natural Resources Inventory
- SPRWS Lead Pipe Replacement/SPRWS
- Railroad Island NRSA (see item 5)

Partner projects calling for ongoing collaboration:

- East Side Real Estate and Development Strategy (ESRED)
- Purple Line Station Area Planning with NNEO Partners
- Daylighting Phalen Creek
- East Side Housing Justice
- Reimagining the Civic Commons

Requests for support:

7:25 pm

4. Care4All Lab Services, 925 Payne Avenue, Request for Letter of Recommendation (Lynette Harris, Care 4 ALL LAB)

Through the Rooted Foundation, requesting money for lab services. Trying to train youth to fill healthcare employment gap. Would appreciate a letter of support for funding. Would train as phlebotomists and DHS testing. Motion by Seanne to provide letter of support for the funding request. Second by Julia. Motion passed unanimously, with Lynette abstaining.

5. 2023 Railroad Island Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area Plan (Jessica Deegan and Nicole Peterson, City of St. Paul Planning and Economic Development Department)

Jessica: Plan allowing flexibility for funding in Railroad Island/Hamm's area. HUD allows this as long as area is contiguous. Boundaries are three census tracts. Nicole: We're requesting the neighborhood's review. It's a 30 page document, includes geography, demography, etc. This falls into Dayton's Bluff as well.

What does this mean in terms of change in community? This is about HUD funding, for the CDBG funds. Hopefully funding can be focused here. Opportunities listed in 10 points to show where funding would go. *It's an opportunity to capture HUD funding.* Yes.

What community input went into NRSA? Railroad Island neighborhood group and Dayton's Bluff, engaged since September. Comments will be incorporated after Dec. 21. We'll send hopefully in January to HUD. Questions were addressed about development spending.

Jack: PPCC engagement work not acknowledged and is not tied to separate Hamm's engagement. That has separate consultant or revitalization plan from St. Paul. This is in advance of real planning to acquire money. Motion by Lynette to consider the plan, for

Board members to individually review the plan. Second by Damian. Motion passed unanimously, with Reier abstaining.

Business items:

6. Reaffirmation of Board Decision: Officers and Executive Committee Members (Updated record required for accounts with our financial institution)
Motion by Janey to record & approve Executive Committee votes. Second by Seanne. Passed unanimously.
7. Refresher: PPCC Conflict of Interest Policy - Reminder it's in Board packet, and to resign form in the spring. Reier: is there a charter, and open meeting laws? Yes.
8. Approval of minutes from the October 2023 meeting
Seanne moved to approve Oct. Minutes. Second by Patricia. Passed unanimously.
9. Financial Reports for September 2023 and October 2023 - Janey gave update. Janey moved to approve reports. Second by Emma. Passed unanimously.
10. Receive and accept: Grant for \$36,000 from Rooted Philanthropic for 3 mos. general operating expenses/revolving fund to offset annual delays/lapses in District Councils receiving authorizations/funds in our regular City of St. Paul Community Engagement Grant (CE)

ADJOURN

8:00 pm

➤ **Next PPCC Community Meeting:** Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Arlington Hills Recreation Center, 1200 Payne Avenue