

Minutes Environment Committee May 17, 2018

Present: David, Wendell, Craig, Melanie, Britta (staff).

Meeting began at 7:03 p.m.

March minutes approved.

**Eureka Tour** is June 4, 3p.m. Meet at MGCC to carpool or meet at Eureka. You must sign a liability form before attending. The tour should take about 1.5 hours.

Sheila and David will do a presentation at Washington Technology School about reducing solid waste, recycling, organics on May 21.

### **Goals for 2018**

Brainstormed ideas:

- Find out more information from the City on plans for removing ash trees and replacement of those trees. Are there plans for care of new trees to increase survival? Could a partnership or grant be sought to replace the trees with trees that are bigger than the standard ones the City plants? Could we ensure effective, adequate communication about the process with residents? Could the City communicate with residents about where new trees will be planted, especially for people with boulevard gardens? Is there a plan for removing stumps? Any possible coordination with other district councils?

Britta will reach out to the City to see if someone could attend our June or July meeting to discuss the process.

- Liz met with Roopali Phadke and Christie Manning on May 18 to reapply for a climate resiliency grant, which is due in late June. If we received the funding, work on the project would probably begin in late summer or fall.

- Other grant \$ that we could apply for relates to food waste and increasing use of compost. Ideas? Britta will check in with Russ Stark about whether there is a possible role for us to play in the City's planning for organics collection. Questions we had about solid waste collection include is there a destination already planned for compost created by the eventual collection of St. Paul's organics? (San Francisco's organics are mostly used to create compost for vineyards.) Also, will the City have access to data about how much profit trash haulers are making in the new organized trash collection system? Since our rates are higher than Minneapolis residents' trash rates, we would like to understand if the St. Paul consortium will result in increased levels of profit for haulers.

- Neighborhood vegetable garden program – MGCC could connect people who have a sunny part of their yard that they would be happy to share with gardeners who like to garden but don't have a spot to do it. We could plan for how the project would work this year and roll it out next spring. In June we will write a general descriptive paragraph to share with block leaders who could share the upcoming opportunity with people at National Night Out. We will

also work on a plan for integrating information about this project into the scavenger hunt at MacGrove Fest.

### **Other updates**

Garden Fest was a nice event. About 100 people and about the same # of plants as those that used to arrive at Craig's house when he hosted the plant share. \$360 made. Should increase marketing next year. Not very many kids. Try to increase attracting kids for a seed activity if we do that activity again next year. New residents with no landscaping were happy to get many plants at the share. Good work!

Packaging ordinance: Zero Waste St. Paul continues to meet monthly to work on this initiative. Councilmember Tolbert tabled the possible regulation until the fall.

MPCA has contracted an environmental engineering company to contact residents who live east of dry cleaners in the neighborhood. We wonder if this is a citywide effort by MPCA. If so, we would like to organize an informational event so that MPCA can share information about pollution, legal liability for dry cleaner owners and property owners, how the testing for toxic vapors works, costs of remediation, regulations for current drycleaners, etc. Melanie will call Christopher Formby from MPCA and report back to the committee.

Meeting adjourned.