

# Union Park District Council

## Board Meeting / May 3, 2023

Board President Sarah Dvorak / Minutes: Submitted by Amy Gage

**Members present:** Jerome Benner, Scott Berger, Rachel Callanan, Dean Cummings, Sarah Dvorak, Dan Elenbaas, Ellen Fee, Kirsten Fryer, Amy Gage, Joe Hughes, April King, Lisa Mueller, Henry Parker, Allen Saunders, Demetrius Shaw, Kent Treichel, Claire Warren

**Members absent:** Bruce Corrie | Open seats: Grids 1, 2, 6

**Staff member:** Leah Timberlake-Sullivan, executive director | **Guests:** Jim Johnson, Tim Mangan

**Welcome:** Sarah Dvorak, president, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

- *Action:* Parker/Treichel moved to approve the May agenda and the April minutes.

**Open forum:** Henry asked who purchased the laundromat on Marshall, east of Cleveland. | Allen spent time in Madrid and said the Twin Cities area is way behind in public transportation, by comparison. Plus, people there appear fit, he said. | Sarah noted that National Trails Day is June 3. <https://americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/> | Leah and Lisa went on an AARC “pedestrian dignity” walk and suggested that the board schedule a group walk sometime.

Scott said University Avenue “is looking worse than ever.” He was walking there recently and noticed many trees have been lopped off at the base. Sarah saw trash “everywhere” at Target. Scott said the Met Council needs to get involved, as well as the City Council. University Avenue should get the “political equity” that Summit Avenue gets, he said. Others said the Post Office is responsible for trash on Pascal and I-94.

- Tim represented this area on the district council decades ago. He won’t let his wife ride the Green Line from Snelling to the east.
- Rachel said people’s livelihoods and homes are in the area. Has our Councilmember done anything? *She didn’t specific Ward 1 or Ward 4.*
- Claire asked how often we engage Toni Carter, our Met Council representative. <https://metro council.org/About-Us/Who-We-Are/CouncilMembers.aspx>
- Demetrius said his group of teens at Skyline Tower did a cleanup today.
- Henry pointed out new apartment buildings, restaurants and other “good stuff” that is happening in the area.
- Amy mentioned a story in Streets.mn today about three neighborhoods that suffered damage in the civil unrest of 2020. <https://streets.mn/2023/05/03/three-years-after-2020-uprising/>. A follow-up story on Monday, May 8, will look at possible legislative investments in these three neighborhoods, which include the Midway.

## **Committee reports**

**Land Use and Economic Development:** Dean Cummings, co-chair, led a discussion on the proposed equity development scorecard. He said they will not refuse to consider a project that won't participate in the process and aren't sure about assigning points. Allen said the scorecard seems cumbersome. Dean said up to 80% of what's on the scorecard is already being used. Jerome suggested using a Google Form format for expediency. This project began in 2018. Leah said some district councils are writing statements of values rather than scorecards.

- *Action: Parker/Benner moved to approve the CLUED equity development scorecard. The motion passed unanimously.*

CLUED and Executive Committee approved the 1619 Dayton project. The Board of Zoning Appeals tabled it till the May 15 meeting. The next CLUED meeting will include the Midway Investment Cooperative (<https://www.midwayinvestmentcoop.org/>) and Keystone Community Services, whose new food shelf will be in Union Park (<https://keystoneservices.org/opening-doors/vision/>) on University Avenue east of Fairview.

**Neighborhood Sustainability and Vitality:** Ellen Fee, co-chair, said the committee has approved its first slate of Cell Tower Funds applications: two for Desnoyer Park Improvement Association (summer picnic, \$3,000; winter Fire & Ice event, \$600); one for the Midway Peace Park Fall Festival (\$3,500, for the event's second year); and one for Ice Cream Peanut Butter & Jam, the September fundraiser for UPDC (\$4,000).

- Leah said the Midway Peace Park amount is \$500 higher than last year because they expect higher turnout. She doesn't want to charge for the event. They hope to pursue a grant or other funding opportunities, so this could become an annual event. But she doesn't feel the event is ready for sponsors and wants to keep a "hospitality" feel.

*Action: Warren/Saunders moved to approve the committee's recommendations for the Cell Tower funds. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Transportation:** Co-chair April King said the committee got an update from Sean Kershaw, Public Works, about the proposal to remove parking along Cretin northbound near the University of St. Thomas. He said the department shares the committee's desire for traffic calming measures should the parking be removed; the committee wants a 4-to-3 conversion.

- Also, Mac-Groveland Community Council (MGCC) will have further discussion about Cretin Avenue on May 11, 8 to 9 a.m.; email April to get invited: [april@unionparkdc.org](mailto:april@unionparkdc.org)

The committee also discussed a national study showing that separated bike lanes are far safer. They heard about the Capital Improvement Budget process and how to improve public safety in parks and on streets. The CIB grant process will happen again in 2024.

**West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Council:** Henry Parker, WSNAC rep, said that MGCC will be voting on Thursday about whether Mac-Groveland is interested in the proposal to make

WSNAC a co-committee of the two district councils. | The group is interested in Cretin Avenue safety and has plenty of money in its budget. | Jerome shared a list of events at the University of St. Thomas. If you're having issues with students, talk to Public Safety or to the students directly. Subscribe to Jerome's neighborhood e-list: [neighbors@stthomas.edu](mailto:neighbors@stthomas.edu)

- Public Safety: <https://www.stthomas.edu/public-safety/>
- Once a complaint goes to Public Safety, Jerome and assistant dean of students Josh Hengemuhle review the complaints. He asked that people let him know about stadium noise or other campus issues, so he can interface with UST departments.

**Staff report:** Demetrius and Leah met with the Star Grant committee, which was enthusiastic about the Midway Peace Park proposal. | In talks with other district council executive directors, she's learned that CLUED is not alone in supporting businesses more overtly. The health of businesses is one of a city's "vital signs." | She urges the board to review our bylaws and asked for a working group. Rachel, Claire and Amy are interested. Leah said that defining a proxy vote is needed. | Leah urged any board member to reach out to her with questions or to see UPDC documents, such as bylaws and budget. | Board and committee meetings will be going hybrid, once we have "owl" technology.

Amy mentioned the Selby-Fairview Arts Pop-up event this Saturday on Selby just west of Fairview: <https://www.facebook.com/events/211623734782891>

Parker/Warren moved to adjourn at 8:26 p.m.