

# VILLAGER

APRIL 29-MAY 12, 2020

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## Should we stay or should we go?

Hundreds of protesters gathered at the Governor's Residence on Summit Avenue on April 17 to voice their concerns about the stay-at-home order imposed by the state in response to the coronavirus pandemic. At right, Kris Duryea wore a placard supporting health care workers as a group prayed at the nearby St. Thomas More Peace Garden for those affected by the virus.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



## Divided council OKs \$7.5M rebuild of Ayd Mill Road

### Roadway's four lanes become three with bike-pedestrian trail

BY JANE McCLURE

It's final. Ayd Mill Road will be rebuilt this summer and fall as a three-lane street with an adjacent 12-foot trail for bicyclists and pedestrians. A sharply divided St. Paul City Council approved the \$7.5 million project on April 22 on a 4-3 vote after more than two hours of debate and despite the objections of the three council members who represent the neighborhoods on either side of the 1.5-mile roadway.

Council members Rebecca Noecker, Chris Tolbert and Dai Thao all voted against the project. They also supported Noecker's unsuccessful bid to set aside the project and instead mill and overlay Ayd Mill Road's existing four lanes at a savings of about \$2.2 million.

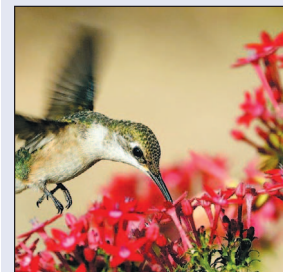
Noecker had several reasons for opposing the \$7.5 million plan. She cited the lack of space in some areas between the traffic lanes and the bike and pedestrian trail, saying the plan does not live up to the city's expectations for safety. She questioned spending so much on one bikeway when such projects as the citywide Grand Round and the Capital City Bikeway downtown must wait years for completion. Another concern was the looming fiscal crisis facing St. Paul due to the coronavirus pandemic, she said.

Tolbert agreed, saying the current plan has had little public engagement given the controversy and years of debate over previous plans for rebuilding Ayd Mill Road. He said the plan brought forward by Mayor Mel-

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## Villager subscribes to new model of doing business

### With an additional online source for local news, paper enlists support of readers

BY MICHAEL MISCHKE

Unlike other small, locally owned enterprises, the *Villager* has remained open for business on the heels of Minnesota Governor Tim Walz's executive order to curtail any and all commercial or organizational activity not deemed to be "essential." That's a rather arbitrary designation, in my mind, but the news media qualified as meeting the standard to continue operating, and so we have.

However, very much like other small businesses that have remained open, the *Villager* has seen its sole source of revenue—in our case advertising sales—fall off precipitously from the level it was at prior to the arrival on these shores of the coronavirus. We responded to the unprecedented challenge we find ourselves facing by trimming costs wherever we could, applying for and ultimately receiving a potentially forgivable loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration, and turning to our readers for their financial support of what has always been a freely distributed publication.

And support us they did. As of the end of last week, we had received more than \$45,000 from more than 600 donors—both from within our distribution area and beyond. Accompanying many of these donations were kind notes and letters of

thanks for publishing a neighborhood newspaper of the editorial quality that has long been the hallmark of this publication. We in turn can't thank those donors enough.

However, we knew from the outset that cost-cutting, the federal loan and our readers' donations were not likely to put this business on a sustainable path for very long. The cost of producing, printing and delivering the *Villager* is such that a different business model was required—one that does not rely on advertisers to pick up 100 percent of the tab.

John Rauch, my right-hand man on the business side here, and I recently met via teleconference with 34 prominent civic leaders who had expressed a keen interest in helping "Save the Villager," the

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# United Villages of Midway

## Apartment towers may rise beside stadium

**\$120M project would include a third building with retail, office space**

By JANE McCLURE

Four years after the St. Paul City Council adopted a master plan for redeveloping the blocks surrounding the new Major League Soccer stadium at Snelling Avenue and I-94, Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC has stepped

forward with the first major project on the former Midway Shopping Center site since much of it was cleared to make way for Allianz Field. Dubbed the United Villages at Midway, the proposed development would include two new towers with 243 apartments, 15,780 square feet of retail and office space and 148,470 square feet of parking.

The St. Paul Port Authority's Credit Committee on April 21 unanimously approved an application for \$2 million in grants for pollution cleanup on the site. The Port Au-

thority Board will review the grant request on April 28, and it is expected to be submitted on May 1. If all goes as planned, pollution on the site could be cleaned up this fall.

The new buildings would be located on the east side of Snelling Avenue between Spruce Tree Drive and Shields Avenue, on the site occupied by Big Top Liquors before that business moved to 1544 University Ave. The new buildings would be just west of the Great Lawn that adjoins the north side of Allianz Field.

Dr. Bill McGuire, lead owner of the Minnesota United soccer team, is the co-developer of United Villages at Midway with longtime Midway Center owner Rick Birdoff. The development would consist of two apartment towers of between nine and 18 stories and a three-story building with about 19,000 square feet of retail space and almost 30,000 square feet of co-working office space. The project would span two blocks, with parking beneath both blocks on one level underground. The estimated cost is \$90 million for the two towers and \$30 million for the three-story building.

The buildings were designed by the Kansas City architectural firm of Populous, which also designed Allianz Field. Mortenson Construction, which led the stadium project, would also lead the work on United Villages. The towers would be built first, and the second block of retail and co-working space would come later.



The proposed United Villages of Midway with its two towers and adjacent three-story building at right, looking toward the northeast from Snelling Avenue.



Outlined in purple above, the site of the proposed United Villages of Midway is located on the east side of Snelling Avenue just northwest of Allianz Field.

Port Authority project manager Ava Langston-Kenney presented a report on the pollution cleanup and the recommendation for approval on April 20. "Only public agencies are eligible to apply for these funds, but both publicly and privately owned sites with known or suspected soil or groundwater contamination qualify for them," Langston-Kenney said. She called the funding "essential" for the redevelopment of the property.

The city of St. Paul or the Port Authority can apply for pollution cleanup grants on behalf of the developers. One application for up to \$1 million is being made to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). A second application for \$500,000 is being made to Ramsey County, with a third application going to the Metropolitan Council.

The 34.5-acre Midway Center "superblock" bounded by Pascal Street and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues was for many years the site of the Twin Cities Rapid Transit Company streetcar maintenance garage and storage facility. The site proposed for United Villages is just north of what later became a Metro Transit bus garage. State records indicate that it was polluted by petroleum products. It is likely that soil vapors will also have to be vented.

The master plan for redeveloping the superblock, which was approved by the City Council in 2016, calls for a mix of office, retail, hotel and residential uses. Big Top, Rainbow Foods and Midway Pro Bowl were among the businesses forced out of Midway Shopping Center. Fewer than a dozen businesses remain.

## Committee shoots down more parking for the Pitch on Snelling

**Reconfiguring first floor, losing drive-thru lane means Walgreens is out**

By JANE McCLURE

Construction is scheduled to begin this month on the Pitch, Wellington Management's planned six-story mixed-use building at 427 N. Snelling Ave. The former Bremer bank building on the property is now gone and utility work is underway. The Pitch will feature first-floor retail space with apartments above. However, it will likely not include surface parking to the south of the building or a Walgreens store inside it.

The Land Use Committee of the Union Park District Council (UPDC) heard an update on the project on April 20 from project manager Casey Dziejewczynski. Wellington will discuss adding parking during an online meeting of the UPDC's Transportation Committee at 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 11. For details, check unionparkdc.org.

The Pitch, whose name refers to the Allianz Field soccer stadium just across Snelling, will have 160 market-rate apartments ranging from micro- to two-bedroom units. The building's exterior remains largely unchanged from what the district council and St. Paul Planning Commission approved in 2019. However, interior changes are planned on the first floor.

The development site is zoned Traditional Neighborhoods 3 and is within a quarter mile of the light-rail Green Line, so there is no minimum number of parking places required. Still, Wellington wanted to provide parking for residents and businesses.



Wellington Management's design for the Pitch, a six-story mixed-used apartment building planned on Snelling Avenue just two blocks south of University and across from Allianz Field.

Off-street parking has been a moving piece of the project and has been affected by delays and redesigns. Plans approved in 2019 called for two levels of underground parking with 142 spaces. Water table problems eliminated one level of underground parking and reduced the number of spaces to 55 on one level. Dziejewczynski said the parking can be increased to about 80 for residents by using a car lift that moves vehicles from the ground floor to underground. The plan also includes 18 ground-level spaces along the Snelling-Fry alley for tenants and customers.

However, adding the car lift and reconfiguring the first floor took away one of two drive-through lanes. One lane is for a relocated Bremer Bank and the other was originally

for a Walgreens pharmacy. Losing one drive-through meant losing Walgreens. "Operationally, it wouldn't have worked for them," Dziejewczynski said.

Bremer Bank will occupy about 2,500 square feet of space and Walgreens was to occupy about 5,000 square feet. The latter space could be occupied by one or two new commercial tenants. The first floor will also have a shared lobby, restrooms and utility space.

Whether more parking is needed for residents is a point of debate. Wellington is providing ample bicycle parking as well as a \$50 Metro Transit Go Card for each new renter.

One idea the committee rejected on April 20 was for Wellington to enter into a five-year lease with the Minnesota Department

*"We've spent a lot of time as the developer, asking what the parking ratios should be," said project manager Casey Dziejewczynski.*

of Transportation (MnDOT) for state-owned land south of the development. Wellington originally eyed that property for a larger structure, but could not reach a sale agreement with MnDOT.

Dziejewczynski said the state-owned land could allow 44 surface parking stalls for the building. The developers would make improvements and maintain the property under the lease. Improvements would include landscaping and improving stormwater drainage.

"We've spent a lot of time as the developer, asking what the parking ratios should be," he said.

Lisa Austin of MnDOT said the state is retaining its properties along I-94 in anticipation of the future redesign and rebuilding of the freeway, but could agree to a five-year lease. "We're not doing permanent uses along any right-of-way we own until we finish the I-94 planning," she said.

The changes discussed on April 20 do not require the project to go back to the Planning Commission, which in April 2019 approved a conditional use permit to allow a height of up to 55 feet, a floor-area ratio variance to allow greater density and a nonconforming use permit to allow for the drive-through lanes.

**1◀ AYD MILL ROAD REDESIGN**

vin Carter drew on outdated studies and includes a “subpar bike lane” that lacks the necessary protections.

Thao and Tolbert both objected to the diversion of motor vehicle traffic into the surrounding neighborhoods that will likely result from reducing Ayd Mill Road from four lanes to three. Tolbert asked for more specifics on how the city intends to mitigate the expected traffic congestion. Thao cited concerns about increased air pollution as well as the accuracy of the traffic models used in predicting future traffic patterns.

The Ayd Mill Road project was supported by council president Amy Brendmoen and members Mitra Jalali, Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang. Jalali became emotional when Noecker proposed the mill and overlay project instead of the more extensive redesign, saying, “I could not be more opposed to this.” According to Jalali, thousands of people have commented on the reconstruction project and the majority support a three-lane Ayd Mill Road. She said that not going forward means “kicking the can down the road” when reconstructing the roadway is sure to be more costly.

One benefit cited by Jalali and other project supporters is the possibility that the Ayd Mill bike trail could be connected someday to Minneapolis’ Midtown Greenway bike trail. However, that connection may require the use of a railroad bridge over the Mississippi River, and permission for that has not been forthcoming from the railroad.

Prince, who criticized the city’s most recent round of Ayd



The planned Jefferson Avenue interchange at Ayd Mill Road's south end, with all cars entering Ayd Mill by the ramp on Jefferson's south side and bicycles and pedestrians using the ramp on the north side.

Mill Road traffic studies for not looking at the congested intersection of Snelling and Selby avenues, said she had been on the fence about the project. What persuaded her to support it was the prospect of turning Ayd Mill Road into a transportation corridor for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as motorists.

The City Council gave its preliminary approval to the Ayd Mill Road project in February as part of the St. Paul Streets 2020 plan. However, the council asked the city’s Department of Public Works to engage the public in a discussion about the plan before bringing it back to the council. The COVID-19 pandemic forced that public engagement to the city’s website

with two video presentations and an online survey.

“We reached many, many more people than we would have with in-person community meetings,” said Paul Kurtz, interim director of Public Works. He said the key takeaway was that the project has more support than opposition.

The project is expected to go out for bid in June with construction to begin in July or August and be completed in November. Ayd Mill Road will be closed to traffic during construction. When it reopens, it will have two southbound lanes and one northbound lane for motor vehicles and a 12-foot-wide trail for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The work will also involve new lighting and drainage improvements to address the water problems associated with underground springs in the area. The city currently spends about a third of its annual pothole patching budget on Ayd Mill Road, largely due to that seepage.

With the new Ayd Mill Road, many of the adjacent neighborhood streets are expected to be over capacity during rush hours, especially in the mornings when as many as 400 motorists confronted with Ayd Mill Road congestion are expected to take alternate routes. The city’s plan includes efforts to mitigate traffic congestion, such as changes to signal timing, turn restrictions and traffic lane configurations.

One issue left for future debate is the speed limit on Ayd Mill Road. Many people have advocated a lower limit. Kurtz said that while the 25 mph limit suggested by many may be too slow, a reduction from the current 45 mph is likely.

“I think we might land somewhere between there,” he said.

# Residents raise concerns over assessments for Griggs-Scheffer project

BY JANE MCCLURE

The St. Paul City Council on April 22 unanimously approved three street reconstruction projects for this year, including the first phase of the Griggs-Scheffer project in the Highland Park neighborhood.

Griggs-Scheffer is the largest of the three with 338 properties in an area bounded by Randolph, Hamline and Scheffer avenues and Edgumbe Road. It has an estimated cost of \$9.95 million, supported by assessments to abutting property owners totalling \$2.21 million. The final cost will not be known until bids come in, and the final assessments will not be ratified until next fall after a second public hearing.

Two neighborhood meetings were held earlier this year to review the project. This year’s work includes sections of Juno, Niles, Hartford, Bayard and Scheffer avenues. Stretches

of Eleanor, Alaska, Vista, Highland Parkway and Edgumbe Road are slated for 2021.

Work is scheduled to begin this month and end in November. It will include new pavement, curbs and gutters, driveway aprons, sidewalks, street lighting, boulevard trees, sewer and water main replacement or repair, storm sewer catch basins, public art and ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps at corners. The city also is working with the Capitol Region Watershed District on boulevard rain gardens to improve drainage and water filtration.

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that affected residents had to email in their comments, rather than testify in person. About 20 neighbors weighed in. Most of those who sent comments said the assessments were too high. Others asked about such issues as boulevard tree replacement and utility work.

Several retirees expressed concern about their fixed incomes and uncertain status of

their investments. Others said they have been laid off or taken a pay cut as a result of the coronavirus.

Bayard Avenue resident Erin Buie said the letter with her assessment was a “real gut punch” when she opened it. She was among those asking that the project be delayed.

“Since that time, our economy has collapsed, putting many citizens of St. Paul in dire financial circumstances,” she wrote. “This assessment, layered upon an extremely high property tax burden, is likely the proverbial straw that will break the camel’s back for me. If it goes through, I will be looking to leave my cherished house and neighborhood, and I know several retired couples on my block are in the same boat.”

Juno Avenue resident Lisa Bowman said her expected \$5,616 assessment is higher than her property tax bill. She called the amount “alarming” and said it will have a negative

impact on her household budget even if she spreads out the payments over time.

Another Juno resident, Nelson Fox, said he is “deeply disappointed” at his family’s assessment. They bought their home two years ago because it was affordable for a young family. Now he said the family is considering a move as soon as possible.

Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert, whose home is in the project area, spoke for work to go ahead. While sympathizing with the economic burden the assessments create, he pointed out that property owners can spread the cost over 20 years. Disabled and elderly property owners can also seek deferred payments.

“I bought my home in 2009 and this work should have been done a decade ago,” Tolbert said. While admitting that the timing is not ideal, he cited the benefits of improved streets, sidewalks and lighting.

**1◀ NEW VILLAGER BUSINESS MODEL**

subject line in a flurry of emails that have been sent in the last few weeks among themselves and to us. The ideas of those publicly spirited individuals for “saving” this newspaper centered largely on abandoning the for-profit business structure the *Villager* has always operated with in favor of forming a nonprofit organization or adopting a cooperative format and thereby qualifying for foundation grants and tax-deductible donations; creating a separate nonprofit “Friends of” entity operating alongside the *Villager* to raise capital, leaving the stewardship of the business to me as the sole owner, as is the case now; or simply selling the business to some other entity that would take the newspaper in an altogether

different direction.

We thank those 34 people for taking the time to lend us their best thinking on the matter going forward. We really do. However, for a variety of reasons, we’ve chosen to go another route.

Beginning this week, an online edition of the *Villager* will go live at myvillager.com. The newly expanded website, which had long served as nothing more than a marketing tool for this business, is still a work in progress. However, we envision it as not only serving the interests of all of those who enjoy reading the *Villager* in its current print form, but the interests of all of those who would like to see even broader, deeper and more timely editorial content than this every-other-week publication could ever produce in print, avail-

able not only at their doors, but on their home computers, laptops and cellphones.

The digital *Villager* will be free to peruse at first as we attempt to ramp up its readership, in hopes of eventually supplementing our existing advertising revenue in the print product with paid subscriptions from our readers and additional advertising revenue in the digital version. We’ve set the price for future paid subscriptions at what we believe is a reasonable \$59.88 per year (\$4.99 per month). “Founders Level” or early-bird subscribers will be invited first to receive additional benefits as we bring them online.

The uncharted waters that the entire media industry is navigating these days certainly present perils to all who find themselves in the same boat. But we believe those waters

also present opportunities. It’s ironic that at the same time media organizations of all kinds find themselves foundering due to the collapse of advertising revenue, the readership and viewership of those news outlets have never been higher.

We believe the appetite for news of a distinctly local perspective—something that our readers tell us the *Villager* excels at—will continue to sustain us both in print and online. Now—as always—fairness, balance, reliability and, above all, the quality of a news medium’s editorial coverage will be tantamount in not only surviving, but hopefully thriving.

*Michael Mischke is the publisher of the Villager newspaper.*



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# CIB proposals shed light on crime prevention, public safety

By JANE MCCLURE

Improved lighting and pedestrian safety projects dominate the submissions for the second phase of St. Paul's redesigned Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process. The CIB Committee and city staff recently began reviewing 98 requests for projects expected to take place in 2021. Plans call for public presentations in May, but whether that happens is unknown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The committee's goal is to make recommendations to Mayor Melvin Carter by June 30. The City Council will make the final decision on the requests by the end of the year as part of the 2021 city budget.

The city launched the redesign of its CIB process last year to replace a system that had been in place for more than three decades. Under the new process, city departments submitted projects in 2019 for construction this year, while all others submitted requests this year for funding in 2021. The latter projects were originally vying for \$500,000, but that amount has been increased to \$1 million following criticism from neighborhood activists.

Carter announced a focus on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design for the 2020 submissions. Most of the proposals are for improved lighting and pedestrian and traffic safety. Only one request out of the 98 was made for cameras and ShotSpotter, a

device that detects the location of gunshots.

One request calls for improved lighting, seating and other infrastructure improvement in McQuillan, Cochrane and Boyd parks, as well as the Holly Tot Lot in Summit-University. Other requests include improved lighting on streets around St. Catherine University, at Fairview and Princeton avenues in Macalester-Groveland, and on 10th Street, Osborn Plaza, Wacouta Commons, the light-rail Central Station, Pedro Park, Hamm Plaza, Lowertown Tot Lot, Kellogg Mall Park and Cohen Plaza outside of the City Hall/Courthouse in downtown.

The Summit Hill Association (SHA) is asking that the Grand Avenue and Victoria Street intersection be converted to a "pedestrian scramble." Traffic signals would stop motor vehicles in all directions to allow safer pedestrian crossings. A pedestrian scramble also is proposed at Snelling and University avenues.

The Highland District Council submitted a request for an improved pedestrian crossing at Shepard Road and Rankin Street to provide safer access to the Samuel Morgan Trail and Crosby Farm Regional Park. It also is seeking funds to redesign the Highland Park Community Center ballfields.

The Future is Grand Task Force, which included members of the Grand Avenue Business Association, SHA and Macalester-Groveland Community Council, submitted

a request to remove on-street parking and create a two-way protected bike lane on the south side of Summit Avenue. Additional bike racks would be added along Grand to encourage more bicyclists to patronize businesses there. A related request seeks better snow removal on Summit and Grand avenues for improved winter walking and biking.

Other Future of Grand-related requests include pedestrian safety improvements at the Grand-Avon and Grand-Snelling intersections, such as pedestrian islands, flashing lights and brightly painted crosswalks.

Snelling was the focus of other proposals. They include a push-button flashing light and crosswalk at Snelling and Osceola avenues, widening or raising the existing pedestrian crossing at Snelling and Lincoln avenues, and adding more pedestrian crossings on Snelling between Selby and St. Clair avenues.

Other local streets also were the focus of submissions. They include a painted crosswalk at Highland Parkway and Mississippi River Boulevard, and adding emergency call posts and widening the bike-pedestrian trail along Mississippi River Boulevard.

Proposals were submitted for sidewalk improvements along Fairview Avenue below the I-94 overpass, for pedestrian safety improvements on Grand near Ramsey Middle School, for a sidewalk and bike lanes along Gilbert Street between Prior and Cleveland avenues,

for turning West Seventh Street into a pedestrian plaza in front of Xcel Energy Center, and for more pedestrian-activated lights at crossings along University Avenue.

Improvements sought in the Snelling-Hamline neighborhood include building sidewalks at the southeast corner of Pascal Street and Concordia Avenue, and making pedestrian safety improvements at Selby Avenue and Saratoga Street.

A few requests involved street improvements that move vehicular traffic. One is for a dedicated turn lane with phasing signal at Cretin and Randolph avenues to reduce rush-hour traffic backups.

Former city transportation planner Luke Hanson suggested closing some streets that intersect with West Seventh Street to eliminate dangerous turns; reducing traffic lanes on portions of West Seventh Street, Dale Street and the I-94 frontage roads; adding corner bumpouts and pedestrian refuges along Grand Avenue; and making pedestrian safety improvements on Selby Avenue.

Other requests were more general, including a call for more north-south bike routes, traffic safety zones around schools, more use of roundabouts at intersections and added traffic calming. One proposal is to install intelligent street lighting in the city that brightens in response to movement by pedestrians, bicyclists and cars.

## Local projects among those wishing on Neighborhood STAR

By JANE MCCLURE

Improvements to the West End's Keg & Case Market and the redevelopment of a historic Merriam Park church are among the projects vying for the city of St. Paul's 2020 Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) grants and loans.

The applications for those grants and loans were submitted to City Hall in April and are now in the hands of the Neighborhood STAR board. Its recommendations will be reviewed by the mayor and St. Paul City Council for final action this summer. The funds come from the city's extra half-percent sales tax.

Typically, applicants meet with the Neighborhood STAR board in person, but city officials are moving many meetings online via Zoom, Skype or other form of teleconferencing. Fifty-eight projects seeking a total of \$6.07 million were submitted, with the funding match for all projects adding up to

\$29.64 million.

One of the largest requests was submitted by Central Baptist Church, 420 N. Roy St., and the Union Park District Council. They are seeking a \$300,000 grant and a \$250,000 loan to renovate the church's oldest structure for office and retail space. The temple-like church was built in 1913, with additions in 1948 and 1962, and a sanctuary in 1975. An \$80,000 match is proposed.

Two requests came from Keg & Case Market, 928 W. Seventh St. The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation is working with the market to apply for a \$60,000 grant and a \$60,000 loan with \$120,000 match to build an amphitheater and restrooms on the West Seventh Street side of the market. In addition, Clutch Brewing Company is seeking a \$100,000 grant with a \$100,000 match to build a second-floor deck outside the food hall.

Other local requests include the following:

- White Squirrel LLC, owned by veter-

an restaurateur Jarret Oulman, is seeking a \$20,000 grant and a \$60,000 loan with \$80,000 match to make improvements to the 19th-century building at 974 W. Seventh St. that previously housed the offices of the Ford Road Federation.

- Amazen LLL, doing business as Vine Park Brewing, 1274 W. Seventh St., is seeking a \$100,000 grant and a \$100,000 loan with a \$200,000 match to add a taproom and make other physical changes to its building.

- Mi Casita LLC is seeking a \$100,000 grant with a \$100,000 match to renovate the building at 106 Douglas St., which received variances several months ago. A second request from West Seventh Dental is for a \$75,000 grant and \$375,000 match to build out a dental center on the building's first floor.

- MyDog, a dog daycare and boarding business, is seeking a \$30,000 grant and a \$45,000 loan with a \$30,000 match to renovate a commercial building at 1324 W. Seventh St.

- RS Eden Solar is seeking a \$40,000 grant with a \$40,597 match to install 77 solar panels and create an art exhibit at its mixed-use building at 1360 W. Seventh St. The building offers supportive housing for young people on the second floor and provides jobs at the Fresh Grounds cafe on the first floor.

- Five Star Cafe, 2489 W. Seventh St. in Sibley Plaza, is seeking a \$50,000 grant and a \$50,000 loan to renovate its kitchen and dining room. A \$50,000 match is proposed.

- The J.J. Hill Parent-Teacher Organization is seeking a \$53,000 grant with a \$53,000 match to create a 5,000-square-foot mural and two 40-foot murals at the school at 998 Selby Ave.

- Esther Homes is seeking a \$18,600 grant with a \$17,600 match to renovate a shelter in the Summit-University neighborhood. The address is not listed to maintain the safety of

NEIGHBORHOOD STAR ►5

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## VILLAGER

Volume 68, Number 5

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The Villager serves the Highland Park, Lexington-Hamline, Macalester-Groveland, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Summit Hill, Summit-University and West 7th neighborhoods of St. Paul, the Longfellow and Nokomis neighborhoods of Minneapolis, Lilydale, Mendota and Mendota Heights.

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**CIRCULATION:** The Villager is published every two weeks by Villager Communications Inc. The paper has a press run of 52,500, including 50,000 copies delivered to households and businesses and another 2,500 distributed via newsstands. Mail subscriptions are available at \$59.88 per year.

**Next Issue: May 13**

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A concept drawing of the five-story building that would bring 81 new apartments to two vacant lots near the southeast corner of Selby Avenue and Dale Street.

## Revised 5-story Selby-Dale project includes remodel of service garage

By JANE MCCLURE

Revised plans for a five-story apartment building near Selby Avenue and Dale Street are moving ahead with a 5-2 vote of approval on April 20 by the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). The design was altered after the HPC rejected a request by TJL Development to demolish a former service garage at 156 N. Dale St. to make way for part of the new project.

The HPC's approval was required because the property is in the Historic Hill District. No start date for the project has been announced. Rezoning is still required to bring the service garage site and two vacant lots at 594 Selby Ave. under the same zoning classification. Front setback, parking, access point and lot coverage variances are also being considered.

The Summit-University Planning Council's Neighborhood Development Committee voted on April 21 to ask TJL Development to include affordable housing in its plans. Developer Jim LaValle said he has looked at affordable units, but the development team was not informed of the online meeting.

The HPC stated in March that the former service garage needed to be saved. Some commissioners were also critical of the apartment building's design, with one comparing it to Chicago's infamous Cabrini-Green housing project.

The proposed building would have 81 apartments ranging from studios to three-bedroom units on the upper four floors, with a total of 110 parking spaces below grade and on the first floor. The building would be stepped back to minimize its massing along Selby and would include an outdoor deck to the west.

HPC staff recommended approval of the proposed building, even though it would be taller than nearby structures. Allison Suhan

Eggers of the HPC staff recommended removal of the proposed balconies on the east end of the building.

The building's footprint has changed and a darker shade of brick is now being proposed for the exterior, according to architect David Holland of UrbanWorks Architecture. Plans also call for park-style green space in front of the apartment building as well as in the front of the former service garage.

Commissioner Barbara Bezat, who joined Robert Lubke in voting against the new design, objected to what she saw as a potentially dangerous entrance for vehicles along Selby. She asked why the former Dale Street garage could not be repurposed as a vehicle entrance for residents of the apartments.

Other commissioners continued to have concerns about the building's size in relation to others along Selby. "Massing is the crucial element in all of this," said commissioner Paul Nelson. "We're seeing a march of big buildings west of this down Selby."

The HPC's discussion on April 20 focused more on the former service garage, which was built in 1915. In 1926 its front wall was set back 27 feet from Dale, and several of its former windows have since been bricked over or boarded up.

TJL Development initially wanted to renovate the garage, but set those plans aside in March due to building's deteriorated condition. It planned to replace the garage with a five-story mixed-use building that would have had 4,900 square feet of retail space on the first floor and apartments above. However, an HPC staff report stated that demolishing the garage would have negative impacts on the Historic Hill District.

LaValle now plans to save and renovate the former garage building on its own, including opening up the former windows.

property. A \$10,000 match is proposed.

- Constantino Real Estate LLC is seeking a \$49,800 grant with a \$49,800 match to renovate its building at 1440 University Ave. that houses Elsa's House of Sleep furniture store. The grant would be used to repair stucco and flooring, replace the storefront, add security features and install a door accessible to people with disabilities.

- Modern Nails of St. Paul, 336 Wabasha St., is seeking a \$20,000 grant with a \$20,000 match to renovate space for a nail salon.

- Twin Cities Athletic Training, 400 Wabasha St., is seeking a \$70,000 loan and a \$29,750 grant with a \$99,750 match to build out a fitness facility at Treasure Island Center.

- The Minnesota Museum of Modern Art, 350 S. Robert St., is seeking a \$200,000 grant with a \$200,000 match to add 16,000 square feet of gallery, office, art preparation and loading dock space, and to restore 260 linear feet of arcade space.

### 4◀ NEIGHBORHOOD STAR

the residents, who are pregnant women facing a crisis in their lives.

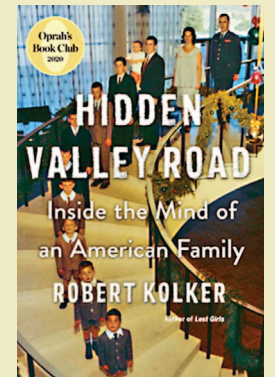
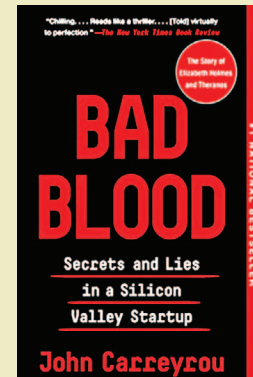
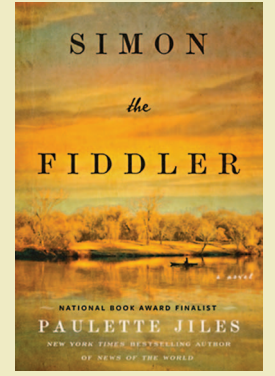
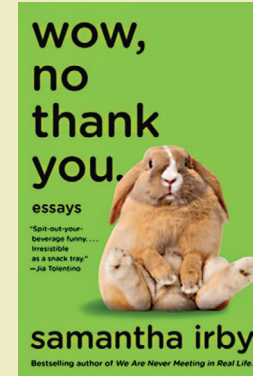
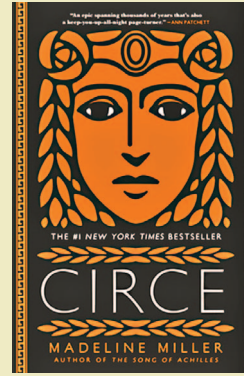
- Clouds in Water Zen Center, 445 N. Farrington St., is seeking a \$12,198 grant with a \$12,198 match to make energy efficiency and other improvements to its building.

- The Asian Economic Development Association is seeking a \$205,000 grant with a \$205,000 match to make facade and public space improvements near the little Mekong Plaza at University and Western avenues.

- Sun Foods, 554 University Ave., is seeking a \$75,000 grant and a \$75,000 loan with a \$150,000 match to add new signage and make window, tuckpointing and parking lot improvements to its store in the Uni-Dale Mall.

- Firebox Deli, 1585 Marshall Ave., is seeking a \$10,000 loan and a \$30,000 grant to create an outdoor dining space and improve the space separating the public sidewalk from the

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The loyalty and support of our readers have always been valued by all of us at the Villager. Your loyalty and support going forward will be more valued yet as we make this transition. Thank you.

Michael Mischke, Publisher

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# News Briefs

## West 7th, Highland Park district councils to hold board elections

Residents of the West Seventh, Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods did not gather in April to elect new district council board members due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, two of those neighborhoods will hold elections to fill those positions later this month.

The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation has decided to elect its board members through online and paper ballots, with the latter being published in the May issue of the *Community Reporter* newspaper. The board is currently made up of six officers and two members each from three subdistricts in the neighborhood. Changes were approved last year to add a renter's seat to each subdistrict, which would expand the board to 15 members.

Federation board president Dana DeMester said it is unclear when the district council can hold an annual meeting this year, due to the pandemic. With some board members wanting to step down, she said, an election still needs to go forward. The district council had recruited new members over the past few months, so a full board is likely to be seated. More information about voting will be posted at [fortroadfederation.org](http://fortroadfederation.org).

The Highland District Council held an online annual meeting on April 23 and will hold an election this month to fill six even-numbered grid and two at-large positions on its board of directors. Candidate filings are due by 5 p.m. on May 8, and voting for board seats will take place from 5 p.m. on May 11 to 5 p.m. on May 18.

For people who cannot vote online, paper ballots will be provided by calling the HDC office at 651-695-4005. Postcards will also be mailed to every resident in Highland Park. Go to [tinyurl.com/hdc-vote](http://tinyurl.com/hdc-vote) for more details.

The Macalester-Groveland board voted in April to postpone its annual meeting and elections due to the pandemic. The postponement will be reviewed regularly to ascertain when a large public gathering can safely be held. Current district council board members and officers will continue to serve until then.

## Council upholds appeal to finish replacement of Hill District drive

A longstanding fight over a planned driveway in the Historic Hill District came to an end on April 15 with a unanimous vote by the St. Paul City Council to uphold an appeal by the homeowner. Ray Meyer, who lives at 524-526 Portland Ave., will be allowed to finish replacing a deteriorated concrete driveway with red concrete stamped in a herringbone pattern.

Ward 1 council member Dai Thao moved to grant the appeal, saying the HPC cannot prevent Meyer from replacing the driveway in the manner he chose. Thao also said the HPC had no jurisdiction over the color of the concrete.

The City Council action overturned a



**A river runs through it.** There was an obvious absence of greenery as a pair of fishermen took to the shoreline of a slightly swollen Mississippi River in Hidden Falls Regional Park on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

November 2017 vote by the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) to deny approval of a permit for Meyer to complete the driveway. That meeting grew raucous and Meyer was removed from the meeting for arguing with commissioners and city staff.

The driveway dispute became part of a larger debate between the HPC and property owners in historic districts, which led to changes in HPC processes. Meyer is a former HPC commissioner.

Meyer got part way through the driveway project when the work was halted by the city. Stamped concrete is not one of the options allowed under historic district guidelines. The HPC had earlier approved the replacement of the rear portion of the driveway with stamped concrete. The HPC told Meyer that the concrete driveway for the front 90 feet could have a scored pattern, but could not be tinted red or stamped in a herringbone pattern.

One argument throughout the process was that it is unknown what materials were used for the original driveway, which predated concrete. Meyer argued that there was precedent in the Historic Hill District for brick driveways and that the HPC was overstepping its bounds.

The Ramsey Hill Association supported Meyer, as did some of his neighbors.

## BZA grants variances to allow signage at Cretin-Derham Hall

Cretin-Derham Hall will be allowed to retain signs that were put up without city approval and to install new signs on an approved building addition as a result of two variances that were granted on April 13 by the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

The high school faces Albert Street and Randolph, Hamline and Hartford avenues, and only one sign is allowed per street frontage. Seventeen signs are in place, requiring a 13-sign variance.

In addition, each sign cannot exceed 30 square feet. A 40.4-square-foot sign is proposed on a recently completed building addition and a new Albert Street entrance, requiring a variance of 10.4 feet. That project also required variances, which won BZA approval last year.

CDH is situated on a 14.8-acre site, which was one reason city staff recommended approval. The signs were needed for visitors to find their way around campus, said facilities director Paul Solmon. "It can be a rather long hike to get to the right place," he said.

The Highland District Council recommended approval of the variances. No one contacted the BZA in opposition.

## Variances granted for four stories of senior apartments on West End

A planned four-story apartment building that would add 47 new units of low-income senior housing to Winslow Commons, 160 S. Western Ave., will be allowed to proceed with two variances approved on April 13 by the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

The property is zoned for multifamily residential use. A 25-foot variance was approved from the required 30-foot front-yard setback, and a variance of 28 square feet per dwelling unit was approved from the minimum lot size of 800 square feet per unit.

The new building will be constructed on green space near Winslow Commons, a 121-unit, seven-story senior residence. Bigos Management wants to transfer willing low-income senior tenants from a building on Mears Park to the planned West End building. The transfer is allowed under a federal Housing and Urban Development program.

The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation recommended approval of the variances. Three neighbors sent letters in opposition, stating concerns about additional housing density on the site and the loss of green space. One neighbor noted that a nearby preschool uses the green space as a play area. A fourth neighbor attended the virtual hearing and asked about storm water management. The developers plan to install an underground stormwater drainage system.

## Corps seeks comments on plans to manage Mississippi floodplain

The St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is seeking comments on a draft environmental assessment through May 8 on its floodplain forest management along the Mississippi River from Upper St. Anthony Falls in Minneapolis to just downstream of Lock and Dam No. 10 in Guttenberg, Iowa.

Forest management includes site preparation, planting and seeding; prescribed burns; biological control; and wildlife habitat improvement. These practices are expected to have a beneficial effect on the Upper Mississippi River through the restoration, creation and enhancement of the floodplain forest.

The draft assessment describing the project and its environmental impacts can be viewed and downloaded at [tinyurl.com/ycmcoxnw](http://tinyurl.com/ycmcoxnw). Questions on the project or comments on the assessment can be directed to project biologist LeeAnn Glomski at 651-290-5595 or [LeeAnn.M.Glomski@usace.army.mil](mailto:LeeAnn.M.Glomski@usace.army.mil).

Written correspondence on the project can be sent to the St. Paul District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Attn: Regional Planning and Environment Division North, 180 Fifth St. E., Suite 700, St. Paul, MN 55101.

*News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and John Wadell.*



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An artist's rendering of the seven-story, 194-unit apartment building planned for 337 W. Seventh St., on the site of Bonfe's Auto Service Mechanical Center, looking northwest from West Seventh.

## Committee backs plan for 7-story 194-apartment building on W. 7th

Neighbors believe building is too tall for area and will add to parking problems

By JANE McCLURE

An 85-foot-high mixed-use building proposed for the 300 block of West Seventh Street and Smith Avenue has cleared its first hurdle despite considerable neighborhood opposition. The St. Paul Planning Commission's Zoning Committee voted 6-1 on April 23 to approve needed variances and a conditional use permit for the development.

That recommendation goes to the full Planning Commission on May 1. A commission decision is final unless there is an appeal to the City Council.

The Zoning Committee received about 30 letters in opposition to the development at 337 W. 7th St. and 366-372 N. Smith Ave. They cited concerns about spillover parking and the building's height.

This is the second Planning Commission review process for the project in less than

six months. Right after obtaining a zoning change, variance and conditional use permit for one building design, developers Ackberg Group and Northland Real Estate Group/Valerian LLC ran into problems with bedrock at the site. Two levels of underground parking had to be dropped and a taller, narrower building planned. The new plans call for more apartments and a smaller commercial space, said architect Aron Johnson of DJR Architects.

In late February, the City Council rezoned the development site from Traditional Neighborhoods 2 to Traditional Neighborhoods 3 use, acting on a December 2019 Planning Commission recommendation.

Stormwater drainage issues have also forced changes to the development plan. The original plan was for stormwater to flow into a structure below the building. The current plan calls for having seven to eight feet of green space on the north and south sides of the building as part of a redesigned stormwater management system. The building will still be 360 feet long, but it will be reduced in width.

Parking will occupy the first floor. The building will have 110 parking stalls, 104 of which will be stacked. The zoning requirement is for 137 spaces, so a 27-space parking variance is needed. The previous plan had 94 parking spaces. Bike parking and a bike repair space for residents are also planned.

The parking area will be about 13 to 15 feet tall. The original plan called for a two-level ramp to be 23 feet tall. Eliminating the ramp meant adding a sixth floor of housing and increasing the number of units from 153 to between 192 and 194. Units will still be a mix of studios, one- and two-bedroom. With the added housing and structural changes, the entire building will be taller, rising from 75 feet to 81-85 feet. The planned retail space on West Seventh has been reduced from 2,500 to 1,800 square feet.

*Eliminating the ramp meant adding a sixth floor of housing and increasing the number of units from 153 to between 192 and 194. With the added housing and structural changes, the entire building will be taller, rising from 75 feet to 81-85 feet.*

Among the opponents of the latest plan are the Historic Irvine Park Association (HIPA) and many area residents. Parking in the area is already congested, they said, and that is compounded by events at Xcel Energy Center. The opponents disputed the contention that many residents of the proposed building will not have cars.

Some opponents contend that such a tall building is not compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and would be better suited downtown. HIPA stated in a letter its concern that "allowing the building to reach 85 feet will set a precedent for erecting higher and higher buildings in the area. The affected neighborhood is a transition area from the dense downtown to the predominantly single-family neighborhoods further down West Seventh Street. Increased building heights will erode the unique nature of the popular West Seventh restaurant and entertainment district and the nearby historic residential areas. To change that, a more detailed conversation is necessary than can be allowed in a single committee hearing closed to the public by (the coronavirus pandemic)."

City staff recommended approval of the variances and permit, as did the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation. The property is zoned for heights of up to 55 feet, but with the conditional use permit, an 85-foot height is allowed. The variances are for parking and for floor area ratio or greater density.

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# VIEWPOINT

## Prepare for the new normal

To Mayor Carter and the St. Paul City Council:

As a former elected government official and a St. Paul resident for the last 16 years, I am not impressed. My property taxes have more than doubled while city services have declined. Garbage, sewer and street maintenance fees have added other escalators.

In view of the current economic crisis, all cities must re-examine local government structure and function. Almost \$4 million of St. Paul's 2020-21 capital budget spending needs to be revisited, as well as St. Paul's budget for operations. This is your responsibility, and it cannot be delayed. Concrete City Council action to cut spending is imperative by the end of 2020.

It is time that city leaders got down to basics along with the rest of us. America's salad days are over as we face global warming, a pandemic, high unemployment, profligate consumer habits and bloated bureaucracies. Tax revenue is declining at all levels as baby boomers retire and the unemployed and business sectors struggle to recover.

The basics include street maintenance, sewer and water services, and police and fire protection. They do not include unnecessary roundabouts, tax increment financing (which merely shifts the tax burden from developers to homeowners for up to 30 years), elaborate road improvements, or health and social services that are already the responsibility of Ramsey County, the state of Minnesota and the not-for-profit sector.

These are sobering times. Please do your part and prepare for a new normal now, or St. Paul will see precipitous neighborhood and small-business declines.

*Marianne Curry  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Public works in public interest

There is no way any St. Paul taxpayers can forget the Public Works Department's attempt at snowplowing last winter or our elected officials' underwhelming response to the fiasco. As the construction season is upon us and with new leadership at the department, here are a few simple steps that can start to rebuild confidence in this department.

- Construction completion dates—Anyone know how long Summit Avenue will be closed? List the date on signs and hold the contractor and city staff accountable for getting the work done on time.
- Construction detours—Require traffic engineer to regularly visit and observe traffic on detours and adjust light timing in response to traffic flow.
- Construction signage—Remove or turn signs away from traffic during non-construction periods.

These observations are not just mine. I've heard them a dozen times in the last year in regard to the closure of Fairview Avenue between Marshall and University avenues, Lexington Parkway and I-94 road work, and most frustratingly on Lexington near Como Lake.

These are in no way overburdensome requirements and should be part of any best-practices approach to managing our infrastructure. More important, they would show the public there is an awareness that there is a need to mitigate the negative impacts of construction. In other words, a customer-service orientation exemplified by many of the small businesses that are closed throughout our city.

Let's see if we can get our elected officials and city departments to work in the public's interest and take a few baby steps toward more accountability.

*Julian Loscalzo  
Lexington-Hamline*

## The conundrum of COVID-19

I don't wonder that some people seem to be contracting COVID-19 at higher rates than the rest of the population. I wonder if racial differences are a factor, or if the issue stems from poverty. I know elders and people on tight incomes who don't have cars (and are thus exposed to public transit to go anywhere), who don't have TVs, don't have cellphones and now don't have access to computers with all public libraries closed.

Those of us without a cellphone have become essentially nonexistent. From news sources or when one phones someplace for information, one is given a website or a text contact. Whole groups of elders and those on the financial edge have no access to these sources. Not having a computer or cellphone should not marginalize people's health.

I suggest that at the rate people are now starting to come

## Readers question sense of \$7.5M project

### Stop this Ayd Mill foolishness

As an architect in St. Paul for the past 36 years, I believe that the proposed changes to Ayd Mill Road are a ridiculous expense that could be used for many other things (*Villager*, April 15). There is enough space for a pedestrian and bike path of simple asphalt on the east side of the road. Who in their right mind would take a road with 27,500 vehicles a day and decrease the number of lanes? Doing this would be as stupid as when the RIP-35E people got I-35 closed to trucks going through a relatively affluent neighborhood while I-94 decimated the Rondo neighborhood.

It would appear that the bicycle lobby has the City Council, mayor and Public Works Department in its pocket. Look at what they did to Pelham Boulevard where none of the homeowners can now park on the street. Also the expense of redoing Lexington had no discernible benefit while the road surface of our most prestigious street, Summit Avenue, is a disgrace. And what about the bike path on Grand Avenue that causes congestion?

Time to get real, people! We need to stop this foolishness before it goes any further.

*Peter M. Brozek  
Summit-University*

### Not the best bang for our buck

James Hamilton's letter clearly demonstrates the need for more public information to be disseminated and discussed prior to any further action by the St. Paul City Council on the Ayd Mill Road project (*Villager* Inbox, April 15). After viewing both YouTube videos produced by the city's Public Works staff, I find it incomprehensible that any discussion about the costs and benefits of the alternatives was not presented to the public. All public infrastructure and transportation projects should have a cost/benefit analysis performed that provides taxpayers with enough information to make a rational decision about which alternative should be chosen.

In the case of the Ayd Mill Road project, any previous cost estimates (e.g., \$60 million for a direct north-end connection to St. Anthony Avenue) would need to be updated to current dollars, and any other incremental costs beyond a simple mill-and-overlay on the 1.5-mile roadway would need to be separately detailed, along with an analysis of how many additional multi-modal users of the roadway would be accommodated. Only then would the public be able to compare the true costs for adding a recreational trail for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The city of St. Paul has also neglected to mention that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has previously reached out to the Public Works Department to discuss the potential of a north-end connection to I-94 as part of MnDOT's current I-94 corridor analysis between both downtowns that is scheduled to end in 2021. According to MnDOT staff, city officials have not responded to a request to meet on this topic or even to discuss the potential of turning Ayd Mill Road over to MnDOT control and maintenance as a highway connection.

unglued, all that would be necessary for society to fall apart completely would be for the electrical grid to go down. How is it that people are stuck with the above technologies as necessities of life, when those didn't exist 25 years ago? Maybe isolation and social distancing will have us valuing more highly real personal interaction.

*Kathleen Deming  
Macalester-Groveland*

### Lessons from the coronavirus

While it probably is too early to assess the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to flatten the curve and for people to isolate and be socially distant has become clear. St. Paul and Minneapolis would like to see greater urban density, but it seems the risks therein have not been addressed even though pandemics will again assault us in the future without a vaccine available. We need to reexamine urban density to begin addressing how best to provide the places people need now and in the future for the requisite social distancing. Access to green space is vital for our mental and physical health and for overcoming pandemics and climate change. Where are the green spaces near Raymond Avenue,



An artist's rendering of the recently approved redesign of Ayd Mill Road with three lanes of traffic (one northbound and two southbound) and a 12-foot-wide trail for bicyclists and pedestrians, looking north toward the ramps to Grand Avenue.

Clearly St. Paul taxpayers are being kept out of the loop on this project. It has been 17 years since Ayd Mill Road was last fully resurfaced with a complete mill-and-overlay, and city decision-makers are using that fact as leverage to push through this project on an artificial deadline of April 22.

Mayor Melvin Carter is simply trying to push through an outdated 2005 decision with old numbers and information to appease his base on this project, and is not considering all the factors involved for the regional roadway network. This is a critical process, especially now, with federal, state and municipal transportation budgets expected to take a monumental hit post-COVID-19. It is imperative that St. Paul's Public Works Department spend any money they have prudently and with the best bang for the buck.

*Lisa Raduenz  
Macalester-Groveland*

### This route ain't made for walking

After reading the plan for the redesign of Ayd Mill Road (*Villager*, April 15), several questions come to mind with regard to pedestrian use of the pathway. My understanding is that the plan includes entrances at Jefferson, St. Clair, Grand, Hamline and Selby avenues. Pedestrians and bicyclists would share a 12-foot-wide path. What is the supposed destination for pedestrians? They can only enter and exit at designated points, and only Grand and Selby offer shopping. In addition, when those pedestrians do exit, they will likely be one to two miles from home.

This plan seems untenable for routine use. Despite all of the pretty renderings, the majority of pedestrian use would make this walk a one-time novelty rather than a park-like experience. In addition, the absence of facilities along the path would be of utmost concern for many.

It seems more like a pretty picture than a real need.

*Stephen Miller  
Merriam Park*

in Lowertown and downtown, and on the Ford site? Let us not rush into increased density, but engage in true long-term planning.

*Renate Sharp  
Highland Park*

### Relieved in the land of Walz

I would like to reassure President Trump that we in Minnesota are not being held hostage by our own elected officials and do not need liberating. In fact, I am so relieved to be living in Minnesota where Governor Walz and our public officials are tracking COVID-19, generating informative data, and making wise public health decisions. The residents of some other states are not so fortunate. Now the onus is on all of us to ensure that the hard work being done is not in vain. Continued social distancing and strict public health measures will protect our communities, not magical thinking.

*Merle Greene  
Snelling-Hamline*



84 INBOX

### Misplaced priorities

Why was the U.S. so unprepared to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic? Could it possibly be that we have misplaced our priorities? The fact is, we throw out \$740 billion to the Pentagon and we give a mere \$11 billion to the Centers for Disease Control. We have 1.3 million active-duty troops and 865,000 in reserve, but not enough doctors and nurses. We have the largest military the world has ever seen, but the U.S. is not capable of furnishing its people with enough protective masks, much less ventilators and hospital beds.

If we really wanted to be a better neighbor to the world, wouldn't stopping our punishing and inhumane sanctions and helping with supplies to fight the pandemic be a good place to start?

Let's use this time to seriously reevaluate U.S. priorities and put the money and resources where they'll do us some real good. Let's reconsider the slogan "Health care not warfare" during this crisis, which holds such great opportunity to bring the world together in a loving, healing way.

In confronting COVID-19, we're inspired by the recent plea from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for a global ceasefire. "The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war," Guterres said. "It's time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives."

*Barry Riesch  
St. Anthony Park*

### Reconsider density of Ford site

The crisis of the coronavirus pandemic is forcing all of us to reexamine our priorities. On a personal level, the crisis is compelling us to take notice of what we hold dear. On a national and local policy level, it is pushing us to rethink the direction in which we have been heading. In St. Paul, recent decisions by city officials have taken us in the direction of increased urban density. This is contrary to what needs to be the top priority of city leadership: the welfare of our citizens.

With this in mind, we should be taking another look at the extreme density proposed for the 122-acre Ford site in Highland Park. Epidemiologists and other public health professionals stress the importance of social distancing during this pandemic, and they have identified the rapid spread of the disease in areas of high population density.

The Ford development will create a pocket of density that is nearly eight times greater than the surrounding neighborhood. By the most conservative estimate, the density proposed for the Ford site (35,882 people per square mile) will exceed the density of New York City (27,012 people per square mile) where the pandemic has overwhelmed hospitals and taken thousands of lives.

Neighbors for a Livable St. Paul has raised concerns about the risks to public health posed by extreme population density. Concerns have also raised about mental health issues associated with overcrowding and the lack of green space in urban areas. The World Health Organization recommends a minimum amount of green space for each person for many health reasons. Green space is not the same as the Ford site plan's "open space," which includes streets, sidewalks and rooftops. The Ford plan falls well short of the green space

necessary for the well-being of residents.

There are many reasons why we should reevaluate the costs and benefits of the Ford plan. But the top priority should always be the welfare of citizens. City officials dismissed these welfare concerns and aggressively pushed to maximize density for the Ford site. They failed to honor one of the most fundamental purposes of the St. Paul's Legislative Code: "To safeguard the public welfare, health, safety and prosperity of the people in St. Paul."

City leaders cannot continue to place the perceived benefits of dense developments ahead of common sense and public health protections. We call upon the leadership of St. Paul, along with Ryan Companies as the master developer, to reduce the density planned for the Ford site and increase the green space in the plan.

*Bruce Hoppe, Jean Hoppe, Kate Hunt  
Kathy McGuire and Jim Winterer  
Neighbors for a Livable St. Paul*

### Boost housing assistance fund

What if, through no fault of your own in this critical time of pandemic, you lost your job or fell victim to the dreaded COVID-19 and were unable to work? You may struggle with paying your rent or mortgage, to keep food on the table or to pay for necessary medications. Hundreds of thousands of Minnesotans could be displaced and lose their homes starting in May.

Minnesota has a Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP), established in 1993. That program now needs a boost of at least \$100 million to ensure that all individuals can remain safely in their homes. What can be gained by putting families out of their homes and subjected to unsafe conditions, lack of proper nutrition and increased mental anguish?

Minnesota Housing is the agency administrator of FHPAP funds, and funding is contingent upon approval by the Minnesota Legislature. It is time for our top leadership in Minnesota to pass at least \$100 million for FHPAP.

*Judy Rhein  
Mendota Heights*

### Fiber Internet for all

In April USI Fiber was scheduled to begin putting high-speed Internet fiber under the right-of-way throughout the Nokomis East neighborhood, unless you live north of Minnehaha Parkway and south of Minnehaha Creek like my family and neighbors.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the value of reliable, resilient Internet services for all. It's smart of USI to invest in putting the fiber underground where it's safely away from high winds, ice storms and heavy snow. Because of COVID, our family is all at home. The kids each have two video calls daily. My wife and I each have two to four hours of the same. Some days the cable doesn't cut it.

Last year, the blocks on the north side of Minnehaha Creek all got fiber Internet. This year, USI Fiber has permits from the city of Minneapolis to wire all of the Nokomis East blocks south of the parkway. We're hopeful that USI follows through on its "fiber Internet for all" mission and files a permit

application with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in order to reach our blocks. If you would also like to see fiber Internet accessible to all Nokomis East blocks, please contact me at robfargo@gmail.com

*Rob Davis  
Ericsson, Minneapolis*

### Tip of the cap to Metro Transit

A suggestion: After the pandemic is over, Metro Transit drivers should have a tip jar by the fare box. We haven't had to pay the fare for weeks on end. Thank you, drivers, for ferrying us back and forth throughout the pandemic.

*Ann Redding  
Fuller, Minneapolis*

### Store firearms securely

Many of us are spending a lot more time at home these days in an effort to keep ourselves, our families and our neighbors safe. We have all heard the important guidelines about hand washing and social distancing, but there are other dangers related to sheltering in place that few people are talking about. One of those dangers is unsecured firearms.

Consider the facts: 4.6 million children in the U.S. live in a home with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm, and 1,500 children in the U.S. are killed each year in homicides, suicides and unintentional shootings.

It is imperative for gun owners to review their home firearm storage. All firearms need to be secured with a gun lock and locked up separately from ammunition. Do not allow for the possibility that a bored and curious young person will discover and play with an unsecured gun. The result could be deadly.

And our vigilance must extend beyond children. The mental health of people of all ages is being challenged during this unusual time. Suicide attempts may rise. Of all the ways that people attempt suicide, guns are the most lethal, resulting in death 85 percent of the time. We cannot take this chance with our loved ones.

Finally, consider the likelihood that domestic abuse may increase now that people are stressed and confined to their homes. The Minnesota Day One Domestic Abuse Crisis Line reported a 25 percent increase in calls during the last week of March. Adding an easily accessible gun to a strained domestic situation can mean the difference between life and death.

Citizens, I urge you, observe safe firearm-storage practices.

*Jill Chisholm  
Neighborhood?*

*Editor's note: The writer is a retired parenting educator in the St. Paul Public Schools.*

### God is in control

Humanity today is experiencing many different kinds of loss—loss of life, health, money, work, experiences and freedom. We are all living with global grief. In time, we will see a leveling of power, wealth, resources and justice in the world. God is in control, and he will work great good from all of this. Live in love and hope.

*C.M. Richter  
West End*

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## SBA paycheck protection loans offer financial lifeline to small business owners

BY IRIC NATHANSON

**B**onnie Alton considers herself one of the lucky ones. The owner of Great Harvest Bread Company, 534 Selby Ave., Alton was able to secure a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration before the federal program ran out of money and was temporarily suspended on April 17.

The SBA faced a rush of requests when it began accepting PPP applications on April 3. Because the loans were approved on a first-come basis, PPP gave small businesses like Great Harvest a leg up in the funding stampede if they were able to find a bank that could move quickly to process their application.

In Alton's case, her banking partner was Julie Novak, senior vice president for commercial lending at BankCherokee. "I reached out to Julie and she was three steps ahead of me in getting information from the SBA," Alton said.

Novak told Alton what she needed to do to prepare a PPP loan application. On April 1, two days before PPP was launched with \$349 billion available, Alton had submitted all of the documentation that the bank needed for its submission to the SBA.

"I'll never forget what happened next," Alton said. "On Saturday, April 4, at 10:13 a.m., I got an email from the processing group at BankCherokee saying that my application had been submitted to the SBA. Eight minutes later, I got another email, this time from Julie, saying that my loan had been approved."

"Julie and her team at BankCherokee knew what they were doing," Alton said. "They were able to prepare and submit loan requests to the SBA while some of the large banks were still trying to figure out how the program worked."

Under PPP's unique loan forgiveness feature, Alton does not need to repay the federal loan if she uses 75 percent of the funds to continue employing her current staff at their same salaries over an eight-week period.

Great Harvest is open for walk-in business during the statewide shutdown, but Alton said sales are lagging.

"We've lost a lot of our wholesale business now that restaurants are closed, but our regular customers still know where to find us," she said. "We're able to give them a sense of normalcy when they come in and see a familiar face behind the counter. That's important, particularly now when our social lives are so disrupted."

Alton said keeping her nine employees on the payroll might have been difficult without the federal loan. "If it hadn't come through, I might have faced the prospect of layoffs or reduced hours. PPP was a real lifeline for us," she said.

Two miles away, the Grand Avenue Veterinary Center also received a PPP loan and remains open for business, but only for emergency procedures. Veterinarian and owner Ann Brownlee estimates that business at the center, 1140 Grand Ave., is down by 50 percent, but its staff of about 15 are still on the payroll.



Owner Bonnie Alton butters rolls at her Great Harvest Bread Company on Selby Avenue. She worked with BankCherokee and the Small Business Association to secure a forgivable loan to keep operating through the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Congress OKs \$310B more to protect paychecks

**S**mall businesses will be able to access an additional \$310 billion in SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans now that Congress and the White House have agreed to extend the federal program in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The funding extension includes \$60 billion earmarked for small- and medium-sized lenders and community-based financial institutions that can assist underserved small businesses,

especially those that are owned by women and minorities.

The loans cover an eight-week period and are forgivable if businesses keep their workers on their payrolls at their existing salaries during that time. The SBA had suspended the PPP on April 17 when it fully committed the funds that were made available under the program's first phase.

The SBA has more information on the PPP at [tinyurl.com/yajrumvz](http://tinyurl.com/yajrumvz).

"Right now, we're doing curbside appointments," Brownlee said. "People come into our parking lot with their pets. Then we bring the animals into the clinic so their owners don't have to."

"The PPP loan has lifted a lot of the fear and burden off my shoulders," she said. "Before we received our loan, we had done some projections and they looked quite dire. Now we know we'll be able to retain our staff and keep them on the payroll for at least the next two months."

Unlike Great Harvest and Grand Avenue Veterinary Center, Wet Paint, another PPP loan recipient, had to close its doors when Governor Tim Walz's two-week stay-at-home order took effect on March 27 and was later extended to May 4. Scott Fares and Darin Rinne, who own the art supply shop at 1684 Grand Ave., had to lay off their 17 employees. Since then, they have brought back four of them to help with on-line ordering and curbside pickup.

Fares appreciates the financial help that the PPP provided for Wet Paint, but he questions the long-term impact of the federal program.

"The loan will help us bring back

people on the payroll, but we have to face the possibility that we'll have to lay them off again if business doesn't improve," he said. "At least in the short run we're able to give our people a paycheck and retain their health care benefits."

Novak, who worked with all three St. Paul businesses, said that the PPP must contend with conditions that vary from one part of the country to the other.

"Here in Minnesota we have a stay-at-home order that's keeping many businesses closed, but that's not the case in all states," Novak said. "We're facing a real conundrum. The SBA wants PPP borrowers to keep their workers on the payroll, but if a business is shut down and their workers are laid off, bringing them back will be hard to do. We're doing what we can to help our clients here in Minnesota adapt to the PPP requirements."

According to Roger Hamilton, another senior vice present for commercial lending at BankCherokee, "This is a moment of truth for small businesses. The PPP shows how important it is for small businesses to have a strong working relationship with their bankers."

# Nonprofit organizations face uncertain future

## State lockdown, slumping economy cut into their revenue

BY ROGER BARR

Like for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations have been rattled by the economic lockdown ordered by Minnesota Governor Tim Walz due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Depending on how long the state's stay-at-home and social distancing restrictions remain in place, many of those nonprofits may end up closing their doors for good.

"Nonprofits have a unique double bottom line of mission and money," said Kate Barr, president of Propel Nonprofits, which trains nonprofit organizations in finance, business strategy and governance. "They're dependent on a wide variety of financial resources to fund their work. This crisis affects each nonprofit differently, but I don't know of a single one that hasn't been drastically impacted."

Many nonprofits have temporarily closed their doors or sharply curtailed their services. According to a 2018 report by the Minnesota Council on Nonprofits, at stake are the jobs of 216,803 employees in the Twin Cities, or 12.5 percent of the metro workforce spread out among 4,605 nonprofit organizations.

Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota suspended operations after Walz ordered nonessential workplaces closed to slow the spread of COVID-19. Based in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood, the 100-year-old organization uses its thrift stores to finance its mission to support people through job search, placement and training, among other services. "Our stores are temporarily closed and not taking donations," said Goodwill president Michael Wirth-Davis. The majority of its employees have been furloughed, he said, though a limited staff continues to work remotely.

Circus Juventas, the Highland Park-based youth circus and school, has cancelled classes and furloughed 70 staff members. Its spring show, which attracts 9,000 spectators, has been cancelled. "We're at a standstill," said co-founder and executive director Dan Butler. "I want everyone to be safe in our circus community," he said, but he fears the pandemic, with its peak not expected until July in Minnesota, "will devastate our business."

Penumbra Theatre has cancelled its entire season. "We're following state and CDC guidelines," said Amy Thomas, managing director. "Our office and theater remain closed,



Instructor Monique English applies paint to the feet of Armiyah (last name and age not provided) as they prepare to create "animal tracks" in the toddler room of the Early Learning Center at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center in Summit-University. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

and our staff is working remotely." The Summit-University company has retained all full-time staff and has made no reductions in hours or salaries and benefits, Thomas said.

Many nonprofits are deemed essential and remain open to serve clients who are vulnerable and may have nowhere else to go. The Hallie Q. Brown Community Center in Summit-University remains open to provide child care and operate its food shelf. "We have to operate," said executive director Jonathan Palmer. Food shelf demand has increased with unemployment on the rise, Palmer said, and those in lower-wage jobs "cannot take time off without losing their jobs. Without us providing (child) care, they cannot work." Palmer estimates that 80 percent of Hallie Q's clients are people of color, the majority of them African American, and 85 percent of its clients are living at or below the poverty line.

Family Tree Clinic in Merriam Park remains open as an essential business providing health care, limited primary care and comprehensive sexuality education. "Our clinic provides medical care to people who experience significant discrimination and lack of clinic access," said executive director Alissa Light.

online services," said executive director Martin Ludden. That includes a partnership with Twin Cities Public Television to translate into Spanish, Hmong, Somali and American Sign Language its "Almanac" programs on COVID-19.

For immediate financial relief, many nonprofits are turning to government for help, including loans through the federal Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program to cover two months of payroll and other expenses. That \$350 billion fund was depleted quickly before Congress approved an additional \$310 billion for the program.

All nonprofits operate using the same basic financial model. Primary revenue sources include individual donations, foundation grants, state and federal grants, state and federal contracts and earned income. Nonprofits that rely primarily on earned income are facing immediate financial uncertainty. Circus Juventas, for example, draws 85 percent of its annual operating budget from ticket sales and classes, according to Butler. "Not having a reopening date makes it hard to plan," he said. "The longer we're closed, the more likely we are to lose employees."

Nonprofits that depend chiefly on grants from foundations are also facing financial stress, especially if the grants are nearing their expiration date. An extended financial crisis may reduce foundations' endowments, reducing their ability to renew grants or award new ones.

"We're projecting reductions in income across the board, including decreases in foundation support," said Penumbra's Thomas. "With several multi-year grants in place, we have some security going into next fiscal year. Volatility is expected, but to what degree is unknowable."

The prospects of individual donations are another concern. As unemployment soars, households will have less discretionary income. Nonprofit executives hope the public will remember their favorite charities even as they struggle to balance their own budgets.

"Donations of any amount not only support our core operations, they lift our spirits," Thomas said.

*Editor's note: Kate Barr of Propel Nonprofits is the spouse of the reporter.*

*Nonprofits that rely primarily on earned income are facing immediate financial uncertainty. Circus Juventas, for example, draws 85 percent of its annual operating budget from ticket sales and classes.*

"Nearly 60 percent of our clients identify as LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual), 50 percent are people of color, 80 percent have low incomes and 25 percent are uninsured." Family Tree's non-medical staff are working from home, Light said, and its medical staff are observing social distancing and screening patients for the coronavirus upon arrival. All staff and patients are wearing masks.

Also deemed essential is the St. Paul Neighborhood Network, which operates four public access cable television channels and helps people develop television programming and access other communication platforms. "Our focus right now is providing as much community as we can through our TV channels and



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# GARDENING

## If you plant it

Colorful salvia is sure to attract a crowd of pollinators to your yard

BY MARY MAGUIRE LERMAN

If you want to attract pollinators to your garden, there is no better plant than salvia. Salvia, also known as sage, is a multi-purpose bloomer that attracts bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. And with the many varieties available, salvia can be blooming in your garden from late spring to the first killing frost. Another advantage: Salvia does not attract hungry rabbits or deer.

Breeders have introduced an amazing variety of tropical salvia in recent years. They can be grown as annuals in our northern climate. A large variety of perennial salvias have also been flooding the market.

Famous Dutch garden designer and breeder Piet Oudolf introduced six new perennial salvias over the past two decades. The intense blue annual anise-hummingbird sage (*Salvia guaranitica* Black and Blue) came on the market in 1996. Since then, breeding programs in the United States, Australia and Europe have produced a tremendous variety of annual and perennial hybrids and cultivars.

This spring you can find between two and four dozen varieties of salvia at such local garden centers as EggPlant Urban Farm Supply, Leitners, Lilydale Garden Center, Highland Nursery and Mother Earth Gardens. The pollinator plant sale formerly held at the Temple of Aaron will be conducted online this year due to the coronavirus pandemic. The sale will feature 33 varieties of salvia. Orders may be placed through the St. Anthony Park Garden Club ([stanthonyparkgardenclub.com](http://stanthonyparkgardenclub.com)) until May 20 and picked up on Saturday, May 23. Proceeds will go toward the purchase of personal protective equipment for St. Paul's first responders.

This year visitors to Longfellow Gardens in Minnehaha Park will find 10 varieties of annual salvias growing, according to its gardener, Teresa Burton. These include Mystic Spires, Rockin Deep Purple, Rockin Fuchsia, Evolu-

tion, Amistad, Black and Blue, Summer Jewels White, Wendy's Wish, Seascape Mix and Roman Red. Roman Red is a hybrid that grows to a height and width of 28 to 34 inches with bloom spikes that rise high above the foliage.

Longfellow Gardens' salvias regularly attract a swarm of hummingbirds in September (check out the MPRB Longfellow Gardens Facebook page). You need a lot of salvia to attract hummingbirds. Each bird must consume the nectar of 1,500 flowers per day to maintain its metabolic activity. Watching the tiny birds dip and dive over the blooms as they fight for nectar can be mesmerizing.

Sage has been prized for its culinary and medicinal qualities for centuries. It was one of the ingredients of the Four Thieves Vinegar used in Europe during the late Middle Ages as protection against the bubonic plague or Black Death. In 2019 the Royal Horticultural Society of England reclassified the culinary herb rosemary as a salvia following DNA research. The species *Salvia officinalis* is an ancient medicinal and culinary sage. It has cultivars with colorful foliage. Though it does not bloom in Minnesota, it can be grown in containers and rock gardens for seasonal accents.

There are a variety of annual sages that produce huge numbers of flowers. Mealy-cup sage and *Salvia farinacea* (Victoria White, Victoria Blue, Evolution, Strata and Seaside Mix) all thrive in hot sun. Pineapple sage (*Salvia elegans*) does not bloom until late summer, but its pineapple-scented foliage will entertain you long before the blooms arrive.

The chartreuse foliage of Rockin Golden Delicious is another standout. Gentian sage (*Salvia patens*) has the most brilliant large blooms. Look for the ultramarine cultivar Blue Angel to be sold in six-packs at garden centers this spring. Mexican sage (*Salvia coccinea*) features a range of colors, from white and soft pink or peach to lavender and deep red. Black-currant sage (*Salvia microphylla*) and Texas sage (*Sal-*



Hummingbirds, like fellow pollinators bees and butterflies, are attracted to salvia for its nectar. The tiny birds, which are pictured here with three varieties of *Salvia guaranitica* Black and Blue, must consume the nectar of 1,500 flowers per day to maintain their metabolic activity. PHOTOS BY HARRIS MALLORY

*via greggii*) have much smaller flowers and small gray-green leaves; however, they still attract pollinators. They are great in hot, sunny containers.

Anise sages (*Salvia guaranitica*) have become wildly popular. These amazingly large plants have huge blooms, often with contrasting stem colors that make the blooms pop. A hybrid—the Wishes series—was bred in Australia; every time you purchase one a portion of the sale goes to the Make A Wish Foundation in Australia.

Scarlet sage (*Salvia splendens*) has been a bedding plant for over a century. There are singles and bicolors with a wide range of bloom colors.

A biennial, silver sage (*Salvia argentea*) produces a rosette of fuzzy, silvery leaves the first season, followed by a candelabra spike of white flowers the following year.

There are over 80 cultivars of perennial salvias on the market, though you are likely to find a limited selection at any one garden center. Be sure to seek out the new dwarf salvia cultivars, including the Bumble, Marvel and Profusion series. They are perfect for the front

border in gardens and rockeries. And if you can't find a particular variety locally, chances are you can track one down online.

For more information on salvias, take part in the free webinar that will be offered through the Minnesota State Horticultural Society on May 27. To enroll in the webinar, visit [northerngardener.org](http://northerngardener.org).

### The ANSR to your plant desires

The Association for Nonsmokers' Rights-Minnesota (ANSR) will hold its 37th annual plant sale during the second week of May at 1647 Laurel Ave. Brandywine, Prudence Purple, Old German, Chocolate Cherry, Golden Jubilee and Amana Orange are just some of the heirloom tomatoes that will be available at the sale. There will be a variety of peppers and herbs for sale, as well as a large variety of annuals and perennials for sun and shade.

The plants will be sold according to the honor system beginning May 11. Socially distant helpers will be on hand for plant sales between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, May 15 and 16. For more information, call 651-646-3005 or visit [ansrnmn.org](http://ansrnmn.org).

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# Crime Report

The following crime incidents were compiled from St. Paul and Mendota Heights police department reports and other sources.

## Highland Park

**Bridge rescue**—A 29-year-old woman was rescued after being stranded on a support pier of the Ford Bridge on the Mississippi River at 1:25 p.m. Tuesday, April 21. Emergency personnel from the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office and the St. Paul Fire Department were able to successfully navigate the strong current above Lock and Dam No. 1 to maneuver a boat close to the pier and retrieve the woman. She reportedly had climbed the bridge support to go fishing and was unable to get back to shore. She shouted to someone on the riverbank to call her father, who in turn called 911.

**Burglary**—A burglary was reported on the 1700 block of Graham Avenue at 1 p.m. Monday, April 6.

—A commercial burglary was reported on the 600 block of South Snelling Avenue at 5:35 a.m. Saturday, April 11.

—Residential break-ins were reported on the 1600 block of Pinehurst Avenue at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 12; and on the 1600 block of Bayard Avenue at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 15.

**Theft**—Several items were stolen from vehicles on the 1900 block of Ford Parkway on April 2, on the 900 block of May Street on April 2 (two vehicles), on Mississippi River Boulevard and Woodlawn Avenue on April 4, and on the 2400 block of Edgumbe Road on April 12.

—Vehicles were stolen on the 1700 block of Graham Avenue on April 3, the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue on April 5, the 2300 block of Benson Avenue on April 12, the 1200 block of East Maynard Drive on April 13, the 1200 block of Davern Street on April 13 and the 1500 block of Scheffer Avenue on April 13.

**Weapons**—Gunshots were heard on the 1100 block of Randolph Avenue at 7:14 p.m. Saturday, April 11.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Assault**—An aggravated assault with a firearm was reported on Ashland Avenue and Lexington Parkway at 2:15 a.m. Wednesday, April 8.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Robbery**—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 2000 block of Grand Avenue at 8:40 p.m. Saturday, April 4.

**Theft**—Bicycles valued at more than \$500 were stolen on Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue on April 2, and on the 2100 block of Grand Avenue on April 3.

—Several items were stolen from vehicles on Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue on April 4, and on the 1300 block of Sargent Avenue on April 9.

—Vehicles were stolen on April 11 on the 1300 block of St. Clair Avenue and on the 2000 block of Jefferson Avenue.

## Mendota Heights

**Assault**—A victim was kicked and threatened with a blunt object on the 1300 block of Northland Drive at 12:29 a.m. Friday, April 10. The suspect drove away before police arrived, but was later picked up by St. Paul police following a pursuit.

**Miscellaneous**—A suspect dumped bags of trash and leaves at Friendly Hills Park at 10:47 a.m. Sunday, April 12.

—The window of a vehicle reportedly was shot with a BB gun on the 1300 block of Highway 13 at 5:32 p.m. Tuesday, April 14.

## Merriam Park

**Robbery**—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 1900 block of University Avenue at 11:07 p.m. Thursday, April 9.

**Theft**—Several items were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1700 block of Hague Avenue on April 2, the 400 block of North Wilder Street on April 3, on Ashland and Prior avenues on April 6, and on the 400 block of North Cleveland Avenue on April 11.

—Vehicles were stolen on the 1900 block of Iglehart Avenue on April 2, the 1800 block of Marshall Avenue on April 8, and the 1600 block of Selby Avenue on April 11.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Theft**—A theft from auto of items valued at more than \$1,000 was reported on Saratoga Street and Selby Avenue at 3 a.m. Saturday, April 11.

## Summit Hill

**Burglary**—An attempted residential break-in was reported at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 11, on the 800 block of Pleasant Avenue.

—A residential burglary was reported on the 700 block of Lincoln Avenue at 9:22 p.m. Tuesday, April 14.

**Theft**—Several items were stolen from a vehicle on the 1000 block of Linwood Avenue on Friday, April 3.

—Three vehicles were stolen on the 700-800 blocks of Grand Avenue between April 12-14.

## Summit-University

**Burglary**—A home break-in that resulted in a police standoff occurred 6:46 p.m. Wednesday, April 8, on the 800 block of Selby Avenue. According to media reports, a female resident found a 47-year-old male suspect in her home armed with a knife. He locked her out of the house, but was apprehended after he jumped from a second-floor window around 1 a.m.

—Burglaries were reported on the 400 block of Dayton Avenue on April 4, the 200 block of Marshall Avenue on April 6, the 700 block of Carroll Avenue on April 9 and the 200 block of Marshall Avenue on April 14.

**Theft**—Vehicles were stolen on the 600 block of Selby Avenue on April 2, the 300 block of Laurel Avenue on April 3 (two vehicles), on Dale Street and Summit Avenue on April 3, and on the 300 block of Virginia Street on April 14.

—Thefts from auto were reported on the 400 block of Laurel Avenue on April 11, the 600 block of Portland Avenue on April 14, and the 800 block of Hague Avenue on April 15.

—Shoplifting of items valued at more than \$500 was reported on the 400 block of North Lexington Parkway at 4:50 p.m. Monday, April 13.

**Assault**—An aggravated assault with a gun occurred on the 200 block of Marshall Avenue at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 15.

## West End

**Burglary**—An attempted residential burglary was reported on the 200 block of Eagle Street at midnight Tuesday, April 7.

—Commercial burglaries occurred on the 500 block of St. Clair Avenue at 3 p.m. Friday, April 10; and on the 200 block of Grand Avenue at 4:47 a.m. Wednesday, April 15.

**Thefts**—Vehicles were stolen on the 600 block of Watson Avenue on April 9, the 600 block of Armstrong Avenue on April 12, the 200 block of Cliff Street on April 12, the 300 block of North Smith Avenue on April 14 and the 100 block of Forbes Street on April 15.

—A theft from auto was reported on Monday, April 13, on the 600 block of Canton Street.

**Weapons**—Gunfire was heard on the 300 block of Toronto Street at 12:03 a.m. Friday, April 10; and on the 1000 block of Juno Street at 11:15 p.m. Sunday, April 12.

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# Waiting in the wings

## COVID drops the curtain on current season leaving theaters in the dark

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

The Twin Cities' perennially vibrant theater scene has gone dark in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak and Governor Tim Walz's statewide order to suspend live performances. At a time when theaters would normally be mounting their season finales and planning their 2020-21 seasons, they have had to cancel shows, dismantle sets and lay off actors and staff. Those cast and crew members fortunate enough to have had health insurance lost those benefits along with their paychecks.

"On March 31, I laid off 90 percent of our staff. It was the worst week of my professional life," said Jamie Grant, president and CEO of the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. "And those who remain have had their pay or hours cut."

Grant is hoping to announce the October opening of the Ordway's 2020-21 Broadway season soon along with a holiday musical. Among the highly anticipated shows canceled this spring were Sting's *The Last Ship*, *The Color Purple* and a live cover of Creedence Clearwater Revival's classic album "Green River."

"We're working on bringing the canceled shows back," Grant said. The CCR show has been rescheduled for 2021. A new date for Sting's show is in the works, but that will have to be worked out with theaters around the country that are also trying to reschedule it. In the meantime, Grant and his staff are looking at what other theaters around the world are doing to plan their own reopenings. "We're looking at theaters in places like Korea to see if what they're doing could be applied at the Ordway," he said.

Some bright spots for the Ordway include the recent approval of a loan through the federal Paycheck Protection Program and additional support from Ordway donors. "We're knocking on doors to raise money and applying for loans until we can get back to business," Grant said.

The Highland Park-based Minnesota Jewish Theater Company (MJTC) has also been approved for a loan through the federal Small Business Administration (SBA). "That will help us retain staff," said artistic director Barbara Brooks. The MJTC had to cancel the fi-

nal production of its 25th anniversary season along with a major fundraising event on June 3. "We were really hoping to have an extraordinary benefit," Brooks said. Her company is still hoping to open the 2020-21 season in August with the first of five plays.

Park Square Theatre in downtown St. Paul has applied for an SBA loan and grants from such organizations as the National Endowment for the Arts. With its two stages already set for the anticipated opening of two new dramas this spring, Park Square had to cancel them, losing its last chance to recoup some of the losses it suffered earlier in the season, according to executive director Michael-jon Pease. "This crisis prevented more than 16,000 local students from seeing *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *Romeo and Juliet*," he said. "We're working to get those programs to students online."

Also going online is Park Square's May 11 performance of *The Mysterious Old Radio Listening Society*, which should work well over the Internet since it re-creates the performance of a vintage radio show. The June opening of Park Square's Sherlock Holmes mystery, *Holmes & Watson*, was postponed and is now tentatively set for a post-Fourth of July opening. "We'll have to wait and see," Pease said.

*Holmes & Watson* costume designer Matthew Lefebvre is hoping the play goes forward. Although he stands to lose "a fair amount" of money from the canceled productions he was working on, Lefebvre said he feels fortunate to still have a job. He is a professor of costume design at the University of Minnesota, chair of its Department of Theatre Arts and Dance and is currently sketching the costumes for an exhibit on the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage opening in September at the Minnesota History Center.

The U of M had to cancel four student productions this spring, according to Lefebvre. Their younger counterparts at SteppingStone Theatre for Youth Development in Summit-University have also had their production canceled this spring. "It's hard. The kids were really looking forward to it," said Mark Ferraro-Hauck, SteppingStone's artistic and executive director.

Ferraro-Hauck has had to furlough most of SteppingStone's staff members. He is hoping



Park Square Theatre executive director Michael-jon Pease stands on the set of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, a production canceled just prior to its opening due to the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

his application for a federal Paycheck Protection Program loan is approved. He is also hoping to move forward with SteppingStone's summer camps in theater—with restrictions for social distancing, if necessary. "This is the first time in my life when I haven't been able to project what will happen for more than a few days," he said.

Ron Peluso, artistic director of the History Theatre in downtown St. Paul, has prepared for several scenarios in his theater's immediate and more long-term future after canceling shows and laying off staff this spring. "We've tried to balance health concerns with the long-range survival of the organization," he said.

After canceling its planned fundraising gala at the St. Paul Hotel in April, the History Theatre created a virtual gala with a silent auction and raised a surprising amount of money, Peluso said. The company is still hoping to take its hit musical *Glensheen* on tour this summer, "though we don't know how comfortable people will feel about sitting next to each other," Peluso said.

Theatre in the Round executive director Steven Antenucci hopes to bring back at least some of the three plays he had to cancel this spring, including *Great Expectations* just a few days before its opening. "I've never faced los-

ing three shows in a row," he said. "It's real scary."

Theater Mu, based in St. Paul's Midway neighborhood, will celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in May with a variety of online programs. The second-largest Asian American theater company in the nation, Mu is currently financially stable, thanks in large part to private donors, according to a statement on its website.

Penumbra Theatre, based in the Summit-University neighborhood, has embarked on a major fundraising campaign. The 43-year-old company has retained all of its full time staff without any reductions in pay or benefits, according to managing director Amy Thomas. "We're finding new ways to employ artists in ways that will move our organization forward," she said.

Summit-University actor T. Michael Rambo, a University of Minnesota drama instructor, has lost multiple roles this spring that he said cannot be reinvented online. He and his fellow actors "are taking this time to regroup and re-envision what we're doing in our craft and reimagine ourselves as presenters of an art form that's been shut down," he said. "Our hope is that the light at the end of the tunnel isn't an oncoming train."

# City closes one lane of River Boulevard for more space to recreate

## St. Paul awards first grants to families and businesses impacted by coronavirus

BY JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul officials are scrambling to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with an array of measures intended to ease the financial burden on citizens, shore up household and business budgets, and create new opportunities for recreation while maintaining social distancing.

Mayor Melvin Carter has closed the southbound lane of Mississippi River Boulevard to motor vehicle traffic between Franklin Avenue and Ford Parkway to provide more space for pedestrians and bicyclists to recreate and still practice social distancing. The closing took effect on April 23 and will remain in place through May 3. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has closed the northbound lane of West River Parkway between 46th Avenue South and 11th Avenue South for the same reason.

"Supporting opportunities for healthy activities during this pandemic is vital," Carter said. "Expanding access for pedestrian and bicycle traffic on Mississippi River Boulevard creates a safe, socially distant way to enjoy our riverfront."

According to Paul Kurtz, St. Paul's interim director of Public Works, the cost for closing part of Mississippi River Boulevard is between \$350 and \$400 per day for barricades and maintenance. That measure follows similar restrictions put in place around Cherokee Park and lakes Como and Phalen.

St. Paul's municipal golf courses opened for the season on April 18 after Governor Tim Walz relaxed some of the state's stay-at-home restrictions. That move took some local residents by surprise, according to Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert. They had grown accustomed to freely strolling around the Highland 18- and 9-hole courses this spring.

The city is now exploring how to reopen its recreation centers to the public. Currently, park visitors may use the fields and trails, but are prohibited from using sports courts, skate parks and playground equipment. One idea is

to appoint volunteer "park ambassadors" to assist in keeping the parks accessible but safe.

The first grants from St. Paul's recently announced \$3.3 million Bridge Fund were distributed last week to families and businesses that have been adversely affected by the pandemic. More than 5,200 families and 2,100 small businesses applied for the grants before the April 19 cutoff date. The fund initially had enough money for 1,000 families to receive \$1,000 grants and 300 small businesses to receive \$7,500 grants. However, more than \$747,000 in additional funds have been made available, and that should help an additional 230 families and 69 small businesses.

With many more applicants than available grants, recipients are being chosen by lottery. About 85 percent of the small-business applicants have been closed by order of the state, and 98 percent of them are independently owned. About 80 percent of family applicants and 71 percent of small-business applicants are from areas of the city with a high concentration of poverty, according to Mayor Melvin Carter. They have reported layoffs, furloughs, reduced hours and other reasons for a loss in income related to COVID-19.

To provide additional relief, the city has reduced by 25 percent the cost of business license fees and fines. If a business' 2020 license fees have already been paid, the discount will be applied in 2021, Carter said. The city has also waived the towing and impound fees for motor vehicles through June 30. That is intended to help low-income people who may need a vehicle to get to work.

Like local governments across Minnesota, the city is facing dwindling revenue from fees and taxes and is seeking financial assistance from the state. At this point, it is not clear how many city employees may have to be laid off. Carter's administration has indicated it wants to avoid layoffs if possible. While many city employees are working remotely online, others have been shifted to different tasks.

For example, employees from several departments have been working on the review and approval of St. Paul Bridge Fund applications. Two dozen members of the St. Paul Public Libraries staff are sewing masks for city employees. Some are making the masks at home and others are working at closed libraries with the libraries' supply of fabrics and sewing machines.

# SPORTS



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### Virus has colleges thinking ahead

As a rule, spring is a more relaxed period for college athletics. The weather is often the biggest concern as colleges rework their schedules depending on the whims of Mother Nature. But all things considered, dealing with a few inclement days in the spring is easier than filling football stadiums in the fall, and basketball and hockey arenas in the winter.

It was, that is, until this spring. The coronavirus pandemic knocked college athletic programs for a loop. At the University of Minnesota, the estimated revenue losses range from \$10 million to \$75 million, depending on how long the virus continues to plague programs. The majority of the shortfall comes from the loss of sponsorships and the cancellation of the NCAA Division I basketball tournaments.

Local colleges have had to do some scrambling of their own—not all of it related to money. “As a Division III school, we don’t rely as much on (sports) revenue,” said Macalester College athletic director Donnie Brooks. “And we don’t charge admission for home games.”

Canceling spring sports meant, in theory, a savings because schools would not have to pay for officials and road trips. At Macalester, however, everything goes into a big pot. So what savings the college might have realized in athletics was turned over to pay for expenses in other areas. For example, students who were staying on campus and were sent home got a refund of sorts.

Athletes still need to stay in shape and, to that end, Macalester started what Brooks called “recovery yoga,” a program that student-athletes can follow via computer. There is also psychological help available online, if needed.

While the spring scramble goes on, Macalester and other local colleges still have to think ahead. This is prime recruiting time for fall and winter sports teams.

“We have about 300 students taking virtual visits to campus,” Brooks said. “They talk with coaches and whoever they need to.”

Macalester competes in the MIAC for every sport except football, where it plays in the Midwest Conference. As a result, Brooks deals with two separate entities in looking ahead to fall play. “There are a lot of options on the table at this time,” he said. “We’ll look to the NCAA for guidance as to how to proceed.”

Concordia University-St. Paul athletic director Regan McAthie echoed that thought. “The NCAA has a task force dealing with all the possibilities,” she said. “We’ll wait to hear from it before we think about the fall.”

That information is not likely to come until June or July. Meanwhile, McAthie is dealing with a different type of issue. As a Division II school, Concordia has several athletes on scholarships. The NCAA came out early and said spring athletes can come back for an extra season if they want. At Concordia, there are 48 seniors who have decisions to make. While it does have a graduate program, it may not make financial sense for some student-athletes to return for another year. There are also seniors who already have jobs lined up when they graduate.

“It’d be very difficult to tell your employer you have to leave at 2:30 for practice or you need a day off for a road game,” McAthie said.

The additional year also applies to freshmen, sophomores and juniors. Those athletes need to decide if they want to be at Concordia for an extra season, which will affect how coaches recruit for the future.

“There’s no deadline for making that decision,” McAthie said. “We don’t want to overwhelm them. We’ll stay in touch and work through this together.”

In addition to the money spent on scholarships, Concordia lost revenue it would have gained from being a host for state high school basketball games. The dome that covers the football field at Sea Foam Stadium is often rented out as well.

Should the NCAA decide to move fall sports to the spring



Senior Kate Pryor isn’t back on the softball field this spring because of the coronavirus pandemic, but she already holds the school record for hits, home runs and RBIs at Minnehaha Academy. She also is a talented basketball and volleyball player.

### Minneapolis Athena Awards mark 48th year

BY DAVE WRIGHT

Graduating from high school and heading off to college is an excursion into the unknown. For Minnehaha Academy senior Kate Pryor, it will mean leaving the comfort zone she has occupied for a dozen years and moving 1,300 miles to the East Coast. Minneapolis Roosevelt senior Marie Peterson’s trip is a lot shorter—she’s crossing the river to attend Macalester College.

Both have shown they know how to succeed in athletics, in academics and in other fields of endeavor. Those qualities are among the reasons they’re on the list of 55 recipients of the 2020 Minneapolis Athena Awards. The 48th annual luncheon to honor the top female student-athletes from Minneapolis area high schools was originally scheduled for May 8, but has been canceled due to the coronavirus.

Prior to the pandemic, both girls had expected to spend a lot of this spring outdoors. Pryor has been playing softball for the Redhawks since she was in seventh grade. Even without the benefit of a spring season in her senior year, she holds the school record for hits, home runs and RBIs. Her prowess in the sport drew the attention of Boston University, which she will attend this fall.

However, softball is only part of an athletic resume that includes three years playing basketball, being on a state championship hoops team, and four years playing volleyball.

Peterson would normally be found this spring involved in track and field for which she throws the discus and shotput. That is just part of her lengthy athletic resume that includes tennis, wrestling and rugby.

In the case of both girls, athletics is only part of their story.

“Kate is a high-quality person and a natural leader,” said Minnehaha athletic director Josh Thurow. “She’s very well-rounded.”

An excellent student, Pryor also serves as a retreat leader for middle school students and a counselor at Covenant Pines Bible Camp.

Her two older brothers both attended Minnehaha and one of them, Matt, was



Senior Marie Peterson’s skills in wrestling, tennis, rugby, and track and field are among the reasons why she has been named the Minneapolis Athena Award winner from Roosevelt.

her head basketball coach when she was a junior. “It was an interesting experience—a bit hard to balance at first,” she said, “but I liked it.”

Pryor injured her shoulder the summer before her junior year. However, she recovered to play volleyball that fall and then to start as guard in basketball, scoring 10 points in the Redhawks’ 72-63 win over Caledonia in the state Class AA championship game.

However, her softball career at Minnehaha got off to a rocky start. As a seventh-grader, she came off the field one inning after jarring a tooth loose. One of her teammates yanked it out and the game went on.

Though not being able to play softball this spring was frustrating, Pryor shrugged it off and concentrated on her schoolwork.

“I’ll have four years to play at Boston,” she said. “I feel bad for the girls who won’t get to play again.”

Peterson will leave Roosevelt with quite the legacy. “She paved the way for girls to get into wrestling,” said the school’s athletic director, Dennis Stockmo. “We now have several girls on our wrestling team.”

Peterson also kept busy with several activities beyond athletics, such as serving as president of the school’s Asian Club, carrying a 3.99 GPA, being a student ambassador and captaining the school’s math team. She also won a Smith Book Award, which is given annually to a junior who combines academic achievement, leadership qualities and concern for others.

“Marie is a fantastic leader in everything she does,” Stockmo said.

She also likes a challenge. She took up tennis to compete against her brother Ted, who is two years older than her. It took a couple of years, but she finally was able to beat him. Peterson, who played singles during the season and doubles in the sections, is ranked among the top 200 players in the state.

“She’s very competitive,” Stockmo said.

All of the above would seem like a lot to handle, but Peterson recently added another activity to her plate—rugby. “I was introduced to it last year,” she said. “It’s now my favorite sport.”

She hopes to continue to play that sport this fall when she starts classes at Macalester.

# Golf courses reopen with added safety measures due to pandemic

By Dave Wright

It was a little later than in past years and it took an executive order from Governor Tim Walz to do so, but the Highland National 18-hole golf course was finally able to open for the 2020 season on April 18.

The governor's order the day before expanded allowable outdoor activities to include golf, as long as players followed proper social distancing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Though they could tee off as early as 5 a.m. that Saturday, the first drives off the first tee came around 8 a.m. at Highland.

"We wouldn't let people go out earlier that day because of potentially frosty temps," said Highland club pro John Shimpach. "But that hasn't stopped the phone from ringing."

The April 18 opening was only slightly behind the Twin Cities opening day average of April 10. At

press time, the Highland National driving range and the adjacent Highland 9-Hole course remained closed. The clubhouses weren't open, reservations had to be made with a credit card in advance, no carts or clubs were available for rent, and there was no food or beverage service. Portable restrooms are available on the course, with hand sanitizers inside.

Midway through the first week of play, Shimpach was pleased with how things were going. The PGA and National Golf Foundation provide industry best practices that were being followed. They include requiring golfers to maintain a 6-foot distance at all times from anyone not in their household.

Tee times have been spaced further apart to increase the distance between golfers. Players are being asked not to pull pins from the holes when putting out. The cups on the greens have been modified to allow retrieving balls without touching

any surfaces.

Water stations, tee markers, ball washers, yardage stakes and benches have all been removed. Rakes are no longer in bunkers. Instead, golfers are being asked to use their shoes or clubs to smooth the sand.

Highland hires many of its workers through the St. Paul Department of Parks and Recreation. With the one-day announcement before the course opened, Shimpach was working with a skeleton crew initially. Once additional COVID-19 restrictions are eased and more help becomes available, more traditional golf course services are expected to become available.

Fees for playing Highland National are \$23 for nine holes, \$36 for 18 holes Mondays through Thursdays, and \$39 for 18 holes Fridays through Sundays. For more information and to book tee times, visit [stpaul.golf](http://stpaul.golf).

## Mendota Par 3

The Mendota Heights Par 3 on Dodd Road was scheduled to re-



Tyler Strand was happy to be back at Highland National after golf courses were allowed to reopen in Minnesota on April 18. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

open on April 27, with additional guidelines and safety measures. They include keeping a social distance gap, taking a 6-foot gimme to avoid touching the cups or pins on the greens, and leaving promptly

after finishing play. Carts, clubs, scorecards, ball washers, rakes and benches are not available.

Tee times are required at 651-454-9822. For more information, visit [tinyurl.com/y78g2xn5](http://tinyurl.com/y78g2xn5).

## 15◀ WRIGHT CALL

due to the coronavirus, Sea Foam will be a busy place with football, soccer, lacrosse, and track and field events all taking place there. McAthie worries about the toll that would take on her staff, but she understands that too will have to be dealt with on the fly.

At the University of St. Thomas, it was bad enough that the men's basketball and hockey teams saw their hopes for NCAA tournament competition suddenly dashed. In addition to the spring issues everybody else has, UST athletic director Phil Esten is also dealing with the fact he needs to find new conferences for his teams to play in a year from now.

"Our primary focus right now is making sure our student athletes have the resources they need from a physical and mental health perspective, while completing their spring courses and making academic progress toward their degrees

during the unprecedented challenges we're all facing this semester with COVID-19," Esten said.

He added that St. Thomas is continuing to assess its path to transition into Division I if the NCAA allows it to make the jump from Division III. "I remain optimistic about our future," Esten said.

St. Catherine University athletic director Eric Stacey faced a thornier problem. He had to deliver the bad news to the Wildcats that they would not be competing in the NCAA Division III Swimming and Diving Championships in March because they had been canceled.

"It was very difficult because they were supposed to leave in a day or two," he recalled. "I hope I never have to do that again."

The spring season also looked promising for the Wildcats. The softball team, which qualified for the last four MIAC tournaments (winning it in 2017), was again ranked

nationally. So were the golf and tennis teams.

"When the NBA stopped playing, it became clear it was just a matter of time before we would," Stacey said.

The NCAA edict allowing spring student-athletes who are seniors to return for another season also extends to Division III. At St. Catherine, there are eight athletes who fall into that category. "Each has a unique situation to deal with," Stacey said, and it might take a while before any decisions are made.

Like the other ADs, Stacey is taking a wait-and-see approach for the coming fall. "It's complicated," he said. "If anyone says they know what'll happen, I'd say they're guessing."

Stacey then added a sentiment that every AD would probably agree with: "The fall season won't look normal," he said.

Dave Wright can be reached at [dwright53@msn.com](mailto:dwright53@msn.com).

# District Councils

## Highland Park

[highlanddistrictcouncil.org](http://highlanddistrictcouncil.org) • 651-695-4005

**Board candidates sought**—The Highland District Council will hold an election in May to fill seats on its board of directors for all even-numbered grid areas and two at-large positions. Residents interested in running for a board seat for 2020-21 can submit a candidate form by 5 p.m. Friday, May 8. Information about how to register is available at [tinyurl.com/hdc-vote](http://tinyurl.com/hdc-vote). Those unable to register through the website may call 651-695-4005 or email [kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org](mailto:kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org) to have a form mailed to them.

**HDC board elections**—Voting for board seats will take place from 5 p.m. Monday, May 11, through 5 p.m. Monday, May 18. Candidate information and links to an online or paper ballot will be available at [tinyurl.com/hdc-vote](http://tinyurl.com/hdc-vote) when voting begins. The site also includes the HDC's annual meeting presentation. For information, call 651-695-4005 or email [kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org](mailto:kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org).

**Upcoming meetings**—The board of directors meeting on May 7 has been cancelled; Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 12; Community Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 19; and Community Engagement Committee, 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 27. All meetings will be held online through the month of May. Updates will be posted on the HDC website.

## Macalester-Groveland

[macgrove.org](http://macgrove.org) • 651-695-4000

**Office closed**—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council office remains closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. For more information, email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org).

**Join meetings online**—The public can participate in the

community council's board and committee meetings by using Zoom videoconferencing. Macalester-Groveland council staff will send out meeting links to all who are interested a few days in advance. Email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org) to get on the list. Upcoming meetings include Community Building Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 11; board of directors, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 14; and Housing and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 27.

**COVID-19 resources**—Visit [macgrove.org/2020resources](http://macgrove.org/2020resources) for an updated list of ways to support one another during this uncertain time. Those who have something to add may email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org).

## Union Park

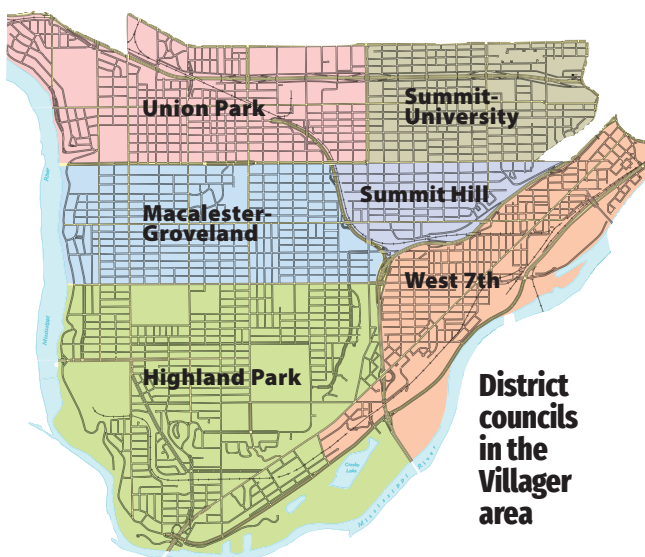
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**Micro-grants**—Those who have an idea for a neighborhood event or improvement project have until May 15 to apply for the Union Park District Council's micro-grants program to help fund those efforts. For an application form, email [wako@unionparkdc.org](mailto:wako@unionparkdc.org).

**COVID-19 resources**—Those who need assistance or information pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic are being asked to call the UPDC office or visit its website.

**Stay in contact**—The public is invited to "like" the Union Park District Council on Facebook, follow it on Twitter at @UnionParkDC, and subscribe to its monthly e-newsletter, "Neighborhood Matters," by emailing [info@unionparkdc.org](mailto:info@unionparkdc.org).

**Upcoming online meetings**—Board of directors, 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, May 6; Transportation Committee, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Monday, May 11; and Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Monday, May 18 (email [brandon@unionparkdc.org](mailto:brandon@unionparkdc.org) to join the Zoom videoconferences for these meetings); and Environment and Parks Committee,



District councils in the Villager area

6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, May 20 (email [wako@unionparkdc.org](mailto:wako@unionparkdc.org) for information on joining the Zoom videoconference for this meeting).

**GiveMN fundraiser**—A virtual fundraising event called #GiveAtHomeMN will be held on May 1-8 to benefit local nonprofits, schools and other organizations working to support people during the COVID-19 crisis. GiveMN is hosting the event. Learn more at [givemn.org/about/giveathomemn](http://givemn.org/about/giveathomemn).

**Get involved**—The community council has three standing committees that meet monthly on different aspects of making Macalester-Groveland a great place to live, work, learn and play. See more at [macgrove.org/committees](http://macgrove.org/committees).

**Building community while apart**—Follow @macgrovecc on Facebook and Instagram to participate in weekly neighborhood-building contests. Participants will be entered into a drawing to win gift cards from local businesses.





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thorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath. Date filed: April 13, 2020. Signed by: Jaime Gjerdingen.

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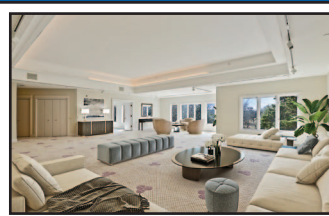
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651-690-8556 • \$425,000



**AMAZING!!!**  
295 Salem Church Rd: Spectacular Sunfish Lake home offering 12,447 sq ft to be used for your largest entertainment need but designed for comfortable everyday living as well. Quality construction and finishes.

**JIM BURTON**  
651-690-8556 • \$3,499,000



**ROBBIE GROSSMAN**  
651-434-7887



**LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN**  
612-810-4138



**1259 AVON STREET**  
Picturesque Como bungalow with vintage character and thoughtful updating. In spotless condition it has an updated kitchen and baths, finished lower level with an egress window and a walk-in storage closet. Natural wdwrk, French doors and hrdwd floors are added features.

**NANCY K MAAS**  
651-235-8581 • \$285,000



**BANCROFT BEAUTY!**  
4049 16th Ave. S. features 4 bedroom, 3 bath, newer roof, mechanicals and windows. The kitchen and baths have been updated. This property has great bones. The home has great space with over 2,100 square feet.

**TOM & MIKE DISTAD**  
612-275-1343 • \$359,900



**421 SUMMIT AVENUE #2, SAINT PAUL MN 55102**  
Stunning condo on historic Summit Avenue! Premier location across from University Club. Lovely open kitchen with Wolf and Sub Zero appliances, and butler's pantry with wet bar! Showing availability per CDC Guidelines only.

**MYA HONEYWELL**  
651-329-3619 • \$800,000



**324 SUMMIT #103, SAINT PAUL MN 55102**  
This stately condo occupies the top two floors of the Lightner-Young Mansion and has an additional apartment accessible by private elevator. It features vaulted ceilings, multiple decks, and panoramic views. Showing availability per CDC Guidelines only.

**MYA HONEYWELL**  
651-329-3619 • \$950,000



**ABE GLEESON**  
651-329-1990



**JIM SEABOLD**  
651-276-8555



**2095 ST. CLAIR**  
Just sold! A top-notch marketing plan helped us sell this home in 2 days in the current market. Contact us for a free consultation - we'd love to put our knowledge and expertise to work for you!

**MICHAELA TOOHEY**  
PHILIP WAHLBERG  
651-282-9617



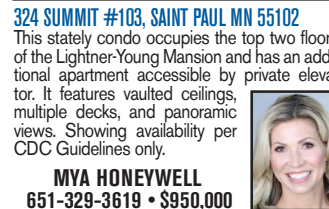
**231 ARUNDEL #5**  
Just Sold! Tree-top Condo in the heart of Cathedral Hill. 3 BR, 2 BA with a lovely balcony, fireplace and in-unit laundry. Premier location just steps from dining and shopping.

**MICHAELA TOOHEY**  
PHILIP WAHLBERG  
651-282-9617



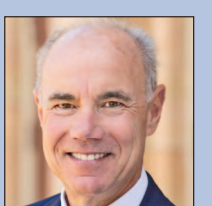
**438 PORTLAND AVE #6**  
Fabulous Ramsey Hill condo has been completely renovated top to bottom. Cooks kitchen with Viking Stove and dishwasher, custom cabinets and counter tops. 2 new bathrooms. All new electrical and plumbing, refinished hardwood floors, air conditioning, garage parking.

**SARAH KINNEY**  
651-282-9621 • \$548,500



**311 PLEASANT #215**  
Spectacular large 2 bedroom, 2 bath corner unit. Front: rear walkout patios. 2 units combined. 1 garage. In unit laundry.

**SARAH KINNEY**  
651-282-9621 • \$299,000



**TOM EDELSTEIN**  
651-695-4300

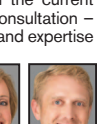


**JOE UEHEL**  
651-341-3599



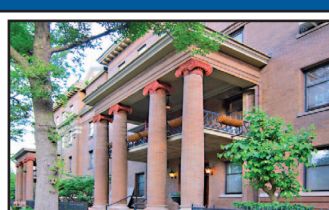
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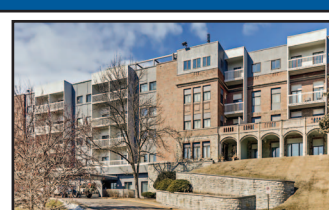
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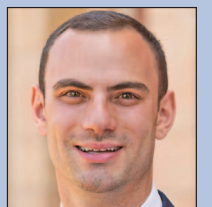
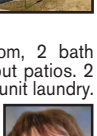
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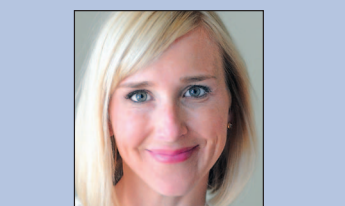
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651-282-9621 • \$299,000



**HENRY EDELSTEIN**  
651-270-1667



**PHILIP M. WAHLBERG**  
651-336-2410



**DEBBIE WHITAKER**  
THE HIVE  
612-532-1490



**KRISTA WOLTER**  
612-247-5106



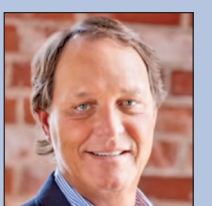
**JIM BURTON**  
651-690-8556



**MORAGHAN DeROSIA**  
952-486-3697



**TOM & MIKE DISTAD**  
612-275-1343



**PETER DONOVAN**  
651-336-8050