

Minutes

Tuesday, December 21, 2021
**D10 Como Community
Council Board Meeting**



This meeting will take place via video conferencing and telephone access, access details below.

I. Call to Order 7:04

II. Land Acknowledgement

- A. “We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Dakota People. We want to acknowledge the Ojibwe, the Ho Chunk, and the other nations of people who also called this place home. We pay respects to their elders past and present. Please take a moment to consider the treaties made by the tribal nations that entitle non-Native people to live and work on traditional Native lands. Consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today. And please join us in uncovering such truths at any and all public events.” - *Excerpt from the acknowledgement given in the USDAC Honor Native Land Guide - edited to reflect MN tribes.*

III. Introductions (name and neighborhood) 7:00-7:05

Board Members: Alex Zikmund, Maggie Zimmerman, Dan Edgerton, Jill Henricksen, Mike Ireland, Jenne Nelson, Kevin Commerford, Ben Kowalsky-Grahek, Matt Kelliher, Rachel Bowers

Como Community Council Staff: Shevek McKee

Community Members: Tom Lucy

IV. Approve Agenda 7:05

Moved; motion passed.

V. Community

A. Community Input (open floor) 7:05-7:15

Community participants welcome to bring topics to discuss

No community input.

VI. Board Business 7:15-9:00

A. Financial Report (Mike Ireland, Treasurer)

November Treasurer Update

Notable Revenue

- The Citywide Drop Off revenue line has \$400 we received from the City of Falcon Heights to pay for participating in this event.

- The General Fundraising and Donations line includes \$55 in general donations from two people and \$566 from 10 people through the Give to the Max drive
- The Reimbursements line for \$1,213 is made up of 18 individual donations for the Thanksgiving Meal program

Notable Expenses

- The Communications and Technology line includes \$57 for our annual Zoom license and \$80.87 for our annual Zoom subscription.
- The Citywide Dropoff (staff/supplies/rentals) line for \$355 is a pass through we received from the City to provide the event organizer stipend.
- Under Neighborhood Relations, the \$1,000 expense on the Other Reimbursements line is to pass on community donations received from the Thanksgiving Meals program to the North End - South Como BNP.

Other Highlights

- As of November 30, our checking account balance was \$52,765.62.
- With donations received for the Thanksgiving Meals program, we purchased \$850 Cub gift cards to supplement the turkey dinners. This pass through expense will be reflected in December's financial reporting.
- Also in December's reporting will be \$384 for our annual SurveyMonkey subscription and a \$1,000 matching donation from an individual anonymous donor.

Motion to approve the financials from November: passed.

1. Action Item: [2022 Budget Approval](#)
 - a) Budget discussion: One important note is that Mike Ireland updated the Neighborhood Relations Committee budget items to reflect both revenue and expenses, so the draft the board received via email on 12/20/21 has a different ending balance (negative).
 - b) We can use reserves to offset the negative. We ended 2021 with a \$4,000+ surplus, and if we use that to cover the ~\$1,500 deficit in the 2022 budget, our reserves are still at a net gain.
 - c) **Motion to approve the budget, with the change to include revenue from the reserves to offset the ending deficit; passed.**

B. Approval of Board and Committee Minutes

1. **Motion to approve; passed.**

C. Board Chair and Officers Report (*Jill Henricksen, Chair*)

1. Jill Henricksen will send out a Doodle poll to choose a date for a virtual board retreat in early February. One focus will be the quality of the experience of board members. Another will be the committees coming up with equity goals.

- 2. Jenne Nelson asked for feedback about good options for future hybrid meetings. Shevek McKee will ask other district councils what they are doing for hybrid meetings.

D. Committee Updates

1. **Environment** (*Rachel Bowers, Committee Member*)
 - a) **ACTION ITEM:** District 10 moves to adopt and send the letter created in the D10 Environment Committee to the Superintendent and SPPS Board in support of the SPFE Solar Schools Initiative with the spelling amendments proposed by Dan Edgerton to standardize all spellings of “Saint Paul” within the letter.
 - b) Tom Lucy, community member and SPPS employee and SPFE organizer, spoke on behalf of the letter. SPFE is asking as many community members and organizations as possible to encourage SPPS to adopt renewable energy sources.
 - c) Jenne Nelson asked about upcoming, specific initiatives that community members can support. Tom Lucy said that in the last legislative session, the Solar in Schools program passed. This is a partnership between the state and Xcel to encourage schools in Xcel areas to generate and use solar power. SPPS has not yet applied for this money; this is one project we could encourage them to take on.
 - (1) We could also look at a community solar garden. This is a good option because there are close to no upfront costs (the solar panels are leased). It makes money for our schools and helps our communities. Families can buy into it. There are two buildings that SPPS has identified as being solar-ready and which are big enough. Como Park Senior High and Washington Tech Senior.
 - d) **Motion to approve the letter with Dan Edgerton’s spelling amendments; passed.**
2. **Land Use** (*Maggie Zimmerman, Committee Chair*)
 - a) Land Use did not meet this month. In January, Ted’s Liquor Lounge is up for a license renewal. There was one homicide earlier this year and another incident recently. We will look for some community input about this renewal.
3. **Neighborhood Relations** (*Kevin Commerford, Committee Member*)
 - a) NRC discussed their calendar of annual events. They are planning to use four large events through the year to anchor the calendar. The goal is to create a way for the community to follow activities more easily and thus improve attendance.

- b) Voting is open for the holiday decoration competition. Winners get donated prizes and a trophy that Sarah Reuter made.
- c) Sunday Series ideas? Send them to the Neighborhood Relations Committee!

E. Staff Report (*Shevek McKee, Executive Director*)

1. **Safe Routes to School Como Snr/Elem. Planning Grant**
 - a) We are named as a partner on a grant with Como Park Senior High and Elementary schools to improve traffic safety around the schools. This is a good opportunity for a board or community member who is a parent to attend two meetings in the fall. More info will be coming later this year if they get the grant.
2. **[2022 Full D10 Calendar Draft](#)**
 - a) Subdistrict Magnet Events/Community Outreach Plan
3. **Internal Orientation/Training**
 - a) You can find materials here:
<https://district10comopark.org/boardmembers/>
 - b) Additions to “board binder” material:
 - (1) [Committee Expectations/Resources Doc Draft](#)
 - (2) [Funding Sources Doc Draft](#)
 - (3) [Grant Considerations Doc Draft](#)
4. **2021 Honor Roll**
 - a) The call for nominations went out in the last newsletter. Nominate anyone in your neighborhood who has gone above and beyond! The City is stepping back from this program, but we can continue to honor neighbors as a district council.

F. New Business (*Board members*)

1. No new business.

VII. Adjourn

9:00

Motion to adjourn; passed.

Join Meeting Info

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/97780538375>


Call in number: +1 312 626 6799, Meeting ID: 977 8053 8375

Times are approximate, draft agenda subject to change.

Next board meeting: January 18, 2022

Upcoming D10 Events/Opportunities

- Thru Dec 31 - [Holiday Decoration Contest](#)

- 
- January 23 - Community Garden Annual Meeting
 - Jan/Feb TBD - Donation Drive (Coats/hats/gloves)
 - Feb/March TBD - Winter Event at NorthDale Rec?
 - SPPS Safe Routes to School Como Snr/Elem. Planning Team Opportunity
 - 2021 Honor Roll

Committees

Como Community Council: Officers Meeting
January 3, 2022, 7 p.m.
Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/98188636464>
Agenda

Attending: Jill Henricksen, Jenne Nelson, Mike Ireland, Ben Kowalsky-Grahek, Shevek McKee

1. Events

- **Community Garden Annual Meeting - January 23**
 - Shevek putting in work to keep the garden connected
 - discussion about a board member taking a larger responsibility
 - Sarah R is a gardener but is already very busy
 - Morgan is a master gardener?
 - Garden liaison instead of a committee commitment for a board member?
 - Some kind of broader community garden volunteer network that could be tapped?
 - Garden in a box program resource: <https://northerngardener.org/giab/>
- **Board Retreat Feb TBD**
 - 11 people have replied to the doodle poll, Jill will send out a reminder.
 - **Earlier meeting with Committee Chairs?**
 - Will work backwards to find a date once we settle on retreat date
 - **Survey**
 - Suggestion to just include as considerations along with the agenda rather than something people need to *do* prior to meeting.
 - **Goals/Agenda?**
 - Jill has been working on revising an agenda, and will email it out.
 - Mission, Vision, Values Statement
 - Small group times, google jam board, committee brainstorm time for a work plan
 - Come up with a 3-year plan for the organization
 - Sherman Eagle's piece in the Park Bugle about the missing middle
 - <https://www.parkbugle.org/more-neighbors-part-of-the-climate-solution/>
 - Could be an issue that pulls committees together?
 - Changes we can make for board meetings, committees?
 - 90 Minute meeting
 - Too many ideas for that time frame?
 - Rolls within committees? (Garden Liaison, Equity focused roles?)
- **Donation Drive (Coats/hats/gloves) - Jan/Feb TBD**
- **Winter Event at NorthDale Rec? - Feb/March TBD**
- **Sunday Series - TBD**
 - Sherman Eagles?
 - Can we invite him to January board meeting, or a Sunday Series?
 - Google doc with empty dates might encourage submissions?
 - Sundays, 1-2:30
 - Each committee come up with 2 people
 - NR - Just Deeds representative

2. Community

- **2021 Honor Roll**
 - Two nominees in response to the newsletter so far:
 - Jessie Austin nominates **Holly & Todd Willmarth**
 - Julie Tholen nominates **Joanne Young**
- **Como Garage Sale - May/June?**
 - Online mapping option similar

- Ask what kinds of things the garage sale will have

3. Communication

- Potential to have the board packets on the website?

4. Financials

- **2022 Budget**

- Shevek & Mike have been making some minor tweaks for things since the board meeting (forgotten rain garden passthrough grant, etc)

- **EOY reporting/reimbursements**

- Final reimbursement requests for 2021 City Engagement and Innovation Fund grants will be filed after we receive all the documentation we need, which the next batch of checks will take care of (on or around January 21). We still are waiting for CRWD reimbursement. Won't have final 2021 numbers until after first January check request.

- **2022 City Grants**

- CE and IF grants are officially merging into one, food/beverage details and any other potential nuances haven't been made clear yet. Goal is to draft a 2022 work plan for the grant and bring it to the full board in February, then submit the grant paperwork shortly after board approval. Application is due in March.
- Early answer is that food/beverage won't be allowed at all (b/c of CBGB), waiting on some kind of additional clarification.

- **CRWD grant**

- CRWD annual (lake clean-up) grant has been approved, curb clean-up was not included this year which is disappointing

5. Board Meeting (Jan 18)

- **Action Items?**

- Pending for meeting discussion (Officer meeting is before committee meetings this month):
 - Land Use: Blackhawk Soccer letter
 - Land Use: Ted's Recreation License
- Invite Sherman Eagles to come discuss density?

- **Events and Safety Ordinance**

- Original FAQ/Summary from Ward 2 Office
- Proposed Language Draft
- Strong response about free speech concerns
- Ward 2 office is saying concerns are stemming from mis-information, they're supposedly looking at clarifying changes before presenting to City Council
 - Ben will reach out to all the D10 ward offices for comment (written or attending meeting)
- Could we ask someone from Ward 4 office to come share about this issue at the board meeting?
- ½ hr item w/ speaker and questions
- Action Item from board?
- Do other districts have statements?
 - NENO voted to oppose the ordinance

6. Other Business

- **Hybrid Meetings**

- Can we assign the research to a specific board member?

- **Recruiting Strategy**

- No Updates
- Jill open to a new chair stepping up
- **Annual Election Mailers - Early March?**

- **Personnel Policy Update?**
 - August board minutes said the Officers were meeting about document updates
 - September Officer mtg notes say “document ready to present, with an overview of changes, but not a line by line change doc.”, but that we would finish bylaw changes first.
 - Officers will present the changes to the board and accept comments.
- Discussion about board attendance and methods of “nudging”
 - Chair Duties
 - Board Buddy system

7. Staff Report

- **D1 South East Community Council ED Position Open**
 - The 4th St. Paul DC staff posting since Shevek started in June
- **Shevek working remotely Jan 17-20**
- **Shevek out town Feb 2-6**
- **Mike out of town Jan 13-18**

Confirm next meeting: Wednesday, February 9, 7 p.m.

I forgot to mention the upcoming National Seed Swap Day event (save the date - **Saturday, January 29**)

- o Seed sharing, gardening inspo, & more
- o Comoseedlibrary.org

District 10 Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Zoom

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/95701783379?pwd=QVppN2QrR09uNXFUL2ZEMmNwSzh5UT09> Dial in: 312 626 6799 Meeting ID: 957 0178 3379 Passcode: 134640

Welcome & Introductions

Present: Alex McLane, committee member; Jennifer Victor-Larsen, Committee Chair; Shevek McKee, ED; Nick Evans, guest, Mike Ireland, board treasurer; Jill Henricksen, Board Chair; Gordon Wrobel, Dan Edgerton, committee member; Angie Sechler; Rachel Bowers, committee member, Suzanne Rhees

Adopt the agenda

COMMUNITY SECTION

Community participants can bring topics & concerns

SPEAKERS / GUESTS

Dawn Pape - ED of We All Need Food & Water talked about her organization. (She also wrote a novel! Ejected – The Story that Solves the Climate Crisis), and ways Como residents can get involved.

<https://weallneedfoodandwater.org>. The organization focuses on conversation and connection. Contact is: Dawn@weallneedfoodandwater.org, Connect on Facebook and Instagram for upcoming events.

Climate for All events throughout the metro – with conversation about environmental topics. Each month. Next month: Skating event talking about plastics.

Climate Circles – discussion group. Let Dawn know if you would like to join. They read books and see movies for discussion. These are generally virtual although some have been outdoors in summer.

Food Equity – run a 1 acre community garden in Coon Rapids. Produce is donated to local food shelves.

Day Camps and info sessions. Water Heroes camp funded by CRWD

Resources:

Climate Simulator - <https://www.climateinteractive.org/tools/en-roads/>

Yale Climate Communication & Opinion Maps <https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/>,

<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us/>

Project Drawdown – Table of Solutions <https://drawdown.org/solutions/table-of-solutions>

Nick Evans from the Groundwater Monitor and Hydrologist for the DNR. He provided an update about the drilling of an observation well ‘nest’ in Como Park between the swimming pool and the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom area. Installation is in January but the deeper wells will be done by a contractor and they are backed up due to pipeline projects. Needs to be done in the winter to minimize

ground impact. Hopefully, within a couple weeks. The smaller well will be dug by the DNR just after the other wells.

The purpose is to measure groundwater levels. It has been a gap of missing measurement of the aquifers in the area. The site was chosen to not detract from park use, but accessed with a drill rig. It is between the pool and Outdoor classroom. The nest is a group of wells dug in the same location at different levels. There will be 530 Jordan Sandstone aquifer, higher to measure Prairie du Chien aquifer, and shallow 60-80ft to monitor wetlands.

Data will be collected hourly and it is published at www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/cgm/index.html

There will be an interpretive sign. It will be put up after some data have been collected after 2 years or so. It can be an additional tool for the Woodland Classroom

FOLLOW UP & REPORT BACKS

- o From Neighborhood Relations - Mike
 - o Neighborhood Honor Roll nominations are due Thursday, January 12th
 - o They are looking for topics for the Sunday Series
- o Lawns to Legumes – grant for demonstration neighborhood – No outreach or subcommittee. Suzanne provided an update: Jessica will be meeting with some gardening groups tomorrow. It will require an e-system, legwork, and is due February 10th. Status: There - Connect Sizanne, Jessica, Shevek. here's the RFP:
<https://bwsr.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2021-11/FY22%20L2L%20Phase%20%20RFP%20Final.pdf>
- o Rain Barrel application early/passed - Priced at \$90 subsidized, no storage space, would require more logistics than in the past. ? interest at this price & amount
- o From last month: Link to the MN SEED 2021 highlights slideshow.
<https://youtu.be/jhxhos8hWhw>
- Update from Jessica (absent this evening)
 - o I will be meeting with some Subdistrict 4 community members about pollinator gardens. It seems like there's a lot of work already happening and some pre-covid conversations that are ready to move forward. I don't know if the timeline will work out for the Lawn to Legume grant, but I think there are some possibilities for partnership here.
 - The NR committee is planning to do a community garage sale (Shevek can update) in connection with the sub-district 4 community clean up event we're hoping to have in May. We talked about doing "trash to treasure" crafts for kids and thought there could be a potential for partnership with EC on Environmental Education regarding reusing/recycling. I'll be talking to Blackhawk Soccer today about using the Orchard Rec Center and partnering with their annual clean up event.

FYI: Did you know about the

- o Landmark Tree Program? There seem to be several around Como

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/natural-resources/forestry/landmark-tree-program>

o Garden Recognition – Blooming St. Paul

Website: https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/Blooming%20Saint%20Paul%20Showcase%202021%20honorees_1.pdf

Open discussion: & topics for future presentations & discussion

- Native aquatic plant transplanting in the lake this fall – Question from Claire. What is that about? Wanting to know more. There were education signs up – Mike will follow up with CRWD. Dan mentioned there is also a new aerator which is keeping a wider area of water open.
- Partnering with D12 Environment Committee & Transition ASAP

STANDING UPDATES (if any)

- Como Education
 - o Woodland Classroom (Sara Jane Cheney or rep)
 - o Trees & Tours/Tree Trek – Stephanie has a tentative Saturday, June 25 date. Will be put in the newsletter.
 - o MNSeed (Dawn Lamm) – see above link.
- Como Community Garden (Shevek) – The annual meeting will be held Jan 23 Sunday afternoon. Morgan will also attend. Shevek will give an overview of the history of the garden. MNDot may be planning to do a project within the next 5 years and they have the ability to evict the garden.
- CRWD Partner Grant (Mike Ireland) –2022 grant was due on Halloween and were just notified and we were asked to include fall mailings but they denied that part of the grant citing low response. They funded curb clean up including \$400 for admin time – and they will fund it with the lake clean up.
- Mayor Carter’s Climate Justice Advisory Board (Shevek) – They’ve only met a few times, to decide scope. Link: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/mayors-office/committees-boards-and-commissions/climate-justice-advisory-board>. Meet second Thursdays.
- Clean Up Events (Mike Ireland) – report for the curb clean-up was due Dec 31 and the results were shared in the newsletter. We prevented 10# of phosphorus from going in the lake which was significant.

No updates:

- ARWG updates (Mike Ireland, Shevek)
- Organics (Shevek)
- Van Slyke Triangle Garden
- Como Steward Program (Jennifer VL)
- Future Events/Ideas (Jennifer VL)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, January 29: National Seed Swap Day (save the date)

- o Seed sharing, gardening inspo, & more
- o Comoseedlibrary.org

Next Committee Meeting Time

Tuesday, February 8th, 7:00 p.m. – Zoom

Land Use Committee – Minutes

District 10 Community Council

Wednesday, January 5, 7pm

Location: Zoom

Attendees

Board and staff: Maggie Zimmerman, Alex Zikmund, Chad Smith, Shevek McKee

Presenters: Arnie Kampa, Jennifer Corcoran, Eric Hudak

Community members: Dolores Rufenacht, Julie Jackson, Anne Thom, Gordon Wrobel, Rich Fundakowski, Suzanne Rhees, Laura Oyen

Committee Business

Call to Order

- The committee was called to order at 7:03pm. All participants attended via Zoom.

Amend/Adopt Agenda

- The meeting's agenda was adopted without amendment. Motion: Maggie Zimmerman, 2nd: Alex Zikmund.

New Business

- Ted's Rec Liquor License Renewal
 - Arnie Kampa shared that he has owned Ted's since 1982, only has long-term employees, and has never had issues like this before. He is as discouraged by it as anyone. He added lighting to the parking lot and has ordered 8 surveillance cameras (4 inside, 4 outside). He is closing at midnight for the foreseeable future, as most issues have been happening between midnight and 2am.
 - Eric Hudak, Licensing Manager with St. Paul Dept. of Safety and Inspections, stated that Ted's has a good record compared to other bars. DSI did not find any connection between bar management and the incidents. He spoke to how cooperative the owner has been and agreed that lightning, cameras, and closing earlier are good ideas.
 - Jennifer Corcoran, Investigative Commander with SPPD's western district, agreed that cameras and experienced staff are helpful. She states that earlier bar closings, including the Lamplighter, leading people to find "the next last call" as well as the direct connection to Minneapolis and the interstate via Larpenteur could be contributing factors. She notes their district's police shift change is at 2am, leaving only 8 officers on at bar close. She invited everyone to attend their monthly community meetings on the 3rd Tuesday at 9:30am and 6:30pm (389 Hamline Ave) and offered her direct contact information: jennifer.corcoran@ci.stpaul.mn.us (651-266-5868).
 - Dolores asked about the business's patronage, and Arnie shared that most before midnight are longtime regulars. Post-midnight they find more non-regulars. Rich asked how long they might stay closed at midnight, and Arnie indicated it would stay for the foreseeable future and that, for now, the larger profit isn't worth the larger number of problems. Gordon asked about clearing the sidewalk/driveway of snow and rocks, and Arnie stated that it's not required due to its status as a "paved boulevard."
 - Maggie stated the board's willingness to help. Arnie mentioned that he is looking into removing structures behind the bar and replacing them with another sort of barrier.

- Orchard Rec Center (875 W Orchard Ave) Zoning Requests
 - St. Paul Blackhawks Soccer Club requests a signage variance for lettering on the building and a street-facing sign. Anne likes the design but worries about the boulevard sign sightlines and the building attracting graffiti – and stated the importance of maintenance. Shevek said the club has been operating there for years and just signed another 5-year lease. The club intends for it to be a “living” space for community use. Motion to support the request – 1st Maggie Zimmerman, 2nd Chad Smith. Approved.
 - [875 Orchard Ave ENS Packet 12.29.2021.pdf \(govdelivery.com\)](#)
- 1554 Midway – Holden House – Jeff Laux, developer
 - Jeff Laux did not appear. Dolores asked if he had a project manager/someone in communications (like the late Chuck Repke) to do these things, but was informed Chuck hasn’t been replaced.

Community Space – open to all discussion topics

- Gordon informed the committee of 8 recent crashes, mostly related to speed, on the curvy bit of Lexington abutting a busy walking path. He also mentioned the triangle of land at E Como Blvd and E Como Lake Dr is unsafe for pedestrians. Maggie suggested we reach out to the city traffic engineer’s office and get these on their radar and asked Gordon for a map of the location.
- Anne brings up consistent lack of shoveling at 1005 E Como. People waiting for the bus currently stand in the street’s turn lane. The committee discussed previous efforts to encourage and enforce shoveling compliance, to various levels of success.

Updates

- K&L Sales (1523 Como Ave)
 - Their second-hand dealer license is up for renewal on March 29.
- Sound Variance for “Slow Show”
 - The Great Northern Festival applied for a sound variance for the “Slow Show” at the Como Pavilion for February 4th from 4-7pm and February 5th from 11am-3pm.
- Catalytic Converter Ordinance
 - The City Council is currently looking to make possession of a catalytic converter without proof of ownership a crime.
- Special Event Ordinance Change
 - Ward 2 office says concerns raised are unfounded and largely based on misinformation.

Coming Events

- Feb 10th – An inter-district council city-hosted engagement event regarding the 1-4 Unit Housing Study at 6:30pm will constitute the next Land Use meeting. You can find additional info about the study on the city’s website: [1-4 Unit Housing Study | Saint Paul Minnesota \(stpaul.gov\)](#)

The committee adjourned at 8:17pm.



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January 7, 2022

St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals

Re: File #21-330390 - 875 Orchard Ave - Blackhawks Soccer Club

The Como Community Council's Land Use Committee voted unanimously January 5 to support the variance request submitted by Saint Paul Blackhawks Soccer Club to install 7 wall signs and one freestanding sign at 875 Orchard Ave.

A representative from Blackhawks communicated with us after receiving the ENS notification and provided additional details and a willingness to answer additional community questions or concerns. In the January 5 discussion, community members expressed support for the proposal and that it would be a positive enhancement for the building and neighborhood.

We urge the Board of Zoning Appeals to grant the variance request.

Sincerely,

Shevek McKee
Executive Director
District 10 Como Community Council

January 4, 2021 Neighborhood Relations - Notes

Meeting called to order, but no quorum. Also no community members for discussion or airing of concerns.

Meeting members: Jessica Willman, Morgan Weinert, Shevek McKee, Mike Ireland, Matt Keliher

- North Como Event, new event, dates, details to start thinking through
 - Jessica fills us in on North Como event and early stage plans for an early March event. Trying for March 5th. Crafts for kids? Crafts for adults? Indoor or outdoor.
 - Planned for Family Fun event in March
 - Jessica looking into Dates and availability
 - Basic outline: sledding if possible, ice rink if possible, hot cocoa/warm beverages, possible craft table for kids/teens, outside games if warm enough (and snow is no go)
 - Jessica talked to Northdale, usually booked up pretty quickly, they said March 5 or 12 are available for warming houses, also have a bigger community room if we're up for inside. 10-Noonish might be best for families?
 - Ask community if there's a craft anyone is interested in leading? Other possible indoor activities?
 - Some of these things are COVID- dependent
 - Discussion leaning towards March 5
 - Mike Ireland: Bethel Lutheran always interested in getting involved in events, they might have a choir.
 - **Think of this event when ideas come up!**
 - Master Gardeners class?
 - Seed Library?
- Recapping of holiday decorations: less of an impact that the Halloween event but the door hangers were effective.
 - 66 votes, 11 entries (halloween had 227 votes, 18 entries)
- Blood drive upcoming dates: Tues 3/1/22, Thurs 5/28/22, Tues 8/2/22, 9am-3pm instead of 10am-4pm
- Neighborhood garage sales idea: create a layer on the map for each weekend, address and hours and summary of items at the garage sale.
 - Coordinate with other districts to avoid matching...or to intentionally match?
 - Is it a better idea to still restrict it to a particular weekend to encourage grouping
 - Sponsor for the garage sale instead of a \$15 fee for posting
 - Tie in to Orchard Rec event?
 - Food truck/community meal?
 - Garage sale partner?

- Neighborhood winter drive: gather and distribute high demand winter supplies, lean on Morgan's connections to help with distribution. Feb 12. 13 for winter drive, "love your neighbors", at the street car station
 - Amy Brendmoen brought need to our attention last year, homeless clothing drive
 - Morgan's clinic (MN Community Care, they're the director of the downtown clinic) could always use donations,
 - Bethesda, Listening House, Freedom House, all need the same things Morgan's clinic needs - Morgan has connections in all those place
 - Jessica reached out to Lyngblomsten, they're interested in providing some thing?
 - Jessica also heard from shelter in Luther Seminary (St. Anthony Park)
 - Things that aren't accepted by the unsheltered organizations might pair well with stuff that Lyngblomsten does want/need.
 - Staff from the org's Morgan mentioned might be up for helping sort the truck during the drive.
 - Shevek will book the Streetcar for Feb 12-13 (10-2pm both days)

- Budget update: Fundraising Goals & Strategy
 - Clarity on asks for money from reserves and on how the budget works and what and how the grant funds cover costs (specifically not food) will help lessen the difficulty of getting money asks approved by the board

- Sunday Series
 - Mike: History of Como?
 - Morgan: Master Gardeners - Already set up to do online presentations (have to do 25 volunteer hrs a year) <https://www.ramseymastergardeners.org/classes>
 - Don't charge for non-profits
 - Mike: Master Watershed something?
 - Morgan: Woman who wrote book about canning and preserving, Stephanie Thurow Can it & Ferment It
 - Book industry stuff - Matt?
 - Jessica: Sunday Series: I could reach out to FREC (Facilitating Racial and Equity Collaborative - <https://overcomingracism.org/>). I did a learning series with them that was fantastic and they work specifically in MN.

- Neighborhood Honor Roll
 - City used to do it, DCs would select 2-3 honorees
 - City dropped it in 2020
 - We're continuing to do it, plaque in the office

Additional Information

Revisions to *Employee Handbook*
Original Version adopted on 10/19/2010

Date	Section	Change
12/20/2011	X.F. Benefits #2. Holidays	Added: Veteran's Day, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and one 8-hour Floating Holiday.
12/20/2011	X.F. Benefits #8. Health Benefits	Changed \$100.00 a month to "150.00" a month
05/01/2013	IX.L. Conditions of Employment /Non-partisanship	Clarified: D10 employees shall not <i>publicly</i> support or oppose any political party or any candidate <i>on behalf of District 10</i> .
05/01/2013	IX.N. #3 Additional Work Conditions	Added: Service animals are exempted from this policy.
05/01/2013	X.B. Pay Periods and Time Sheets	Clarified: Pay periods are the 1.) first of the month to the 15 th of the month, and 2.) 16 th of the month to the end of the month.
05/01/2013	X.F. Benefits #4. Paid Time Off	Clarified: From: "Paid Time Off (PTO) in the amount of 1/12 of the annual PTO allotment To..... District 10 does not pay our unused PTO upon termination of employment.
05/01/2013	X.F. Benefits #4. Paid Time Off	Clarified: "bereavement leave" Added: spouse's/partner's sibling and grandchild
05/01/2013	X.F. Benefits #4. Paid Time Off	Clarified: PTO taken will be subtracted from the employee's accrued time bank in four-hour increments, unless otherwise approved in advance by the board chair or designee.
05/01/2013	XIV. Grievance Procedure	Clarified: Continuance of corrective action taken by the Executive Committee or Board if an employee files a grievance.
12/17/2013	X.F Benefits #8 Health Benefits & #9 Cell phone reimbursement	#8. Removed \$150/month reimbursement for health care costs. #9 Added \$50 per month reimbursement for use of personal cell phone.

03/18/2014	IV. Equal Employment Opportunity	IV. Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (policy changed to be in accordance with City of St. Paul requirements)
01/20/2015	X.F Benefits #8 Health Benefits & #9 Cell phone reimbursement	#8. Effective January 1, 2015, \$75/month stipend for health care costs for full-time employees. #9 Removed \$50 per month reimbursement for use of personal cell phone.
<u>06/16/2015</u>	<u>X.F Benefits</u> <u>#8 Health Benefits</u>	<u>#8 Removed \$75 per month stipend for health care costs for full-time employees.</u>

D10 Como Park 2021 Honor Roll Nominees

- Jessie Austin nominates **Holly & Todd Willmarth**:
 - I'd like to nominate Holly and Todd Willmarth for the District 10 Honor Roll. When we moved into the Como neighborhood last year, they immediately reached out and made us feel welcome. And I don't know anyone who gives to others more, or more often. Holly is an extremely active member of the Buy Nothing Como facebook page, and is constantly offering her neighbors items her household doesn't need- but that others could make better use of. They are also excellent bakers and are constantly offering neighbors samples of their delicious treats. And on top of that, they regularly drop off food scraps off on our front steps, for our chickens to enjoy! AND they organize our California Ave block party every year- which brings folks from the community together :)

- Julie Tholen nominates **Joanne Young**:
 - I am nominating Joanne Young for this honor because she is without a doubt the most caring, helpful, and steadfast neighbor anyone could ever ask for. I have had the privilege of living across the alley from her (and her late husband John) since 2002. Together they were like guardian angels, always there. willing to laugh, pitch in and just present. Since John's passing a couple of years ago, Joanne has carried on that wonderful neighborliness. She helps out all of her neighbors in so many ways, from cat sitting, to taking her role as block captain very seriously - making sure our alley gets plowed, to helping out whenever an extra pair of hands are needed, to making life a little easier with her friendship and true affection. She is not a flashy person. She doesn't seek the spotlight. No, she just does the 1001 acts of kindness for our block that make her our hero and she should be recognized for that reason alone.

- Tseganesh Selameab nominates **Jeanne Baumann** (*Previously honored in 2011*)
 - I am writing to nominate Jeanne Baumann for the District 10 honor roll. Jeanne has been the connector in our neighborhood since I moved here 13 years ago. She has maintained a weekly newsletter that she sends out with updated and specific information for our corner of district 10. She, along with other community members, have organized our block party for years and last year, during Covid, they hosted our Halloween parade. Jeanne is a person I will reach out to if we need information about what is happening in the district, what is happening with our neighbors, and how

we can stay connected as a community. During Covid she was the one that helped us keep track of our neighbors and reach out to each other and to meet each other's needs during a very isolating and scary time.

- I am not sure if she has been nominated before but if she hasn't please except this email as a strong endorsement and nomination for her.

- **Richard Kelly nominates Ron Okenfuss**

- I would like to nominate Ron Okenfuss for this honor. He has taken it upon himself to set cross country ski tracks by himself and maintain them all winter. He has even purchased specialized equipment to accomplish this.

- **Sally Worku nominates Tseganesh Selameab and Matthew Cain**

- This family has opened their hearts and home to neighborhoods, entertained children at our block gatherings and national night out gatherings and made our neighborhood a more welcoming place for all.

- **Kathie Jenkins nominates Rick and Kathy Zieman**

- Our neighborhood is so lucky to have Rick and Kathy Zieman as residents. They are an amazing couple. Not only do they organize the neighborhood night out each year, but they're on top of what's going on in Como and keep us informed.
And they do a lot more. At the first sign of a sniffle Kathy is at your door with a jar of her homemade jam. Rick shovels sidewalks and pathways up and down the block, rakes leaves by the curbs so they don't get swept into the lake, and will fix anything that breaks.
And between the two of them in the present and past they have delivered meals to shut-ins, volunteered at a food bank, pick up trash around the lake and mended toys for underprivileged kids.
And this is just what I know of. The Zieman's aren't braggers. They just do things without fanfare. They definitely make Como Park area a better place to live, work and play.

- **Sue Krivit ALSO nominates Rick and Kathy Zieman**

- I am nominating Rick & Kathy Zieman for the District 10 Community Honor Roll. I have many reasons to nominate them from the welcome they gave us when we moved into the neighborhood, to hosting an annual National Night Out party each year, to dropping off luminarias on the solstice so everyone can get out of their house in the winter to stroll the neighborhood and great each other. Not to mention the emails that alert us to happenings (both good & bad) in our neighborhood. They keep us all connected and make us all better neighbors.

Please consider Rick & Kathy Zieman for this honor.

- **SEVERAL** other Neighbors represented by Karen Nikolai

ALSO nominate **Rick and Kathy Zieman**

- Nomination for Rick and Kathy Zieman for the 2022 Como Neighborhood Honor Roll
- This application is from all of us who live near Rick and Kathy in the little area they make us feel so at home in, between Lexington and Chatsworth from Nebraska up to Hoyt. Thank you from all of us!
- Here's what some people wrote about them:
- (This one was also sent in separately) I am nominating Rick & Kathy Zieman for the District 10 Community Honor Roll. I have many reasons to nominate them from the welcome they gave us when we moved into the neighborhood, to hosting an annual National Night Out party each year, to dropping off luminarias on the solstice so everyone can get out of their house in the winter to stroll the neighborhood and great each other. Not to mention the emails that alert us to happenings (both good & bad) in our neighborhood. They keep us all connected and make us all better neighbors.
- Please consider Rick & Kathy Zieman for this honor.
- ---
- Being brief about this wonderful couple is awfully hard. I can't imagine more civic-minded or helpful people than Rick and Kathy.
- They are protectors! They protect us from harm. Before we moved in, Rick saw that construction workers did not close our garage one night, so he went and did it himself. Environmentally-minded,
- Kathy told us about the rain garden subsidy, so we applied and got part of our garden installation fee reimbursed by the watershed.
- They are generous helpers! We needed to borrow a rake before we moved in, so Rick lent us one and then had us leave it near his garage when we were finished. Once, we needed to roll a big file cabinet into our house from our trunk, and Rick wheeled over his sturdy dolly for us to use. We wanted to participate in Halloween candy handouts, but our front door is hidden and unseen from the street from a key angle, so Rick and Kathy referred their Trick or Treaters over to our house.
- They are good hosts! Before we moved in, we were invited to attend the National Night Out Block Party which they host. That allowed us to get acquainted with our neighbors. We participated in the iluminaria walk they initiated in 2020, then invited a friend over for the recent walk and found out while walking that Kathy had helped our friend through cancer. They also delivered a plate of Christmas cookies to us, unsolicited.
- ---
- Rick and Kathy have been wonderful neighbors. They organize the block party in August, send emails to our group to make us aware of

neighborhood happenings (good/bad), they bring cheer with wonderful Halloween Decorations, and tree decorations in the winter. They have been so welcoming and were the first to stop over and say hi when we moved in (4 years ago). If we needed any help we wouldn't hesitate to ask them as they have modeled their willingness to do so.

- ---
- I've been in the neighborhood for 20 years. Rick and Kathy have been great neighbors, and great neighborhood organizers for all 20 years. they are the backbone if the neighborhood from my perspective, and have always helped to make everyone feel welcome.
- ---
- Rick and Kathy are wonderful neighbors who are like Como Park ambassadors for our community.
- When Dan was in the Hospital for a week, Rick and Kathy made sure to check on me and asked about Dan daily.
- Besides organizing community events like national night out and fabulous holiday light shows every year, Rick and Kathy also help coordinate community donations to those in need. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, Rick and Kathy coordinated with the local police department pick ups of food and supplies for those in our community who needed it most. Rick and Kathy alway go above and beyond for others.
- They are wonderful neighbors and our community and block is better because of them.
- ---
- I can't think of anyone that does more for the neighborhood than Rick and Kathy. They are always sharing their time and talents by organizing neighborhood events and helping neighbors in need.
- ---
- Kathy and Rick have been a glue in our neighborhood. They have hosted National night out celebrations in the Mary Lane-Oxford-Hoyt-Nebraska 'hood for at least the last 18 years, they have compiled and spread a neighborhood list of residents, and they have regularly posted heads-up news items on Next Door. Their smiling faces are a treat when they are out walking our streets!
- ---
- The block party they do each year has been instrumental in making me feel like I'm part of a small, supportive community. Wahoo!
- ---
- I support the nomination of Kathy and Rick Zieman for the Como Honor Roll. They keep neighbors informed of area happenings and go above and beyond in bringing neighbors together, whether it's hosting a National Night Out gathering or delivering bags and candles for the December

luminary event. Our family recognizes how fortunate we are to have exemplary neighborhood leaders like Rick and Kathy Zieman.

- - ---
 - Rick and Kathy are the most amazing neighbors we could hope for. In the 21 years I've lived here, they have welcomed me like a member of the family, Rick sawed up a major tree branch after a storm took it out 5 years ago, they bring Christmas cookies every year and these last two years have coordinated the distribution and lighting of luminaria all along our streets. It's a beautiful way to celebrate the season and bring light to winter, and Rick and Kathy are at the core of that and of so many things I'm grateful for in our sweet area of Como.
 - This nomination is from all of us in our little Como neighborhood enclave!
 - Thank you from all of us.
 -
- Janna Caywood nominates **Melissa Liu and Deepa Nirmal**
- I'd like to jointly nominate two neighbors on my block as co-candidates for this year's Neighborhood Honor Roll: Melissa Liu and Deepa Nirmal.

Melissa, as you know, is former chair of District 10's Board. And she has many other leadership positions, past and present, with other community-based organizations that I could list as evidence of her ongoing contributions to the health and vibrancy of Como and beyond.

Similarly, Deepa holds board and leadership posts with several non-profit and civic organizations, including Saint Paul Public Libraries, for which she is a very strong and effective advocate. Like Melissa, her love for Como and Saint Paul runs deep.

Together their leadership contributions, many that directly impact Como, could fill a book.

But that's not why I'm nominating these two women.

I'm nominating them because of their sustained and impactful contributions on our particular block - Avon Street North, the stretch just a couple blocks east of Como Lake.

If ever there was a model to be used to fill a community with the idealized 'good neighbor' these two women are it. I cannot over state their generosity to those of us who live here on this street. Both are the first to reach out if someone is in need of neighborly support. Both share generously of their time, their passions, their love of people.

For Melissa, a few examples:

- * During COVID-19's worst months, Melissa would regularly text me to ask if we needed anything from Costco as her husband Frank was making a run.
- * My Mom, who is 80, lives with us and has been stuck at home during the Pandemic, so Melissa arranged for her son Tim, who is now 13 (I think), to give my mom a guitar concert over FaceTime. Mom absolutely loved this.
- * When my brother died in 2018, Melissa saw me taking a walk past her house and I must have looked somber because she immediately texted me and said - "How are you doing?"
- * Last November she came back from a Hmong wedding and gave us a giant bowl of khao sen rice noodle salad, which was delicious. Her own cooking, often amazing Chinese dishes, also come our way, to our delight.
- * Melissa's family raises backyard chickens and have shared their eggs many times. My mom gets a huge kick out of seeing Tim and his little sister Hannah take one of the chickens for a 'walk' on a leash. Tim is the rooster, apparently, so they comply.
- * I have lost count of how many times our sidewalk magically got shoveled - Tim is the prime suspect, but I know Melissa is behind this kindness.

These are but a few quick descriptions that come to mind. There are many more like this.

These may seem like very small gestures, but I cannot tell you how powerful they are. And we are not the only recipients. Everyone in our immediate vicinity has had this kind of compassionate attention from Melissa and her family. If ever there was a sweet elixir to create an instant feeling of 'home' beyond one's house, Melissa's care for those around her is the secret ingredient.

As for Deepa, she is the exuberant celebrant that compliments Melissa's gentle touch.

For Deepa, a few examples:

- * Just this past Sunday Deepa took me to the 'Little India' grocery store on Central Avenue, to be my guide through that amazing cornucopia of Indian cooking ingredients. She had made 'tamarind rice' for my husband because he broke his shoulder, and I raved so much she offered to show me how to whip it up myself.

- * During our outing we got to talking about my Mom being stuck inside a lot. Deepa suggested her daughter Maya could come over once in a while and just sit and talk with Mom. You have no idea what a help this is. I get very exhausted being her main chatting companion.
- * Deepa is co-founder of our very robust four-block book club, which has been running since 2008, and which has spawned several spin-off clubs: knit club, beer club, and garden club. Her enthusiasm for reading and connecting across our passions is very infectious.
- * She is famous for her mesmerizing knitting skills and generously coaches many of us novices here on Avon. And encourages us to enter our creations in the State Fair - something she does herself and wins ribbons every year.
- * Deepa is very generous in sharing her gardening know-how. She regularly shares plant cuttings with many of us on Avon. I dare say every hosta in my yard originated in hers. She even gave a lovely talk for one of District 10's Sunday Series events about gardening for pollinators.
- * We have many neighborly gatherings on our block and Deepa is so very good at making the rounds, talking with everyone, making sure they feel included. She is sincerely interested in talking with them too. Her love of hearing other people's stories is so welcoming and inclusive.
- * Deepa is one of those neighbors you find yourself standing in the yard talking to for well over an hour and you don't even notice the time. She is such a delightful person and is so interested in you that you kind of lose yourself as you float so comfortably in conversation with her. She puts everyone at ease.

It is my hope that District 10's Neighborhood Honor Roll is also intended to honor those neighbors who are simply that - everyday 'good neighbors.' Their contributions might not be the accomplishment of some major volunteer project or pulling off some hugely attended community event. Rather their sustained contribution is at the block-level, making our home street feel like a warm and caring place, a sense of family beyond the boundaries of our own little plats. With neighbors like these, life in Como is amazingly sweet.