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City considers eliminating the requirements for off-street parking

By JANE McCLURE

Saint Paul officials are considering reducing or eliminating the off-street parking requirements for new developments as a way to discourage driving, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote mass transit and a more efficient use of land. The proposed changes received a mixed response from local residents and business people in a public hearing before the city's Planning Commission on April 30. Dozens of additional comments were received by the commission before the May 9 deadline.

Saint Paul developers are currently required to provide a minimum number of off-street parking spaces or seek a variance from the city. The parking requirements vary by zoning district, the size and type of development and the proximity to mass transit. They have long been in place to reduce parking congestion on streets and make it possible for local residents to find parking near their home.

Two options are being considered by the Planning Commission, according to city planner Tony Johnson. One set of amendments would eliminate minimum parking requirements altogether. The other would reduce minimum parking requirements through exemptions and other means.

OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS ▶3



Creative kickoff.

Bridget Zimowicz, 4, spins a mural with biodegradable cornstarch paint at Bradford and Endicott streets during the May 22 opening celebration of Chroma Zone in Saint Paul's Creative Enterprise Zone. The summer-long mural and art festival has returned following a year's absence. At right, Rock "Cyfi" Martinez holds a study of his much larger work in progress. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



St. Paul ponders future of public safety in the city

Commission suggests office, prioritization of police calls

By JANE McCLURE

A new neighborhood safety office and changes in how some police calls for service are handled are among the key recommendations from Saint Paul's Community First Public Safety Commission. City Council members on May 19 heard the commission's recommendations, which followed a six-month study process facilitated by the Citizens League.

The 48-member commission was appointed last year by Mayor Melvin Carter. Council members hope to use the group's recommendations to help shape the future of public safety in the city and how it is supported.

The commission also looked at how to foster ongoing involvement in the Community First Public Safety Program. The program includes efforts ranging from community ambassadors to healing circles in approaching crime prevention by addressing the root causes of misconduct.

Commission co-chairs John Marshall of Xcel Energy and Acooa Ellis of the United Way of the Greater Twin Cities praised the study process and its outcomes.

"I'm proud of the work we did," Marshall said. He noted that the commission took on

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION ▶2

For teen activists, school walkout was a step for racial justice

By ANNE MURPHY

The big thing is presence," according to Jerome Treadwell. "As long as you're present in the now and doing everything you can to create a better future, that's what's important."

A Highland Park resident, Treadwell is a junior at Highland Park High School. As a co-founder and executive director of MN Teen Activists, he helped organize a walkout for racial justice on April 19 at more than 100 high schools in Minnesota. Junior Remi Pye was one of the leaders of the walkout at Cretin-Derham Hall, where more than 100 students took part. Together, Treadwell and Pye said,

they are testing themselves and others in taking a stand against racism.

It was a year ago this month that Fridley sophomore Aaliyah Murray came up with the idea for MN Teen Activists. Looking for leaders in Saint Paul, she learned about Treadwell's advocacy work and asked him to come on board.

"It started with a group of 16 kids from the metro area," Murray said. Initially, they focused on racist incidents at schools. "But after the murder of George Floyd, it expanded," she said. The group now has about 21,000 followers on its Instagram site and is known as a major advocate for racial justice in Minnesota.

"All my life I've been an advocate for Black

lives," said Treadwell, who also serves as youth president of the Saint Paul chapter of the NAACP. "Going to a predominantly white school yet growing up in a Black neighborhood, I've seen the disparities among different races. Being the only Black student in the band program, in the Chess Club, in honors and IP classes has motivated me to defy the odds and be an advocate for my peers, for people who look like me. I want to encourage them and motivate them."

A saxophonist, Treadwell said he has used music to advocate for arts programs in the Black community, "finding ways to fund and advance those programs. I've wanted to be a catalyst, using music as a healing power."

After Floyd's death, Treadwell played his sax throughout the Twin Cities, alone and with other musicians, to offer comfort and inspiration. He played at the George Floyd Memorial in South Minneapolis, at June-teenth events, at the state Capitol and during marches. "Music is a universal language of hope, love and peace," he said. "That was how Blacks were able to cope with slavery; they sang Negro spirituals. Music is a way I can touch Heaven, touch my ancestors and touch people."

Treadwell joined other MN Teen Activists in raising over \$8,000 for businesses on Lake

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Street in Minneapolis damaged in the riots last May. "I was intrigued by this organization being started by 15-year-olds," he said, "students younger than me activating the community in such a dynamic way. They helped me grow as a human being, and I've tried to help them grow as an organization."

In advance of the April walkout, "I tried to help (students at other schools) with how you do a walkout, how you communicate with school officials," Treadwell said. "We're trying to learn time management in terms of helping others and lobbying for equality along with our work as high school students."

It is estimated that 700-800 students walked out of Highland Park High School on that Monday in April, or more than half of the student body of 1,381. "As a district and as a school, we respect students' right to peaceful protest," said Highland Park principal Winston Tucker. "At the walkout, students spoke truthfully and respectfully about racism, equity, what is happening in society. There was a diverse mix of students, and they were attentive and engaged."

"I love it that we had a diverse group of kids and they were all supporting their peers," Tucker said. The numbers may have even been greater if a third of the school's students were not still distance learning, he added.

"(Treadwell) is a remarkable young man," Tucker said. "He's extremely mature for his age in his awareness of social issues, engagement with other students and outlook on life. He's a natural leader. He's very intelligent, very personable, very principled, and has a remarkable ability to connect with people."

Like Treadwell, Pye was involved in social justice activities before joining MN Teen Activists. Last year he organized a supply drive at CDH, "trying to help out the homeless, raising awareness of homelessness and its detrimen-

"The school walkout wasn't a one-and-done thing. Our hope is to get to the legislative side and help with policies for youth and amplify youth voices there and everywhere."

tal effects on society," Pye said. "I think we donated about 100 bags plus three totes of coats, boots and gloves." However, speaking out on racial injustice was not something he did.

Then, after the murder of Floyd, "I started showing up at charitable events, solidarity events, sit-ins, forums," he said. "I educated myself on what I could do. That led me to step up during the walkout. I gave a speech there."

Several CDH students who took part in the walkout were suspended by the school, not for walking out but for carrying signs that were profane and directed against police officers, posting videos of disrespectful, abusive and demeaning name-calling, and leading some inappropriate chants, according to CDH principal Mona Passman and president Frank Miley. In a joint statement on the school website, they said, "CDH has a long tradition of supporting our students' voices as well as their work for social justice. We do not support hate speech."

CDH students organized another assembly as a followup to the walkout in support of the right to protest. "It was a coordinated event with CDH alumni who supported the students' cause," Pye said. "We marched down Edgumbe Road and then to the Capitol. I think we had 30 to 40 alums. Students from Highland and Central high schools also joined us." Pye is now working with close to a dozen other CDH students to further racial justice and racial equity at the school.

According to CDH spokesperson Annie



MN Teen Activists executive director Jerome Treadwell (right), 17, sat down last week with friends and associates Collin Roycraft, 18, John Mbanda, 18, Gabby Hou, 16, and Ruby Haimli, 16. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Broos, "The CDH community is working to better confront the tragedy of injustice. As individuals and as a school, we are called to determine what role we will play in the fight for justice and how to be an ally to people of color who suffer from racial injustice. We are proud of our students who stand against racial injustice and seek to make the world a better place. That is why our school is developing a comprehensive plan to work for racial justice within our school that will engage multiple and diverse voices."

After this school year ends, Pye said, "I hope to stay linked to (Treadwell) and MN Teen Activists by supporting their protests and helping out in any way I can. I'd like to work on a project with them this summer pertaining to homelessness, racism in health care and food

scarcity in our community."

"The walkout was impressive as far as turnout," Treadwell said, "seeing students from Bemidji to Duluth to Rochester to all over the Twin Cities being more cognizant of the problems." Still, he said, there is a need for continued awareness and activism if sustainable change is to be achieved.

"The walkout wasn't a one-and-done thing," Treadwell said. "Our hope is to get to the legislative side and help with policies for youth and amplify youth voices there and everywhere."

"And after we're done being teenagers, we hope to be the advisers for the next teenagers of Minnesota, the next MN Teen Activists who will have their boots on the ground for Black and brown individuals."

14 PUBLIC SAFETY COMMISSION

very complex issues while creating an opportunity for people with many different opinions to share their ideas.

Ellis said she is excited to see what possibilities the report brings forward, and urged elected leaders to think more comprehensively about public safety.

"Saint Paul and the Twin Cities are at the epicenter for meaningful change on this topic," she said. "The eyes of the country, if not the world, are watching us."

Focuses for the commission included ways to look at how lower-priority calls for assistance could be handled in ways other than sending the police. The aim is to defuse some

situations and free up police to focus on higher-priority calls.

Amanda Koonjbeharry, the Citizens League's director of public policy, said the commission reviewed how police calls are currently prioritized. The commission scrutinized calls for child abuse, welfare checks, disorderly conduct, people in crisis, civil matters, motor vehicle thefts, property damage, motor vehicle accidents and calls involving juveniles. Saint Paul police already have a mobile unit for mental health-related calls and work closely with social workers.

Another focus of the study was on how police traffic stops should be addressed. That issue drew more attention after the death of Daunte Wright, who was fatally shot by a

police officer this spring during a traffic stop in Brooklyn Center.

Some commission members said Saint Paul police should only conduct traffic stops for more serious violations, such as DWIs, hit-and-run accidents and speeding. Stops for equipment or minor traffic violations and expired license tabs would be eliminated.

The commission suggested the use of cameras and mailed notices to those running red lights. However, state law prohibits the cameras, also known as "photo cop."

It is unknown what the recommended changes would cost, and how funds would be allocated in the 2022 city budget. For comparison, Minneapolis spent \$7.4 million this year for its Office of Violence Prevention. That

office could be a model for a Saint Paul Office of Neighborhood Safety. Such an office had strong support among commission members.

One possibility for funding is through the federal American Rescue Plan.

Record gun violence and 34 homicides in Saint Paul in 2020, coupled with demands for law enforcement reform in the wake of deaths at the hands of police nationwide, are driving the calls for change.

Seventy-eight people had been shot in the city as of mid-May, at least nine of them fatally. While that is an increase from May 2020, what has really risen in Saint Paul are the number of calls for shots fired. Those totaled 820 as of last week, as compared to 484 by mid-May 2020.



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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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City Council orders the demolition of the burned out shell of Big Top Liquors

By JANE McCLURE

Just days before the one-year anniversary of its looting and torching during the riots following the murder of George Floyd, the former Big Top Liquors store at 1544 University Ave. has been ordered demolished. The Saint Paul City Council voted on May 12 to give Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC 45 days to remove the blackened hulk of the one-story structure.

RK Midway LLC owns the Midway Center property where Big Top is located, but it has granted a master lease to Minnesota United lead owner Bill McGuire and his group Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC. The latter company has been working with Mortenson Construction in seeking demolition bids and hopes to demolish Big Top by the end of May.

Big Top has been a Midway Center tenant for many years at two different locations. Its owners recently obtained City Council approval to transfer the business' off-sale liquor license to an as yet undetermined location.

The former liquor store and a second Midway Center building that housed several businesses were fenced off last June after both were extensively damaged by arson. Most other Midway structures extensively damaged in the rioting have been demolished or rehabilitated. It is not clear when the larger Midway Center building will come down.

A Saint Paul Fire Department report from last May indicated that looters were still in the Big Top building when it was on fire. Fire-



Firefighters worked to douse the blaze that all but destroyed Big Top Liquors on May 28-29, 2020.

fighters attempted to enter the burning building, but when people began throwing objects at them, they pulled back until everyone was out.

The city issued an emergency summary abatement order for the structure in June 2020. A contractor fenced off the building, removed loose materials and cleaned up other items. Since then, three summary abatement orders have been issued for graffiti cleanup. Four work orders were issued to board and secure the property. An inspection in November found the building to be a nuisance. An order to abate a nuisance building was posted on January 27 with a compliance date of February 26, but the building remained in place.

Attorney Bruce Parker, who represented McGuire at an April 13 hearing, told legislative hearing officer Marcia Moermond that his client's intent is to demolish the structure as soon as possible.

14 OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Saint Paul's 2040 comprehensive plan calls for reducing the land devoted to off-street parking, promoting higher-density neighborhoods with destinations that are more convenient for walking, and encouraging shared parking agreements, shared motor vehicles, carpooling, bicycling and public transit. Reducing the parking requirements is also seen as a way to lower the costs for developers and encourage the development of more affordable housing.

Staff from the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development have introduced the proposed parking amendments to several civic groups in recent weeks. These have included district councils, the Highland Business Association and the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce. The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee has recommended reducing the minimum parking requirements, but many other groups have not taken a position yet.

Mayor Melvin Carter's administration is leaning toward the elimination of all minimum parking requirements, according to Russ Stark, the mayor's chief resilience officer. "It's a simple approach," he said. According to Stark, it addresses the mayor's goals for climate change and overall development. It would also send a clear message to developers and the public at large about what is expected, he added.

Barb Thoman, who chairs the Union Park District Council's Transportation Committee, favors reducing the minimum parking requirements but not eliminating them. Her committee regularly meets with developers to discuss parking and other traffic issues. If minimum parking requirements are eliminated, she said, "I don't know where we'd have those conversations."

Tyler Blackmon of Highland Park spoke for eliminating the parking requirements, saying the city's current regulations create a "byzantine system of rules for developers" and add to the cost of development.

Downtown resident Merritt Clapp-Smith, a former city planner who worked on Saint Paul's last citywide parking study in the 1990s, also spoke for eliminating the parking requirements. She said eliminating them would allow the city to focus its resources on more important issues.

Alexandra Cunliffe of Macalester-Groveland said her family chooses to live in Saint Paul because of the walkability of the neighborhoods and the options for public transit. She would like to see the parking requirements eliminated. "There is ample street parking in Saint Paul," she said, "and the parking lots near businesses are often unsafe for pedestrians."

Hilary Gustafson of Hamline-Midway said the minimum parking requirements should be reduced but not eliminated. She used to live in the Carleton Artist Lofts at 2285 University Ave., and according to her, the construction of three nearby apartment buildings without adequate off-street parking led to congested curbs throughout the area. It became clear, she said, that many people will still own vehicles even if they have good mass transit nearby.

Several citizens said they did not want to see the minimum parking requirements reduced at all. "Residents of affordable housing may not have the freedom to choose not to drive a car," said East Side resident John Slade. "They may have to work outside of regular working hours and may be working or going to school in areas without transit connections."

Como resident Anne Thom suggested that the proposed changes would discriminate against people with disabilities. "Everyone will be old someday, and as you age the chances of a disability that impairs mobility increases," she said. "These proposals are onerous for both disabled and older people."

Thom asked city officials to consider the safety and efficiency of public transportation, especially now when the metro transit system has seen cuts to service. Transit riders often have to wait a long time for a bus, and often at night and in areas without adequate shelter or lighting, she said.

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Developers seek variances for three new buildings at Ford site

By JANE MCCLURE

Plans for a new medical office building and two residential buildings with affordable housing at the 122-acre Highland Bridge development in Highland Park are headed to the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) with variance requests that have all been recommended for approval by the Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee.

Project for Pride in Living (PPL) is building a five-story, 63,000-square-foot structure for Emma Norton Services at the northwest corner of Hillcrest Avenue and Mount Curve Boulevard. The building will include 60 one-bedroom and studio apartments for women in the agency's program, a 26-space parking ramp as well as the offices of Emma Norton.

Immediately to the west on Hillcrest, PPL is also building Nellie Francis Court, a five-story, 78,000-square-foot structure with a mix of 75 studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments and 39 underground parking spaces. Construction of both buildings would begin later this year and be complete in 2023.

PPL needs three variances for the Emma Norton building—for a floor area ratio of 3.45, or 0.45 above the maximum density called for in the Ford site master plan; a building lot

coverage of 78 percent, or 8 percent above the maximum lot coverage of 70 percent; and a height of 67 feet, or 2 feet over the maximum of 65 feet.

PPL needs four variances for Nellie Francis Court—for a floor area ratio of 3.4, or 0.4 above the limit; for open space of 22 percent of the lot, or 3 percent below the master plan minimum for multifamily buildings; a parking variance of 17 spaces below the required minimum of 56 spaces; and a height variance of 13 feet taller than the 48-foot height limit for buildings in the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area.

A two-story, 63,000-square-foot medical office building is planned for the southwest corner of Ford Parkway and Mount Curve Boulevard. Master developer Ryan Companies is seeking a variance for that building for being less dense than required, or under the minimum floor area ratio of 1.0. The brick and glass structure would have a tower at the Mount Curve corner and another tower overlooking the adjacent Gateway Park. Two levels of underground parking and surface parking are planned. Construction would begin late this year and be completed in 2023.

The developers of all three buildings are also seeking variances from the car-sharing requirement that is in place throughout High-



Renderings of the medical office building proposed for the southwest corner of Ford Parkway and Mount Curve Boulevard, above; and, at right, the Nellie Francis Court (left) and Emma Norton buildings proposed at the northwest corner of Mount Curve and Hillcrest Avenue.



land Bridge. The Ford site master plan calls for most developments on the site to have a car-sharing service with one or more vehicles. Instead, Ryan Companies is working with city officials, Xcel Energy and HourCar on plans for a centrally located car-sharing hub to serve

the entire Highland Bridge development.

The HDC committee's recommendations on the variances will be reviewed by the full district council on June 3. The BZA is expected to review the variance requests sometime in June or July.

Commission grants variances for West End duplexes on vacant lot

By JANE MCCLURE

A vacant parcel that has long been occupied only by billboards could soon become home to a pair of West End duplexes. The Saint Paul Planning Commission approved five variances on May 14 for the project at 300 Banfil St./149-155 Dousman St.

Last month, the commission also recommended that the 5,674-square-foot property be rezoned from commercial to multifamily residential use. The rezoning request is pending City Council approval in June. A public hearing will be held before the vote.

City records show that the property has been vacant since at least 1940. The site is owned by Jeffrey and Rebecca Austin, who also own an adjacent two-story commercial building at 504-506 W. Seventh St.

In their application, the Austins said that the variances were needed



A rendering of the pair of duplexes Jeffrey and Rebecca Austin want to construct fronting Dousman Street.

due to the lot's wide width and shallow depth. One variance is for four off-street parking spaces instead of the required six. The other variances were from the minimum setback of roughly 9 feet on all four sides of the property. One-foot setbacks are proposed for the front, back and north side yards, while a 6.3-foot setback is proposed for the south side yard.

The developers, Stonewood Investments LLC, said the project will provide "missing middle" housing for four families. Such housing is defined as duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes that are compatible in scale and form with single-family homes.

Each duplex would have a two- and a three-story unit, and each unit

would have a single-stall garage and one off-street parking space.

City staff recommended approval of the zoning change and variances. The project also has the support of the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation.

However, neighborhood reaction to the project has been mixed. While some neighbors said they appreci-

ate seeing the property developed, others have objected to the number of variances and feel that the development is too large for its site.

Pete Degan owns a 120-year-old barn at 159 Dousman adjacent to the development site. His building has had several tenants over the years, including a wood shop and an advertising agency. He believes the duplexes will block light and air for his property.

"Building nearly to the edge of the property will needlessly crowd the sidewalk, inhibit sightlines for drivers and pedestrians, and diminish the neighborhood aesthetic," said Goodhue Street resident C.J. Lindor.

Other neighbors said the project will fit nicely in the area. Lara Duddingston, who lives on Superior Street, praised the design.

"The project looks really cute and would be great for the neighborhood," she said.

Highland reservoir demolition, Pig's Eye soil storage to continue

By JANE MCCLURE

Plans to demolish Highland Park's decommissioned southern water reservoir for future development as sports fields can proceed. The Saint Paul City Council on May 19 approved an agreement to lease the 4.3-acre site on Ford Parkway and Snelling Avenue from Saint Paul Regional Water Services through the year 2050 at a cost of \$1 per year.

The reservoir was built in 1926, but has not been used since 2014 due to decreased water usage. After the reservoir's 18-million-gallon water tank is removed this summer, the site will be seeded and left as open space. The city plans to develop sports fields there, but it could be a few years before funding is available to do so.

In connection with the demolition project, Ramsey County is making parking lot and vehicle access improvements this summer to its adjacent Charles M. Schulz Highland Arena.

A second agreement approved by the council on May 19 allows the water utility to continue to use city park property near Pig's Eye Lake to store soil during work on water mains. The agreement also clears the way for 2.5 acres of water utility property in the city's northeast corner to become a future park. The property is adjacent to the former Hillcrest Golf Course, which is now being studied for redevelopment.

The council had debated the agreements for several weeks. It was originally presented as a land swap to allow water utility use of the Pig's Eye property in exchange for the city leasing the Highland reservoir site. That drew protests about inequity among neighborhoods, as well as concerns about how the Pig's Eye property is used. The property adjacent to the Hillcrest Golf Course was recently added to the agreement.

The storage site at Pig's Eye is located near the Mississippi River and is used when soil is

dug up during water utility work. It has been used as a staging site for several years, with soil being moved in during the winter and hauled out each spring.

Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation director Mike Hahm said the agreement is intended to meet city requirements that call for no net loss of parkland.

Council members Jane Prince and Nelsie Yang praised the agreement. Not only does it add park space for the Hillcrest area, but it includes \$100,000 from the water utility to provide parking stalls and an improved park entrance at Pig's Eye. Prince noted that the long-term vision is for a more accessible park there as part of the Great River Passage plan for the city's entire Mississippi riverfront.

"For much of the last century, the East Side riverfront, and Pig's Eye Lake in particular, was the city's dump," Prince said.

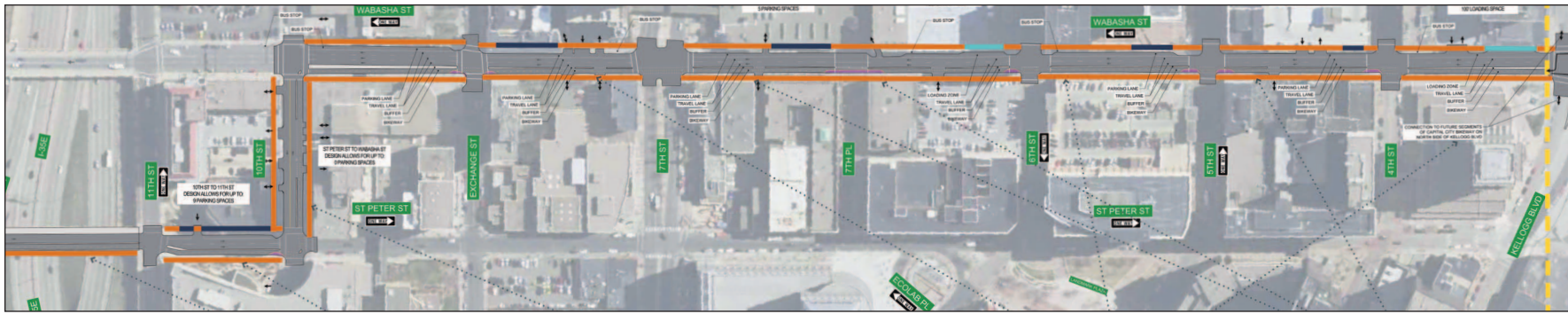
Yang conceded that not everyone will be happy with the agreement, but she empha-

sized that it provides more park resources for the East Side.

They and other activists called for improvements to Pig's Eye, instead of treating it as a dumping ground for soil and for uses such as a city wood chipping operation. Retired Friends of the Parks and Trails director Peggy Lynch noted the area's status as a large heron rookery and a home for other wildlife.

Former council member Tom Dimond said in a letter to the council that the wet soil could be placed on other land the water utility owns. He said the city continues to discriminate against a less affluent area of Saint Paul.

The water utility needs space to dump wet soil before it is taken off-site for future uses. The site was proposed at 8 acres, but reduced to 5 acres in the amended agreement. The lease term is for 20 years and not 29 years as originally proposed. The city can cancel the lease if other uses for the parkland come forward.



The western leg of the Capital City Bikeway in downtown will feature a two-way track on the west side of Wabasha Street between the Mississippi River (right) and 10th Street, where it turns west and then north over I-94.

City approves Wabasha Street alignment of downtown bikeway

By JANE MCCLURE

The much-debated western leg of Saint Paul's Capital City Bikeway could be a reality as early as 2022. Despite objections from local businesses, including Candyland and Amsterdam Bar and Hall, the City Council voted 6-0 on May 12 to approve the Wabasha Street alignment. Those businesses and others on Wabasha would lose on-street parking and, their owners contend, that will not help as they struggle to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Plans call for a protected two-way bicycle track on the west side of Wabasha between Kellogg Boulevard and 10th Street. The route then follows 10th to Saint Peter Street, Saint Peter to 12th Street and 12th to John Ireland Boulevard. It will cost about \$2 million, according to city traffic engineer Randy Newtown. That cost includes bikeway pavement markings and signs, signal modifications, new curbs and concrete medians, and the removal of corner bumpouts.

Wabasha, Saint Peter Street and a combination of Saint Peter and Market Street were all considered for the western leg of the bikeway over the past few years. Saint Peter was

the top choice originally, but Wabasha was favored by many cyclists and by Public Works staff because it provides the most direct connection to the Wabasha Street Bridge over the Mississippi River.

Wabasha for most of this stretch has two or three lanes of one-way traffic and parking on both sides. It carries 7,350 to 10,300 motor vehicles per day.

To accommodate the bikeway, a left-turn lane from Wabasha to Seventh Street would be removed, Saint Peter between 11th and 12th streets would be narrowed from two to one traffic lane going south, and 12th Street between Saint Peter and John Ireland Boulevard would be narrowed from two to one traffic lane going east.

The project would require the removal of 87 parking spaces on the west side of Wabasha. For Amsterdam, losing on-street parking complicates the unloading and loading of band equipment. Candyland would lose short-term parking for its customers. Other Wabasha Street entities that are concerned about the loss of parking include the History Theatre, Minnesota Children's Museum, the Church of Scientology and the Victory and Lawson parking ramps.

Amsterdam Bar and Hall manager Jarret Oulman said, "the new bike lane will create a situation where some artists who travel with buses and trailers will not be able to have shows at our venue because of the amount of continuous space they need to park and unload." Jarret Oulman and co-owner Jon Oulman also raised concerns about pedestrian and traffic safety along Wabasha.

Amsterdam has operated on the ground floor of the Lawson Commons block since 2011. The city is its landlord, and rent is based on a percentage of the club's gross revenue. Public Works staff have proposed moving the Amsterdam's loading area to Sixth Street. If a situation arises where a band has to unload along Wabasha, Newtown said, the city will work with Amsterdam staff.

Candyland co-owner Brenda Lamb objected to the loss of parking in front of her store. "This would be devastating to Candyland and any business that would want to open and survive downtown," she said. If prospective customers do not see convenient parking, they will just keep on driving, she added.

Newtown said the city is looking at providing short-term parking for Candyland and other local businesses on the east side of Wa-

basha. Possibly as many as four short-term parking spaces could be provided, he said, rather than the two in front of Candyland now.

Although comments against the bikeway's Wabasha alignment were in the majority, several businesses testified in favor of the route, including 40 members of the Rice Park Association, the Fitzgerald and Palace theaters and the Ecolab Global Communications Center. Public Works staff and the city's Transportation Committee support the Wabasha Street alignment. The Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition and local bicyclists also spoke in favor of Wabasha as a north-south connection through downtown.

City Council member Rebecca Noecker, whose Ward 2 includes downtown, acknowledged the difficulties in making any bikeway alignment work. However, she called it the kind of "bold, visionary, really exciting investment" that cities make in their downtowns.

The Capital City Bikeway's eastern leg was completed several years ago along Jackson Street. Last year the northern leg was constructed on 10th Street. Construction of the southern leg along Kellogg Boulevard is tentatively scheduled between 2023 and 2025.

City Attorney affirms legality of mayoral veto OK'ing Lex Station

By JANE MCCLURE

Barring a legal challenge, it now appears that Alatus LLC's Lexington Station mixed-use development will move forward this summer. In a May 13 letter to the Saint Paul City Council, City Attorney Lyndsey Olson said that she was satisfied Mayor Melvin Carter had the authority to veto the City Council's denial of the Lexington Station site plan and that she would not seek an opinion from Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison on the legality of that veto as requested by the council.

Six-story Lexington Station would feature 288 apartments above 3,000 square feet of first-floor commercial space and 254 parking spaces on a long-vacant parcel at 411-417 N. Lexington Pkwy. Alatus is not seeking any public subsidies for the \$57 million project, nor is it requesting any zoning changes or variances.

However, the project has become a flash point in the debate over affordable housing and gentrification in the neighborhood. Lo-

cal residents would like to see lower rents in the building, and they are concerned that the development will drive up rents and property taxes elsewhere in the area, leading to the displacement of longtime residents.

Alatus has offered to make about half of the 288 apartments affordable to households making from 50 to 60 percent of the Twin Cities area's median income. However, opponents of the project maintain that those new studio and one- and two-bedroom units would still be financially out of reach for local families.

At a recent press conference, Frogtown Neighborhood Association co-director Caty Royce said opponents of the project would sue to block the development. That district council is one of several organizations opposing the project. Others include the Summit-University Planning Council, Midway RiseUp and the Black Ministerial Alliance.

Most site plan reviews in Saint Paul are conducted by city staff. The controversy over the Alatus project prompted city staff to ask the Planning Commission to review the site plan

and hold a public hearing. The commission voted 8-7 to reject the site plan, citing its six-story height and inconsistency with the city's comprehensive plan.

Alatus appealed that decision to the City Council, which voted 4-3 to deny the appeal, citing the same concerns as the Planning Commission. Carter vetoed the council's resolution denying the appeal. Without a fifth vote, the council was not able to override the veto, but it did vote 5-2 to ask the state Attorney General to conduct a legal review of the mayor's veto authority in zoning matters. A request for an Attorney General's opinion must be submitted by the City Attorney's Office, which Olson would not do.

In her letter, Olson said that Carter had several reasons for vetoing the council resolution. They included the city's need for new housing at all income levels, the site plan's conformance to the underlying zoning and the fact that the developer sought no public subsidy.

"The mayor has veto power over quasi-judicial decisions," Olson stated. According to her, the city charter allows the mayor to

approve or veto every resolution the council sends to him.

Olson stated that there is no Minnesota case law indicating that the veto is invalid. She cited a 1967 Duluth case that went to the Minnesota Supreme Court. In that case, which centered on a liquor license, the high court found that a mayoral veto in a quasi-judicial matter was valid.

Carter's veto also simply nullified the council's action, Olson added. She cited a Minnesota statute that places a 60-day deadline on zoning requests. Under that law, if a city does not act on a zoning request within 60 days, it is automatically approved. Developers can agree to a 60-day extension of that deadline in the case of an appeal, but even with an extension, the time ran out on denying the site plan on April 17.

City Council member Jane Prince said she was troubled by Olson's legal opinion and the power the City Attorney is giving to the mayor. According to her, it sets a dangerous precedent to allow Lexington Station to proceed with the unilateral approval of the mayor.



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Life coaching for adolescents

Positive Presence helps teenagers get over the rough patches in life

By Frank Jossi

As a high school student growing up in suburban Milwaukee, Michelle Marie King felt bullied by other students for being “short, fat and awkward,” she said. While in high school, she was recruited as a model by the hair products company Redken Fifth Avenue NYC. At 18, she moved to Arizona and worked as a runway model until the pressures of the fashion industry became too much and sent her into a tailspin of anxiety, bulimia and depression.

King eventually recovered from what she called “a dark place” in her life. She moved to Colorado and became a motivational speaker, personal coach and blogger. She won the Ms. Colorado pageant in 2013 and continued to work as a model. However, the birth of her daughter in 2015 reminded King of her struggles as a teenager. She left modeling and began coaching young girls on how to enter the modeling industry in a positive way. In 2016 she founded Positive Presence, a life-coaching service that helps teenagers confront their demons, meet new challenges or just get over the rough patches of adolescence.

King studied at the School of Positive Transformation where she earned certification as a master practitioner in positive psychology. She and her family moved to Chanhassen in 2019, and she opened a Positive Presence office in Highland Village.

Positive Presence is just beginning to get a foothold in Minnesota. The company currently has 17 life coaches in 11 states and nearly a dozen more in training. Over the past five years, it has served about 250 clients in 38 states.

Positive Presence’s life coaches work as independent contractors, meeting with clients in person or via Zoom for one hour every week or every other week over a six- or 12-month contract. The life coaches receive extensive training in SELF, a program that teaches them the best way to deal with 500 different sce-

“Mentoring was once an organic process for humans. Our goal is to bring that back. We believe we can change lives.”

– Michelle Marie King

narios ranging from everyday challenges to more serious mental health issues. Prospective coaches are heavily vetted, and just 25 percent are chosen for the program.

Positive Presence’s clients range in age from 12 years to college. Some are overachievers who are feeling the pressure of trying to be perfect. Others have been hanging out with the wrong crowd or have become addicted to video games or drugs. Still others are having trouble managing their time or staying within a budget or are struggling with anxiety, depression or bipolar disorder.

The life coaches are generally within 10 years of age of their clients. Many have suffered “their own level of darkness and have their own stories,” King said. “They can relate to their young clients, and that’s really important. We want to give young people a positive relationship with adult mentors who can help them face their issues.”

Blake Cleaver, 26, a Positive Presence coach from Kansas City, has helped her clients deal with the social and academic pressures of high school and college as well as anxiety and body-image problems. She provides plenty of advice in coaching sessions, she said, and has directed clients to Positive Presence’s online resources, too. “You can see a lot of change in students who go through the program,” she said.

Positive Presence does not replace professional psychological counseling or treatment that some teens may need on their journey



Michelle Marie King helps young people overcome stress and meet new challenges through her life-coaching service Positive Presence in Highland Park. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

to adulthood, King said. It is, rather, an additional tool for parents who want to help their children navigate the high school years. Health insurance does not cover the cost of life coaching, she said, but more than 80 percent of parents retain the company’s services after their initial contract ends, she said.

Both of Vickie Lamb’s daughters have worked with Positive Presence coaches. Her youngest daughter, Emily, now 20, worked with a coach on issues she had when her family moved to a new home during her high school years. Lamb’s daughter, Katie, now 22, worked with her coach on the challenges of being away at college.

Positive Presence gives young people “a

person to talk to when they’re stressed with everything life can throw at them,” Lamb said. Emily liked the program so much she has gone on to become a Positive Presence coach.

King is now in the process of creating life-coaching programs tailored to gender, targeting males and non-binary individuals. A new Spanish-speaking program is also in the works, and King is hoping to expand into Mexico and Canada.

With Positive Presence, King wants to provide a service where youths can receive help from a mentor during a critical period in their lives. “Mentoring was once an organic process for humans,” she said. “Our goal is to bring that back. We believe we can change lives.”



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News Briefs

Bank drive-thru supported for old Pier 1 site

The former Pier 1 building at 733 Grand Ave. moved one step closer to new occupancy on May 20 when the Saint Paul Planning Commission's Zoning Committee unanimously recommended approval of a conditional use permit for a bank drive-through lane. The request for the drive-through will be reviewed by the full Planning Commission on May 28. Coulee Bank is the tenant, and it hopes to move into its new space, which is kitty-corner from its existing space, this fall.

The drive-through has the support of the Summit Hill Association with conditions. The SHA is concerned about drive-through traffic exiting onto Grotto Street and wants those safety concerns addressed. The city's planning staff is asking that vehicles queuing in the drive-through lane be managed in such a way that traffic does not back up onto Grand.

Pier 1 closed in March 2020, and besides occasional use as a seasonal store, the building has been vacant ever since. The property owners had wanted to divide the building between the bank and an unnamed restaurant. They had been in discussions with Panera, but that restaurant wants a drive-through lane, too. A plan unveiled earlier this year showed two drive-through lanes, but the second was set aside in the face of neighborhood opposition.

The Planning Commission received several letters in support of one or both drive-throughs and several letters against.

Council denies bid to close skyway for 3 years

The Saint Paul City Council on May 12 unanimously rejected a request from Madison Equities to close the skyway that connects its Park Square Court building to Mears Park Place for up to three years. Park Square Court, which has long housed businesses, is being converted to market-rate apartments or hotel rooms. Mears Park Place houses predominantly apartments.

The request was rejected by a skyway governance committee. Madison Equities tried to withdraw the request before the City Council vote after many people contacted city officials to oppose the closing.

Ward 2 council member Rebecca Noecker said the closing would cause a burden for downtown residents. While closings for construction are not unheard of in the skyway system, three years is longer than is usually allowed.

Some downtown residents with disabilities said that they rely on the skyway system and that the closing would create

problems for them to get to and from their homes and other destinations. Under current COVID-19 pandemic orders, skyways now close at 7 p.m.

Rezoning OK'd for West 7th, Saint Clair lots

Zoning changes that would allow two multifamily housing projects to move forward in the West End and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods were approved by the Saint Paul City Council on April 28.

The property at 1164 W. Seventh St. was rezoned from townhouse to multifamily residential to make way for a market-rate apartment building with 10-14 one-bedroom units. The property is now occupied by a building that had been used as sober housing.

The council also approved the rezoning of a vacant lot at 1291 Saint Clair Ave. from local business to Traditional Neighborhoods 3 to allow Hovda Properties to construct a mixed-use building. The lot was occupied for years by an electrical power substation.

Just Deeds helps remove property restrictions

Saint Paul property owners who want to remove old race-restrictive covenants from their properties may do so now through the Just Deeds program approved by the City Council last month. The covenants are legal clauses in property deeds that were used to keep people of color or certain religious faiths from owning and renting homes in particular areas of the city. They began showing up in the Twin Cities in the early 20th century and were outlawed in Minnesota and most of the United States in the 1960s. However, the language remains in many deeds, though homeowners may not be aware of it.

Saint Paul and other municipalities that are participating in the Just Deeds program are working with the University of Minnesota's Mapping Prejudice organization, according to Saint Paul City Attorney Lyndsey Olson. That group has mapped all of the properties in Ramsey County that have race-restrictive covenants, and it will work with homeowners in getting the covenants removed.

Several municipalities involved in Just Deeds are allowing property owners to remove the restrictive covenants free of charge. Saint Paul is working with Ramsey County to do the same. For more information, visit justdeeds.org.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.

Local projects fail to make CIB funding cut

BY JANE MCCLURE

Playground improvements at the Merriam Park and Homecroft recreation centers, replacement of the Walnut Street steps and filling a sidewalk gap along Marshall Avenue were among the local projects proposed by city departments that were shut out in the first round of Saint Paul's 2022-2023 Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process.

The city's CIB Committee began reviewing the projects on May 10. A total of \$22 million was recommended for funding over the two years, while nearly \$36 million in requests did not make the cut. A virtual hearing to hear public comments on the proposals is expected to be held on June 14.

No local projects other than deferred park maintenance were recommended. Past projects that had ranked highly also fell off of the list.

Under a newly streamlined process, neighborhood-generated projects vie for a share of \$1 million in CIB funding in even-numbered years. In odd-numbered years, a group reviews proposals by city departments and funding for annual city programs. The rankings are then released for public comments.

By the end of June, the CIB committee will forward its recommendations to the mayor. The City Council will then review the requests before voting at the end of the year as part of the city's 2022 budget deliberations.

The reviewing group recommended funding for the Hamline Midway Library, North End Community Center, Safe Routes to School for Bruce Vento

Elementary and deferred park maintenance, including new roofs or mechanical systems for the Merriam Park, Oxford, Dunning and three other recreation centers. Funding for those four projects totaled \$14.2 million over 2022-2023. No police or fire projects were recommended.

Funding for annual city programs totaled \$7.8 million for 2022-2023. The largest recommended project was \$3 million for citywide capital maintenance over the two years. Other programs recommended include citywide tree planting (\$660,000), outdoor sports court restoration (\$472,000), and bike/pedestrian and traffic safety projects (\$450,000). Children's play area improvements were left out (\$500,000), as were 14 individual projects.

Local projects that did not make the cut include the following:

- Randolph Avenue Bridge (\$765,000). Rehabilitation or replacement of the three-span, 170-foot long bridge over the Union Pacific Railroad near the Mississippi River is expected to cost a total of \$5 million.

- Homecroft playground (\$350,000). The play equipment has significant safety and accessibility issues that put it high on the list for replacement. The hope was to replace the play equipment, which is shared with the Saint Paul Public Schools, at the same time that school renovations were done.

- Marshall Avenue sidewalk construction (\$200,000). The intent was to fill the street's remaining sidewalk gap with a six-foot wide sidewalk on the south side of the street between Snelling Ave-

nue and Albert Street. Some trees would have to be removed and driveways modified in the process.

- Merriam Park improvements (\$1.5 million). The funds were sought to replace the 27-year-old play area and 16-year-old skate park. Merriam Park ranks third in need of improvements among the city's play areas. The skate park has had a master plan in place for more than a decade, but it has been unable to obtain funding in past CIB cycles.

- I-94 noise wall construction (\$101,000). Funding was being sought to build a noise wall along the south side of I-94 between Prior and Fairview avenues. The city funds would have matched \$900,00 from the state.

- Kellogg Mall Park (\$1.5 million). Renovation of the park was meant to support the city's River Balcony master plan and Capital City Bikeway along Kellogg Boulevard. The park has not seen significant work since it was extensively redone in 1989.

- Central District Police Station (\$9.6 million). Funding was being sought for a new Central District police building in the Rice Street area. Local residents have sought to replace an old rental facility for more than two decades. Central is currently housed in the police headquarters building at 367 Grove St.

- Walnut Street stairway (\$2.5 million). The city was looking to replace the stairway, which is adjacent to the James J. Hill House. The concrete stairs and adjacent brick wall were built in 1907. The city-owned stairway was closed last July when about 540 feet of the wall collapsed onto adjacent private property.

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VIEWPOINT

No, it's not business as usual at the *Villager*

BY MICHAEL MISCHKE

My office window no longer catches the morning's light but rather the afternoon's. Instead of papers piled up on every square inch of desk and countertop space in my old office, boxes of papers and books are stacked up against the wall waiting for their contents to be filed or shelved in my new office. Rather than the constant rumble of cars and trucks out front on Snelling Avenue in Highland Park, I hear only the constant chirping of birds in the trees off the alley behind Cleveland Avenue in Macalester-Groveland.

Other than that, it's pretty much business as usual at the *Villager's* new home.

Oh, but is it?

In reality, our recent move to 241 S. Cleveland Ave. signals a quickening of the process that began a little more than a year ago to reimagine the future of this neighborhood newspaper that's been in business since 1953.

In those early days of the pandemic, no one could predict the toll that the government's forced shutdown of businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools and houses of worship would exact. We did know that its impact on the *Villager* was both dramatic and immediate.

With the loss of a considerable portion of our advertising base due to the shutdown, the *Villager* responded by turning to our readers and advertisers for their support in the form of paid subscriptions. Thousands of you responded to that appeal, and especially at a time of economic uncertainty, we couldn't be more grateful for it. Hundreds of other people went above and beyond by making substantial donations. All of those readers and advertisers are now receiving the *Villager* in their mailboxes via the U.S. Postal Service.

However, tens of thousands more have yet to respond, likely asking themselves: "Why pay for a product that I've been continuing to get for free?" In fact, "I'll pay if that's the only way I can get it" is the most frequent statement we hear from those who have yet to subscribe.

Well, a year later, the *Villager* is not out of the woods by any measure, and as the time for renewing many of those annual subscriptions is upon us, we're going to need both renewing *and* new subscribers to come through.

As part of that effort to entice subscribers, the *Villager* has been rethinking how we can provide even greater value to our readers and advertisers. We think we've come up with it in a newly updated website that we're about to launch. The website at myvillager.com will continue to feature all of the news and information you've come to expect from the printed version, whenever you want it and on whatever electronic device you choose. However, there will also be even greater editorial content, a constantly growing archive of past editions, and an opportunity to sign up for free electronic newsletters with more timely content than an every-other-week printed publication can provide. Access to all of that will be available behind a paywall, free only to all subscribers.

The new website will also streamline a lot of back-office functions that will allow us to better serve readers and advertisers alike.

So no, it's not business as usual at the *Villager*. It's business as it must be if we're to continue to produce, and even enhance, what we believe to be the best neighborhood news source around. At a time when so many other publications have gone under or have greatly cut back on their editorial quality, we believe the *Villager* plays an even more vital role in the neighborhoods it serves.

We hope you agree. To subscribe to the *Villager*, visit myvillager.com or see our advertisement on page 3 of this issue for more information. And thanks.

Michael Mischke is the owner of the Villager.

INBOX

Fallout from Ford site lawsuit

Reporter Jane McClure did a nice job in her article about the lawsuit over the application of the definition of "open space" in the Ford site master plan (*Villager*, May 12). We thank her for her coverage of this issue. However, a few important points were not mentioned.

First, Judge Guthmann agreed, albeit in commentary, that based on the evidence produced at trial, it may be possible to conclude that the city of Saint Paul failed to perform an official duty imposed by law by interpreting "open space" to mean private rooftop balconies and decks. This is a key finding that the city has consistently denied.

Second, we learned that the 10-day administrative zoning appeal requirement in city code applies not only to zoning decisions but also to an intentional refusal to enforce the zoning code. Apparently, it is up to private citizens to track backroom meetings at City Hall and identify and formally appeal any shenanigans within 10 days.

We were glad to see that City Attorney Lyndsey Olson now recognizes the decade of community engagement (and likely millions of tax dollars) that went into the planning of the Highland Bridge site. Following the codified master plan that arose out of that engagement—and those expenditures—was all that we were advocating for in the first place.

The city is now working on a revised definition of "open space" for private parcels at the Highland Bridge site. We encourage citizens to get involved in this issue via the Saint Paul Planning Commission and the Highland District Council.

*Kate Hunt, Howard Miller and Jim Winterer
Highland Park*

Editor's note: The writers were all plaintiffs in the recent lawsuit regarding the Ford site master plan.

Who's the sheriff in town?

There's a dustup building between our sheriff in Ramsey County and the Saint Paul City Council. I knew Bob Fletcher when he was the lieutenant in charge of the Saint Paul Police Department's Burglary Unit and I was a community service officer assigned under him. He's a rootin'-tootin', hard-ridin', go-get-'em kind of lawman, that's for sure. But he also has a good and honest heart. This I know.

I can't say the same about the oh-so-proper City Council. They are an assemblage of tight-lipped, buttoned-up, starch-collared schoolmarms who want to take the sheriff behind the woodshed over his "Live on Patrol" YouTube videos. The "ladies" (that includes the two male council members) are upset that Bob never asked them for permission. Even worse, they have no authority over him in the first place. That's what's twisting their bloomers. Now, do they also have a hidden agenda? I'll take that bet.

And while I'm tossing my two bits into this pot, I have neither forgiven nor forgotten the City Council's duplicitous actions during ye olde trash cart affair. Nor how they caused former council member Dan Bostrom, another alum of the cop shop, to resign from their faculty. I was merely acquainted with Dan when he was a copper, but still knew that he was someone with integrity. His departure during the trash cart business was a loss to the East Side.

Now it's the Edgcombe Road sidewalk affair. The City Council wants to rule by edict, and when the residents object, they're not above using the old bamboozle. The council puts the shade in shady, which is ironic when their plan is to cut down all the shade trees.

*Regina Purins
Highland Park*

Development degrades charm

I have lived in Merriam Park since 1976. The new mentality of developers coming into my neighborhood and tearing down our 100-year-old homes is unconscionable. Many of us invested in the city when many others were fleeing to the suburbs in the 1960s and '70s. Our thanks is to raise our property taxes incredibly, a huge increase in crime as reported in this very newspaper, and tearing down homes for market-rate apartments.

A housing shortage? There is no housing shortage. There is a shortage of affordable housing. Will these expensive apartments built at the expense of our antique neighborhood address that? Absolutely not. They are market-rate apartments.

Many people are attracted to our antique city for its old charm. Building ugly cubist apartments that attract college students

drives people away and degrades our charm. If you developers want to build suburban buildings, go back to the burbs and build them there or go over to University Avenue, which is already compromised.

Shame on the City Council and other city leaders for allowing this to happen. The neighborhoods do not want this, and we are not being listened to.

*Nancy Hone
Merriam Park*

Schools should invest in solar

The Saint Paul Public Schools plans to spend more than \$500 million on school facilities over the next five years. Five local organizations are joining together to urge the school district to make greater use of solar and other emerging forms of energy. Currently, the school district makes little use of solar energy. Meanwhile, districts like Waconia and Forest Lake report saving more than \$200,000 per year by using solar panels while reducing their CO2 emissions.

However, it isn't just about cleaner energy and saving money. This issue is important in terms of racial equity. Energy insecurity affects almost one-third of Americans and an even larger proportion of people of color. It's clear that less expensive energy would be a huge benefit. We also want to see more opportunities for young people to learn about climate change, solar and other renewable energy sources and learn from those whose jobs are in the clean energy field.

We encourage readers to contact candidates for Saint Paul School Board and urge them to make the expansion of solar and other renewable forms of energy a top priority as the district spends \$500 million on its buildings.

*Elizabeth Dickinson, Saint Paul 350
Joe Nathan, Center for School Change
Clarence White, East Side Freedom Library
Ellie Leonardsmith, West Side Community Organization*

Conflict versus cooperation

When the news of the day includes a Martian rover with a helicopter, mixed-use projects like Lexington Station and the problems with homeless shelters, it illustrates the difference between groups seeking a common goal versus groups who are interested in taking care of themselves. In the latter case, mud slinging and tunnel vision lead to unhappiness on every hand.

As I read about Freedom House (*Villager*, April 28 and May 12), I ask myself, "Don't we realize the issues involved belong to everyone in this society?" Let's face it, the time will never come when everyone is housed. Barriers to employment along with mental illness will produce some level of homelessness. So the problem is to find locations for homeless arrangements. Downtown is a convenient choice for aid agencies, but for hardly anyone else. We have adult entertainment zones. Maybe homeless service zones would be the start of an answer.

We can engineer rocket boosters that land like in *Flash Gordon*. I think we can engineer an optimum siting of homeless services. But NASA would be helpless without a team spirit. Society needs that for its human issues.

*Jim Mork
Cooper, Minneapolis*

Complaining about scooters

How trivial it is that our neighborhood shows dismay over the return of electric scooters. Highlanders act as if the scooters are the worst thing to come to this neighborhood, while forgetting the positive impacts electric scooters have for users and the environment. While some users ride too fast, use sidewalks versus bike lanes and leave the scooters in inconvenient places, let's not forget the countless users who ride safely in order to save money, lower greenhouse gas emissions and have fun.

Could electric scooter companies do a better job at educating riders on proper usage? Of course. But the answer isn't to get rid of scooters. Electric scooters are here to stay. The city of Saint Paul has approved two vendors, Lime and Bird, for the use of their scooters this season, so we might as well get used to them. Instead of complaining about the negatives, let's show neighborliness by moving a scooter to the side if it's in the way, by smiling at scooter riders as they zoom by, by educating rather than reprimanding. If you have a concern, send complaints to the companies and local leaders rather than arguing about scooters on social media.

84 INBOX

We are fortunate that we have access to electric scooters, an eco-friendly alternative to gas-guzzling cars. Try it out for yourself. You might find that zipping through the neighborhood on an electric scooter allows you to forget your complaints, even if just for a few moments.

*Kadey Seeger
Highland Park*

River road to perdition

For his part in defacing mile upon mile of Saint Paul's beautiful natural river scenery with thousands of orange plastic traffic cones, I suggest that Mississippi River Boulevard be renamed the Mayor Melvin Carter III Memorial Construction Zone.

*Jack Maloney
Desnoyer Park*

Lay off the herbicides

On a spring walk through Highland Park, I noticed a local academy had applied herbicide to its grounds with the usual signs warning children and pets to keep off the lawn while the poison seeps into the ground and wafts through the air. Children go out to play at recess on these grounds. I called the school and was told it was standard practice across the city and perfectly legal.

How much consideration do school and city administrators have not only for their kids, whom they are poisoning, but for their neighbors? Schools, particularly, need to set an example and take the poisoning of their properties out of their budgets. What kind of biology lesson are we teaching our kids that poisoning our environment does anything besides poison us?

*Greg Nayman
Highland Park*

Note to Metro Transit

Any Metro Transit manager who thinks the present setup is going to entice drivers out of their cars and onto a bus or train is dreaming. I think I speak for many elderly people and for any who are classed as lame and halt when I say that the timetable for buses is insufficient and the recent removal of half of the bus stops along Grand Avenue has made for a downright painful experience for anyone who must use a cane or crutches when walking, not to mention those with strollers or lots of bulging shopping bags.

On a recent trip to a medical office on Smith Avenue, I had to walk one block further to the office and two blocks further from the office because of the removal of bus stops at Chestnut Street. Those were three painful blocks, as were those I walked to get to businesses between Dale Street and the next bus stop two blocks farther west.

When people are going to medical appointments on a bus, they conceivably have painful problems and would like some consideration in public planning. Ditto for people who are constrained to use the bus to do their shopping. Grand Avenue is a shopping avenue, and there should be stops on every corner to accommodate those who shop.

And why are there all those weird bumpouts at many bus stops? They force bus drivers to cut sharply left to get back into the traffic lane. Without the bumpouts, bus drivers could more gently merge into traffic. Who thinks up all these idiotic changes? Who doesn't think it's suitable to have a bus stop at the Highland Park Library entrance?

We need fare card machines that can be read in bright sunlight and fare-charging machines that won't freeze over in winter. We need sheltered places to sit at transit stops. And we riders would greatly appreciate hooks in shelters on which to hang our tote bags, to have a bit of respite while waiting for the not-nearly-frequent-enough buses.

*Kathleen Deming
Macalester-Groveland*

Thanks from Laura Jeffrey

I'm writing to celebrate one who has dedicated the last four years to supporting our students. An AmeriCorps member with Minnesota Math Corps, Gary Taruscio has focused on providing our students with extra practice and support to improve their math skills. Over the past four years, he has given a total of 3,600 hours to help our students succeed.

Gary works one-on-one or in small groups with students. With Gary supplementing the excellent work our teachers are doing in their classrooms, we've seen wonderful growth. He has been an invaluable part of our community. I especially have enjoyed watching him build strong relationships with the students he serves.

I couldn't let the school year end without acknowledging Gary and all he has done to support our students. As Gary moves on to his next adventure, we'll have big shoes to fill in the fall. If you're interested in joining our team as a math tutor, please visit readingandmath.net. And, if you happen to have a fifth-through-eighth-grader looking for a great school, check out Laura Jeffrey Academy.

*Jacob Bonde, Math Corps Internal Coach
Laura Jeffrey Academy
1550 Summit Ave.*

Moving forward with Carter

I don't think we've seen a mayoral candidate as capable as Mayor Melvin Carter. He's handsome, I love his smile, and I'm inspired by the way he speaks to the needs and hopes of our neighbors who have long been marginalized and disregarded. When it comes to the important stuff, I'm grateful for his broad and deep experience in education and executive leadership. I may not personally know people uplifted by his policies, but I believe we all do better when we all do better.

Early in his term, Mayor Carter recognized that our city must be prepared for a rapidly evolving and uncertain future—for things like climate change, a pandemic and social unrest. He developed a staff ready to address our deepest challenges and lead courageously with initiatives like the People's Prosperity Guaranteed Income Pilot Program. We're taking care of ash trees before they die and fall on buildings, and beautiful new housing is being added to the tax base, responding to some of the exploding demand, especially for people who want to live their life in an urban neighborhood instead of behind a windshield.

Let's keep moving forward with an experienced and progressive mayor who centers the voices we've long ignored. Think about how different the past year would've been if the focus was on monied lobbyists and nonstop frivolous lawsuits. I would've moved out of town.

*Ben Frank
Highland Park*

Not Mayor Carter's fault

Regarding Sue Shetka's letter ("Nothing but the best for city," *Villager* Inbox, April 14):

All cities have been hugely affected by people no longer commuting to work and school. Closures due to COVID are not limited to Saint Paul. Long before Melvin Carter became mayor, people called Saint Paul a ghost town at night. The whole world is observing the problem of the United States' refusal to honestly address the catastrophe we created by 244 years of slavery and subsequent racist practices. Naturally, the number of high-profile deaths from police shootings in the Twin Cities would cloud our livability ratings.

Personally, I continue to admire the genuine interest Mayor Carter has in making our city one in which all can prosper.

*Heidi Burris
Macalester-Groveland*

Support the pharmaceuticals

Like many Minnesotans, I have had a difficult year. It has been challenging to stay isolated at home and not see friends or loved ones. But thankfully, it won't be like this for much longer. Because of our incredible pharmaceutical advancements, we now have multiple vaccinations against COVID-19. By building on known scientific methods, these companies were able to develop critical treatments in less than a year.

As a physician assistant student, I have been fortunate to receive the vaccine and I no longer live in fear. I can't wait for life to return to normal. But our advancements in medical innovation cannot stop with these new COVID cures. We need biopharmaceutical companies to continue their work in developing treatments for all diseases. It is crucial that government continue supporting this industry. Our leaders have to remember that without the efforts of pharmaceutical companies, we would be nowhere near the end of the pandemic.

Now is not the time to consider policies that risk endangering the development of treatments and cures, like price-setting legislation. We need to support research and development to protect all Americans. Otherwise, we risk not only harming the patients of today, but those for generations to come.

*Kaia Carlson
Robbinsdale*

The Villager welcomes letters to the editor. They must be signed and indicate the neighborhood in which the letter writer lives. Send yours to the Villager, 241 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105, email it to letters@myvillager.com or submit it via our website at myvillager.com/editorial.

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Middle school considers dropping Governor Ramsey as its namesake

Public invited to discuss change at June 3 forum

By CASEY EK

Ramsey Middle School may have a new name as early as this fall. A committee of teachers, students, parents and school district staff is recommending the change to the Saint Paul School Board.

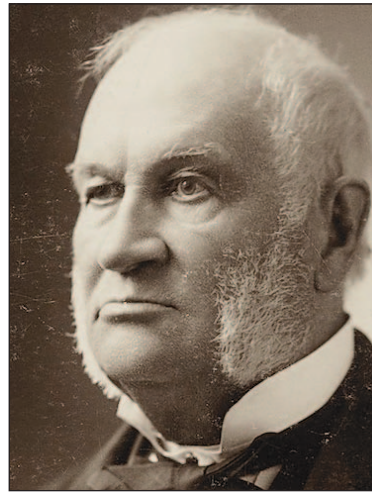
The grades 6-8 public school at 1700 Summit Ave. is named for Alexander Ramsey, Minnesota's first territorial governor and second governor following statehood in 1858. Historians credit Ramsey with being the first governor to commit troops for the Union cause in the Civil War. A former mayor of Saint Paul, Ramsey later served as a U.S. senator and U.S. Secretary of War. However, his dealings with Native American tribes in Minnesota have come under increasing attack.

"I think the name of the school should be changed because Alexander Ramsey was a horrible person who did horrible things to people," said Lahna Hedin, a Ramsey seventh-grader, in a video presentation at the April 13 Saint Paul School Board meeting.

"I feel like we can't have any school spirit (with the Ramsey name)," said eighth-grader Faduma Ali in the video.



Ramsey Middle School staff and students invite alumni and others in the community to comment on a proposal to rename the school at 1700 Summit Ave., which is currently named in honor of Minnesota's second governor, Alexander Ramsey (above).



Another Ramsey student who identified herself as American Indian said she has seen students poke fun at other American Indian students at the school.

Kiernan Baxter-Kauf, a seventh-grader and member of the Ramsey student council, said she and other students want to distance the school from its namesake to create a more inclusive environment. "We have lots of kids from different backgrounds, and the goal of our school is not just to learn math and history, but to become good persons. Alexander Ramsey did not have the quality of being a nice human being."

As territorial governor from 1849-53, Ramsey negotiated treaties between the U.S. government and Minnesota's Dakota tribe, including

the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux in 1851. Ramsey was Minnesota's governor from 1860-63. In 1862, war broke out when small bands of Dakota attacked white settlements and government outposts in southwestern Minnesota. Many of the factors that led to the war were directly related to the treaties Ramsey helped negotiate and to the U.S. government's failure to comply with their terms, according to the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS).

More than 600 white people were killed in the six weeks of the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. All but 120 of them were unarmed men, women and children, according to the MHS. Close to 100 Dakotas were killed in the war. Another 38 were executed for their role in the war, and 130 to 300 Dakota people died from dis-

ease and harsh conditions while interned that winter in a concentration camp outside of Fort Snelling.

Ramsey has been faulted for advocating the extermination or exile of the Dakota people from Minnesota after the war.

Surveys conducted last November and December at Ramsey School showed that 87 percent of students and 93 percent of staff members were in favor of the name change.

Ramsey principal Teresa Vibar said that the prospect of changing the middle school's name has been discussed for years. However, more recent events such as the death of George Floyd while in Minneapolis police custody last May have made such conversations more pressing, according to her.

Whether or not the school's

name is changed, Ramsey students will continue to learn about the role Alexander Ramsey played in Minnesota history, Vibar said. "While (Ramsey) might have done great things, we learn from our history," she said.

Renaming the school would cost an estimated \$11,000, according to Vibar, much of that for new signage, and the signs could be installed in conjunction with improvement projects for the building that are already planned for next year.

The Ramsey committee invites the public to weigh in on the proposed name change in an online forum at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 3, via Zoom. To access the link, visit spps.org/domain/17585. A subcommittee continues to work on the process for recommending a new name for the school, Vibar said.

School Board member John Broderick urged district and school administrators to gather as much testimony as possible on the proposed change. "Other than closing a school, changing the name may be the most emotional thing that can happen to a school," he said.

Ramsey alumnus Nancy Breeding said she has fond memories of the school she attended in the 1960s. She said she would prefer the school remain Ramsey because she associates the name with those memories. However, she added, "if they have good reasons for wanting to change the name, then a little progress never hurt anyone."

Policy would designate zones for homeless day shelters across city

By JANE McCLURE

Day shelters that provide a place for people who are homeless to relax, shower, eat and access other services could be allowed in parts of Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland and other Saint Paul neighborhoods if a zoning policy change is approved by the City Council. The public can weigh in on the proposed zoning changes at a virtual hearing before the city's Planning Commission at 8:30 a.m. Friday, May 28.

The ordinance would allow new day shelters within a half mile of any overnight shelter for homeless people. Interfaith Action opened an overnight facility for homeless families earlier this year at the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet's former Provincial House at 1880 Randolph Ave.

The Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee learned of the possibility for a new day shelter in Highland Park at its meeting on May 18. Although the HDC was given ample time to review and

vote on a conditional use permit for the overnight shelter at the former Provincial House, it did not have time to notify people or take a position in advance of the Planning Commission's May 28 hearing, according to executive director Kathy Carruth.

Senior city planner Bill Dermody told the HDC committee that it is "quite unlikely" that a day shelter would open in Highland Park or Macalester-Groveland because of the underlying zoning and existing structures. Other neighborhoods within a half mile of

an overnight shelter for homeless people are in downtown, the West Side, East Side, Como and Payne-Phalen neighborhoods.

Currently, the city's zoning code only allows day shelters as an accessory to another use, such as an overnight shelter. The exceptions are Listening House in Dayton's Bluff and Freedom House in the West End. Listening House won a court case against the city and is considered an accessory use to the

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School Notes

Al Johnson, an administrator with the Saint Cloud Area School District who has previous experience in Saint Paul and Hopkins public schools, has been named the new principal of Henry Sibley High School in Mendota Heights, effective July 1. Johnson succeeds Ron Monson, who served as Sibley's principal for seven years and is retiring on June 30. Johnson is finishing his seventh year with Saint Cloud. He currently is principal of the McKinley Area Learning Center. He has also served as principal of Saint Cloud Apollo High School and the district's director of equity services. Johnson holds a masters of organizational leadership degree from Northwestern University of Saint Paul and is completing research for a doctorate in education at Bethel University.



principals' Association's Saint Paul Division. She was recognized by colleagues statewide on April 15. Jones has been working in the Saint Paul Public Schools for 25 years as a teacher, assistant principal and now principal at the school where she had her first teaching assignment. She was noted for her leadership in schoolwide practices and her continuing commitment to racial equity. She also is a vocalist with the Grammy Award-winning Sounds of Blackness musical ensemble.

Mitchell Hamline School of Law, 875 Summit Ave., recently announced that all students, staff and faculty must be fully vaccinated to be on campus for the fall semester, effective August 1. The school's summer session will include some in-person classes, with more in-person classes scheduled in the fall. For more information, visit tinyurl.com/emaemfz8.

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave., will offer a six-week class on the Gyl beginning on June 19. (There will be no class over the July 4th weekend.) The Gyl, which is sometimes referred to as the African xylophone, is the traditional instrument of the Dagara people of northern Ghana and Burkina Faso. The cost of the class is \$100. Register at info@womensdrumcenter.net.

Saint Thomas Academy won the David Ricardo division of the Minnesota Economics Challenge. The team members included seniors Thomas Moser, John Grismer, Garrison Solliday and Chip Knapp of the school's Econ team. The national competition was set for May 20-24. The winning team will receive \$1,000, and each student and their coach from the top four teams will receive a medal.

The Saint Paul Public Schools announced on May 12 that it will receive approximately \$334 million in federal funding for COVID-19 response efforts and to address long-term student outcomes that have been affected by the pandemic. Students in the school district have been back in their classrooms for several weeks following the implementation of distance learning in March 2020. Elementary students returned to in-person learning on February 1, and secondary students on April 14. Part of the school emergency relief funds must be used to address learning loss, which may include summer learning and before- and after-school enrichment programs.

Bobbie Johnson, the principal of Jie Ming Mandarin Immersion Academy in Highland Park, was one of three finalists for the 2021 Minnesota National Distinguished Principal. This marks the 37th year that the award has recognized elementary and middle-level principals who set high standards for student achievement. Johnson considers the growth of Jie Ming to be among her proudest accomplishments. The bilingual school started in 2011 with a single kindergarten class of 19 students. The current enrollment is more than 370, making Jie Ming one of the fastest-growing elementary schools in Minnesota. Visit mespa.net/ndp.

Saint Paul Public Schools will provide meals at no cost to all children ages 18 and younger, and those with a disability currently enrolled in a school program, through the upcoming summer. More information, including home delivery options and school pickup locations, will be available soon at spps.org/2021meals.

Global Language Institute, 340 Cedar St., has permanently closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The accredited language school operated for 30 years and was owned by Sheila Hoffman of Macalester-Groveland and Mary Guion of Como Park. It taught English to international and local students, and also offered summer camps and training for au pairs and professionals.

The Saint Paul School Board approved a policy on April 26 to provide weighted grades for high school students taking college-level equivalent courses, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, concurrent enrollment, Postsecondary Enrollment Option and articulated college credit opportunities. Grades awarded in those courses will be multiplied by a factor of 1.25. For information, visit spps.org/boe.

Chreese Jones, the principal of Global Arts Plus School, 810 Palace Ave., has received the 2021 Division Leadership Achievement Award for the Minnesota Elementary School Prin-

10 DAY SHELTERS

church in which it is located. Freedom House is being operated in a former fire station at 296 W. Seventh St. under an emergency ordinance related to COVID-19. When the pandemic is over, it will have to close without the passage of the new zoning ordinance.

The ordinance that is under consideration would allow Freedom House to remain in place because it is located within a half mile of Catholic Charities' overnight shelter downtown. However, like other day shelters, it would need to obtain a conditional use permit from the city.

Freedom House is open from 8 a.m.-8 p.m. daily and often serves as many as 100 home-

less clients in a day. While it has won praise for meeting a great need, local businesses and residents have complained about panhandling, public intoxication, vandalism, theft, public urination and other anti-social behavior on the part of its clients.

Under the proposed ordinance, the number of visitors to a day shelter would be limited to the beds at the nearby overnight shelter. The former Provincial House has 39 beds.

To obtain a link for the virtual hearing on May 28, visit tinyurl.com/zk52erv9 and scroll down to the meeting for May 28. For more information on the proposed ordinance or on how to submit a written comment, contact Dermody at 651-266-6617 or Bill.Dermody@ci.stpaul.mn.us.



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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Burglary—A commercial break-in was reported on the 700 block of South Cleveland Avenue at 11:10 p.m. Sunday, May 2.

—A burglary was reported on the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue at 2:10 p.m. Wednesday, May 5.

—A residential break-in was reported on the 1300 block of Murray Street at 12:30 p.m. Friday, May 7.

—Burglaries also were reported on the 500 block of Brimhall Street on May 11, and the 1200 block of East Maynard Drive on May 12.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive on April 29, and the 1800 block of Bohland Avenue on May 12.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 2000 block of Randolph Avenue on May 11.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 1800 block of Sheridan Avenue at 9:52 p.m. Sunday, May 2.

Miscellaneous—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 1600 block of Ford Parkway on May 1, and the 2000 block of Bohland Avenue on May 2.

Lexington-Hamline

Robbery suspects arrested—A pair of robberies at gunpoint ended with three arrests and two loaded handguns recovered after the suspect's vehicle was discovered in the Midway Target parking lot at 9:40 p.m. Tuesday, May 18. About an hour earlier, an 18-year-old man had called 911 to report he had been robbed near Orange Avenue and

Maywood Street by armed suspects driving a Toyota Camry. About 10 minutes later, police were dispatched to the 100 block of Winnipeg Avenue where a 27-year-old man also said he had been robbed at gunpoint. The suspects and vehicle matched the description from the previous incident. A felony traffic stop ensued after the vehicle was discovered at Target and two males and one female were arrested. Two loaded handguns, including one with an extended magazine, were found in the vehicle.

Burglary—A commercial burglary was reported on the 1300 block of University Avenue at 5:23 p.m. Thursday, May 6.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—A residential break-in was reported on the 1500 block of Grand Avenue at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, May 2.

—Commercial break-ins were reported on the 1500 block of Grand on May 9, and the 1300 block of Randolph Avenue on May 10.

—A burglary was reported on the 1500 block of Grand Avenue at 9:03 a.m. Monday, May 10.

Theft—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 2000 block of Fairmount Avenue on Tuesday, May 11.

Mendota Heights

Burglary—A burglary was reported on the 1000 block of Highway 13 at 8:57 a.m. Tuesday, May 11.

Theft—Catalytic converters were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1300 block of Northland Drive on May 9, the 1400 block of Highway 13 on May 11, and the 2400 block of Lexington Avenue on May 12.

—Copper was reported stolen from an air conditioner on the 1600 block of Lilydale Road during the evening of May 10-11.

Merriam Park

Burglary—Burglaries were reported on the 1900 block of Ashland Avenue on April 30, and the 900 block of East Lynnhurst Avenue on May 1.

—Commercial break-ins were reported on the 1600 block of University Avenue on May 4, and the 200 block of North Cleveland Avenue on May 7.

Theft—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 300 block of North Prior Avenue on April 29, and the 1700 block of Ashland Avenue on May 2.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of North Wilder Street on May 1, the 1900 block of University Avenue on May 4, and the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue on May 9.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 1800 block of Laurel Avenue on May 1, and the 1500 block of Saint Anthony Avenue on May 8.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 1700 block of Ashland Avenue at 3:27 a.m. Tuesday, May 11.

Snelling-Hamline

Theft—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 400 block of North Snelling Avenue on Saturday, May 1.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 1400 block of University Avenue at 1:15 a.m. Monday, May 10.

Summit Hill

Burglary—A commercial break-in was reported on the 700 block of Grand Avenue at 5:13 a.m. Tuesday, May 4.

Miscellaneous—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 1100 block of Grand Avenue at 7:13 p.m. Tuesday, May 4.

Summit-University

Robbery—A convenience store was robbed at gunpoint on the 800 block of Selby Avenue at 5:30 p.m. Monday, May 3.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on Summit and Western avenues on May 1, the 900 block of Marshall Avenue and the 300 block of Virginia Street on May 5, the 400 block of Ashland Avenue and the 900 block of Marshall on May 6, and the 200 block of Marshall on May 7.

—Items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on Dale Street and Portland Avenue on May 6.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 800 block of Selby Avenue at 2:02 a.m. Sunday, May 2.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on Victoria Street and Marshall Avenue on May 2, on Selby Avenue and Grotto Street on May 4, and on the 300 block of Laurel Avenue on May 8.

West End

Burglary—A commercial break-in was reported on the 200 block of West Seventh Street at 3:37 a.m. Sunday, May 2.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of Michigan Street on May 1, the 700 block of Bayard Avenue on May 3, and the 900 block of Watson Avenue on May 4.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 700 block of West Seventh and the 200 block of Grand Avenue on Thursday, May 6.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 600 block of South Lexington Parkway at 11:28 a.m. Wednesday, May 5.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 900 block of Randolph Avenue at 10:57 p.m. Thursday, May 6.

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ON THE TOWN

Chasing Abe's ghost

Klecko's collection leads readers in search for the spirit of Lincoln

BY ANNE MURPHY

When he signs copies of his new collection of poetry, *Lincolnland*, Summit Hill author Danny Klecko writes not only his name but what he considers to be the book's mantra, "Find your ghost."

"People oftentimes need a loving shove," he said. "All of us have questions, and I firmly believe the world will be more peaceful if we all get the answers we desire."

Searching for answers is what led Klecko to write *Lincolnland*. In much the same way, searching for solace inspired Klecko's previous collection of poetry, *Hitman-Baker-Casketmaker*. Published in 2019, that book was written in response to the closing of Klecko's three-decades-old Saint Agnes Baking Company. He was forced to shut down the bakery after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement found that more than 20 of his longtime employees were illegal immigrants ineligible to work in the U.S. Klecko is working now as the executive baking director at Grandma's Bakery in White Bear Lake.

Of his new poetry collection, he said, "I suspect my interest in Lincoln was similar to many people's. However, that changed a couple of years ago when I went to D.C. for the first time. I saw many of the traditional landmarks, but Ford's Theatre captivated me. When you walk in the gift shop, there's a tower two stories high of Lincoln books next to a placard that announces, 'After Jesus, more books have been written about Lincoln than anyone else.' We learn about Lincoln's

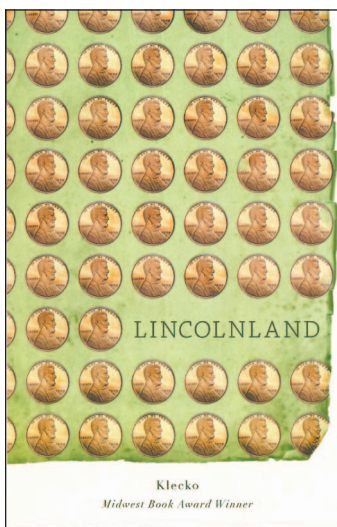
assassination (at Ford's) when we are kids. In the theater, something overtook me. It was the beginning of an obsession.

"Lincoln steered this country through a civil war, while the Union was undermanned, underfed and on the verge of bankruptcy. He was a miracle worker. Like most people, I've had situations where I didn't have a good hand to play, but gosh.... Bookies were giving odds as to whether Lincoln would even make it to the White House after his election. I admire his courage and perseverance. Like many people, my life has been checkered with setbacks. The main thing I learned from Lincoln was that to be successful in life, the best thing you can do is move forward and try to unify people."

Klecko said he wrote *Lincolnland* as a diary that includes visits to places where Lincoln has a presence: his home and burial place in Springfield, Illinois; Mount Rushmore in the Black Hills of South Dakota; and Council Bluffs, Iowa. "My Lincoln itinerary grew organically," he said. "One thing that many people don't consider is that Lincoln never traveled further west than Council Bluffs. (Traveling from) D.C. to Iowa is doable."

It was in Iowa that Klecko felt Lincoln's presence most strongly. "Many presidents and members of royalty have gone on record as having seen Lincoln's ghost," he said. "I wanted to experience that as well. The strongest presence I felt was in Clermont, Iowa, where I made contact with his ghost. When you're an American president and make that claim, people smile. But when you're a baker...."

"I believe ghosts to be very natural," Klecko said. "They're everywhere and surface



Summit Hill poet Danny Klecko has published his second collection, *Lincolnland*. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

periodically like wind. Trust me, I'm not a New Age guy, but natural is natural.

"My process is to live life and when interesting things manifest, I text myself notes. Sometimes I write them up that night and other times I have to sleep with them or think about them while mixing bread dough."

"I have a history of poets calling my work prose, and prose writers referring to it as poetry," he said. "To be honest, it doesn't matter to me. They're words. They're strung together to create a response, not a critique. In many ways, *Lincolnland* qualifies as both. It's actually a book of poetic micro stories."

"In the end," Klecko said, "there are only two kinds of poetry, good and bad. I do love brevity in literature. It's the best way to make contact with the reader. I've never been a fan of adjectives or physical descriptions. Let the reader define the focal points and purposes. When you allow them that, their experience will be personalized."

An unexpected focal point in *Lincolnland* is the late introduction of former Beatle John Lennon, who like Lincoln was assassinated and who, Klecko learned, was also a baker. Klecko writes about Lennon's life and death and about a dream he had: Klecko is alone on a rooftop in London and he hears a piano. Lincoln is at the piano, and he is playing the Beatles song, "Let It Be." Singing the chorus, he changes the lyric: "There *won't* be an answer, let it be."

For Klecko, Lincoln and Lennon "put their money where their mouth was and forfeited their lives trying to place love on its axis. In Lincoln's second inaugural address, his message was clearly pointed at unification. My favorite part of the speech is at the close when he states, 'With malice toward none, with charity for all.' MLK echoed those same sentiments. JFK did as well. John Lennon used this logic in his peace campaign."

A similar captivation is behind a new book Klecko is now penning. "I'm a huge F. Scott Fitzgerald fan," he said, referring to the native Saint Paul novelist. "In fact, I live in a Summit Avenue mansion catty-corner from where he wrote his first novel. My next book is about a Saint Paul baker who takes the scepter from Fitzgerald and learns how to harness the green light from *The Great Gatsby*." The green light at the end of the Long Island dock in Fitzgerald's novel is considered to be a symbol for one's hopes and dreams.

During his *Lincolnland* tour, Klecko journeyed from D.C. to Rockville, Maryland, and spent time at F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald's grave site. "The following day, I drove to Baltimore and visited the last house the Fitzgeralds lived in together," he said. "Then I went to the Owl Bar and drank gin rickeys with the Balto locals."

Gin rickeys were a favorite of Jay Gatsby's Long Island crowd. They were also looking for answers.

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ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Theater

WonderLand, a spinoff of *Alice in Wonderland*, will be performed as steampunk dance theater by Collide Theatrical on weekends from May 29 through June 20 at two outdoor locations. The drama is set at a first-rate mental institution run by Dr. Andrew Knight, who is tasked with treating a man who suffers from severe anxiety disorder, a young woman with body dysmorphia and an older woman with narcissistic rage. Intended for adults, the story about friendship and acceptance was created by Regina Peluso. It stars Rush Benson, Renee Guittar, Brian Bose, Miranda Shaughnessy, Heather Brockman and Jarod Boltjes. May show times are 4 and 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 and 5 p.m. Sunday outside of the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. June shows are at 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday outside of the Mill City Museum, 704 Second St. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$36-\$22. Visit collidetheatrical.org or call 651-395-7903.

Books

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host free online readings and discussions with authors Jordan Ellenberg and his book, *The Hidden Geometry of Information, Biology, Strategy, Democracy and Everything Else*, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 1; James D'Amato and his book, *The Ultimate RPG Game Master's Worldbuilding Guide*, 7 p.m. Friday, June 4; Benjamin Percy and his novel, *The Ninth Metal*, 7 p.m. Monday, June 7; Caseen Gaines and his book, *Footnotes: The Black Artists Who Rewrote the Rules of the Great White Way*, 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 8; Shawna Kay Rodenberg and her memoir, *Kin*, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 10; and Michael Kleber-Diggs and his poetry collection, *Worldly Things*, 7 p.m. Monday, June 14. Visit nextchapterbooksellers.com.

SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will host free online readings and discussions with authors Mary Casanova and her historical novel, *Waterfall*, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 1; and Ames Sheldon and Mary Logue and their novels, *Lemons in the Garden of Love* and *The Street*, respectively, 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 16. Visit subtextbooks.com.

Exhibits

Multimedia works by 40 members of the Minnesota Artists Association are on display through June 27 in the North Gallery at Landmark Center. Landmark Center is now open during the prepandemic hours of 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays, until 8 p.m. Thursday, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. The center's American Association of Woodturners Gallery is open

from noon-4 p.m. Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and from noon-7 p.m. Thursday. The Schubert Club Music Museum will be open during those same hours when it reopens June 10 after an extensive renovation. Face masks are still required in Landmark Center. Visit landmarkcenter.org.

The Sibley Historic Site, home of Minnesota's first governor, Henry Sibley, at 1357 Sibley Mem. Hwy. in Mendota, will open for the summer on May 29. Hour-long tours will begin at 1, 2, 3 and 4 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday. The cost is \$7, \$6 for seniors, \$5 for children ages 6-17. Tour sizes are limited for proper social distancing. For reservations, call 651-452-1596 or visit dakotahistory.org/sibley-historic-site.

Walking tours in and around downtown Saint Paul will once again be offered free of charge this summer by Landmark Center. The free tours step out at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. The schedule includes the Rice Park area on June 2 and 16 and the Great River Tour along the mighty Mississippi on June 9 and 23. Tours are limited to 10 participants, and reservations are required. COVID protocols will be observed. Visit landmarkcenter.org or call Sydney at 651-292-3063. Virtual tours are available anytime at landmarkcenter.org.

Music

The Minnesota Orchestra's series of free online concerts will continue with "Remembrance and Reflection" at 8 p.m. Friday, May 28, featuring conductor Osmo Vänskä and violinist Karen Gomyo in works by Shostakovich, Saint-Georges, Simon and Mahler; and "Radiance and Light" at 8 p.m. Friday, June 11, featuring pianist Juho Pohjonen and Vänskä in works by Haydn, Chopin and Saint-Georges. The latter concert is open to a limited in-person audience. Visit minnesotaorchestra.org.

Bach-Tage 2021, a recital, lecture, discussion and performance featuring Bach's Cantata 85, will be streamed online by Mount Olive Music and Fine Arts at 4 p.m. Saturday, June 5. Performers include organist David Cherwien, vocal soloists and the Bach-Tage Orchestra under the direction of Kathleen Romey. Visit mountolivechurch.org.

Classical guitarists Samuel Hines, Wade Oden, Milena Petkovic and Benjamin Kunkel will perform compositions by Sor, Ponce, Rodrigo and others in a Minnesota Guitar Society concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, June 5, on the society's YouTube channel. The concert is free, though donations are welcome. For reservations, visit mnguitar.org.

A mix of old and new solos, duos and trios will be performed on June 11 and 12 by Baroque musicians Paul Jacobson and



In A Pickle. Sally Wingert stars as Doris, a woman whose state fair pickles are disqualified for the second year in a row and she wants to know why in the Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company's production of *A Pickle*. Based on actual events, the new play by Deborah Yarchun is running May 27 through June 19 at a variety of outdoor locations. Show times are 7 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and 1 p.m. Sundays. For tickets, call 651-647-4315 or visit mnjewishtheatre.org. In conjunction with *A Pickle*, the theatre will offer free Zoom programs on How to Pickle Vegetables with Doris Rubenstein and Jeanne Markell of the University of Minnesota Extension Service at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 1; and State Fair Food Over the Years: What's Changed? at 7 p.m. Monday, June 7. To register for the Zoom links, call 651-647-4315.

Immanuel Davis on flauti traversi and Donald Livingston on harpsichord. The concerts will be live-streamed via Zoom at 7 p.m. Friday and 11 a.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$10, \$5 for students. For more information or reservations, visit lyrbaroque.org.

Dance

An American in Paris, a ballet by Peter Davison based on the Gene Kelly movie of 1951, will be performed on June 5 and 6 by Ballet Co.Laboratory at Como Lakeside Pavilion, 1360 N. Lexington Pkwy. Brimming with references to the iconic dance moves of the era, *An American in Paris* is a timeless story of passion and self-discovery. Show times are 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$35, \$25 for seniors and students. Audiences and performers will be masked, and seating will be distanced. For reservations, visit balletcolaboratory.org or call 651-313-5967.

Masterworks by Loyce Houlton and Lise Houlton and a world premiere by choreographer Elayna Waxse will be performed by Minnesota Dance Theatre in a live-stream at 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 11, and on demand

through June 13. MDT professionals Brennan Benson, Katelyn Boche, Elissa Fonseca, Adrián Pastén, Solana Temple and Zachary Tuazon will be joined by new members Sarah Jordan, Jared Kelly and Jacob Lewis. Music will be provided by singers Bradley Greenwald and Jennifer Baldwin Peden, pianist Tom Linker and saxophonist Jeff King. For tickets, priced at \$20-30, visit thecowlescenter.org or call 612-206-3600.

Family

Make the Saint Paul Public Library your destination for summer fun and learning. Summer Spark, a series of outdoor and virtual events, reading challenges and book giveaways for children teen-age and younger, will run from June 1 through August 31. Stop at any Saint Paul public library branch to register and pick up activity and reading logs and a book to keep. Complete 10 activities or 10 hours of reading and earn a color-your-own bookmark. Complete 20 activities or reading hours and earn a journal and pen. Among the activities are outdoor story strolls where participants walk from one oversized storybook page to the next; Take and Make Kits with art materials to create in the great outdoors; and online performances by storytellers, jugglers, magicians and others. Participation is free of charge. For more information, visit spppl.org/summer or call 651-266-7000.

Canceled last year by COVID-19, the Ordway Center's Flint Hills Family Festival will return in June with both virtual and in-person events. The virtual festival from June 1-12 will feature free recorded programs, activities and workshops by such favorites as Dan & Claudia Zanes, Squonk Opera, the Native Pride Dancers and House of Dance. The in-person event will take place outside of the Ordway on June 4 and 5 with socially distanced performances by the Okee Dokee Brothers, Sonia de los Santos and Chicks on Sticks at 6 p.m. Friday and 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$10. For more information or to attend a virtual show, visit flinthillsfestival.ordway.org.

Train Days, a celebration of the heyday of the railroad, will be held from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, June 5 and 6, at Saint Paul's Union Depot. Historic rail cars and locomotives will be displayed. Vendors will be selling model trains and train-themed photography, souvenirs, toys and apparel. Educational programs, a video and photographic history of trains and interviews with railroad aficionados will also be featured. Refreshments will be available. A scavenger hunt, coloring stations and craft activities will be offered to children. Admission is free. For information, visit uniondepot.org.

THE KIOSK

FRIDAY/MAY 28

PERSONAL STORIES of recovery from mental illness will be shared in a free online program from noon-1 p.m. Sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the presentation is intended for people who are part of a faith community. To register, visit namimn.org and click on "classes."

THURSDAY/JUNE 3

MEMORIAL BLOOD CENTER will be accepting blood donations from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. in the gymnasium at Linwood Recreation Center, 860 Saint Clair Ave. Sponsored by Sarah Kinney and Brian Wagner of Coldwell Banker Realty, the blood drive will follow all COVID safety protocols. To make an ap-

pointment, visit tinyurl.com/bf3byznk.

MIDWAY PEACE PARK, 416 N. Griggs St., will be the site of a tree and shrub planting event from 4-6 p.m. Join the Trust for Public Land, Tree Trust and Friends of Midway Peace Park in this voluntary effort. No experience is necessary. To register, visit tinyurl.com/7yf82vw5.

SATURDAY/JUNE 5

THE NATHAN HALE CHAPTER of the Daughters of the American Revolution will hold a wreath-laying ceremony at 10:30 a.m. in Nathan Hale Park, 401 Summit Ave. The public is invited. The ceremony will mark the 266th anniversary of the birth of this hero of the American Revolution, a soldier

and spy for the Continental Army who was captured and executed by the British in 1776.

TUESDAY/JUNE 8

THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB will gather this evening for a three-mile hike around Lake Nokomis. The hike will begin at 7 p.m. in the concessions parking lot 5075 W. Lake Nokomis Pkwy. in Minneapolis. New members are welcome. Call Sharon at 651-207-5926.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 9

A PRIDE MONTH webinar on society's treatment of LGBT people through history will be offered from 7-9 p.m. by World Without Genocide. Panelists include state Senator Scott Dibble, Judge Tara Kalar of

the state Department of Human Services, transgender rights advocate Ellie Krug and human rights fellow Caitlin Schweiger. The cost is \$10, \$5 for seniors and students. To register, visit worldwithoutgenocide.org.

THURSDAY/JUNE 10

"THE SECOND-GENERATION Experience," a program on how the children of Holocaust survivors can better understand their parent's trauma and how that trauma influenced their own development, will be offered from 7:30-9 p.m. by the Jewish Family Service of Saint Paul. The free Zoom session will be led by therapist Beth Johnson and nurse Bonnie Jaffe. To register for the link, call 651-313-6623 or email jsaltzman@jfssp.org.

SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Return to normal for prep athletes

First, they got the word that players could take off their masks while competing. Now, as the spring seasons head for their climax, there's a sense that high school sports are slowly returning to their old routines.

By the time most people read this, prep athletes will be immersed in sectional play. In baseball, Central has won its third Saint Paul City Conference championship in four seasons. Highland Park, which tied with Central for the softball crown last year, claimed it outright this year. The difference was Highland's 9-5 win over Central on May 10.

Central also finished second in boys' tennis. Its sole conference setback was a 6-1 season-opening loss to undefeated Harding.

Track and field boils down to City Conference finals on May 25-27 at Harding. It's the same for boys' golf, when all players were set to tee it up on May 24 at Keller Golf Course.

Last winter, section play was held on the home courts and fields of the top seeds. Softball and baseball will do that for the first couple of rounds this spring, but the semifinals and finals will be held on neutral sites with paid admission.

"There aren't a lot of options," noted Central athletic director Treacy Funk. "It's also a chance to make a little money."

Like a lot of athletic directors, Funk watched coaches closely as they got back in gear this spring. "It was really hard because several kids hadn't played for two years," she said. "It took a while for coaches to get reacquainted and see what they had to work with."

One negative of taking classes online due to the pandemic was some schools saw a drop in numbers on their spring rosters. "You had kids who hadn't been coming to school," Funk said. "A lot of them also didn't play last summer. We're hoping the numbers pick up again this fall."

Funk was asked about the experiment with winter section games being played on-site. "I liked the atmosphere," she said. "I think it can be a better experience."

Basketball was no problem because every school has a gym. Hockey can be trickier getting ice time, but it seemed to work just fine this year.

The Minnesota State High School League had to do a little scrambling, but things are falling into place for state tournaments in June. Boys' tennis goes first from June 8-11 in Saint Cloud and Prior Lake. Softball in North Mankato and golf at various courses around the state will follow from June 15-16. Track and field is moving from Hamline University to

WRIGHT CALL ►16



Cadet Asa Rapp reaches high for a bunt to advance teammate Colin Walsh during STA's 4-2 win over Hastings on May 17. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Swinging for sections

Defense is blueprint for success of STA baseball

BY BILL WAGNER

It hasn't been easy this season for the Saint Thomas Academy baseball team, which is back on the field again for the first time since winning a state title two years ago. However, the Cadets could still be a force to be reckoned with when the section playoffs begin this weekend.

STA was 11-6 overall and 10-5 in the Metro East Conference through May 19. The Cadets had cracked the list of the top 10 teams in Class AAA, but still hadn't figured out how to best conference rivals Hill-Murray and Mahtomedi. Despite dual losses to both of those schools, coach Jon Engeswick was hopeful that the best was yet to come.

"Everyone has settled in with their roles and what's expected of them," he said. "We're further along than we might have thought we'd be at this point. It'll be fun to see the kids really come together in sections."

The Cadets also were 11-6 at this point of the season in 2019 when they went

on a tear to win the state AAA championship. However, they never got the opportunity to defend the title last spring after the season was canceled due to the pandemic.

The Cadets have rung up some quality wins this year. Engeswick cited a 5-4 walk-off victory over Henry Sibley in which they rallied from a three-run deficit in the seventh inning. They also posted a 6-1 win versus North Saint Paul and a 3-0 victory over South Saint Paul by overcoming some high-caliber pitching.

This year's team doesn't have a lot of fence-busters who can drive the ball for distance or flamethrowers on the mound. However, it does have other ways to get the job done.

"Our defense and our team speed are really good," Engeswick said. "And our pitching is coming around. Our pitchers have good control."

The Cadets' pitching staff, which consists entirely of right-handers, has a bona fide ace in senior Zach Klemz. Sophomore Mike Miller and senior Charlie Steel are right behind him to

make for a solid starting rotation.

Engeswick doesn't demand that his starters go all seven innings, but he does want to see them go four or five. And he likes them to throw the ball over the plate and let the team's rock-ribbed defense do its work.

"As we all know, there's no defense for the base on balls," Engeswick said.

The STA bullpen enlists the arms of seniors Liam Brennan, Ben Taxdahl, Tristin Thilmany and Jacob Zenner. Thilmany is foremost a catcher and the veteran starter is nimble behind the plate. He also makes good contact with the ball and leads the team in hits. Miller backs him up at catcher.

Taxdahl is stationed at first when he isn't pitching, and shows a lot of power. He usually hits third or fourth in the batting order.

Second base is split by sophomore Asa Rapp and senior Colin Walsh, who both provide solid defense. Engeswick said it comes down to whose bat is "hot at the

STA BASEBALL ►16

Malek brothers keep teeing up wins for Highland golfers

BY BILL WAGNER

Brothers Jack and Caden Malek might go about their business on a golf course differently, but they achieve pretty much the same results.

Jack is a senior and Caden is a sophomore at Highland Park High School. Together, they've been the low scorers for a Scots team that was undefeated in dual meets through May 18. Their coach, Gary Podas, likes what they both bring to the links.

Jack, the Scots' No. 1 player, has been logging a 77 average for 18 holes, while Caden has been shooting between 78-80 most of the time. In five dual meets this spring, one of the two has been the meet medalist with the overall lowest score.

The way each of them gets there, though, is different. Podas put it this way: "Jack is a grinder. He's dedicated and he works hard at it. Even if he doesn't have it on a particular

day, he's going to still find a way to post a decent score. Caden has imagination. He knows how to think his way around a golf course."

Whereas Jack is a seasoned varsity golfer, Caden played tennis until switching sports this spring. At first, the transition wasn't very smooth. "He couldn't hit it anywhere," Podas recalled.

But that didn't last. Before long, Caden had added about 60 yards to his drives and was hitting the ball about 270 off the tee, Podas said. Caden said he owes his new power to weight training for hockey, which both brothers also play for Highland.

"It made me stronger," Caden said. "I could tell that my hitting was going to be better, but my short game is still what I do best."

Podas said that both Maleks have an outstanding short game. They both also work at Highland National Golf Course.

Jack earlier this spring logged his first career eagle at Highland versus Humboldt, where he

was the medalist with a 38. He relies heavily on his ability to work his irons and chip it close onto the greens. And he's a good putter, too.

He doesn't let it bother him if he gets off to a little slow start, either. Like, say, at the first tee. "It's tough if your first shot isn't very good, and then you have to dig out for the first two or three holes," Jack said. "You just have to stay with it and not try to do too much too quickly."

Caden is proud of his putting as well. He drained a 30-footer at Phalen Golf Course against Johnson on May 11, in which he was the medalist with a 38. He also was clutch in a crucial meet versus previously undefeated Central on May 18, emerging as medalist there with a 40.

He has no second thoughts about his move from one varsity sport to another. "I still like tennis," Caden said, "but I'm convinced I made the right decision when I went for golf."

Despite his youth, he has been taking on a

leadership role with the Scots. "When you go out and put up good scores, it encourages other players on the team to do the same thing," Caden said.

When it comes to coaching, Jack said Podas approaches the game differently, depending on the circumstances.

"He lets us alone when we're playing in matches," Jack said. But during practices, the veteran coach likes to send his players out in rotating groups of three or four and run them through in-match scenarios.

The Maleks both say that they follow closely as each other's scores come in, but there's a minimum of rivalry between them. "We're quite positive and supportive of one another," Caden said.

The Saint Paul City Conference tournament was set for May 24 at Keller Golf Course, and the Section 4AAA tournament is scheduled for June 2-4 at Bunker Hills.

15◀ WRIGHT CALL

Saint Michael from June 17-19. No site has been determined for the lacrosse tournaments on June 15-19.

Baseball had to make some adjustments. The Class AAAA quarterfinals and semifinals have traditionally been played at CHS Field in downtown Saint Paul. However, the combination of the Saints playing more games as a Triple-A club for the Twins and the Twins needing it for other activities have made scheduling there difficult. As a result, the AAAA quarterfinals and semifinals are headed to Chaska from June 15-16. AAA will be nearby in Jordan, while A and AA will convene in Saint Cloud. The state finals in all four classes are set to be played on June 18 at Target Field in downtown Minneapolis.

Highland AD fills in where needed

As Highland Park athletic director Pat Auran found out this spring, the ramifications of the pandemic extended far and wide. Officials for varsity events are assigned by the various associations that handle the sports. Junior varsity and ninth-grade games, however, are often another matter. A lack of available officials forced Auran to expand his supervisory role to include calling balls and strikes at several of the Scots' JV baseball games this spring.

"I used to umpire high school games years ago," Auran said, "and I still had all my gear. I told the coaches in advance that it would be a big strike zone. The coaches understand it's important to keep the game moving."

Auran acknowledged, with a laugh, that the players didn't always see it that way.

Although it wasn't the primary reason for doing so, it also saved the Scots the \$80 fee an umpire would normally get for working a game. "Because of COVID restrictions, we're supposed to provide supervision at home games anyway. I just took that to a different level," Auran said.

Fortunately for him, none of the games he worked were as outrageous as the Scots' varsity game against Harding on May 5. That afternoon, it looked bleak for the home team when the Knights scored nine runs in the top of the fourth inning to



Lucas Pawlicki, 9, carries the ball while pursued by Henry Fox during a flag football game on May 2 sponsored by Capital City Football at Cretin-Derham Hall. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

take a 21-6 lead.

Then Highland started hitting...and hitting...and hitting. The Scots scored 13 runs in the bottom of the fourth to cut the lead to two runs. They added a run in the fifth and poured on five more in the sixth for a 25-21 win.

It was a game to remember—for one team anyway.

Auran was naturally pleased with the final result. However, as an occasional umpire he noted sadly, "It took three hours and 23 minutes."

Capital City Football initial season a success

Chuck Miesbauer sounded like a proud papa. One of the guiding lights of the Capital City Football MN league whose season recently concluded, the Cretin-Derham Hall head

football coach was pleased with the final results.

"We had six teams at four levels," Miesbauer said. "It went for four weeks and each team got to play eight games."

The youngest level saw kindergartners and first-graders playing flag football. The other three levels—grades 2-3, 4-5 and 6-8—played in a 7-on-7 league. The relatively new tackle bar was used at the upper levels. The youngest-level teams had eight players, while the upper ones had 10-12 kids.

"We ended up with about 250 players," Miesbauer said. "It was a good mix of kids from private and public schools. I think it all went very well."

Miesbauer hopes to team up with nearby youth football associations to form a second league this fall. Before that happens, however, he's hoping to get CDH's 2021 high school football schedule in place.

"Every day in the lunchroom, I probably have five kids ask me if I know the schedule yet," he said. "All I can say for sure is the first practice is August 16."

The culprit is football's districting plan. The member schools of the various districts have changed this year and athletic directors are still working to get an eight-game slate in place.

For most schools, this isn't a big problem. However, with no football stadium on the CDH campus, Miesbauer has to go shopping once he knows his schedule. For years, CDH has played at O'Shaughnessy Stadium at the University of Saint Thomas. But with the Tommies moving to Division I this fall and not in possession of its own schedule yet, the stadium's availability is unknown.

Thus, the Raiders need to stay in contact with schools like Macalester, Hamline, Concordia and Northwestern—all of which have lighted fields—to see what kind of arrangements can be made. It's further complicated because Saint Agnes, which also doesn't have a stadium on campus, has been playing home games at Hamline and Concordia ever since Midway Stadium was demolished.

"I'm hoping to know who and where we're playing in the next couple of weeks," Miesbauer said.

Dave Wright can be reached at dwright53@msn.com.

15◀ STA BASEBALL

time" when determining which one starts.

At short is senior captain Jordan Young, who has a lot of tools at his disposal. "He has an amazing glove and range," Engeswick said. "He's fast and has a good arm."

Young was also leading the team in hitting with a .412 batting average.

The third baseman is senior captain Joe Middleton, another good contact hitter with skills as a leadoff batter and a solid glove.

Senior center fielder Angelo Pacyga was leading the team in runs scored and was batting .353. He has good speed and gets a good jump on the ball in center.

Junior speedster Bobby Cunningham plays right field, while left field is more of a coop-

erative effort, with Klemz, Zenner, senior Joe Brennan and Cunningham all taking turns.

The designated hitter is senior Simon Kotok who contributes a good on-base percentage.

Junior backup catcher and pinch hitter Keegan Cashill and senior backup first baseman Tim O'Brien provide strength as utility players off the bench.

Engeswick said he's pretty close to figur-

ing his team out and it all boils down to defense. "We've done well in games in which we haven't had errors," he said.

It's the blueprint he hopes will take his team on a good run into the Section 3AAA playoffs that start May 29. That would constitute quite a season when one considers that out of the 15 seniors on the team, 12 had never played in a varsity game before this spring.

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Taste of Ward 3: Encore—The Highland and Macalester-Groveland district councils and the Highland Business Association conducted a month-long promotion of restaurants in Saint Paul's Ward 3. Submit your receipts by June 1 for orders placed at restaurants in Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland between April 22-May 22. Every two receipts will be eligible for one entry in a drawing for gift cards. For information, visit tasteofward3.com.

Donations needed—A blood and donation drive will take place on Friday, June 25, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The event is being conducted by Memorial Blood Center, Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul, Highland District Council, Highland Business Association, Macalester-Groveland Community Council and Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation. Drop off full-sized personal care items (shampoo, conditioner, bodywash, body lotion, toothpaste and deodorant) anytime between 10 a.m.-3 p.m. The items will be donated to the Project Home shelter at the Provincial House on Randolph Avenue. To donate blood, sign up on the HDC website or Facebook page.

Homeless Services Zoning Study—The Saint Paul Planning Commission is conducting a public hearing at 8:30 a.m. Friday, May 28, regarding draft zoning code amendments pertaining to the Homeless Services Zoning Study. Included in the proposed changes is new language around the location and capacity of homeless services facilities in the city. Learn more and get the meeting link at bit.ly/StpZoningCode.

Saint Paul parking study—The city of Saint Paul is reviewing changes to off-street parking requirements. Planning staff have proposed two options—reduce and eliminate—for the city's Planning Commission to recommend to the City Council for adoption. Learn more at bit.ly/ParkingStudyStp. Questions can be sent to city planners Tony Johnson and Menaka Mohan

at ParkingStudy@stpaul.gov.

Business of the Month—Kim's Kitchen is being featured as the Highland Business of the Month for June. Located on Randolph Avenue, the family-owned Chinese restaurant has been located in Highland since 2009. Read an interview with the owner on the HDC website.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 3; and Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 8. All HDC meetings are currently being held online via Zoom. Links to access the meetings are posted on the HDC's website. Visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Mac-Grove Fest—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council has received a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board for the 2021 Mac-Grove Fest and is currently looking for talent, sponsors and volunteers to participate in the event. Possible activities include stage performances, interactive activities and art exhibitors. Stipends are available for the artists. Mac-Grove Fest will be held from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, September 11, on the fields of the Edgcombe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. For more information, visit macgrove.org/what-we-do/macgrovefest.

Council openings—There currently are openings for a Grid 5 board seat and an at-large faith representative on the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's board of directors. The council also has three standing committees that meet once a month. Visit macgrove.org/committees for more information.

Show your neighborhood pride—Macalester-Groveland T-shirts can still easily be ordered online for home delivery. The shirts come in kiwi green, heather indigo blue and dark heather gray in a variety of sizes. Visit macgrove.org/tshirt.

Upcoming online meetings—Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, May 26; Inclusivity Task Force on

Thursday, June 3; and board of directors on Thursday, June 10. All three meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. For information, visit macgrove.org/participate.

Office closed—The community council office remains closed. Email mgcc@macgrove.org for more information.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Board update—At its meeting on May 10, the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation board of directors supported variances for the construction of two duplexes on a vacant lot at 300 Banfil St., following a recommendation of support from the Transportation and Land Use Committee. Also at the meeting, the board voted to endorse a rent stabilization initiative that Housing Equity Now Saint Paul is trying to place on the November ballot. The proposed policy would limit rent increases to 3 percent in any 12-month period. The board approved waiving the 45-day notice period and supported a liquor license request by ROK Eatery at 882 W. Seventh St. Board members also heard a presentation about the Riverview Corridor modern streetcar line by Ramsey County, which will hold an open house on the topic in June.

Book discussion circle—West End residents are invited to read *Me and White Supremacy* and participate in a virtual book group discussion from 6:30-8 p.m. on Wednesdays in June via Zoom. Register by May 26 by visiting the website.

Upcoming Zoom meetings—Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 2; Joint Riverview Task Force 6:15 p.m. Thursday, June 3; board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, June 14; and Community Engagement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 17. For details and log-in information, go to fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

Stay in touch—People are invited to "like" the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation on Facebook and subscribe to its e-newsletter on its website.

CLASSIFIEDS

SPECIAL EVENTS

OUTDOOR WALKING group. Meet on Monday mornings at 10:00 AM outside the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Parkway. Contact Liz, 651-698-7019.

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Next Issue: June 9 Deadline: June 2

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF MINNESOTA CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable consumers to be able to identify the true owner of a business. 1. List the exact assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted: Cheribums Garden 2. List the Principal Place of Business: 1219 Deerfield Drive, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55119 USA 3. List the name and complete street address of all persons conducting business under the above Assumed Name, OR if an entity, provide the legal corporate, LLC, or Limited Partnership name and registered office address: Gao Lor; 1219 Deerfield Drive, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55119 USA 4. I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized 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. 5. This certificate is an amendment of Certificate of Assumed Name File Number: 1222320500021 Date filed: March 15, 2021 Signed by: Gao Lor Mailing Address: 1219 Deerfield Drive, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55119 USA Email for Official Notices: cheribumsgarden@gmail.com

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This bungalow is a versatile urban home and is much larger than it appears! A beautiful home for entertaining and for every day living! Almost 3000 finished square feet, yet it has a cozy feel. GoodCompanyRealtyGroup.com

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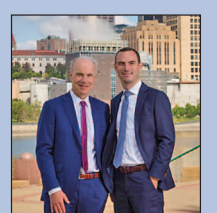
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1631 HAGUE AVENUE

With thoughtful renovations throughout, this turn-of-the-century Merriam Park home captures all of the original details & charm while providing modern updates and amenities to enjoy. Walkability factor a 10!

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952-486-3697 • \$449,900



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1732 BEECHWOOD AVENUE

Very special 2BR, 1BA late '40's bungalow is perfect starter/retirement alternative. Absolutely charming & meticulously maintained w/formal living & dining areas plus eat-in kitchen. Improvments include, kitchen, bath, windows, landscape & more. Exceptional curb appeal, private porch & patio. Call Lolly for details!

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1146 MARSHALL AVENUE

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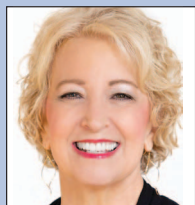
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