

## Community Environmental Advisory Commission

### Regular Meeting

July 15, 2020 – 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Online Meeting

Dial-In Number: 612-276-6670 Conference ID: 741 326 637#

**Notice:** This meeting may involve the remote participation by members, either by telephone or other electronic means, due to the local public health emergency (novel coronavirus pandemic), pursuant to the provisions of MN Statutes Section 13D.021.

**Board/Commission Members:** Allan Campbell, Anthony Varriano, Erin Kern, Erin Niehoff, Halley Norman, Ian Manion, Katie Hill Brandt, Marianna Hefte, Mark Dhennin, Michelle Shaw, Nicholas Minderman, Sandy Fazeli, Thomas Olsen, Tim Sexton (Quorum 9)

**Guests:** Dean Dovolis, Karen Clark, Kyle Samejina, Brian Zakem

**Staff:** Diana Chao, Olayemi Fadahunsi, Kim Havey, Bjorn Olson

### Call to Order

Erin Niehoff called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm. Katie Hill Brandt read the following land acknowledgement statement:

*Land Acknowledgement: As we meet here today, we are reminded that Minneapolis is situated on the homelands of the Dakota people. An area that is steeped in rich Indigenous history, and today is home to Indigenous people from more than 30 different nations. As a City, we have a responsibility to care for the land on which we live and work and all of its natural surroundings. This stewardship is an integral part of our involvement in this commission, and we honor it as we begin our meeting. We now open up this space to discuss ways in which we can support Indigenous people in our community.*

Allan Campbell announced that the West Calhoun Neighborhood Council recently voted at its July meeting to change the name of the organization from West Calhoun to West Lake.

### Adoption of the Agenda + Acceptance of Minutes of June 17, 2020

Ian Manion moved to adopt the agenda and accept the minutes of June 17, 2020. Tim Sexton seconded the motion. None were opposed.

### Discussion

1. Update on the Upper Harbor Terminal project from members who attended the Upper Harbor Collaborative Planning Committee meeting on July 8, 2020.
  - Most of the meeting discussion was about the previous meeting, where Bill English physically charged at Alexis Pennie. At the meeting, Bill apologized for the incident to everyone except Alexis.
  - Most of the group voted to leave this incident out of the meeting minutes.
  - There was no update on City actions regarding the Upper Harbor Terminal plan.
2. CEAC discussion on actions and next steps regarding the Roof Depot site.

- The group discussed focusing on what is attainable right now, based on the progress of demolition on the site.
- Dean Dovolis clarified that the building is still intact. So far, only the removal of environmental elements, such as asbestos, has been done.
- Erin Kern asked if it is possible to reverse the vote and if the community can buy the Roof Depot site back from the City.
- Dean Dovolis stated that there are two major funders interested in buying the site, Glen Ford and Agro Fund One. The State legislature may also be interested in providing support.
- The Southside Green Zone Work Plan talks about air quality, which mentions the City's responsibility in mitigating the environmental impacts of the Hiawatha Expansion.
- The vote to move forward with the Roof Depot project was done pre-Covid-19, however, a lot has changed since then.
- On Monday, July 13, 2020 Karen Clark, along with other community members from Little Earth, met with Council Member Cam Gordon to discuss the CEAC special meeting on July 7, 2020. CM Gordon reiterated to them again that changing the focus on community businesses repurposing the site is a stronger angle. There will be a meeting on July 16, 2020 with businesses to explore whether they would want to use the space. There is at least one Council Member in support, so they should take this opening.
- There will also be another meeting with community stake holders on their ideas and plans for how the building can be repurposed to benefit their needs.
- CEAC's stance should be to ask the City Council to reconsider their vote on Option A for the Roof Depot site.
- Thomas Olsen stated that we can't afford to be neutral. The Public Works plan is "reasonable," but it's not what the City should stand for. It's time to actively do good.
- Sandy Fazeli stated that the Public Works plan was based on ineffective community engagement. CEAC should push to develop guidelines for planning that aligns with City goals, such as the Southside Green Zone work plan.
- Michelle Shaw asked how many acres the community needs. Is three acres enough? Public Works has alternative locations and the neighborhood does not.
- Dean Dovolis stated that three acres was the minimum request from the community. Given what's occurred in the community with new developments of heavy-hit businesses and the murder of George Floyd, three acres will not be enough. We want the whole site. It's become essential for the community, especially for businesses.
- Nick Minderman stated that the justification for the Hiawatha expansion was that it would reduce GHG emissions. This reduction was traded off for local criteria pollutants in the neighborhood. The solution here is electrification of vehicles to maintain reduced emissions profile and not cause local criteria pollutants.
- Halley Norman stated the Public Works presentation discussed partnering with the Urban Scholars program to recruit community members for workforce development. As a former Urban Scholar, that's not how the program works. The program is run through Civil Rights, not Public Works, and recruits from higher education, not community. It seems disingenuous and performative to cite something that sounds good but is not a real way to engage with the community.
- Tim Sexton asked if there a way to guarantee more long-term local job opportunities, with recent instability in the agriculture field.
- CEAC will write a letter requesting for City Council to change their stance on the Roof Depot site. CEAC should not give them an opening for to explore other options. CEAC

can draft a second letter with recommendations for Public Works if the City continues to move forward with the project.

- Sandy Fazeli asked if CEAC could issue a joint letter to the City Council with the Southside Green Zone Task Force.
  - Nick Minderman made a motion to give CEAC's Chair authority to determine the final wording of a letter to City Council on the Roof Depot site that includes the following points:
    - Reconsider the Council's decision for use of the property for city operations
    - Describe the environmental impacts and state that the City shouldn't be reducing overall emissions at the cost of increasing emissions in an already impacted community
    - Return the land to the community and emphasize the need to actively do more for impacted communities
    - Community is more geographically limited and bound than the City; importance of this site to implement community vision
    - Detail how current issues have caused this situation to change dramatically
    - Outline concerns of community members
    - Describe the engagement issues and the need for guidelines for community-led planning
  - Anthony Varriano seconded the motion. None opposed.
  - Erin Niehoff will draft and finalize the letter and send it to City Council. After it has been sent to City Council, she will send it to other commissions, such as the Southside Green Zone Task Force and the Capital Long-Range Improvements Committee, to ask if they want to support the letter. If other commissions support the letter, it could be additional leverage.
  - CEAC will also write an op-ed at the same time. If there are community organizations and social justice organizations that would be interested in supporting the op-ed, CEAC will include them for feedback and support.
  - Nick Minderman made a motion to give CEAC's Chair authority to develop partners and language for the op-ed to be submitted to one or multiple publications and determine when there are a sufficient number of partners.
  - Ian Manion seconded the motion. None opposed.
  - Erin Niehoff will provide an update one week after the letter is sent to the City Council. Erin will email everyone as Council Members respond.
  - Nick Minderman also recommended reaching out individually to respective Council Members as constituents.
3. CEAC discussion on online meeting process.
- Accessibility of meetings is not adequate when residents are not able to join the Microsoft Teams online platform. Instead, they must call in on the phone, which prohibits from them being able to see the members, meeting chat, and presentation slides.
  - CEAC will plan to work on a letter to City Clerk's office and approve it during the August meeting.
  - Erin Niehoff will start Google document where members can add their contributions for the letter and Michelle Shaw will write the letter.
  - Anthony Varriano moved to adjourn the meeting. Erin Niehoff seconded the motion. None opposed.

**Next Meeting: August 19, 2020 – 5:00-7:00 pm**

**Location: Online Meeting**

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats, please contact the Sustainability Division at 612-673-2563 or e-mail [diana.chao@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:diana.chao@minneapolismn.gov). People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626. Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.