

## St. Paul scales back its expectations for Midway superblock

### New plan projects fewer amenities near stadium

By Jane McClure

Potential changes to the development of the largely vacant “superblock” around the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium in Saint Paul’s Midway area are outlined in an update of the alternative urban areawide review (AUAR) for that long-awaited redevelopment effort. The new Minnesota United Stadium and Mixed-Use Urban Village AUAR revises a document drafted in 2016. Among the changes are more apartments, but a reduction in hotel rooms and new office and retail space, a smaller park area, fewer parking spaces and the presence of a large dynamic display screen.

Staff from various city departments worked with consultants from Stantec and SRF on the updated AUAR, which addresses the block bounded by Pascal Street and Saint Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. Notice of the new AUAR was published on December 20 in the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) Monitor. The comment period on the document expired on January 5. If the Metropolitan Council and other state agencies do not object, city staff can approve

MIDWAY SUPERBLOCK ▶3



**No foolin’, that’s a lot of snow.** Like many of us, this sculpture at the University of Saint Thomas appears to be stunned by the amount of snow that we have already received this winter—and it’s only January. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Saint Paul’s pitch for extra 1% sales tax en route to state Capitol

### Proceeds earmarked for fixing poor streets, maintaining parks

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul City Council voted 6-1 on January 4 to add an extra 1 percent sales tax to its 2023 legislative agenda. The tax is anticipated to generate about \$984 million over 20 years and is seen as a way to address a growing backlog of street and parks maintenance needs in the city. If approved by the Legislature, the sales tax proposal would be put before voters as part of a citywide referendum.

Ward 7 council member Jane Prince cast the lone vote against the tax, citing several concerns. One is that the city is also lobbying for an increase in Local Government Aid (LGA) dollars this session, and she does not want the issues to cancel each other out. Prince also cited complaints the council has heard about the city’s 15 percent increase in property taxes for 2023 and that business groups were not given enough time to comment on the sales tax proposal.

Prince agreed that the city has many deferred maintenance needs, noting that past mayors between 1994-2005 chose not to raise property taxes. Maintenance was often the first thing cut from city budgets. “It was a can that was kicked down the road by mayors for 12 years,” she said.

However, council president Amy Brendmoen said the city should go for everything it needs when making requests to state lawmakers. Other council members said the tax is an opportunity for the city to cover the costs of badly needed

SALES TAX INCREASE ▶4

## New president Vischer aims to strengthen UST’s ties both near and far

By Anne Murphy

As Rob Vischer begins his tenure as 16th president of the University of Saint Thomas, he is thinking a lot about sense of place. That includes everything from the university’s relationship with the surrounding community to its status well beyond.

“It’s important to recognize that Saint Thomas is not just in the neighborhood, it’s of the neighborhood,” said Vischer, who assumed his new position on January

1 after serving as interim president following the departure of Julie Sullivan last year. Prior to that, Vischer was dean of the University of Saint Thomas Law School for 10 years.

“I spent 17 years (at the law school), and I learned a lot as a teacher, a scholar and a leader. I have great lifelong friendships there, and I’ll be back frequently. I’ll continue to do whatever I can to support the law school’s upward trajectory even as I work to steward the university as a whole.”

Dr. Amy Goldman, vice chair of UST’s

Board of Trustees, led the school’s nationwide search for a new president. She said Vischer’s selection “is emblematic of the university’s mission. Saint Thomas is poised to be a leader with great intellectual firepower. Rob will lead with his head and his heart to be a wonderful president. Under him, Saint Thomas will be an even more tremendous asset to Saint Paul and Minnesota.”

Vischer grew up near Chicago. He earned a bachelor’s degree in political science at the University of New Orleans in 1993

and his juris doctorate in 1996 at Harvard Law School. There, he was an editor of the *Harvard Law Review*. After graduation, he served as a clerk for three federal judges and as a corporate litigation associate. Before joining the Saint Thomas Law School as an associate professor, he was an assistant professor at Saint John’s University’s School of Law in New York.

One focal point of his presidency at Saint Thomas will be fostering stronger relations

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# Commission will advise St. Paul on righting wrongs to Black residents

By Jane McClure

Applause broke out among supporters who braved a winter storm on January 4 to watch the Saint Paul City Council unanimously approve a new commission to explore the reparations that could be made to residents who are descended from those who were enslaved in the United States prior to the Civil War.

Saint Paul must “never go backward” in trying to right past wrongs,” said Jane Prince, the City Council member who led the efforts to establish the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission.

The commission is tasked with recommending ways the city can repair the harm that has been inflicted on Black residents whose ancestors were slaves. As an advisory to the mayor and City Council, it will study the systemic racism that resulted in disparities between Blacks and other racial groups in the areas of homeownership, generational wealth, education, employment, health care and criminal justice.

The commission will recommend short- and long-term policies and programming issues regarding reparations. It will look at city spending with an eye toward racial equity. It will also look at how to pay for reparations. Suggested sources include philanthropic donations and taxes on the sale of recreational marijuana if that becomes legal in Minnesota.

The commission will have 11 members appointed by the City Council in the weeks ahead. Following a staggered start, commission members will serve three-year terms. Membership is open to all Saint Paul residents. The goal is to draw from a diversity of neighborhoods, races, cultures, ages, abilities, incomes and sexual orientation. The commission will meet monthly and prepare an annual report.

The idea of racial reparations moved to the forefront following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020. The City Council took its first steps to addressing past wrongs when it issued a formal apology to those affected by institutional racism in 2021. Those steps included forming an exploratory task force.

The task force recommended direct cash payments as a form of reparations. Mayor

Melvin Carter has proposed creating a fund that would grant up to \$100,000 in forgivable loans that former residents of Saint Paul’s Rondo neighborhood could use to improve their house or make a down payment on a new house. That program is expected to be reviewed by the City Council this year.

Although efforts to provide reparations have stalled at the federal level, several states are studying them. Evanston, Illinois, was the first city to pass a reparations measure, providing \$25,000 to direct descendants of Black residents impacted by discriminatory city housing policies between 1919 and 1969. Evanston leaders passed the measure in 2021 and use a tax on the sale of legal marijuana to pay for it.

Saint Paul officials have not indicated what form reparations could take here. In other cities, reparations have ranged from direct cash payments to changes in public policy.

More than two dozen people attended a December 21 public hearing on the reparations commission. More than a dozen others submitted written comments. Some opponents questioned the potential costs in light of already high property taxes. Others wondered whether Native Americans are also entitled to reparations. However, most of the testimony was in support of the commission.

Trahern Crews, who is credited with bringing the reparations issue forward in Saint Paul, told the City Council, “you guys are setting an example for the rest of the country with what you’re doing here.”

The Reverend Carl Walker also spoke in favor of the commission. His family was among those who lost their homes and businesses when I-94 was constructed through Saint Paul’s predominantly Black Rondo neighborhood in the 1960s. Those losses and the allegedly inadequate compensation for those losses has long been a sore point in the city’s Black community.

“We wanted stability. We were told we had to move,” Walker said.

Longtime Summit-University resident Sharon Garth agreed with those who said there was insufficient compensation for the Rondo residents whose houses were marked for demolition. She said the loss of homes had a “lifelong impact” on Black families.

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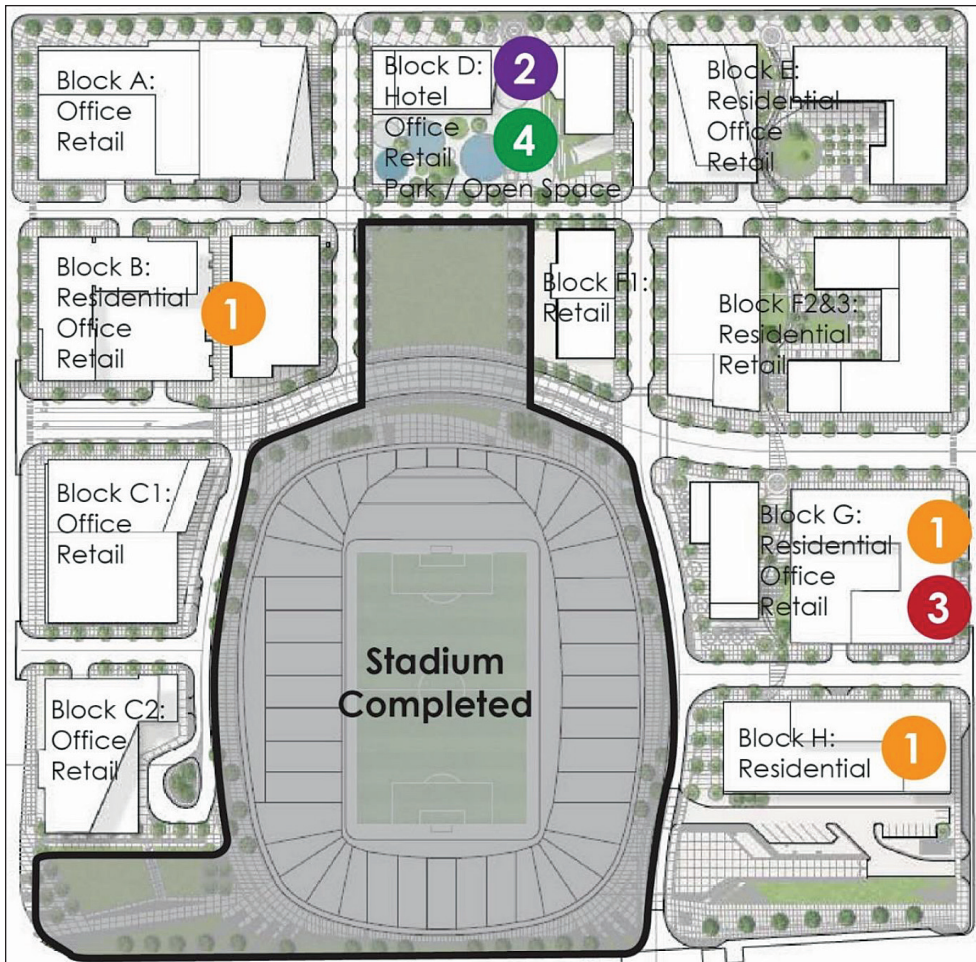
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This diagram for the proposed master site plan for redevelopment of the Midway superblock around Allianz Field at Snelling and Saint Anthony avenues indicates areas where changes are expected: more apartments (1), fewer hotel rooms (2), less commercial development (3), and less park space (4).

**1◀ MIDWAY SUPERBLOCK**

the new AUAR and use it for another five years.

AUARs outline various issues that could arise due to site redevelopment and how those issues could be mitigated. These include potential impacts on traffic, wildlife, water resources, historic resources and air, light and noise pollution. It is used to examine the cumulative impacts of development scenarios to inform decisions on the development and related infrastructure.

Senior city planner Josh Williams said that any formal objections would likely center on a specific issue or issues that need more analysis or mitigation. The city and the objecting agency would then have to work out a solution before the AUAR can be approved.

Anyone can comment on an AUAR, but only the specific agencies involved get a response before the final document is approved. Members of the Union Park District Council's land use and transportation committees said they were not made aware of the AUAR update.

The first AUAR for any project is a pre-development document outlining how a project could affect the surrounding community. The AUAR is then updated every five years until the project is completed. The Midway project was one of the first in Saint Paul to use the AUAR process. Other projects that have been the focus of AUARs include the redevelopment of the former Ford Motor Company assembly plant in Highland Park.

The 20,000-seat Allianz Field is the lone development on the superblock since the first AUAR was completed. Redevelopment of the rest of the block has not happened. What remained of Midway Center's long-time strip mall was torn down following a fire in June 2020 that was believed to be related to the civil unrest that followed the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police.

The Big Top Liquors store was also torched in the civil unrest and it, too, has been demolished. A McDonald's restaurant and a small multi-tenant building are all that still share the block with Allianz Field.

The proposed AUAR update includes the city's 2016 master redevelopment plan and a 2020 redevelopment vision. In 2020, Midway development team leader

*The plan for a 400-room hotel in 2016 has been reduced to 100 rooms in the 2020 plan. The 1,000,000 square feet of office space and 421,100 square feet of retail space in 2016 have been scaled back to 802,680 square feet of offices and 241,425 square feet of retail space in 2020.*

and Minnesota United soccer team owner William McGuire said a changing economy was driving possible revisions to the site plan. However, the 2020 revisions were never approved by the city, so the 2016 AUAR is still in effect.

The proposed Minnesota United Stadium and Mixed-Use Urban Village AUAR makes a host of changes to the 2016 AUAR. The 2016 plan called for 620 multi-family dwellings. The 2020 plan envisions 948 apartments. The plan for a 400-room hotel in 2016 has been reduced to 100 rooms in the 2020 plan. The 1,000,000 square feet of office space and 421,100 square feet of retail space in 2016 have been scaled back to 802,680 square feet of offices and 241,425 square feet of retail space in 2020.

The 2016 plan called for a new park area to extend from the stadium all the way to University Avenue. The 2020 plan has commercial development on that block of University.

The heights of new buildings have been reduced from a range of 70 to 290 feet to a range of 35 to 230 feet. Off-street parking spaces have decreased from 4,720 in the 2016 plan to 3,204 in the 2020 scenario.

One new idea that would require a city zoning change is a proposal to place a large dynamic display screen on the superblock. The screen would be used for various programming, including community movie nights, performances live-streamed from community festivals, public service announcements, advertisements, visual art, and live broadcasts of Minnesota United's home and away soccer games.

To read the entire 61-page AUAR, visit [stpaul.gov/departments/planning-and-economic-development/planning/snelling-midway-redevelopment-site/snelling](http://stpaul.gov/departments/planning-and-economic-development/planning/snelling-midway-redevelopment-site/snelling).

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# LGA boost, Kellogg Bridge top St. Paul's legislative priorities

By Jane McClure

Increasing its allotment of Local Government Aid (LGA) from the state will be the city of Saint Paul's top priority during the 2023 session of the Minnesota Legislature. The City Council approved the city's 24-page legislative agenda for 2023 on December 21. The session began January 3.

The city's 2023 budget anticipates nearly \$73 million in LGA, an increase of about \$900,000 compared to 2022. Christian Taylor, the city's director of intergovernmental relations, said that appropriation must increase to help the city meet its needs.

"We have the largest unmet LGA need in the state," Taylor said. "We'll be fighting hard for that."

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has calculated that the statewide need for LGA funding for 2023 is \$767.9 million, while the current funding level is \$564.4 million. Saint Paul leaders want to see that gap closed. They are also pushing for inflationary adjustments to the LGA formula.

LGA accounts for about 19.5 percent of Saint Paul's general fund revenues for 2023. LGA was reduced by legislators at least twice in the last two decades. LGA received by the city fell to its lowest point in 2010 at around \$50 million.

The next highest priority for Saint Paul is bonding, as a bonding bill was not passed

by the 2022 Legislature. The city's top bonding priority is \$26 million for the Kellogg Boulevard Bridge near RiverCentre. The second is \$26 million for the Park at RiversEdge. (See story on page 5.)

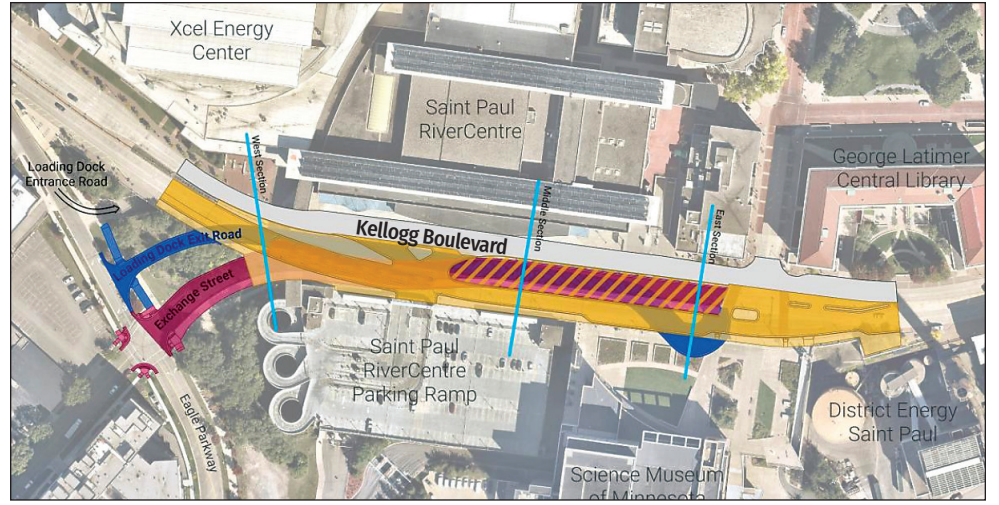
Taylor said Mayor Melvin Carter is a strong supporter of downtown and riverfront redevelopment. "We believe that funding our (Kellogg) bridge and the park concurrently is a strong step in that direction," he said.

The city's third bonding priority is \$290 million for the Great River Recreation and Environmental Education center at Watergate Marina. Fourth is \$12 million for improvements to the Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, fifth is \$13 million for redevelopment of the Hillcrest Golf Course, and sixth is \$8 million for the North End Community Center.

Taylor said the city is also supporting nonprofit bonding requests, including a \$5.65 million request for a new Playwrights' Center in the West Midway, \$3.9 million for the East Side Freedom Library, \$5 million for the Sanneh Foundation, and an unspecified amount for the Rondo Land bridge over I-94.

"Many of us expected a bonding bill last year," Taylor said. It is unclear yet whether state lawmakers will bring forward a bonding bill in 2023 or if other ways to fund capital projects will be brought forward.

A third focus of the city's legislative agenda is state support of efforts to build



Saint Paul's highest bonding priority on its 2023 legislative agenda is \$26 million for the Kellogg Boulevard Bridge near RiverCentre. The project area is more than 1,000 feet long.

more affordable housing, preserve existing affordable housing and provide tenant protections. Funding to rehabilitate Public Housing Authority buildings and to provide more supportive and senior housing are also sought.

"Housing will always be a priority for the city of Saint Paul," Taylor said.

Efforts to aid the city's homeless population through state assistance for more supportive services, shelter options, permanent housing and other forms of aid will continue. Taylor said the city will work with the county and its Heading Home Ramsey project to help provide service and support for the homeless.

Other areas of focus for the city include support for initiatives for public safety, libraries, parks, youth jobs, early childhood programs and education, and first responders. Continued state support to combat emerald ash borer is also a focus.

Among the public safety initiatives is support for the League of Minnesota Cities' proposal to crack down on those who steal catalytic converters. The focus is on making it harder for scrap metal dealers to purchase the items without proof of ownership. Taylor said the statewide effort was initiated by Saint Paul leaders.

The city is bringing forward a similar initiative regarding the sale of copper wire. Hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of wiring is stolen from city street lights every year.

Another legislative effort involves changes to the state's Open Meeting Law to make it easier for groups like the city's Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals to meet virtually. They were able to meet virtually during the pandemic as part of the city and state public health emergencies.

## 1 SALES TAX INCREASE

brick-and-mortar improvements.

City Public Works director Sean Kershaw and Parks and Recreation director Andy Rodriguez gave council members an overview of the proposed 1 percent sales tax and what it would cover on January 4.

Saint Paul has had an additional half percent sales tax in place since 1993, with the funds going toward neighborhood and cultural projects, and RiverCentre improvements. Voters rejected a similar tax in 1999 when city leaders tried to bring a Minnesota Twins stadium here.

The city's current sales tax is 7.875 percent, while Minneapolis' is at 8.025 percent. The proposed 1 percent increase would make Saint Paul's one of the highest

local sales taxes in the state, tied with Duluth at 8.875 percent.

Mayor Melvin Carter announced the sales tax proposal in late December. He and city department heads outlined the prospect of spending \$738 million to rebuild parts of 25 city arterial and collector streets. Another \$246 million would be used to address Parks and Recreation maintenance and new facilities needs.

Area streets identified for work include Grand Avenue, Summit Avenue, Hamline Avenue, Shepard Road, Cretin Avenue, Pelham Boulevard, Cleveland Avenue, Marshall Avenue and Kellogg Boulevard.

Parks projects called out include restoration of existing facilities and proposed new ones, including the Mississippi River Learning Center, downtown river balcony,

downtown parks, a multi-field athletic complex, and a new athletic complex and aquatics facilities on the city's East Side.

Ward 2 council member Rebecca Noecker said she is hearing from constituents wanting to know why other projects cannot be covered. Kershaw and Rodriguez said specific projects have to be spelled out before the tax request can go to the Capitol.

Kershaw said a sales tax does not affect basic needs, such as groceries and clothing. It can be seen as less regressive than property taxes and a more equitable way to address funding needs.

The city's deteriorating street conditions have been called out in recent reports. "Arterials and collectors are on a 124-year replacement cycle, and it should be 60 (years)," Kershaw said.

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, Hospitality Minnesota and other groups are raising red flags about the proposed sales tax increase, and are asking why it was not discussed with them before the mayor unveiled the idea.

Kieran Wells, who owns Wells Pianos at 408 S. Snelling Ave., is among small business owners who are wary of more sales taxes. "I can't predict whether or not it's going to be the business killer that I think it is," he said, "but I can for sure say that it's not going to be good."

According to Wells, an average customer purchasing a Steinway piano would save about \$450 if he moved his store to Mendota Heights today. "They would save about \$1,000 if I moved the store after the tax hike," he said.



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# County commits \$26M for 9-acre park along Saint Paul's riverfront

By Jane McClure

The long-proposed RiversEdge mixed-use development along downtown Saint Paul's riverfront has taken another step forward. The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously on December 20 to commit \$26 million toward the development of the Park at RiversEdge.

The 9-acre public park would be built over Shepard Road and adjacent railroad tracks and provide direct access to the Mississippi River. It would be adjacent to the approximately \$800 million mixed-use RiversEdge development on the former site of the county jail and West Publishing properties along Kellogg Boulevard between Wabasha and Market streets.

The county's allotment for the park is considered the first public funding allocation toward building that amenity for RiversEdge. It also puts the county in a position to seek a matching \$26 million grant from the 2023 Minnesota Legislature for the \$84 million park.

The county sought funding for the park in 2022 through the state's biannual bonding cycle. However, the project did not make Governor Tim Walz's list of priorities and the Legislature did not pass a final bonding bill last year.

State lawmakers, who began a new legislative session on January 3, have not indicated if they will try to pass a bonding bill this year. Ramsey County's top bonding



The Park at RiversEdge will be part of the proposed River Balcony, a 1.5-mile promenade along the Mississippi River bluff in downtown Saint Paul.

priority for 2023 is the \$26 million request for the park. (See story below.)

County and state funding would be used to acquire, design, build and furnish the Park at RiversEdge, which has been touted as a place for public events, dedicated retail and restaurant space, and connecting trails.

Bane Gaiser, who has led the RiversEdge effort for Los Angeles-based developer AECOM in recent years, said the county funding commitment will help carry the project forward. "We've worked on this together for many, many years," Gaiser said.

Gaiser is now being succeeded on the project by Matt Crane. In a statement, Crane said, "At a time when many downtowns are recovering from the pandemic,

we're pleased to see the Park at RiversEdge moving forward and proud to work with Ramsey County and the city of Saint Paul on this once-in-a-generation opportunity."

County officials celebrated both the funding commitment and the renewal of the preliminary development agreement with AECOM. Ramsey County manager Ryan O'Connor said the funding demonstrates to developers and to state lawmakers the county's commitment to seeing the entire RiversEdge project through. "This puts us in a place of readiness where we have not been before," he said.

County Board chair Trista MatasCastillo agreed, calling the county's allocation for the park "historic."

The \$26 million is part of the new prelim-

inary development agreement the county approved on December 20 with AECOM. It continues the development relationship and sets specific benchmarks for the developer and county to meet as they proceed toward a final development agreement.

The Park at RiversEdge would be part of the city's proposed River Balcony, a 1.5-mile promenade along the Mississippi River bluff in downtown. Planning for the balcony has continued through the pandemic. It is seen as a connection between public spaces, civic landmarks, development sites and the river.

Park construction was originally scheduled to start in the fall of 2022, with completion in 2024. No new timeline has been announced.

RiversEdge is expected to include two residential towers with first-floor retail space and another two towers with more retail, entertainment and hospitality space. The county earlier spent \$17 million clearing the property to make way for the development. The project is expected to yield more than \$15 million a year in new property tax revenue.

Planning for RiversEdge has been in the works for years. County commissioners met this fall, including in a closed session, to discuss how to move forward. AECOM has been the chosen developer for four years, succeeding the original developer.

Commissioners had hoped to finalize the development agreement in fall 2021, with final design and engineering last year.

## Park at RiversEdge is top bonding priority on county's legislative agenda

By Jane McClure

Providing family stability, transforming government systems and promoting economic competitiveness and inclusion are the focus of Ramsey County's 2023 state legislative agenda. The County Board approved the agenda on December 20, in time for the convening of the Minnesota Legislature on January 3.

Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire, who chairs the county's Legislative Committee, said the 20-page agenda will likely be expanded as the session goes on and new issues emerge.

Before the agenda won committee approval, commissioners debated several issues at length, including county bonding requests. The county's top bonding priority is \$26 million for the Park at RiversEdge, which would serve the long-delayed RiversEdge mixed-use development on Kellogg Boulevard. The County Board is providing a \$26 million match for the state bonding request. (See story above.)

Commissioners debated whether they should ask Saint Paul city leaders to also make the Park at RiversEdge its top priority. The city's top bonding request is funding to rebuild the Kellogg Boulevard Bridge

by Saint Paul RiverCentre, a block from the RiversEdge site. The Park at RiversEdge is ranked second on the city's legislative agenda.

Outgoing Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough questioned whether having the bridge and park requests going forward at the same time would undermine each other. "We're just throwing them both out there," he said.

McDonough and other commissioners suggested the city make the park its top priority, with the Kellogg Bridge second.

A bonding bill stalled during the 2022 legislative session and it is unclear if one will be introduced this year. County Board chair Trista MatasCastillo said no new bonding requests are being taken by the state, so if anything is passed this session, it will be from the 2022 list.

The county's bonding requests include \$5 million to extend the Bruce Vento Regional Trail to White Bear Lake, and \$3.9 million to rebuild part of Rice Street. The county is giving "priority support" to the city's request for the Kellogg Bridge at \$26 million and is also supporting a \$9 million request from the Ramsey County Historical Society to improve the Gibbs Farm museum.

Commissioners opted not to specifically

support a Keystone Community Services bonding request for its new food shelf on University Avenue. Instead, it decided to generally support more state funding for organizations that expand food and crisis services for county residents.

The county's legislative agenda has several other areas of focus, many aligned with the human services, courts, corrections and public health services the county provides. Some service areas, such as mental health and criminal justice, are eyed for changes in how they are delivered. Throughout the agenda, there is a focus on racial equity.

Most requests do not have specific dollar amounts. The County Board is seeking more county aid for various programs.

One specific area where more state funding is being sought is for building and maintaining a workforce to respond to infectious diseases, including stepped-up community education, engagement and outreach along with case investigation and contact tracing and testing.

Housing is another big focus. The county's main program to address homelessness, Heading Home Ramsey, has several requests pending at the Capitol. The intent is to fund shorter-term solutions over the

next five years while more permanent affordable housing is built.

State funding would increase shelter capacity for single adults and families with children, and more day shelter capacity. Another request is for support to develop a "Familiar Faces" program to address frequent users of emergency services.

The county also supports transitioning the special property tax refund to a property tax credit that is automatically calculated and issued to qualifying homeowners. That is seen as a way to reduce the regressive nature of property taxes and could help keep homeownership more affordable.

State law currently requires homeowners to apply for property tax refunds. That has led to underutilization of the refund. County and Saint Paul officials have stepped up their efforts to promote refunds, but they said people still do not apply. Transitioning the refund to a credit allows all homeowners to receive it if they are eligible.

Another county focus is for more transportation funding, including support for the light-rail Green Line, the proposed Riverview Corridor streetcar line, and the proposed Rondo Community Land Bridge.

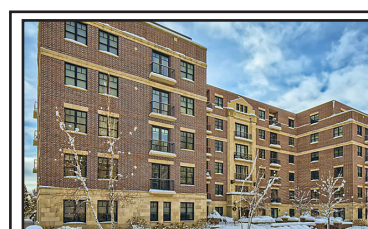
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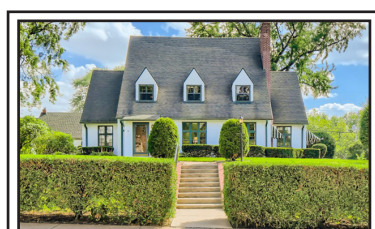
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# Saint Paul revises its procedures for clearing the streets of snow

By Jane McClure

Saint Paul declared its fourth snow emergency of the winter on January 4. The city's Department of Public Works marked the occasion by recommending that the City Council amend the city's snow emergency ordinance to reflect how the city actually enforces snow emergency parking restrictions. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the amendments at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, January 11.

Beverly Farragher, operations manager for the Public Works Department, explained how the city can declare a snow emergency anytime between October 1 and May 1—the recognized winter season in Saint Paul. The emergencies can last up to four days or 96 hours, she said.

Snow emergencies always begin at 9 p.m. with night plow routes. Night plow routes are the busier arterial streets and the one side of north-south residential streets that have Night Plow Route signs. Day plow routes are cleared of snow beginning at 8 a.m. the following day. Day plow routes are east-west residential streets and the side of north-south residential streets without Night Plow Route signs.

Parking is forbidden on the night plow and day plow routes until the plows have cleared the snow from curb to curb. After the day plow routes have been cleared, the city turns its attention to cleanup during the remaining 72 hours of a snow emergency. That can include another pass by the plows.

Vehicles that are not moved from night plow and day plow routes can be ticketed



Joan Little carved a path out of heaps of the white stuff along Wellesley Avenue in the aftermath of last week's storm, which dumped a foot of snow on Saint Paul. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

and may be towed to an impound lot before the plows come through. Saint Paul has two impound lots, one across Como Avenue from the State Fairgrounds and the other near the Mississippi River at 830 Barge Channel Road. Ticketed vehicles that have not been moved can still be towed throughout the 96 hours of a snow emergency, Farragher said.

Farragher described Public Works' response to the snow emergency that began on January 4. Thirty-three trucks went out on January 3 to do some plowing and to treat arterial and collector streets with

chemicals, salt and sand. Twenty-one trucks were out the night of January 3-4. Another 33 trucks went out during the day on January 4. Once the snow emergency began at 9 p.m. on January 4, about 70 trucks were out. That level of activity continued the following day.

By the time the snow emergency began, about a foot of snow had fallen in Saint Paul. Residents questioned why a snow emergency was not declared at 9 p.m. on January 3, when well over 4 inches had already fallen. Farragher said the timing of the snowfalls would have meant back-to-back

snow emergencies—something the city tries to avoid because of the confusion that can cause for residents.

The snow on January 3 and 4 fell in two heavy waves. The snow emergency was not declared until the second wave wound down. However, the pre-emergency plowing did include some residential streets where a lane was cleared down the centers of those streets, but that practice is controversial, Farragher said. While people like the ability to drive more easily on residential streets, parked cars get blocked in by the cleared snow and that can mean having to dig them out.

The Twin Cities has had more than 50 inches of snow so far this winter, according to local weather services. A typical winter will see a total of 50 to 55 inches of snow.

The city is now out of snow storage space downtown, Farragher said. Any additional snowfall this winter will have to be blown into trucks and hauled out of downtown.

The city is considering other options for its snow emergency parking restrictions. However, those studies are just getting underway. One idea is winter parking restrictions that are not part of a declared snow emergency.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Snow emergency parking tickets are \$56. Towing and impound lot fees are \$275.08 if the car is picked up before midnight on the day it is towed. After midnight, an additional \$15 is charged for each day the car remains at the impound lot. The towing and impound lot fees must be paid to get a vehicle out of the impound lot. Parking tickets are paid separately.

## 1< US'T'S NEW PRESIDENT

with the neighborhoods that surround the campus. According to him, there is a significant percentage of people in the neighborhood who are either Saint Thomas alumni or employees. "The neighborhood, that's us," he said. "We're inseparable from the neighborhood."

However, he added, having a strong bond with all residents of the neighborhood is equally important. "Our path forward includes the surrounding community, not just because we can't avoid it, but because that's a key resource for the kind of educational experience we want to provide," he said.

"In any given year, there are always going to be some incidents that need some attention," Vischer added. "But I believe we're the only school that has a full-time staff member dedicated to neighborhood relations. That commitment and that investment in strong relationships will continue. We know the neighborhood doesn't look the same as it did when we opened our doors in 1885. Saint Thomas doesn't look the same as it did in 1885. So the neighborhood and Saint Thomas adapt and evolve and grow stronger together as the needs of the world change.

"We're a Catholic university with a strong belief in the concept of vocation," Vischer said. "That's our calling. We're trying to help our students discern how their gifts, values, priorities and passions align with the needs of the world. And if we want to do that at the individual level with our students, we also have to do

it at the institutional level. We have to understand how the expertise, resources, gifts and mission of Saint Thomas align with the needs of the world around us. Those answers are different today than they would have been 25 or 50 years ago."

Vischer acknowledged that "sometimes tension comes with change. But change is unavoidable if you want to thrive. We want to make sure that we're adapting and strengthening in ways that connect with the neighborhood around us because it's part of us. We're part of the neighborhood. We're committed to continuing those conversations in the months and years to come. It makes us stronger.

"That's one reason why I was attracted to Saint Thomas 18 years ago," Vischer said. "The university has always rejected this notion that academia is in some sort of self-contained bubble, that our call is to pull students out of the world and bring them into a walled compound for four years or for the two or three years of graduate school. If we really believe that our call is to advance the common good, and to equip our students to help advance the common good, then the surrounding world needs to be part of their development.

"As dean of our law school, I'd tell students that some of the most important lessons they'll learn will not take place in the classroom. They're out in the community, volunteering and doing other work, where they're learning how to apply their gifts and what they've learned to real world needs. That doesn't wait until you're done with school. It



New University of Saint Thomas president Rob Vischer. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

starts right now.

"We also want to make sure that our neighbors and community members are on campus frequently, whether it's attending performances and supporting student activities or being a guest speaker in a class or a mentor to a student. We want this two-way street to continue and even expand because our students are best equipped to flourish in the world if the surrounding world is part of their development."

Under Vischer, Saint Thomas

will continue its conversation with the community about the university's need for expanded athletic facilities. "Figuring out facilities is a challenge, and we have to be creative about it," Vischer said. That is what drew the school to look at Highland Bridge as a potential site for baseball and softball, he said. Vischer believes the softball and baseball stadiums would be a great benefit to the surrounding community. The same is true of a proposed multipurpose arena on campus.

"We want these to be community assets where there can be community functions, too," he said.

"If you look at the level of excitement that athletic facilities bring to college campuses, it's great," he added. "We're not talking about massive, 30,000-fan facilities. We're talking about facilities that are right-sized for what Saint Thomas aspires to be.

"Our history at Saint Thomas positions us well for the future," he said. "We still draw about 80 percent of our undergraduate students from Minnesota, and we don't want to diminish that. But we do need to have more geographic diversity in our student body, not just because we believe in our mission and want a bigger platform for our mission, but for our business model. It's healthier."

Another aim for Vischer is ensuring that greater diversity is always beneficial to students. "We welcomed our most diverse class ever with our freshman class this fall," he said. "As our student body grows more diverse, we're really just catching up to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. And the diversity isn't going to matter if we can't match that with inclusion. We want to make sure that every student who steps foot on campus is seen and known and valued."

Pope Francis, Vischer said, has called all people of goodwill—not just Catholics, not just Christians—to build a culture of encounter as a way to push back against the culture of indifference. That ideology "should be at the center of the Saint Thomas experience," he said.



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# VIEWPOINT

## INBOX

### Taking a shine to purple pride

You may have noticed the purplish streetlights that have popped up around Saint Paul the past six months. The city's Public Works Department notes that this is a manufacturer's defect. They plan to replace the bulbs as they appear.

I personally oppose this plan. The purple lights are not harmful, nor do they create any safety issues. If anything, they give the city a unique charm. Minnesota dons purple proudly and should continue to do so with the street lights. I implore, write to your City Council member and demand more purple streetlights.

Patrick Henry  
West End

*Editor's note: According to the city's website, the purple-colored streetlights are the result of a manufacturer's defect and a failure of the LED bulb in many of Saint Paul's "cobra style" streetlights installed between 2017 and 2019. The city's Public Works Department is asking residents to notify the Lighting Division at 651-266-9777 to report the number and location of any streetlights that have a purplish hue.*

### Return the surplus to taxpayers

All of Minnesota's nearly \$18 billion budget surplus belongs to the taxpayers. We are being overtaxed. All of the budget surplus should be returned to us, the taxpayers. But we know that is not likely to happen with a DFL governor and DFLers in control of the state House and Senate. Nevertheless, I believe the first order of business during the current legislative session is to ensure that taxpayers receive a refund check by mid-February. I would like single people with or without children to receive at least a \$1,500 check and married people with or without children to receive at least a \$2,500 check.

Sue Shetka  
Macalester-Groveland

### Slow traffic leads to safer trails

Regarding the proposed Summit Avenue Regional Trail: After living in Saint Paul for 20 years, I moved to Vermont and have been working with local towns to install bike and pedestrian loops on paved roads for both commuting and sight-seeing between towns. Our conclusion has been, if you don't slow motor-vehicle and bicycle speeds, you've failed to gain a pathway for safer travel.

Making it harder for motorists and bicyclists to go fast

## A CUP of prejudice around UST campus

"Ma'am, no student feels welcome in your neighborhood." That was the response of an African American student when a University of Saint Thomas (UST) neighbor asked whether the student felt welcome in the neighborhood. The response was made at a meeting of a UST leadership panel following a racial-slur incident on campus in 2017.

Prejudice is an assumption or opinion about someone based on that person's membership in a particular group. Discriminatory restrictive deed covenants based on a person's occupation—student—were put on 30 homes in the Macalester-Groveland and Merriam Park neighborhoods between 2005 and 2013. These covenants are required by Condition 10 of the 2004 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) between the city of Saint Paul and UST.

Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan states, "We are a city that creates opportunities for all residents to achieve their highest potential.... We are a city that welcomes all, where everyone feels safe and

empowered to participate in decisions that impact them."

The covenants were a topic at the December meeting of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee. The argument was put forward at that time that students are not members of a protected class. That is not a condition of the 2040 Plan, nor should it be a condition of the CUP. Prejudice should not be tolerated in our city, yet the city of Saint Paul and UST have been governed by a CUP that discriminates against students for 18 years.

I invite our community to come together to help Saint Paul and UST leaders remove Condition 10 and its 30 restrictive deed covenants. The time has come to let everyone know that they are welcome to participate in community decisions that make our neighborhood a great place to live, work, learn, play and worship.

Catherine Plessner  
Macalester-Groveland

is our low-hanging fruit. Changing speed-limit signs or increasing the number of speed traps does little to decrease speeds. However, narrowing the traffic lanes forces vehicles to slow down and keeps everyone safer. If drivers are fearful of damaging their cars, they will slow down. Intersections are safer when everyone is going slower.

I urge everyone to review videos on "advisory bike lanes." There are three such bike lanes in Vermont, one in New Hampshire and I think one in Minneapolis.

Good luck and keep on fighting for slower speeds and community building.

Larry Buck  
New Haven, Vermont

thrown together with an occasional hardworking individual who was forced to take the train after the No. 16 bus was eliminated on University Avenue.

Minneapolis is losing residents faster than marshmallows melt over a fire. Rampant crime is the main reason; rising taxes is another. Many Minnesotans have just had enough.

Some days I wonder if a bus commute is worth the risk it involves. I have witnessed innumerable violent incidents on the trains and buses. The Blue Line and the Green Line should be scrapped. University bus routes that were axed should be returned. At the very least, the "honor" system for paying on the trains and buses should be abandoned.

Ann Redding  
Fuller, Minneapolis

### Enforce fares for all on transit

Regarding Bill Hosko's letter about rising crime and homicides on or near public transportation ("No honor among crooks," *MyVillager* Inbox, December 21): I've been using local buses and trains for nearly 50 years. I quit using the Green Line, then the Blue Line, a couple of years ago due to safety concerns.

Mr. Hosko is correct: An "honor" system of payment has not worked and will never work on Metro Transit buses and trains. The Metropolitan Council's "courtesy" policy opens the door for misbehaving riders to endanger the safety of the drivers and the passengers. Light-rail trains are now pot lounges and criminal "fish bowls"—a mixture of the hapless homeless and hardened criminals

### Do write, won't you?

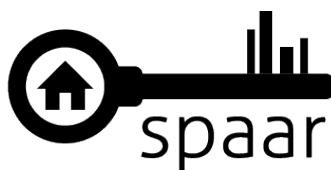
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# District Councils

## Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

**Holiday trees**—The pickup of one Christmas tree is included in Saint Paul’s citywide residential trash collection program. People should place the trees next to their garbage carts on the regular collection day between January 2-15. Wrapping paper with glitter or foil, as well as tissue paper, ribbons and bows are not recyclable.

**Recycle holiday lights**—Old and broken string lights and miscellaneous electrical cords can be recycled by dropping them off at any Saint Paul Public Library now through January 20.

**Board candidates sought**—Due to several vacancies, the Highland District Council is seeking candidates to represent Grids 9 and 11 on its board of directors through April 2023, and an at-large candidate to serve through April 2024. The positions will be up for election at the board meeting in early February, and the application deadline is January 31. Learn more on the HDC website.

**Workshop presenters sought**—The Highland and Macalester-Groveland district councils are bringing back their home improvement fair this year under the newly titled Home Improvement Workshop Day. Presenters are now being sought to give 45-minute to one-hour workshops during the event, which will be held on March 11 at Cretin-Derham Hall. Visit [macgrove.org/events/hiwd](http://macgrove.org/events/hiwd).

**Upcoming meetings**—Board of directors with an update from city planning director Luis Pereira, 7 p.m. Thursday, January 12; Transportation Committee with a look at Lexington Landing pedestrian safety concerns, the Lexington realignment project and West Seventh Street improvements, 7 p.m. Tuesday, January 17; and Community Development Committee with a presentation on the University of Saint Thomas’ proposed athletic complex at Highland Bridge, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, January 24. Meetings are held at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy., with the option to join online. Get the Zoom link and agendas at [highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar](http://highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar).

## Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

**Frost Fest 2023**—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council and the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation will hold Frost Fest from 2-5 p.m. Saturday, January 28, at the Groveland Park Ice Rinks, 2021 Saint Clair Ave. There will be free ice skating, lessons, puck decorating, games, hot chocolate, a bonfire, treats and other activities. Visit [macgrove.org/frost-fest](http://macgrove.org/frost-fest) to learn more.

**Frost Fest puck hunt**—The community councils’ social media and website are now offering clues to find the bronze, silver and gold hockey pucks hidden somewhere in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. Those who find the pucks should send a picture to [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org) to win prizes from Tono’s Pizzeria, Groveland Tap and Roots Roasting. Be sure to also take the puck with you if you are the first to find it.

**Goals for the new year**—In 2023, the community council plans to continue working toward engagement and creation of an Equitable Development Scorecard, begin hybrid meetings, continue to expand its events and programs, welcome six residential representatives to the

board of directors in April, increase its partnerships with other district councils, and engage with the public on such local issues as variance applications, multimodal transportation and safety issues.

**Joining the board**—During its annual meeting in April, the following representatives will be elected to the community council’s board of directors: two from Grid 2, two from Grid 4 and two at-large residential members. To learn about running for the board, email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org).

**Mac-Groveland pride**—Locally designed Macalester-Groveland T-shirts can still be ordered online and delivered within days. Check [macgrove.org/tshirts](http://macgrove.org/tshirts) for the current availability of sizes and colors.

**Upcoming meetings**—board of directors on Thursday, January 12; Inclusivity Task Force on Wednesday, January 18; Transportation Committee on Monday, January 23; and Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, January 25. All of the meetings will be held via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. For log-in details, visit [macgrove.org/participate](http://macgrove.org/participate).

## Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

**Executive director transition**—The Union Park District Council’s new executive director is Leah Timberlake Sullivan. Since September 2021, she has served as the UPDC’s program manager. She succeeds Abdulrahman Wako, who served as director for more than three years and will continue in an advisory capacity this year.

**Honoring Penumbra**—ReConnect Rondo will honor the legacy of the Penumbra Theatre from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, January 12, at the Wilder Foundation, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy. Hostess Jamela Pettiford will perform music associated with the plays of August Wilson and members of the ReConnect Rondo planning team will share their role in creating a cultural enterprise district connected by a community land bridge. Learn more and register at [tinyurl.com/muamt2x9](http://tinyurl.com/muamt2x9).

**Upcoming meetings**—Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, January 16 (in-person location TBD); Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, January 16; and Neighborhood Sustainability and Vitality Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, January 17. All meetings are held via Zoom (unless otherwise noted). For access information, email [Leah@unionparkdc.org](mailto:Leah@unionparkdc.org), or see the calendar on the website.

**Contact us**—The public is invited to “like” the Union Park District Council on Facebook, follow it on Twitter at @UnionParkDC, and subscribe to its e-newsletter, “Neighborhood Matters,” by emailing [Leah@unionparkdc.org](mailto:Leah@unionparkdc.org).

## West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

**Board openings**—There are currently four vacancies on the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation’s board of directors: Area I coordinator (renter), Area I coordinator, Area III coordinator and treasurer. For more information, email [fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org](mailto:fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org).

**Upcoming meeting**—Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, January 19. The meeting will be held via Zoom. For log-in details, visit [fortroadfederation.org/calendar](http://fortroadfederation.org/calendar).

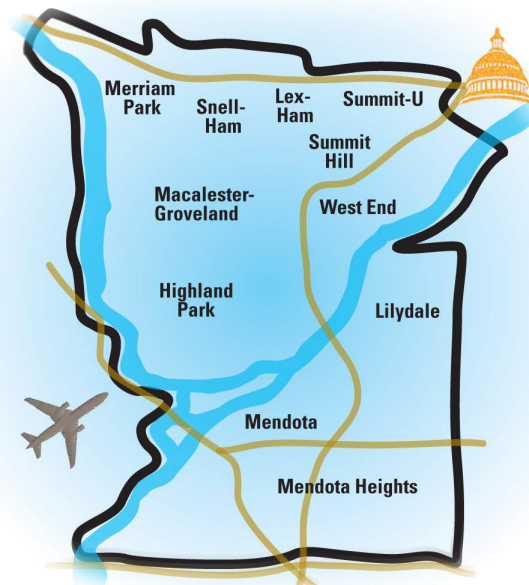
# MyVillager

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Volume 70, Number 22

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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# Renovation of West End fire station gets \$1M boost

By Jane McClure

Conversion of former Fire Station 51 at 296 W. Seventh St. back to its original use took another step forward on December 21 as the Saint Paul City Council approved spending \$1 million in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to renovate the facility. The expenditure was recommended for approval earlier in December by the city’s Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee.



Former Fire Station 51 at 296 W. Seventh St.

The building most recently was home to Freedom House, a drop-in day shelter that was run by the non-profit Listening House until a judge ordered it shut down in spring 2022. Listening House has since purchased the former Red’s Savoy Pizza building at 421 E. Seventh St. and is converting

it for day shelter use. Meanwhile, it continues to use church space in Dayton’s Bluff.

The fire station on West Seventh opened in 1965, replacing a station at Ninth and Main streets in downtown. It served as Station 1 until 2010, when it and Station 10 moved their crews

and equipment to the new Station 1 at 1000 W. Seventh St.

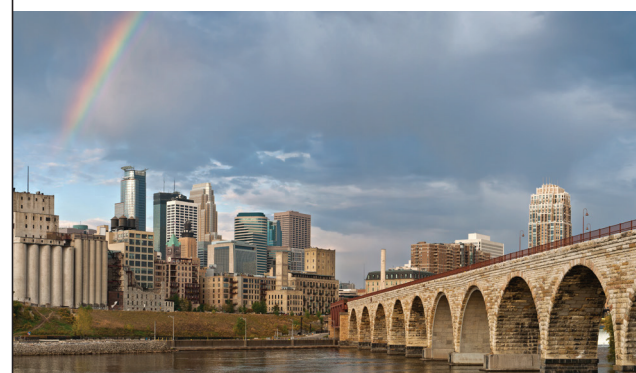
The former station building will be brought up to current city codes and for compliance with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It will also be renovated to be more energy efficient.

The fire station is not only being restored to serve the downtown area and nearby neighborhoods, but will also house the Fire Department’s Community Alternative Response Emergency Services Team. The CARES Team is a mobile operation that responds to mental health crises and behavioral emergencies.

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# The final spin

## After 42 years, Winegar reluctantly shuts down her beloved SweatShop

By Frank Jossi

On a wintry December afternoon, Gayle Winegar walked through the basement offices of the SweatShop Health Club on Snelling and Selby avenues and pointed to dozens of photos of trainers lining the walls. She mentioned she had employed more than 2,000 people in her more than four decades as a fitness center owner and teacher.

On December 17, the SweatShop taught its last workouts after Winegar announced that she had decided to close. She had tried to sell the business she began in the 1980s to capitalize on the appeal of Jane Fonda's workout craze before morphing it into a leading center for Pilates instruction and exercise classes. Yet that still was not enough as deals with several potential owners fell through, leaving Winegar frustrated and saddened.

"After the last deal fell through I tried a few more times and finally said, 'This is exhausting,'" Winegar stated. "I couldn't find the right person to take it."

Though she decided to sell the SweatShop building, which also includes Rose Street Patisserie, to Paster Properties, it is no surprise the energetic Winegar will not

*Though she decided to sell the SweatShop building, which also includes Rose Street Patisserie, to Paster Properties, it is no surprise the energetic Winegar will not be leaving the fitness industry.*

be leaving the fitness industry. To ensure her Pilates students had a second home, she reached out to an old friend, Life Time Fitness CEO Bahram Akradi, who agreed to build a Pilates studio in the company's Highland Park center that could serve her clients and employ her former staff. Akradi also hired Winegar as a consultant to upgrade his Pilates programs.

"We really had fun in a 10-minute conversation where I designed the studio with him, and he got it done," she said.

Winegar plans to collaborate with the Cultural Wellness Center to open a fitness club in the Midtown Global Market in Minneapolis. "It's going to be a Pilates and wellness center focused on communities of



SweatShop owner Gayle Winegar poses in the Pilates room of her Snelling Avenue gym on the last day of operations on December 17. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



Matt Tillotson works out with other Pilates students on the last day the SweatShop was open.

color," Winegar said.

The SweatShop earned a reputation as one of the region's premier training centers for Pilates' instructors over the past 30 years, Winegar said, and that part of the business will move to a space in Woodbury. She plans to mentor and then transfer the training business to the founders of Defining You Pilates and Fitness.

Winegar's path to fitness started in her childhood. She grew up in Albert Lea. Her father, Wallace, was a chiropractor and alternative medicine practitioner and her mother, Deanne, played on two Iowa women's championship teams in high school. Winegar's sister Jill teaches Pilates and sister Karin, a journalist, has written about health and wellness.

Still, when Winegar and her sisters grew up, institutions rarely encouraged women to be athletic. Decades before the body-positive movement, the Macalester College graduate still recalls a dance professor telling her she had a body not built for the dance world, which stung.

"I've never forgotten that little piece of scar tissue and I thought, 'There's another way to do this,'" Winegar said.

During her time at Macalester, she spent her senior year on a racing sailboat from California to the Panama Canal and back while earning credits toward a cultural anthropology degree. At around the same

time, Fonda ignited a workout craze with a fitness book and Winegar, a devotee, convinced the sailing crew to join her in exercising at spots where they docked.

Returning to the Twin Cities, she and business partner David Washburn started the first SweatShop in Loring Park, then a rough-on-the-edges Minneapolis neighborhood. She hired a good staff, focused on empowering team members and clients, and marketed to a growing legion of fitness devotees.

"It was so much fun, and we were so good at what we were doing," Winegar said.

Winegar later moved the SweatShop to other Saint Paul locations and Rochester before deciding to bring the operation into one place. She chose the Snelling Avenue retail storefront 33 years ago after buying it with financial assistance from John and Sage Cowles. John Cowles, the *Star Tribune* publisher who retired at age 62, asked Winegar to have her staff train him to become an aerobics instructor and he later joined her team.

With money from the Cowles, Winegar bought a Pilates reformer and purchased the Snelling Avenue building, which included a corner retail spot.

"It was the most incredible act of sup-

SWEATSHOP CLOSES ►11

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# Burger Moe's owner appeals HPC's denial of Ramsey House demolition

By Jane McClure

The fate of the historic Justus Ramsey House now rests in the hands of the Saint Paul City Council. At 3:30 p.m. on January 25, the council will hear property owner Mojtaba Sharifkhani's appeal of a Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) decision denying a demolition permit for the 170-year-old structure, which is located on the patio beside Burger Moe's restaurant at 252 West Seventh St.

The HPC voted 8-1 last month to deny the permit. Sharifkhani, aka Moe Sharif, filed the appeal on December 16.

The two-room limestone structure is believed to be the oldest surviving house in Saint Paul. However, it is in a deteriorated state with a collapsed wall and a gaping hole in the roof. Historic preservationists want to see it saved at its present location or another site in the neighborhood. They are concerned that in its current state it could sustain further damage.

Among the groups pushing for the Justus Ramsey House's preservation are Historic Saint Paul, the Historic Irvine Park Association and the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association. The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation land use committee on January 4 discussed how to convince other district councils in Saint Paul to oppose the demolition. Committee members fear the demolition of the historic structure could set a precedent and lead to the "demolition by neglect" of other historic structures.

HPC staff cited the structure's historic significance and indicated that the building can be saved. The HPC recommended that the building be secured until a more detailed analysis can be made of

its condition.

Sharif, his attorney and their engineering consultants want the building to come down, saying it is a public safety risk. Staff from the city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) agreed, condemning the building due to its condition. Sharifkhani said he has had to suspend patio service in the past due to concerns for the safety of diners.

In the four-page appeal, Sharifkhani's attorney Brian Alton cited several reasons for granting the demolition permit. One is timing. The demolition request was filed on June 29, 2022. The HPC has 60 days to act on the request. It missed the deadline, and that means the demolition permit should be automatically approved, according to Alton.

Another argument for demolition is the contention that one city department cannot overrule another. DSI has called for the demolition of the Justus Ramsey House, citing safety concerns, while the HPC, which is within the Department of Planning and Economic Development, denied the demolition permit. Alton described the denial as "unreasonable, arbitrary and capricious."

The appeal claims that the HPC decision had no basis in fact and that the HPC staff's findings were speculative and not supported by evidence. The appeal cited the years of alterations that have negated the Justus Ramsey House's architectural and historic merit, and that its demolition would not harm the character or historical significance of any surrounding buildings.

The appeal also cited the conflicting consultant reports on whether or not the house can be repaired.



## Learn what's going on in our upcoming Education Edition

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January 25th

DISPLAY AD DEADLINE  
January 19



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Gayle Winegar checks in with longtime member Lindsay Blattner on the last day of the SweatShop.

### 10 SWEATSHOP CLOSSES

port I've ever received because it showed their belief in the SweatShop, our team and our business," Winegar said.

After Starbucks moved into the corner storefront, the financial burden lessened. The national coffee chain saw a neighborhood in transition, she said, and its investment opened the door to Whole Foods Market across the street and to more retail establishments at Selby and Snelling.

Meanwhile, the SweatShop had an employee that had trained with Pilates founder Joe Pilates and Winegar saw an opportunity to become a leader in that field.

Pilates has made up a majority of classes at the SweatShop for many years. It always offered a "variety of different classes," said Lindsay Blattner, a long-time member and Snelling-Hamline resident who found a community of fellow fitness enthusiasts at

the SweatShop. "There was always something new."

Pixie Martin took classes at the SweatShop while serving as a consultant to the business. She praised her friend's generous contributions to the community, from helping build visibility for the Snelling-Selby neighborhood to raising money annually for charities.

"All of these things came together in a meaningful way that really was promoting health, but at a lot of different levels," Martin said. "She is also just a gregarious, warm-hearted person."

Over the years, Winegar taught thousands of clients, among them a few famous actors, politicians and college presidents. Now it is time for another chapter in her life, and she plans to keep it interesting.

"As we reinvent ourselves, we must reinvent ourselves to do what's next, not what we already did," Winegar said.

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# Crime Report

The following criminal incidents were compiled from Saint Paul and Mendota Heights police reports. For vehicle and catalytic converter thefts and other crime reports not mentioned here, go to MyVillager.com.

## Highland Park

**Burglary**—A man stole an empty cash register from Skyline Cleaners in the Highland Shopping Center at 7:53 p.m. on December 27.

**Theft**—A gun was reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1300 block of Davern Street at 11 a.m. on December 23.

—Thefts from vehicles were reported at Crosby Farm Park on December 26 and 29, and at Hidden Falls Park on December 26 and 30.

—A utility trailer was reported stolen on the 2200 block of Rockwood Avenue on December 26-27.

—A purse was stolen from a vehicle at the Highland National Golf Course between 2:30-3:30 p.m. on January 2.

**Assault**—A domestic assault involving the possession of a firearm by a felon was reported on the 1900 block of Ford Parkway at 12:13 p.m. on December 29.

**Arson**—A dumpster fire was reported on the 1200 block of East Maynard Drive at 5:36 p.m. on December 31.

**Miscellaneous**—A 32-year-old woman was arrested for DWI after being found passed out behind the wheel of a running vehicle on the 2200 block of Edgcumbe Road at 1:59 p.m. on December 30.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Theft**—A woman was the victim of a theft and assault on University Avenue and Lexington Parkway at 10 a.m. on December 20.

—Several people were arrested for shoplifting at the Midway Target around the holidays, including a 37-year-old woman for trying to steal more than \$800 in items on December 20, a 24-year-old man with multiple outstanding warrants on December 23, a 31-year-old woman with 16 outstanding warrants on December 24, and a 29-year-old woman who tried to make off with nearly \$1,800 in merchandise on December 28.

—A 20-year-old man was cited for trespassing after he was found passed out in a locked stall in the men's room at the Midway Target at 2:57 p.m. on December 26. The man has been banned from the store due to shoplifting earlier in the month.

**Weapons**—Police responded to Speedway, 399 N. Lexington Pkwy., at 3:33 a.m. on December 18 regarding a male who had been shot in the back. A female witness said the two had been shot at by someone in another vehicle on Lake Street in Minneapolis.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Robbery**—Wells Fargo Bank, 1827 Grand Ave., was held up by a lone suspect at 2:11 p.m. on December 15.

**Burglary**—An apartment burglary was reported on the 1500 block of Saint Clair Avenue at 3:24 p.m. on December 21.

—A residential burglary was reported on the 1900 block of Stanford Avenue between 5:18-6:28 p.m. on December 22.

—Three home break-ins were reported on Saturday, December 24, including at 8:34 and 10:19 a.m. on the 1700 block of Stanford Avenue, and at 8:20 p.m. on the 1900 block of Princeton Avenue.

—A home break-in was reported on the 2200 block of Fairmount Avenue between December 28-January 2.

## Mendota Heights

**Burglary**—Suspects broke into a storage room at an apartment building and stole copper piping and tile on the 1000 block of Highway 13 at 10:49 a.m. on December 9.

**Theft**—A suspect was arrested for stealing items from vehicles on the 700 block of Main Street at 4:42 p.m. on December 23.

**Miscellaneous**—Mendota Heights police officers assisted Saint Paul Park police in the pursuit of a suspect wanted on multiple felony warrants at 3:35 a.m. on December 22. Stop sticks were deployed on I-35E at Wagon Wheel Trail. The suspect managed to drive around them, but a squad car sustained two flat tires. The suspect was ultimately arrested in Eagan.

—A woman was arrested for DWI and drug possession after she was found passed out behind the wheel of a running vehicle while parked at gas pumps on the 1200 block of Mendota Heights Road at 4:22 a.m. on December 29.

## Merriam Park

**Burglary**—Checks and mailbox keys were stolen from an office during a break-in of an apartment complex on the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue on December 8-20.

—Home break-ins were reported on the 1700 block of Carroll Avenue between December 21-January 1, and the 2000 block of Selby Avenue on December 25.

—A garage was broken into at Charles Thompson Memorial Hall, 1824 Marshall Ave., at 3:05 a.m. on December 23.

—Suspects cut a hole in the roof and entered the office at Wendy's, 1770 University Ave., on December 29. Police said it did not appear the suspects were able to open the safe.

**Theft**—Multiple items were reported stolen from an employee's vehicle at Breakthrough Beverage, 429 N. Prior Ave., between 9:36-10:20 p.m. on December 29.

—A woman was arrested for driving a stolen vehicle on Cretin Avenue and I-94 at 12:46 p.m. on December 29.

**Assault**—A man was run over by his partner's car during a domestic assault at the Quality Inn, 1964 University Ave., at 4:30 p.m. on December 22.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Robbery**—Speedway, 56 N. Snelling Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at 9:16 p.m. on December 21.

**Burglary**—A home break-in was reported on the 1400 block of Summit Avenue at 4:35 p.m. on December 26.

**Theft**—A juvenile employee was arrested for stealing \$700 in items from the Midway Cub Foods between December 17-31.

**Miscellaneous**—Felony damage to property and attempted auto theft were reported at the Midway Cub Foods at 1:20 p.m. on December 18.

## Summit Hill

**Burglary**—A male suspect entered an occupied apartment on the 400 block of Summit Avenue at 5:38 a.m. on December 31. He was found standing in the living room and was escorted out of the building by the resident.

**Theft**—A 41-year-old man was arrested for pulling out a knife while trying to shoplift at Walgreens, 734 Grand Ave., at 6:19 p.m. on December 27.

**Assault**—A 37-year-old man was arrested for assaulting a police officer and felony damage to property at an apartment on the 400 block of Summit Avenue at 5 p.m. on January 1.

## Summit-University

**Burglary**—Around \$2,000 in tools were reported stolen from a construction site on the 500 block of Selby Avenue on December 23-24.

—Three suspects broke into an apartment and stole jewelry at gunpoint on the 800 block of Hague Avenue at 1:02 a.m. on December 30. The occupant fled and was fired at, but was not injured.

**Theft**—A gun was reported stolen from a vehicle at the Oxford Community Center, 270 N. Lexington Pkwy., at 2:07 p.m. on December 18.

**Assault**—A woman was sprayed with mace and robbed of her purse and phone near Saint Albans Street and Dayton Avenue at 1:29 p.m. on December 21.

—A man was assaulted with a dangerous weapon in an apartment on the 600 block of Selby Avenue at 9:29 p.m. on January 1.

**Sex crime**—A male exposed himself to another tenant on the 800 block of Laurel Avenue at 3:40 p.m. on December 16.

**Miscellaneous**—A 28-year-old woman was arrested for DWI and resisting arrest after she was found yelling and blocking the street after hitting a vehicle on the 300 block of Summit Avenue at 1 a.m. on December 24.

—A 30-year-old man was arrested for DWI and failure to carry proof of insurance after he drove into multiple parked cars and then tried to run away at 12:37 a.m. on December 25 on the 1000 block of Marshall Avenue.

## West End

**Burglary**—A break-in and felony damage to property were reported at the Waterford Bay Apartments, 380 Randolph Ave., at 4:11 p.m. on December 27.

**Theft**—An employee theft of more than \$1,000 was reported at a business on the 900 block of Randolph Avenue on December 20.

—Two suspects stole 24 cartons of cigarettes from Speedway, 1734 W. Seventh St., at 5:19 p.m. on December 26.

—Items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a construction company on the 100 block of South Western Avenue between December 24-26, and on Michigan Avenue and Duke Street on December 28-30.

**Assault**—An assault with a knife was reported in the entrance to an apartment building on the 600 block of Stewart Avenue at 9:37 p.m. on December 20.

—A 43-year-old woman was arrested for felony domestic assault of a man on the 300 block of Spring Street at 9:05 p.m. on December 22.

—Officers were called to assist medics with a highly intoxicated 48-year-old man at Patrick McGovern's Pub, 225 W. Seventh St., at 11:48 p.m. on December 23. The man was eventually arrested for assaulting officers who were attempting to bring him to the hospital.

**Arson**—A portable toilet was found set on fire near the 200 block of Wilkin Street at 11:05 p.m. on December 24.

**Weapons**—A 36-year-old man was arrested for possession of a gun by a felon and several outstanding warrants after he was found slumped over in the driver's seat of a vehicle at Speedway, 1125 W. Seventh St., at 8:50 a.m. on December 26.

—A 23-year-old man with multiple outstanding warrants was arrested for possession of a BB gun at the Grand 7 bar, 315 W. Seventh St., at 12:44 a.m. on December 27.

**Miscellaneous**—A 39-year-old man was arrested for DWI and having an open bottle after he was found asleep behind the wheel of a vehicle on West Seventh Street and Kellogg Boulevard at 6:32 a.m. on December 25.

# Permit, variances granted again for six-story Marshall Ave. Flats

By Jane McClure

The proposed six-story Marshall Avenue Flats project is poised to move ahead with the January 6 unanimous approval of a conditional use permit and variances by the Saint Paul Planning Commission. The commission's Zoning Committee also recommended approval on December 29.

This is the second time around for PAK Properties' 98-unit affordable housing project, which would be built just north of the former Richards Gordon School at 1619 Dayton Ave. The project won Zoning Committee and Planning Commission approvals in the spring of 2020, but has encountered an array of delays.

The conditional use permit allows a building height of up to 75 feet in the Tradi-

tional Neighborhoods 3 (TN3) zoning district. Variances were needed for the building's front setback and balconies along Marshall. Ten-foot setbacks were required and five feet were proposed.

The Union Park District Council's Committee on Land Use and Economic Development supported the project in December. The full district council recommended approval in 2020.

New approvals were sought since the previous conditional use permit and variances were set to expire on May 15 and the developer was not certain that ground would be broken by then, according to senior city planner Kady Dadlez. The deadline has been extended to May 14, 2024.

Zoning Committee members said they were pleased to see more affordable housing being provided. Marshall Flats will

have 44 one-bedroom, 49 two-bedroom and five three-bedroom units. The three-bedroom units will be affordable for households making 30 percent of the Twin Cities Area Median Income (AMI), which works out to around \$35,200 for a family of four. The remainder will be at 50-70 percent AMI. The affordable rents must be maintained for at least 30 years.

The project ran into delays related to the COVID-19 pandemic and rising construction costs. Filling the financing gap took time as did reviews with the city and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Those issues have since been resolved. The project is receiving federal funding and that added more layers of review.

The former Richards Gordon School has been identified as eligible for local or national historic designation. Marshall Av-

enue Flats will be built on what is currently a parking lot north of the existing building.

The school was built in 1911 and is now used for offices. The limestone retaining wall around the property was built by the federal Works Progress Administration in 1936. The retaining wall also received scrutiny for its possible historic status.

PAK Properties has agreed to preserve the southern and most of the western part of the wall, but wants to replace the unrepairable northern and eastern sections with modular blocks designed to look similar to the original. Plans for the wall have been reviewed and approved by the SHPO.

The developer is also seeking a lot split, which will be handled by city staff. The address for the new building would be 1606 Marshall Ave.

# Apartment pioneer

## Lowertown building is first to seek permit for more short-term rentals

By Jane McClure

A Lowertown mixed-use building can more than double its short-term rental units with a conditional use permit approved by an 8-3 vote on January 6 by the Saint Paul Planning Commission. But the request from Pioneer Endicott LLC has some commission members wondering if limits should be placed on such units in the wake of the region's housing shortage.

The Pioneer Endicott Building at 141 E. Fourth St. includes 235 rental dwelling units and a handful of businesses. Four short-term rentals are currently operating in the two connected buildings that make up the structure, with five more proposed.

Saint Paul added zoning code regulations for short-term rentals in 2017, before the Twin Cities hosted the 2018 Super Bowl. Short-term rentals typically operate through web-based platforms such as VRBO and AirBnB, which promote themselves as alternatives to hotel stays, and Awayish, which promotes itself as a way to give renters a chance to experience a place before making a permanent move.

It costs \$42 per year to license a short-term rental unit in Saint Paul. Operators must go through background checks and meet other conditions. One of Saint Paul's conditions is that any building with more than four short-term rental units must seek a conditional use permit.

Senior city planner Kady Dadlez said the application from Pioneer Endicott is the first to seek a conditional use permit for more than four units. Pioneer Endicott is two connected buildings constructed in the late 1800s, with the L-shaped Endicott wrapping around the taller Pioneer. Both have local and national historic designation, and are zoned B-4 for downtown commercial and residential use.

The CapitolRiver Council recommended approval of the request, though some members expressed worries about apartments being converted to short-term rentals when there is a housing shortage in Saint Paul. Board members want to be involved in future discussions to develop policies related to short-term rental units in downtown residential buildings, so reasonable limits on this use will continue.

Planning Commission members also said they want to see the issues of short-term rentals explored further. Most said they could support the Pioneer Endicott request, as nine units is a small number when compared to the 235 unit total.

The commission's Zoning Committee voted 4-1 on December 29 to recommend approval of the permit. Commissioner Luis Rangel Morales, who cast the lone negative vote, said the issue needs to be looked at over the longer term.

"We always hear about the lack of housing we have in the city," he said. "We don't hear as much about a shortage of



The Pioneer Endicott Building at 141 E. Fourth St. is the first in Saint Paul to receive a conditional use permit for more than four short-term rental units. It's planning to have nine. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

short-term rentals."

Shannon Woodstrom, one of the community managers for Pioneer Endicott, told the Planning Commission that current rental units are in high demand, and many prospective tenants like having the ability to stay in the building before deciding to move there.

The apartments currently used for short-term rentals at Pioneer Endicott include

three studios and a one-bedroom apartment. The additional uses will include two studios, two one-bedroom and one two-bedroom unit. Pioneer Endicott LLC will retain its lone short-term rental unit, while Pearl Investing increases its numbers from two to four and Awayish goes from one to three units.

The Planning Commission heard no public opposition to the request.

# Hearing set on new parameters for redevelopment along river

## New rules could affect plans for four project sites in Highland Park

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 8:30 a.m. Friday, January 20, on proposed changes to the rules for the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA). Originally scheduled for November 18, the hearing was postponed at the request of Ramsey County and the Downtown Alliance.

County officials are working with developer AECOM about the proposed RiversEdge development on the riverbluff where the old county jail and county Government Center West were located. However, Highland Park may have the most at stake in the new MRCCA rules. Unlike other Saint Paul neighborhoods that are

largely developed, Highland has several redevelopment sites that would be affected by the rules.

One is the former Ford Motor Company assembly plant, now partially redeveloped as Highland Bridge. Another is the Shepard-Davern area where large parking lots have long been eyed for redevelopment. A third area is Crosby Farm Park and Watergate Marina where a new river learning center is planned. Then there is 706 S. Mississippi River Blvd. where Paster Properties is planning a four-story, 50-foot-high apartment building.

Under the proposed rules, buildings on that part of Mississippi River Boulevard would be limited to 35 feet. A revised site plan was submitted in October and is still being reviewed by city staff. Neighbors contend the building is too tall and is being pushed through before the new regulations are adopted.

The MRCCA was created in 1976. The intent was to provide coordinated regulations and land use planning for the 72 miles of riverfront in the seven-county metro-

politan area. MRCCA encompasses 54,000 acres in 30 cities, counties and townships. That includes 7,150 acres in Saint Paul—21 percent of the city's total land area. Saint Paul has the most land within the MRCCA of any community.

The MRCCA divides land along the Mississippi into six zoning overlay districts—rural and open space, river neighborhood, river towns and crossings, urban mixed, urban core, and separated from river (bluff-tops). Saint Paul has all six districts within its stretch of the MRCCA. Each of them has its own set of standards for new construction regarding building heights and setbacks. Each district also has provisions for requesting variances to the regulations.

The Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee began its review of the MRCCA draft regulations in mid-November. Committee members expressed interest in learning more about the proposed regulations, but chairman Tim Morehead questioned how much input the HDC would have, given that the draft regulations are handed down

by the state.

Senior city planner Josh Williams encouraged the HDC to make its wishes known if it has recommendations or sees areas where changes should be made. The HDC board is scheduled to discuss the proposed changes to the MRCCA rules on January 12.

The proposed ordinance for the MRCCA in Saint Paul is based on a Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) model with specific provisions, definitions and regulations necessary to comply with the MRCCA rules.

In 2020 the city made the MRCCA the subject of a new chapter in the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan in compliance with the proposed rules. Last summer the DNR found Saint Paul's draft to be in substantial compliance with what it has proposed and gave it a conditional OK. That sent the rules back to the Planning Commission and eventually the City Council.

To read the rules and view the maps for the MRCCA, visit [tinyurl.com/4reez6zj](https://tinyurl.com/4reez6zj).

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# ON THE TOWN

## They've got the beat

### Women circle up to master rhythms from around world

By Carolyn Walkup

Back in the 1950s and '60s when girls wanted to play the drums in their high school band, they were sometimes handed a flute or clarinet instead. "That still happens today," according to Bettie Seitzer. That is despite the best efforts of Saint Paul's Women's Drum Center. Seitzer serves as executive director of the drum center, which for the past 33 years has been defying the notion that drums are too masculine for women to play.

The drum center was founded in 1989 by Colleen Haas to give women interested in drumming a supportive environment in which to play. Interest in drumming has grown over the years, and so has the drum center. Six years ago, it moved into a larger, 1,300-square-foot space in the basement of the building at 2242 University Ave., and it has been adding to its class offerings ever since.

Studies have shown that when people drum in a group, they feel relaxed and energized at the same time. "It engages the brain and the body in physical and mental exercise," Seitzer said. "Individuals also do it for meditation and healing."

"It's a good workout for the brain," said Diane Burnett, a Highland Park resident who has been studying drumming at the drum center for the past six years. "It's also relaxing. For a couple of hours, you focus on nothing else. It was a lifesaver during COVID."

Linda White has been a student at the drum center for three years, since moving from Iowa to Macalester-Groveland. Her class at the center has become like a sisterhood, she said. In fact, she has become so involved in the program that she recently joined the board of directors.

Shannon Sesol, another Iowa transplant, joined the advanced class last September with 22 years of experience drumming with a group in Des Moines. Fellow students at the drum center "took me in with open arms," she said. "There was no ego, no judgment. I feel like I found where I needed to be."

Advanced student Jill van Koolwijk of



Jill van Koolwijk (left) and Lucy Gerold (center) kept a steady beat in a Women Who Groove class led last week by Bettie Seitzer (right) at the Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

Summit Hill began taking drum lessons at the center five years ago. She is especially passionate about Women Who Groove, a class in African drumming offered at the center. Although that style of drumming is very different from the kind she grew up with, she said, "we're serious about being true to the culture. We often bring in guest instructors from Africa."

Students at the drum center range in age from 20 to 80. Seitzer and other drum center instructors attend drum camps and consult with native practitioners to learn the ins and outs of a culture's drumming methods. In addition to African, the drum center offers workshops in Brazilian, Middle Eastern and Japanese drumming.

Dan Engebretson has been teaching African drumming at the center for the past six years, after discovering the art form at a Renaissance fair. "I saw people playing all different hand drums together and people dancing (to the rhythm)," he said. "I decided I had to do this. I took lessons and dove head first into drumming over 20 years ago."

The nonprofit drum center is supported

by class fees, donations and occasional fundraisers. "We keep the fees affordable," Seitzer said, and students do not have to buy their own drums. The walls of the classroom are lined with shelves that hold three kinds of large drums—African djembe, Brazilian surdo and Japanese taiko drums. However, serious students often buy their own drum so they can practice at home.

The drum center sponsors a performance group called drumHeart, which plays at various community events, in Saint Paul's Music in the Parks series and at the Minnesota State Fair. They also play at fundraisers for a variety of causes. DrumHeart's first event this year will be the Bee Run, part of the Great River Cleanup on April 22.

The drum center's top priority for 2023 is expanding its outreach in the community. That includes training the activity directors at schools, nursing homes and congregate-dining and assisted-living facilities and training facilitators for drum circles at churches, community centers and social service

agencies. A full-day workshop in drum-circle facilitator training will be offered in March.

Among the new programs in January is a beginners' class in Middle Eastern rhythms. An intermediate drumline camp will begin in February. It will feature Brazilian-style drumming and other Latin American songs and rhythms. New co-ed drum circles will take place on the third Friday of each month.

After much debate, the drum center decided several years ago to open some of its workshops to men. "We had requests from husbands who observed how much fun their wives were having drumming," Seitzer said. The drum center began offering co-ed drum circles last year. Additional beginner-level classes have been scheduled due to the increased interest in drumming.

The beginner classes "are in greatest demand as people continue to learn about the benefits and the pure fun of drumming in a nurturing environment," Seitzer said.

For more information, visit [womensdrumcenter.org](http://womensdrumcenter.org).

## ON THE TOWN Briefly

### Books

Shannon Gibney will discuss her latest young adult novel, *The Girl I Am, Was and Never Will Be* at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, January 18, at the Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave. Part memoir, part speculative fiction, the book delves into the often surreal experience of growing up as a mixed-Black transracial adoptee. Special guest Sun Yung Shin will take part in the free program. Call 651-224-8320.

Poets Thomas R. Smith and Klecko will read from their verse in a free program at 6 p.m. Thursday, January 19, at Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave. Smith's work has reached national audiences on Garrison Keillor's radio show, "Writer's Almanac." His latest collection, *Medicine Year*, tells of his and his wife's recovery from serious health issues in the midst of

the pandemic. Klecko's latest work is *The Dead Fitzgeralds*, a memoir in verse that reflects on the literary legacy of Saint Paul. Call 651-225-8989.

### Music

"The Bohemian Connection," a concert featuring the works of Neruda, Telemann, Benda, Reichenauer and Myslivecek, will be performed by Lyra Baroque Orchestra at 3 p.m. Sunday, January 15, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$5-\$35. Visit [lyrabaroque.org](http://lyrabaroque.org).

An evening of jazz and finger-style guitar will be presented by the Minnesota Guitar Society on Tuesday, January 17, in Fingal's Cave at MetroNOME Brewery, 385 Broadway St. Kevin Carlson will open the show at 6 p.m. followed from 7-9 p.m. by the masterful Pat Donohue. Call 651-317-

9080 or visit [metronomebrewery.com](http://metronomebrewery.com).

Ramsey Hill drummer Peter Kogan will return to the MetroNOME on Thursday, January 19, with a band featuring Dave Graf on trombone, Geoff LeCrone on guitar, Ted Godbout on piano and Kameron Markworth on bass. The music begins at 7 p.m. at the Lowertown brewery, 385 Broadway St.

Stephanie Arado and Pitnarry Shin of the Bakken Ensemble will be joined by Cece Belcher on violin, Jenni Seo on viola and Gao Hong on pipa in concert at 4 p.m. Sunday, January 22, in Antonello Hall at the MacPhail Center for Music, 501 S. Second St. in Minneapolis. The program includes John Corigliano's *The Red Violin Caprices* for solo violin, Billy Childs' string quartet *Unrequited*, and Zhao Lin and Zhao Jiping's *Red Lantern* for pipa and string quartet. Tickets are \$25. Visit

[bakkenensemble.org](http://bakkenensemble.org).

Baritone Justin Spenner and pianist Carson Rose Schneider will perform Schubert's monumental song cycle, *Die Winterreise*, in recital at 4 p.m. Sunday, January 22, at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. An exploration of the human need for connection and acceptance, the music is performed to the poetry of Wilhelm Müller, who asks, "what drives a person to be convinced they are unloved." Admission is by donation.

Mother Banjo and her trio will present a free concert of acoustic music from 4:40-6:30 p.m. Sunday, January 22, in the Como Conservatory.

"The Last Waltz," the 18th annual tribute to The Band and the star-studded concert

**14 ON THE TOWN BRIEFLY**

it presented in 1976, will be performed by Big Pink and an all-star cast of Minnesota musicians at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, January 27 and 28, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Tickets are \$25-\$50. Visit [first-avenue.com](http://first-avenue.com).

**Ginkgo Coffeehouse**, 721 N. Snelling Ave., will host the following concerts: guitarists Sam and J from 6:30-8 p.m. Friday, January 13; open mic with emcee Neal Dimick, 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, January 18; country and bluegrass artist Becky Schlegel, 6:30-8 p.m. Friday, January 20; eclectic singer-songwriter Jesse Anderson, 6:30-8 p.m. Friday, January 27; and soulful blues artist Dan Rumsey celebrating the release of his CD, "Faith in Tomorrow," with special guest Sarah Morris, 8 p.m. Saturday, January 28, (tickets are \$15). Admission is by donation unless otherwise indicated. Call 651-645-2647 or visit [ginkgocoffee.com](http://ginkgocoffee.com).

**Exhibits**

**Proving once again that creativity** does not contract in the cold, Art Shanty Projects return to the frozen surface of Minneapolis' Lake Harriet from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, January 21 through February 12. Eighteen art shanties will be featured along with a rotating schedule of 20 performing arts groups. Among the attractions are the American Ice Theatre, Twin Cities Native Lacrosse, snowsuit yoga Saturdays, Sunday dance parties and the live music of Frigid Airs, Taiko on Ice, Klezmer on Ice, and Good Trouble and Sarina Partridge and their Subzero Singalongs. Rounding out the entertainment will be live plein air painters, puppet shows and other theatricals, and the solar-powered



**The indomitable Dorothy Molter.**

*The Root Beer Lady*, a one-woman show about Dorothy Molter, the last person to have a home in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, will open a four-week run on January 28 at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Bucking the social norms of the 1930s, Molter (above) moved into a cabin on Knife Lake and became famous for the root beer she brewed with lake water and served to thirsty canoeists. The play, which was written and is performed by Kim Schultz, explores Molter's independence, fortitude and love of nature and pushes back against the notion that she was the "loneliest woman in America," as the Saturday Evening Post wrote in 1952. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays through February 19. For tickets, visit [historytheatre.com](http://historytheatre.com) or call 651-292-4323.

Archive of Collective Memory and Techno from the Sun music project. Admission is by donation with \$10-\$20 suggested. Kicksleds will be available as mobility

aids, and there will be ASL interpreters and audio describers daily between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. For more information, visit [artshantyprojects.org](http://artshantyprojects.org).

**Theater**

*I Was A Stranger Too*, a new drama by Cynthia L. Cooper, will be performed on January 26-29 at Neighborhood House, 179 E. Robie St. Drawn from dozens of interviews, the play tells of a woman who is drawn to help asylum seekers in memory of her mother's rescue from the Holocaust and encounters a rich mosaic of people. Directed by Carolyn Levy, it stars Bethmari Márquez Barreto, Kirby Bennett, Nicole Frethem, Mahmoud Hakima, Megan Kim, Jasmine Porter, Shona Ramchandani, Abigail Ramsay and Phasoua Vang. Show times are 7 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$10 or whatever you wish to pay. Visit [strangertoo.weebly.com](http://strangertoo.weebly.com).

**Dance**

**Minnesota Dance Theatre** will join the Minnesota Chorale, singers Anthony Potts, Linh Kauffman and Gary Ruschman and musicians Bob Adney, Barbara Brooks, David Hagedorn and Tom Linker in six performances of *Carmina Burana* on two weekends in January at the Luminary Arts Center, 701 N. First St. in Minneapolis. Loyce Houlton's original choreography

is set to Carl Orff's brilliant score in the production. Show times are 7:30 p.m. January 13, 14, 20, 21 and 22 and 4 p.m. January 15. Tickets are \$40. Visit [my.luminaryartscenter.com](http://my.luminaryartscenter.com).

**The new Twin Cities group Cumar** will introduce its fusion of the traditional music and dance of West Africa and Ireland in shows at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, January 27 and 28, at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The group, whose name means "confluence" in Gaelic, is an ensemble of dancers and musicians co-directed by Fodé Bangoura, former lead drummer for the national ballet of Guinea and artistic director of Minneapolis' Duniya Drum and Dance, and Cormac O'Sé, founder of the Celtic Junction Arts Center in Saint Paul and a member of the original *Riverdance* cast. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for students. For reservations, visit [southerntheater.org](http://southerntheater.org).

**Family**

**Experience Mexico** without traveling any further than downtown Saint Paul when Landmark Center opens a new season of Urban Expeditions from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, January 22. Enjoy authentic Mexican music, dance and crafts in this immersive program. Admission is free. Visit [landmarkcenter.org](http://landmarkcenter.org).

**The Twin City Model Railroad Museum**, 668 Transfer Road, has brought back Night Trains. From 3-7 p.m. on Saturdays, now through February 25, the lights will be turned down and the model trains and miniature villages through which they pass will be aglow in holiday decor. Admission to the museum is \$15 for Night Trains, \$10 at other times, free for children age 4 and under. Call 651-647-9628.

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# SPORTS



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### CDH shows signs of endurance

**M**att Funk sounded tired when he answered the phone. It was the second of two snow days for students at Cretin-Derham Hall. Snow days may be fun for students who don't have to go to class, but for athletic directors like Funk it was a busier day than usual at the office. The gym still had to be readied for wrestling practice. When that was done, the mats had to be put away and the baskets lowered for basketball practice. After that, it was prepping for hockey practice, a matter of particular interest to Funk since he's also the head coach of the boys' team that was to take an 8-4-1 record into a game against a solid Stillwater team on January 5.

That's enough of a plate to handle, but Funk was also dealing with the ramifications of the sudden death of Cormick Scanlan.

Scanlan, 16, was a sophomore player on the Raider JV hockey team. His older brother Colin is a senior forward on the varsity squad. In early December, Cormick suffered a stroke. It was discovered later to have been caused by a rare condition called moyamoya disease, which constricts arteries to the brain. It is estimated to affect one in a million people.



Cormick Scanlan

Cormick underwent surgery, but died on Christmas Day. The effect on the school was immediate and heartbreaking.

Going to schools like CDH, which has roughly 900 students in grades 9-12, is akin to living in a small town. Cormick's sisters Brynn and Sloane are buddies and classmates of Funk's daughters, and Cormick was the grandson of Mal Scanlan, a legendary Raider coach who's still involved in the school.

It's a very small world at times, and the loss of such a young man affects a wide range of people, from the CDH community to Scanlan's former teammates when he played youth hockey for the Saint Paul Capitals.

"It affects the whole school," Funk said. "He played three sports. He was involved in a lot of school activities. He led by example and modeled our Culture Creates Champions motto in everything he did. His impact was felt through our entire community and he will be greatly missed."

But life must go on. The CDH boys' hockey team took a day off to mourn, then regrouped to play three games in a tournament on December 27-29. "We had a practice and then started playing games again. But we had time to process," Funk said.

Colin Scanlan was pressed into additional duty during those games as a penalty killer due to an injury to another player. "He played great," Funk said. "To see him interact with his teammates was amazing."

CDH lost the first two games of the tournament to talented Maple Grove and Wayzata teams. On the third day, the Raiders defeated Totino Grace 4-1, with Colin earning an assist on the last goal.

School was off that week. The whole school returned to class for a day last week ("a hard day," Funk said), but the subsequent snowstorm kept the students at home for two more days. A visitation for Cormick was held at the school on January 6, followed by the funeral at Assumption Church the next day.

Accordingly, there's been little time for those who needed it to regroup and talk to somebody about what occurred. And in a small town, such help may not be readily available. "We talked about it," Funk said. "People go at their own pace. Fortunately, we have a lot of resources available here for those who need it."

It's a been a rough go lately at CDH. There's been

WRIGHT CALL ▶17

## Rebounding nicely

### Redhawk girls are nearly back to full strength

By Bill Wagner

**T**he Minnehaha Academy girls' basketball team knew early this season that if it could just hang in there, better things were around the corner.

The Redhawks, who were ranked second in the state in Class AA heading into the new year, had posted a solid 7-2 record on the heels of a five-game winning streak. It wasn't easy, however; they had to battle injuries and a flu bug that made its way through the lineup.

After the holidays, those issues mostly appeared to be in the rearview mirror. "We're getting our health back now," said coach Matt Pryor.

He was especially encouraged by the way his team won the Hill-Murray Holiday Tournament on December 30 by beating previously undefeated Lakeville South 61-55 in overtime. Sophomore guard Addi Mack hit a three-pointer at the buzzer at the end of regulation to keep their hopes alive.

"We kind of had them after that," Pryor said. "It was a great environment for the game. A very loud gym."

The Redhawks don't have all of their walking wounded back yet. Junior forward Angel Hill broke her hand in the first game of the season and could be out until mid-February. The high-scoring Hill has also been invaluable on defense. "We miss her a lot," Pryor said, "but we've been able to (carry on)."

Senior forward Aniyah Reuben is now back following a sprained ankle. She was missed for her all-



Minnehaha Academy sophomore Addi Mack, guarded by teammate Ava Cupito during practice, leads the Redhawks in scoring with a nearly 30-point average. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

around skills, including an average of nine rebounds, nine points and five assists per game. "She's a point guard in a forward's body," Pryor said, "and probably the best passer on the team."

In addition to beating a high-profile school like Lakeville South, Pryor cited his club's 56-47 win over Orono on December 8 as a signature accomplishment. "They were a ranked team in Class AAA," Pryor said. In that contest, he said the Redhawks were down to six healthy players.

Minnehaha's only losses so far this season were 52-66 to Minnetonka (a top 10 Class AAAA school) in the opener and 77-90 to Benilde-Saint Margaret's (ranked second in Class

AAA) in mid-December. In the loss to Benilde, Pryor played the same five girls the entire game.

But as 2022 rolled into 2023, the Redhawks were playing like a dominant team. Through its first nine games, Minnehaha had outscored its opponents 596-451 and had out-rebounded them 271-82.

Mack, who averages nearly 30 points per game, gives the Redhawks one of the top scorers and most sought-after college players in the state. Mack already has several high-profile Division I programs expressing an interest and has plenty of time to decide where she'll apply her skills after high school.

Eighth-grade guard Ava Cupito hasn't let her youth

affect her play at all. She's averaging around 13 points and five assists per game, and is also getting some Division I college looks. Pryor likes the way Cupito keeps a level head on the court. "She's so calm," he said. "What she does best is distribute the ball."

Freshman guard Sinae Hill is another one who's been playing older than her years. "She can do everything. She's a jack-of-all-trades," Pryor said. "If you can crack our lineup as a freshman, that means you're a player."

Sophomore guard Amina Allen has made great strides this season. "She's the most improved player in the state," Pryor said. "She's doing all the little things that good players do."

The Redhawks have some tough games coming up, including two contests against Providence Academy, which was ranked first in the state in AA. However, Pryor wouldn't want the schedule any other way but challenging. "We get to play all the big dogs," he said.

The team expects to be firing on all cylinders when Angel Hill returns from her injury. The Redhawks also received more good news recently when junior guard Berit Parten decided to play basketball this season after all. Parten, who is slated to play soccer at the University of Iowa, initially told Pryor that she wanted to sit out the basketball season. However, she changed her mind late last month.

"She said she missed her teammates and asked if she could come back and play," Pryor said.

## Cadets are off to fast start in hockey

By Bill Wagner

**L**ast winter, the Saint Thomas Academy hockey team landed in the unfamiliar place by finishing with a .500 record and being knocked out of the playoffs in the section semifinals. One year later, with a coaching change and a largely different group of players, the Cadets were off to a 9-4 start and ranked among the top 10 Class AA teams in the state.

Mike Randolph, the former legendary coach of Duluth East, served as associate head coach for the Cadets last year and now as head coach is putting a new system in place that, so far, his players are buying into.

"There are a lot of areas in which our play needs to improve," Randolph said. "We have a long way to go, but I'm really happy with our start. Hopefully our young players will continue to develop. And I love our senior leadership."

Randolph said that last year's squad was filled with seniors, while this season the Cadets only have two senior defensemen and four senior forwards who saw significant ice time last year. And there's a lot of talent and potential among the younger players.

"I love their work ethic," Randolph said. "They bring it every game."

Through January 7, the Cadets had outscored their opposition 50-

24. That includes wins over highly ranked Cretin-Derham Hall (4-2) in the opener and Duluth East (4-1), Blake (4-1), Holy Family (4-3) and Moorhead (4-1).

STA's losses so far have been in a rematch with CDH (2-4) on December 22, against Top 10 Edina (1-5) at a holiday invitational, to a strong Benilde-Saint Margaret's team (2-4) on January 5 and to Metro East Conference rival Mahtomedi (1-2) on January 7.

Randolph said the victory over Duluth East, his former school, was an emotional experience because it had the last group of youngsters he had

STA HOCKEY ▶17



**16 STA HOCKEY**

coached there. "But I'm glad we're done with that game," he said.

There's a long tradition at STA for high-scoring forwards and senior center Tommy Cronin is doing his best to carry on in that vein. Cronin had 18 goals and 10 assists as of January 7, after scoring 17 goals last year.

Senior wing Zach Howard complements Cronin well up front, though Randolph doesn't like to play them on the same line that often. He does, however, like to have them out together on the power play.

Randolph said Howard, who has four goals and nine assists, has had a bit of misfortune in scoring so far this season. "But he's still getting great chances," he said.

Senior wing Jordan "Tack" Tacheny has what Randolph calls "buzz and speed" to close on people, and senior wing Lucas Kickhofel has similar skills. Both forwards are good forecheckers and quick on their skates.

On defense, Randolph has six players of

equal ability and doesn't like them to skate the puck out of their zone if at all possible. He said he prefers them "to get it off their sticks and get it up to the forwards so we can get going."

The STA backliners include senior Sean Burns paired with senior Mario Savino, junior Brody Deitz paired with sophomore Patch Cronin, and sophomore Tommy Kertz paired with sophomore Jake Faith.

In goal, Randolph rotates between sophomore Cody Niesen (.893 save percentage) and senior Tyler Magozzi (.933 save percentage).

The Cadets were looking forward to 2023 after scheduling quirks forced them to play all but two of their games in December away from their home rink. On January 12, they have another home game against conference rival Hill-Murray.

Randolph really likes this year's squad. "A lot of our players are very similar," he said. "So it's nice to have that depth. It'll all come down to how much our younger guys grow up."



STA's Zach Howard and Will Dosan chase the puck as Mahtomedi's Carter Haycraft (at right) tries to slow them down in the Cadets' 2-1 loss to the Zephyrs on January 7.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

**16 WRIGHT CALL**

concern over Casey O'Brien, a recent graduate who's been battling cancer for several years. There were the recent deaths of legendary baseball coach Dennis Denning as well as the father of longtime boys' basketball coach Jerry Kline. That's a lot for a tight-knit community to endure. Through it all, however, there have been signs that show how strong people can be.

Nevertheless, Funk acknowledged that there'll be lingering effects of the tragedy. "It'll be a while because you'll get reminders," he said. "We talked about that and the need for perseverance."

**Hazards of football are back in spotlight**

Like a lot of folks, Saint Thomas Academy football coach Dan O'Brien saw the horrific scene when Buffalo defensive back Damar Hamlin suffered a cardiac arrest after making a tackle in a game in Cincinnati. Hamlin's health, which was reported to be improving as this was being written, is the obvious first concern in everyone's mind. The question of what caused his cardiac arrest was still being determined.

Seeing Hamlin fall on the field brought back the horrible memory of the day when Detroit Lions wide receiver Chuck Hughes dropped to the field during a game in 1971. He died that afternoon. Hughes was only 26, but the doctor performing the autopsy said he had the heart of a 70-year-old. Modern physicals are intended to address such medical issues in advance and keep players in that condition off the field.

Seeing the Hamlin play, however, O'Brien's mind went into auto pilot. "He tackled the guy from behind," said O'Brien, who played defensive back in college at Saint Thomas. "You see a lot more of that than you used to."

One of the challenges in sports like football is that the players are stronger, bigger and faster today. "I weighed 190 when I was in college," O'Brien said. "Now you have high school defensive backs who are 205 and more."

While some running backs are also bigger, some schools still have no choice but to send a 150-pounder out for a pass. On the line, the weight differences are even more pronounced. When the University of Saint Thomas was still in the MIAC, there were many occasions when a Tommie lineman outweighed the guy opposite him by nearly 100 pounds. Most of the time, things didn't go well for the undersized lineman.

Size issues aside, O'Brien worries that the tackling techniques being taught today are different than the ones he grew up with. The old concept of squaring up and lowering a shoulder to bring a runner down seems to have been replaced by the high hit, and there are more horse collar penalties and ejections now.

"The officials are being more vigilant about it and that's a good thing," O'Brien said. "But it has to start at the top." Translation: Kids emulate what they see on TV.

Like a lot of coaches, O'Brien is wary of having players hit too much while practicing. "We're only in full pads one day a week before a game," he said. "We only tackled to the ground three times before we played our first game."

At the same time, O'Brien feels the game is as safe as it can be. "We have better helmets and better shoulder pads than when I played," he said. "We just need to teach the right techniques."

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

# 2023

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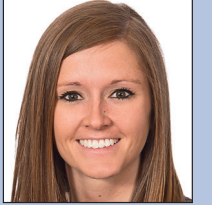


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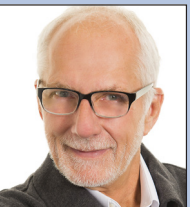
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