

St. Paul turns to even-sided parking ban

Possible strikes, missed recycling pickups add to city woes this winter

By Jane McClure

A parking ban on the even-numbered sides of Saint Paul residential streets that went into effect on March 10 will continue to be in force through April 15. The ban was announced on March 8, prior to yet another snowstorm. It is just one more inconvenience in this winter of Saint Paul's discontent.

The city was facing a possible strike on March 21 of city workers, including the Department of Public Works employees who drive snowplows. Drivers for Eureka Recycling, which handles residential recycling collection in Saint Paul, were considering a strike of their own due to impassable alleys. Eureka said some drivers have been injured in falls on slippery ice and have been told not to travel alleys that are too snowy or icy.

Eureka sent out about 2,000 letters in March announcing that it would not empty recycling carts in

WINTER PARKING BAN ▶3



A tip of the cap to Saint Pat. Jeff Schmidt couldn't be missed outside Landmark Center on March 17 during the Saint Patrick's Day Parade in Saint Paul. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City pushes for 1% sales tax hike to address repair of streets and parks

By Jane McClure

Saint Paul officials have been lobbying the Minnesota Legislature this session to approve a new 1 percent sales tax in the city to help pay for two dozen street repair and reconstruction projects and the building and maintenance of new and existing parks and recreation facilities.

If approved by state lawmakers, the 1 percent sales tax would likely be placed on the citywide ballot this November. If approved by a majority of city voters, the sales tax is expected to generate about \$984 million in revenue over the 20 years the city is seeking for the tax increase.

The sales tax in Saint Paul is currently 7.8 cents on the dollar. That includes 6.8 cents from the state sales tax, a half cent from Ramsey County's transit tax and a half cent from the city's existing sales tax. Add in another penny and that moves Saint Paul's sales tax to 8.8 percent—more than Minneapolis' 8 percent sales tax and equal to Duluth's sales tax.

Mayor Melvin Carter "decided that this year was the year we needed to try again" for the sales tax increase, said Saint Paul Public Works director Sean Kershaw. With the DFL in control of the House and Senate and a DFL governor, Carter be-

CITY PITCHES SALES TAX ▶2

Summit-U woman helped turn the tide for Title IX

Brenden scored an early victory for gender equity

By Anne Murphy

Peg Brenden never wanted to write a book about her experiences as a high school tennis player who fought for gender equity on the court and in the arena of women's athletics. "It was exhausting enough to live through it," she said. Her sister, Sheri Brenden, felt compelled to write the story, however. Her new book, *Break Point: Two Minnesota Athletes and the Road to Title IX*, tells of the landmark court case that

opened the door to female athletes across the U.S.

"I was delighted and, frankly, honored that my sister would take on a project about women's sports equity," said Brenden, a resident of the Summit-University neighborhood of Saint Paul. "She uses my story and Toni St. Pierre's story as an anchor to that larger story about the evolution of girls' sports."

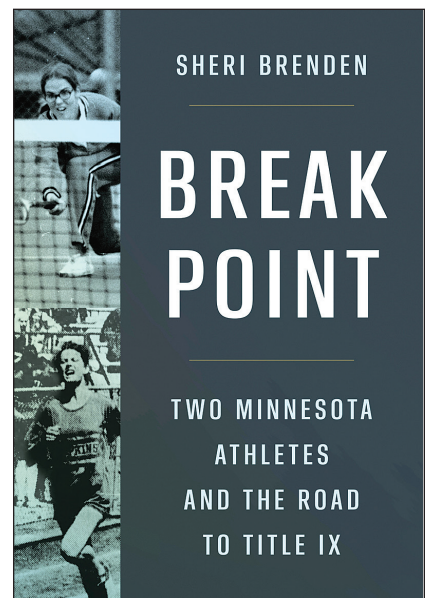
The book opens in 1971-72 when Brenden was a senior at Saint Cloud Tech High School. She played tennis. St. Pierre was a junior at Hopkins Eisenhower High School, and she ran and skied cross-country. Both girls were struggling with a lack of oppor-

tunity to compete in those sports at their respective schools.

"The story is about more than sports," writes Sheri Brenden in the book's prologue. "It is about a historic court decision on gender equity that launched a movement among girls and women and put educational institutions on notice: They could no longer stall or ignore gender equity in athletics."

In the lawsuit against their high schools and the Minnesota State High School League, Brenden and St. Pierre argued that schools with only boys' sports teams were in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the

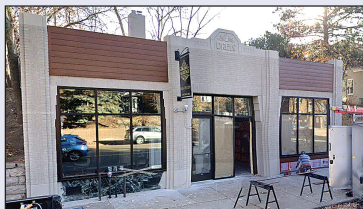
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BUSINESS REACTION

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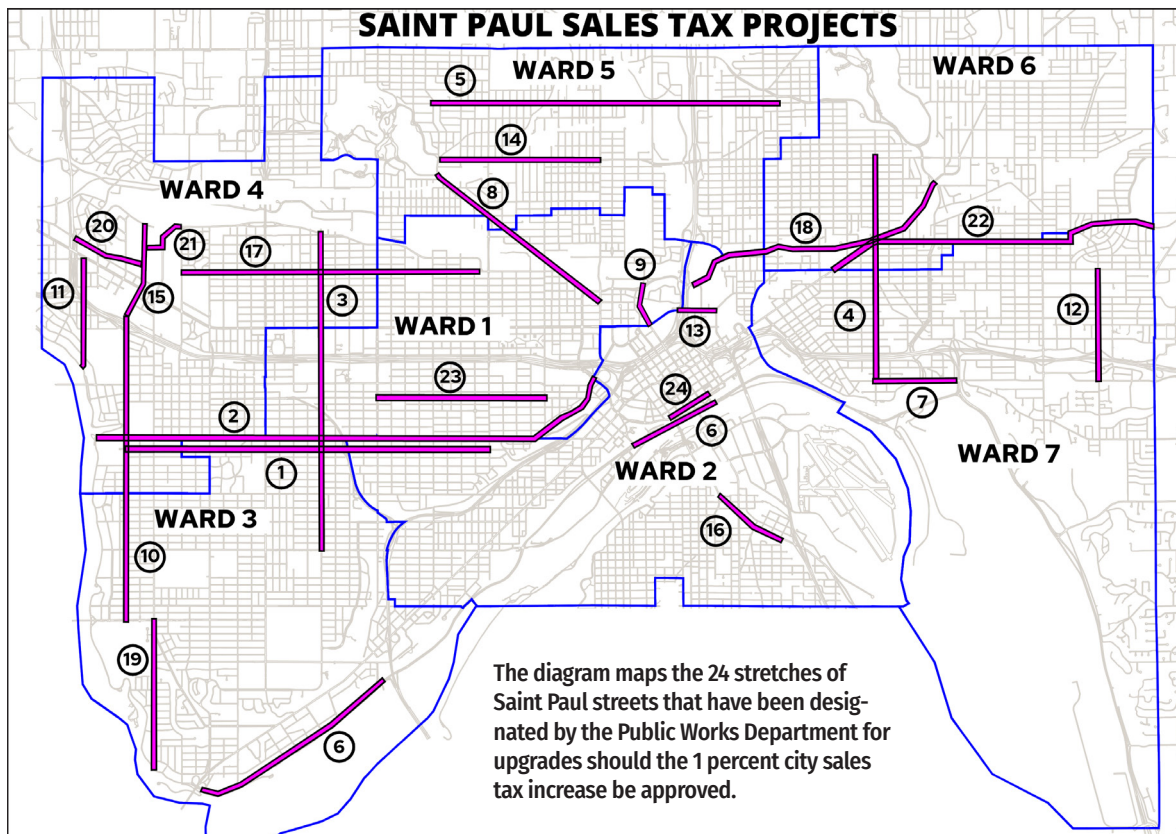
14 CITY PITCHES SALES TAX

lieved the request could succeed in 2023, Kershaw added.

The Legislature is seeing a record number of requests for local option sales taxes this year. According to the League of Minnesota Cities, 39 requests have been submitted. Some of those are due to the failure of state lawmakers to pass an omnibus tax bill in 2022, the league noted in a recent publication. That left 19 cities and two counties without final action on their proposed sales tax projects or adjustments.

The bill for Saint Paul's proposed sales tax has been introduced in both the House and Senate, but no hearings had been set as of mid-March. According to Kershaw and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation director Andy Rodriguez, the sales tax increase is needed to meet the city's needs in their departments. Local Government Aid from the state has not kept up with inflation, they said, and the city does not want to fund the improvements with an increase in property taxes. They noted that the parks and public works facilities in Saint Paul have regional significance, and the costs of maintaining those facilities should be spread out regionally with a sales tax on all who spend money in the capital city.

Cities and counties that submit a local sales tax request must have a detailed list of potential projects, Kershaw and Rodriguez said. Public Works listed its street projects with several criteria in mind. These included streets



with public safety issues, regional transitways, major regional freight corridors and bicycle facilities.

"We could have picked any arterial or collector street because almost all of them need work," Kershaw said. Given the city's resources, "Saint Paul's arterial streets are now on a 124-year replacement cycle," he said. "Residential streets are on a 289-year replacement cycle. The industry standard is a maximum 60 years. And this year we're going to see the worst pothole season we've ever seen."

Public Works outlined two

Public Works outlined two dozen street projects in the city's sales tax proposal.... For Parks and Recreation, "our biggest need is capital maintenance."

dozen street projects in the city's sales tax proposal, including Summit Avenue between Mississippi River Boulevard and Kellogg Boulevard, Grand Avenue from Cretin Avenue to Dale Street,

Hamline Avenue from Pierce Butler Route to Randolph Avenue, Shepard Road from Highway 5 to Elway Street and from Eagle Parkway to Sibley Street, Cretin Avenue from I-94 to Ford Parkway, Pelham Boulevard from Franklin Avenue to Mississippi River Boulevard, Vandalia Street from I-94 to Capp Road, Cleveland Avenue from Mississippi River Boulevard to Ford Parkway, Territorial Road from Vandalia Street to Cromwell Avenue, Transfer Road from Prior Avenue to Ellis Avenue, Ellis Avenue from Transfer Road to Vandalia Street, Marshall Avenue from Lexington Parkway to Western

Avenue, and Kellogg Boulevard from Wabasha to Sibley streets.

Some of these road projects could receive federal funding and be taken off of the potential sales tax list, Kershaw said. Given rising costs, it is not likely that all 24 projects would be funded. The estimated needs for these Public Works projects alone is at \$750 million.

For Parks and Recreation, "our biggest need is capital maintenance," Rodriguez said. His department has 39 recreation center buildings with an average age of 40-plus years. The city only has \$2.5 million in its capital maintenance budget each year, and Parks and Rec has a backlog of \$40 million in maintenance needs, Rodriguez said. Parks and Rec receives more than 3,800 maintenance service requests each year, he said. Only 75 percent of those requests are completed. And as buildings continue to age, the costs increase, he added.

Other parks and recreation facilities cited in the sales tax request include the Mississippi River Learning Center and National Park Service headquarters at Crosby Farm Park and downtown's Pedro Park, Lower Landing Park, Kellogg Mall Park, Mears Park, Harriet Island, Wacouta Commons and the proposed River Balcony. A new multi-purpose recreation center on the East Side and new bike and pedestrian connections for the Bruce Vento Trail and Wakan Tipi center are also cited along with a new regional athletic center that does not have a designated site.

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Businesses say sales tax hike is not best way to meet city needs

By Jane McClure

Reaction to the city of Saint Paul's proposed sales tax increase has been muted so far. The Saint Paul Area and Midway chambers of commerce and the Saint Paul Building Owners and Managers Association have heard presentations on the proposal, but have not taken formal positions.

B Kyle, president and CEO of the Saint Paul Area Chamber (SPAC), said her members understand the need for infrastructure improvements, but their preference seems to be for increases in Local Government Aid (LGA) rather than the city sales tax.

SPAC and other business organizations recently conducted an informal survey of businesses on the sales tax. Of the more than 200 respondents, 73 percent were opposed to the increase, 16 percent were in support and 12 percent were undecided.

The survey also included an open-ended question: If not through a sales tax, how should the city raise the revenues needed for street and park improvements?

Two themes emerged in the responses to this question. One is that the expenditures that would be covered by the sales tax are core functions of municipal government that should be prioritized through the city budget. The second theme is that businesses are worn down by government actions

that have negatively affected the city's economic viability. These actions include the 14.7 percent property tax levy increase in 2023, the recent imposition of rent control and growing concerns about public safety.

"While the Chamber and our member businesses wholeheartedly agree that we need to repair our streets, we simply can't look at this issue in a vacuum," SPAC stated. "The proposed sales tax would tie Saint Paul (with Duluth) as having the highest local sales tax in the state, when we already

have the second highest property tax rate in the state."

In its statement, SPAC calls out the "historic opportunity" in 2023 for Minnesota to make major investments in LGA. There is a bill before the Legislature that would provide Saint Paul with an additional \$16.5 million in LGA per year. SPAC also

cites the state's \$17-plus billion surplus and federal infrastructure funds as other potential revenue sources.

"The city's expectation for residents to approve additional taxation to repair streets exposes a failure to prioritize fundamental needs of Saint Paul," SPAC stated. "While the current administration and City Council may not be to blame for the status of Saint Paul's roads, shifting the burden to residents and businesses to determine whether or not the streets of Saint Paul are drivable abdicates their leadership role."

"The city's expectation for residents to approve additional taxation to repair streets exposes a failure to prioritize fundamental needs."

1◀ WINTER PARKING BAN

some alleys until mid-April due to driving conditions. Residents who received the letters can place their recycling at curbside.

The city is requiring Eureka to collect recycling, even if it is not on the designated collection day. In some cases, Eureka is contracting with private trucks. But that has led to mix-ups. Residents have reported seeing private rental truck crews collect recycling, only to have the Eureka truck come through later the same day.

Parking is currently not allowed in Saint Paul on the south and east sides of residential streets. Vehicles found to be in violation will be ticketed and towed. The ban could be removed sooner if weather conditions permit.

Normal parking rules remain in effect on both sides of main, arterial streets. Saint Paul has not declared a one-sided parking ban since March of 2019. The city's first-ever such ban was in 2014.

The ban comes at a time when Saint Paulites are increasingly frustrated about the ability to travel streets, sidewalks and alleys. Alleys in Saint Paul are plowed by property owners and not the city.

Jeanette Rebar, Public Works spokesperson, said snowplow drivers were frustrated with low compliance during the first weekend of the ban. "There were several areas that our plows weren't able to clear the streets at all because there were too many parked cars," Rebar said.

That first weekend, 30 plows were out on March 11 and 12 overnight. Between March 10-12, city workers ticketed 2,180 vehicles and towed 320. Crews continue to plow streets and patch the high number of potholes popping up around the city.

Anyone with a disability parking sign in front of their house and lives on an even-sided street where parking is banned can contact Public Works for a temporary sign.

If a snow emergency goes into effect, the parking ban will be suspended until streets are plowed. The public should check the city website and social media when a snow emergency would start and end, and when a parking ban would be reinstated.

Mayor Melvin Carter, city Public Works director Sean Kershaw and Fire Chief Butch Inks announced the one-sided parking ban at a news conference at Fire Station No. 1.

"The safety of our residents, workers and visitors is our top priority in Saint Paul," Carter said. "This action will help ensure that our emergency services and Public Works can keep our streets safe and passable."

Carter referred the city's then-75-inch snowfall total as "historic." (As of March 13, the total had grown to 80.3 inches, making this the eighth snowiest winter in the record books.) All that snow and the city's narrowing streets prompted the ban to help emergency vehicles and school buses safely traverse the streets.

Inks said public safety is a top priority for city leaders and that the one-sided parking ban will give fire trucks more room.

"We know that on-street parking is critical to many residents, and we've done everything we can to keep streets as wide as possible this winter," Kershaw said. "The parking ban enables our crews to be more responsive with whatever winter weather comes in the remaining season."

He noted that the city is running out of places to store snow. "Snow is a team event," Kershaw said, while thanking residents who have kept their sidewalks clear. "People have been patient."

He also reminded residents to move trash and recycle carts out of the streets, so that plows can get through. "We understand that this is a big imposition and we ask for everyone's patience," Kershaw said.

A map of where parking is banned can be found at stpaul.gov/1sideparking.



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14 PEG BRENDAN

14th Amendment. The suit was heard by the U.S. District Court for Minnesota and was upheld by the U.S. Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. The court's decision resulted in a ruling that the federal civil rights law Title IX, which established equal access to educational opportunities for women, should be interpreted to include athletics.

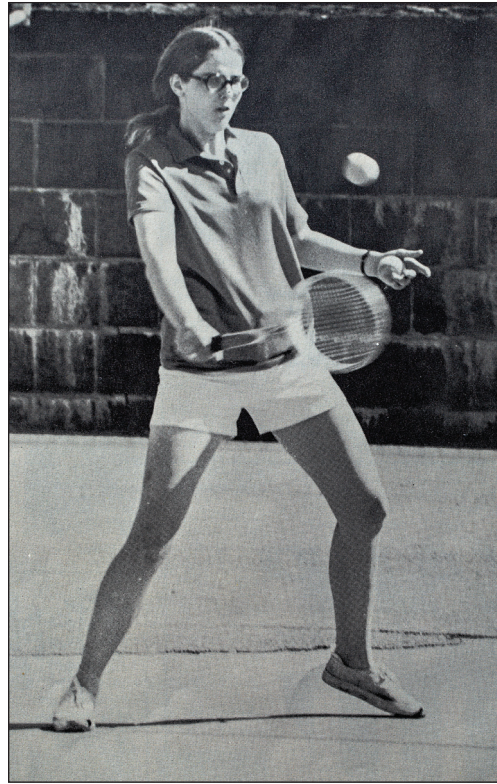
"The case unlocked the gates to an arena that had been constructed with only one gender in mind," Sheri Brenden writes. "Girls everywhere who had once stood on the sidelines started to see themselves racing to a finish line, scoring a crucial point, or claiming a victory."

The lawsuit was only the beginning of a long road for women athletes, according to Peg and Sheri. As suggested in the book's title, Sheri said, "Peg and Toni won a break point that enabled them to alter the pattern of sports teams just for boys," and they became role models for young women athletes across the country.

That spring, Peg Brenden became the first girl in Minnesota to compete on a boys' high school tennis team. The following school year, St. Pierre competed with the boys in Nordic skiing and track and field as a senior at Eisenhower. St. Pierre went on to the College of Saint Benedict. Saint Ben's did not have a varsity program for women, so St. Pierre competed on the men's cross-country team at nearby Saint John's University.

Both women continued to compete in athletics. St. Pierre was training to run in the Boston Marathon when she died of cancer in 2013. Brenden served as the pro at the Saint Paul Tennis Club, was an assistant coach for the University of Minnesota's women's tennis team, and served on the board of Saint Paul Urban Tennis, a non-profit youth development organization. A longtime resident of Highland Park, she practiced law as an attorney and as a Minnesota State Workers' Compensation Court judge.

Sheri Brenden, who is six years



Peg Brenden competes as a senior on the court at Saint Cloud Tech, and years later she poses with the letter she earned as a member of Tech's newly co-educational varsity tennis team.



younger than Peg, worked as a reporter for the *Saint Cloud Daily Times* before pursuing a career as a research librarian for Minneapolis law firms. She started working on *Break Point* in 2005. "But I had three high school-age kids at the time, and I just wasn't getting anywhere," she said. "So I put the book aside. A few years later, I went back to Peg and said, 'I really do want to do this.'"

Sheri was unrelenting in her research for the book, according to Peg. "She knows more about my experience than I do at this point," Brenden said. "She did so much legwork visiting newspaper archives and talking to people who had a part in the story, from family members to my teammates, to coaches to Judge (Miles) Lord, the judge sitting on the case."

"It's been really interesting to revisit everything in a way that is not so emotional," Peg Brenden said. "Although I have to say, I had the most visceral reaction to reading the trial testimony and the things the experts had to say in defense of the high school league and our high schools."

"They made arguments about how we couldn't (compete) with the boys because of our physical disadvantage. We weren't strong enough or fast enough or durable enough to play sports. They suggested that

Toni and I had all kinds of opportunities, and that we were just asking for special privileges to play on our high school team. Probably the argument that they hung their hat on most was that our place on our respective high school teams would be disastrous to the growth of sports opportunities for girls.

"I keep looking at participation numbers, and they're great for Minnesota girls in high school," Brenden said. "But they drop off more quickly and drop out more easily than boys from their high school experience. And we don't see women coaches in the numbers that we see men coaches. Girls could go through their whole sporting experience and never have a female coach. That doesn't say the right thing about who can be leaders and who girls can look to for their future."

Peg and Sheri Brenden will discuss those issues and more at a Women's Coaching Symposium on April 21 at the University of Minnesota. For information on the symposium, which is cosponsored by the U of M's Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport, visit wcs.umn.edu. The Brenden sisters will also discuss their book in a free program at 6 p.m. Monday, May 22, at Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave.

Work to begin this spring on Wabash bike trail

By Jane McClure

A small bike trail along a former railroad spur could make a big difference for cyclists and pedestrians who use the Grand Round and other paths to access the West Midway area, Minneapolis and other destinations. The Saint Paul Planning Commission Transportation Committee heard an update on March 6 regarding work on the Wabash trail spur, which is scheduled to start this spring and be completed in June.

The spur will provide a connection to the Grand Round at Pelham Boulevard, which connects cyclists and walkers to Mississippi River Boulevard and other destinations. It also will provide a connection to a future bikeway on Wabash Avenue, which would link to Cleveland Avenue's bike lanes, and to the north end of Westgate Commons Park. Long-term, the trail could tie into future freeway improvements as the state continues its

"It's about as far west as you can go in Saint Paul," said city landscape architect Dave Ronzani.

Rethinking I-94 process.

The trail is being paid for with a \$150,000 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant and \$185,000 from the city's 8-80 Vitality Fund. The latter dollars are left over from a 2014 program started by then-Mayor Chris Coleman. The city spent \$42.5 million over the past nine years on various 8-80 projects. The Grand Round itself was given \$13.2 million from the fund.

The new 12-foot-wide and quarter-mile-long trail will be located on a former railroad spur line west of Highway 280 and north of I-94, near the Saint Paul-Minneapolis border. The rail spur once served a large Weyerhaeuser Lumber facility.

"It's about as far west as you can go in Saint Paul," said Dave Ronzani, landscape architect for the city's Department of Parks and Recreation.

The trail starts at Berry and Myrtle streets, follows the rail spur and connects with Wabash at Eustis Street. Wabash crosses over Highway 280, just north of its interchange with I-94. Cyclists can share the bridge traffic lanes and pedestrians can use the bridge sidewalks to get to Pelham.

The Wabash Avenue bridge and railroad bridge are not included in the current project's scope, which raised questions for some Transportation Committee members. They would like to see improvements made there in the future, possibly when the planned Wabash trail is built to the east.

Ronzani noted the trail provides a connection for an area that has high residential and office density, but no good way to safely bike or walk in parts of the area.



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St. Paul unveils plan to make single-family zones more dense

More 2-, 3- and 4-unit dwellings are sought

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at 8:30 a.m. Friday, April 14, on zoning changes that would make it easier to convert large single-family homes to duplexes or triplexes and to add accessory dwellings next to single-family homes. The citywide changes attempt to address the housing shortage in Saint Paul while being sensitive to preserving the character of neighborhoods.

The changes are included in a 163-page zoning study aimed at increasing density with “neighborhood-scale housing.” In addition to duplexes, triplexes and four-plexes, the study encourages the building of townhouses, cluster-style developments, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and so-called tiny houses in the city’s single-family, two-family and townhouse zoning districts. These are the so-called “missing middle” of housing between single-family dwellings and large apartment buildings.

The idea is to change the zoning code to allow a greater mix of housing types in residential neighborhoods, according to Emma Brown, lead city planner in the zon-

ing study that was requested by the City Council in 2018.

Brown and her colleagues have been following the trends in people’s living habits, according to Brown. One trend is having several generations in a family living together. Another is the rapidly growing number of people living alone.

According to the study, 36.1 percent of the households in Saint Paul are one-person, 28.6 percent have two people, 13.4 percent have three, and 21.6 percent have four or more.

About 70 percent of the residential property in Saint Paul is zoned for single-family housing. Between 2000 and 2017, the number of single-family detached units in the city increased from 58,489 to 59,859. That represents about 50 percent of the housing units in town. Attached single-family units, namely condos, increased from 4,039 to 5,228. The number of units in large apartment buildings (20 or more units) increased from 22,083 to 28,509, making up 31 percent of the city’s housing units.

Eleven percent of the city’s housing units are in duplexes, triplexes and four-plexes. The number of units in these buildings and in smaller apartment buildings decreased slightly between 2017 and 2020.

To provide for an increase in the density of neighborhood-scale housing, the zoning study proposes a sweeping set of changes to lot size, lot coverage, building setback

and other zoning requirements. These changes would make it easier to develop townhouse and cluster developments where housing units are grouped around a shared courtyard or community center. The cluster developments also may include tiny houses.

Other trends shaping the proposed zoning changes are economic. Housing affordability is a growing problem, Brown said. So are stagnant wages that are not keeping up with inflation. The rising cost of single-family homes is another factor. Saint Paul no longer has much in the way of starter homes for first-time home buyers.

The median sale price of a single-family home in Saint Paul is now \$287,000. According to the study, that is out of reach for a four-person household making under 80 percent of the area median income of \$117,300.

The rental vacancy rate in Saint Paul currently stands at 6.67 percent. A vacancy rate of 5 percent is considered the benchmark for a healthy rental market. Although there is a higher number of vacant units now, none of them are affordable to households making less than \$35,000 per year or 47 percent of the area median income, according to the zoning study.

One of the goals of the study is to provide incentives for building new affordable housing and preserving existing housing that is affordable at all income levels. The

study aims to address racial, social and economic disparities in housing and to create infrastructure to stabilize housing for all. It intends to encourage the re-use and discourage the demolition of existing housing.

Helping homeowners and small-scale developers add new housing is another goal, as is making the zoning code easier to understand. Seven types of low-density residential zoning would be reduced to four.

The city’s Department of Planning and Economic Development will host two webinars on the 1-4 Unit Housing Study from noon-1:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 28, and from 6-7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 30. Each webinar will include an informational presentation and an opportunity for viewers to ask questions. For more information, visit tinyurl.com/2s47dyrt. The Zoom link for the webinars will be available at that website on the day of the webinar.

Written comments on the proposed zoning changes may be submitted until noon Thursday, April 13, by mail to 1 to 4 Unit Housing Study, 25 W. Fourth St., Suite 1400, Saint Paul, MN 55102, or by email to 1to4HousingStudy@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

The Planning Commission is expected to forward its recommendations on the proposed zoning code changes to the City Council for a public hearing sometime this summer.

Land trust buys into preserving affordable housing at Selby Wilkins

By Jane McClure

Six Summit-University dwellings will be acquired by the Rondo Community Land Trust as part of an effort to preserve affordable housing in Saint Paul. The City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), recently earmarked \$1.37 million in federal Community Development Block Grants for the project.

The land trust will acquire 165 Avon St. and 796, 800, 822, 837 and 841 Selby Ave. from Land Bank Twin Cities, and set up a revolving loan fund. The long-term intent is to keep the six properties providing housing at an affordable level. Financing on the dwellings closed on March 15.

The houses and duplexes were part of the Twin Cities Housing Development Corporation (TCHDC) Selby Wilkins development, a merger of Selby Commons and Wilkins Townhomes. The non-profit corporation announced last year that it planned to sell six of the 12 buildings that had been part of Selby Commons.



The Rondo Community Land Trust is acquiring six Selby Commons buildings, including these two at 796 and 800 Selby. GOOGLE PHOTO

One of the duplex units at 837 Selby and a home at 822 Selby are vacant and will be offered for sale immediately to buyers at or below 80 percent of the Twin Cities area median income (AMI), or \$89,400 for a family of four. The remaining units will remain rentals until the current tenants choose to move out. Then they will also be sold at 80 percent AMI. The land trust holds the lease on the land, while families own the homes.

Land trust executive director Mikeya Griffin said the average tenure in one of their houses is 7-10 years. However, some have stayed with the program since its

inception in 1993. She described a homebuyer who was able to earn a doctorate degree, start a business that is now in a land trust commercial unit, and buy a home on her own. “That’s the power of what we do,” she said.

Rondo was the first residential community land trust in Minnesota. It has 94 dwellings and a goal of adding 500-700 more in the next five to six years. It also is looking to expand its current 9,300 square feet of commercial space.

City Council members expressed their support for the land trust’s work, and for keeping properties affordable for

new owners and existing renters. Ward 1 council member Russel Balenger, whose ward includes Selby Wilkins, noted that a nearby Dayton Avenue house recently sold in just a few days for \$479,000.

Other council members said they are interested in seeing more done to expand the land trust’s work or to see other land trusts formed, as the city grapples with an affordable housing shortage.

Late last year, TCHDC refinanced Selby Wilkins with sources that included low-income housing tax credits from the city and Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

Wilkins Townhomes is a three-building, 23-unit, affordable townhome community with 100 percent of the housing units holding Section 8 vouchers. The buildings are all on Marshall, Ashland and Holly avenues east of Dale Street. They were built in the early 1980s, but have seen no substantial improvements since then. TCHDC purchased the properties in 2020 with the intent of combining them with Sel-

by Commons and making needed improvements.

TCHDC has owned and operated Selby Commons since the early 1990s. The scattered-site development had 12 buildings along a five-block stretch of Selby, with 38 two-, three- and four-bedroom dwellings. Most buildings are single-family homes, duplexes and triplexes, the largest and most prominent of which is at the northeast corner of Selby and Milton Street.

The Selby-Milton building was granted a conditional use permit by the Planning Commission last year to allow the conversion of ground-floor commercial space into eight, two-bedroom apartments. The apartments were to be affordable to households making 60 percent AMI, or \$70,400 for a household of four. That is in addition to the 10 apartments already there.

The commission also recommended that the building and its parking lot at 912 Selby Ave. be rezoned from commercial to residential, which the City Council approved.

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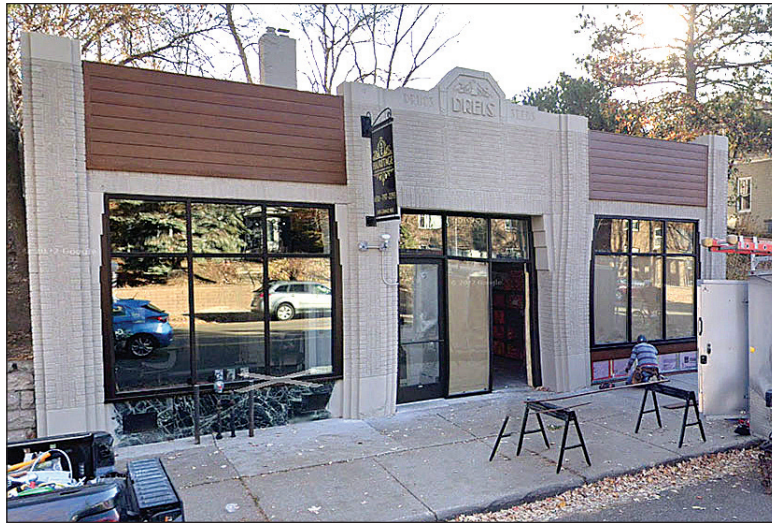
Commission supports request to rezone 1416 Grand for retail

By Jane McClure

A Grand Avenue property owner is one step closer to having a mid-block building with homes on either side rezoned for his footwear and apparel retail store. The Saint Paul Planning Commission on March 17 recommended rezoning 1416 Grand Ave. from office-service to traditional neighborhoods 2 use. That recommendation will go to the City Council for a final public hearing and vote.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee recommended against the change, citing concerns about illegal spot zoning. The district council would like business owner Rob Yang to locate his Phenom Global shop elsewhere on Grand, citing the number of empty storefronts available.

However, city staff recommended approval of the rezoning, saying it is consistent with



Rob Yang is looking to rezone the mid-block building at 1416 Grand Ave. in order to operate his footwear and apparel retail store there. GOOGLE PHOTO

the way Grand has developed. Planning Commission members agreed, saying that while they understand the neighborhood concerns, they do not see the request as being illegal spot zoning.

"It is clear that mid-block commercial is atypical in a citywide context, but Grand Avenue is an

atypical street, and the current building is part of the character of the neighborhood," the staff report stated. "TN2 would allow development at a scale allowed by the adjacent (low-density residential) district also fronting Grand Avenue on this block."

Yang said he should be able to

open a retail business in the one-story building, which has housed a variety of office and service businesses in recent years, including a hair salon. He grew up in Saint Paul and has been trying to open a store at 1416 Grand since 2021.

He noted that many customers for his Lucky 888 LLC business will be purchasing items online and that he does not anticipate creating parking problems. The building has no off-street parking.

Four residential neighbors and one business sent letters in opposition to the rezoning request, and one neighbor spoke. Neighbors said Yang has renovated the building and advertised the location online before getting the zoning change, and has had crews and materials placed on adjacent properties without owners' consent.

They said that not only will a zoning change bring in a use that is incompatible with the rest of the block, the change to TN

zoning allows the possibility of the building being demolished and replaced with a much larger mixed-use structure that would generate more parking demand. Under recently changed city regulations, none of those uses have to supply any off-street parking.

Caleb Johnson, who lives adjacent to 1416 Grand, said a change in zoning and use of the building will have an immediate, negative impact on the neighborhood. He noted that city and neighborhood plans call for retail at corners and so-called neighborhood nodes, not mid-block. The property at 1416 Grand is reportedly one of only five commercial lots on the avenue with residential-zoned properties on both sides and not at an intersection/node.

"None of the four other properties are general retail use," Johnson said. He added that rezoning the property would set a precedent for the other lots on Grand and for similar properties throughout the city.

St. Paul seeks citizens help in drafting Safe Streets for All plan

City is rushing to meet June deadline for federal funds

By Jane McClure

The city of Saint Paul is facing a June deadline to draft a Safe Streets for All Transportation Safety Plan and apply for federal funding to carry out the plan. The plan would identify specific projects, policies and design strategies to eliminate or reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries by addressing the root causes of traffic accidents. Between \$5 million and \$30 million in federal money is available for that effort.

The Saint Paul Planning Commission's Transportation Committee reviewed an early version of the plan and made initial recommendations on March 6. Citizens are being asked to help in this effort by filling out a survey of where they have seen or experienced crashes. An initial deadline for the public to weigh in is April 15. Visit

www.stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/transportation-and-transit/transportation-safety-action-plan. The city's Public Works Department will also collect public comments at community events.

David Peterson, a transportation planner for Public Works, is managing the project. He said the intent is to focus on unsafe areas and make major investments to eliminate serious crashes, including those involving motorized vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

"It's a pretty lofty goal," said Lydia Statz, a multi-modal transportation planner with the engineering consulting firm of Kimley-Horn. But it is a goal worth striving for, agreed members of the Transportation Committee.

The plan will draw on crash data. Saint Paul's rate of crashes is higher than Minnesota's, but lower than the national crash rate. Over the five years of 2018-2022, a total of 16,070 crashes were reported on city streets. They resulted in 58 deaths and 264 serious injuries. Six hundred ninety-nine

of the crashes involved pedestrians, with 21 killed and another 111 seriously injured. Two hundred ninety-six of them involved bicyclists.

Saint Paul will be competing with municipalities nationwide for a share of the \$5 billion that is available through 2026. The city's goal is to have an initial plan in place by June. The plan would then be shaped over the succeeding months with completion of a more robust plan in 2024 that could be used to apply for the funds in future years.

"This feels really rushed to me," said Planning Commissioner Brian Martinson.

Public Works staff agreed, but said they want to be able to throw the city's hat in the ring for funding this year. "This is a super-competitive process," said Randy Newton, city traffic engineer. "We want to give ourselves as many chances as possible to apply for funding."

An initial survey of the city shows several streets that could be candidates for major safety improvements, including

downtown and sections of University Avenue, West Seventh Street, Rice Street and Maryland Avenue. However, other area streets, such as Cretin Avenue in Merriam Park, have been singled out as unsafe. Areas where motorists tend to speed, run red lights or slide around corners are among those being considered.

"We've all seen extreme speed," said Peterson. "We've also seen motorists driving recklessly and running red lights. That's pretty unsettling to see."

Some of the more prevalent traffic problems are seen in the city's lower-income neighborhoods. These are generally areas where residents have not been as engaged in recent city transportation projects.

Past traffic studies are also being reviewed for ideas that are still relevant today. These include improved pedestrian crossings, improved sidewalks, new sidewalks in places where there are none, better sidewalk connections, and various measures to reduce speeds and encourage vehicles to yield to pedestrians.

Longtime UST advisory group to study possible restructure

One idea would make WSNAC a committee of Mac-Grove, Union Park

By Jane McClure

The West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) voted 6-5 on March 14 to form a working group that will review possible changes to its structure, including a proposal to make it a committee of the Macalester-Groveland and Union Park district councils.

The group could also look at having the councils simply provide staff support for WSNAC, which was created nearly two decades ago to address University of Saint Thomas and related neighborhood issues. The group could bring forward other ideas as well or decide to keep WSNAC as is. Any ideas brought forward would have to be approved by the district councils and WSNAC.

A written proposal presented in late

2022 by leaders of the district councils that adjoin the campus called WSNAC's work "duplicative and time-consuming" for people in the two neighborhoods. It also criticized the current WSNAC membership, saying it represents a narrow segment of the neighborhoods.

WSNAC was created in 2004 when the city approved a conditional use permit that allowed UST to expand into the two-blocks bounded by Summit, Cleveland, Grand and Cretin avenues. The committee includes members of the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA), Neighbors United, Saint Thomas and the two councils.

The March 14 vote had two Union Park, three UST and one Macalester-Groveland vote for creating the working group, with both SARPA and Neighbors United members and one Macalester-Groveland representative against it. UST's support is contingent that any changes to WSNAC would not violate its conditional use permit.

Union Park representative Henry Parker said the working group's study could pro-

duce ideas that "reduce complexity for neighbors" dealing with UST-related issues and could result in bolstering neighbor involvement and providing staff support for WSNAC through the councils.

WSNAC would still meet as a separate group under the district councils' proposal, Parker said.

However, some longtime neighborhood residents and WSNAC members are skeptical. "When WSNAC formed, we did this to hold Saint Thomas accountable," said SARPA representative Kathy Cairns. She and Neighbors United representatives asked how their organizations would be affected if the group became a committee of the district councils.

Over the years WSNAC has worked on such issues as a housing buyback and rehabilitation program, pedestrian crosswalks around the campus, street lighting, and campus master plans and projects. It also worked on a student housing zoning overlay, which established distance requirements between student rentals.

WSNAC is currently involved in the re-

view of a planned 6,000-seat multipurpose arena that would host hockey and basketball games on the university's south campus. Given that project, Macalester-Groveland representative Marc Manderscheid said, "I'm not sure if this is the time to change our status."

Corrections

• A story in the March 8 edition of *MyVillager* on a February 28 forum concerning the growing problem of violence in the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) referenced a January shooting at the Jimmy Lee Recreation Center. The victim in that shooting, JuVaughn Turner, 16, did not die, but was critically injured and, according to his family, is now on the road to recovery. A gofundme page has been set up to help pay for his recovery expenses. For information, visit tinyurl.com/juvaughnturner.

Also in that story, Central High School alumna and SPPS teacher Jessica Grodin was quoted, but her last name was misspelled as "Godin."

Hearing set on request for 1 a.m. liquor service at Billy's on Grand

Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave., is seeking a new Class N license to serve liquor until 1 a.m. The longtime Victoria Crossing establishment's request will go before the Saint Paul City Council at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 5.

The council can ask the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) to process the new application, which would nullify existing enforcement processes. Or the council could reject the application and continue to pursue current enforcement actions.

If directed to process the new application, a public hearing will be scheduled by the DSI. The Summit Hill Association will hold a Zoning and Land Use Committee meeting prior to the hearing and provide a forum to collect comments.

In February, Billy's was ordered to pay a \$1,000 fine for license violations discovered last year. Attorneys for Billy's owners, the DWD Group, and the DSI argued the case last August before Administrative Law Judge Jessica Palmer-Denig. The case was heard after Billy's appealed a May 2022 notice of license violations from the DSI in response to 128 police calls for service in the area. Thirty-one of those were considered "quality of life" calls that police believed were connected to Billy's. They included a DUI on March 4, a shooting in the area on March 5, an assault on March 13 and a fight on March 18.

The May action was the second within a year against Billy's. The City Council in February 2022 fined Billy's \$500 for license violations reported in fall 2021. Those included a fight, a patron leaving the premises with a beer and a couple caught on security cameras having sex on the patio.

Billy's holds city licenses for liquor on-sale with 291 or more seats, liquor on-sale Sunday, liquor on-sale 2 a.m. closing,

liquor outdoor service area patio and entertainment Class B.

Saint Paul seeks applications for its reparations commission

The Saint Paul City Council is accepting applications through March 24 for membership on a newly created commission that will explore reparations that could be made to Black city residents whose ancestors were slaves.

The 11-member Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission will serve as an advisory body to the mayor and council. It will be tasked with studying the disparities between Blacks and other racial groups in the areas of homeownership, generational wealth, education, employment, health care and criminal justice.

"Born and raised in Rondo and now council member to the neighborhood, I'm thrilled to have our city lead in racial equity and positive change for our community," said Russel Balenger. "This is one of the most important initiatives I've seen in my lifetime."

The City Council established an exploratory task force in 2021 that released its final report and recommendations in 2022. Those efforts culminated in the council establishing the reparations commission on January 4 via an ordinance, which took effect on February 13.

"Work on this commission holds the promise of changing the way we confront racial inequality in Saint Paul," said council member Jane Prince. "People should apply to serve who are committed to building real racial healing and justice in Saint Paul."

The council intends to appoint commis-

sioners who represent diverse perspectives. The initial round of appointments will feature a staggered start, with three one-year, four two-year and four three-year terms. All subsequent appointments will be for three years. The commission will meet at least monthly.

The council expects to announce the appointments in May, with the commission beginning its work in June. To learn more about the work of the commission, visit tinyurl.com/reparationscommission.

Saint Paul purchases first fully electric fire truck in Minnesota

Mayor Melvin Carter and Fire Chief Butch Inks announced on March 15 that the Saint Paul Fire Department is purchasing the state's first fully electric fire truck.

The Fire Department received demonstrations of the RTX electric fire truck from Austrian-based designer and manufacturer Rosenbauer last year and again this January. Members of the department's training division, apparatus selection committee, and vehicle maintenance personnel were impressed with the maneuverability, safety features, and functionality of the vehicle.

"I was blown away by its overall performance and how quiet the rig is," Inks said. "Communication on fire scenes is important and can be extremely difficult, especially when six or seven loud diesel engines are operating in high idle."

The city is seeking federal funding to support the purchase of the approximately \$1.8 million vehicle. Officials said the investment is in alignment with the city's Climate Action & Resilience Plan, which focuses on achieving carbon neutrality in

city operations by 2030 and citywide by 2050.

Rosenbauer has begun the process of building the truck, with final assembly to be completed at its facility in Wyoming, Minnesota. Delivery is expected by 2025 and to coincide with completion of a new Fire Station 7 on the city's East Side.

City orders little free food box removed from Selby boulevard

The Saint Paul City Council ruled on March 15 that Greg Trentman and Rachel Goligoski must remove a box stand on city property at 1317 Selby Ave. The box has been used to offer free food and spare change for bus fare.

The box is in the city's right-of-way and must be removed or relocated, said legislative hearing officer Marcia Moermond. The owners were given until July 1 to relocate it, which allows time for frost to get out of the ground.

Trentman said the box has been in place for three years, and is one of the only structures of its kind on the north side of Selby. Many similar boxes are Little Free Libraries. He said space on their property is limited because of a retaining wall. Placing the box atop the wall would make it out of reach for people in wheelchairs.

He asked the council to look at policy issues of locating such shared resource boxes, which council members said they could do. This is the second such case in six months. The previous was a Little Free Library in Hamline-Midway, which a property owner had to remove.

The Little Free Library parent organization offers advice of building and installing such boxes, and urges people to not put them on municipal property.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and John Wadell.



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VIEWPOINT

INBOX

Better options for Summit trail

Andy Singer characterizes Save Our Street (SOS) as “an ideological fringe group advancing conspiracy theories” (*MyVillager* Inbox, February 22). SOS has a petition against the proposed Summit Avenue Regional Trail that has been signed by more than 2,500 people from all over the city and beyond, along with more than 400 signed testimonials against the trail, on its website (savesummitavenue.org). Is it possible that all of these people are a fringe group advancing a bunch of baloney?

Singer claims “the street isn’t being widened.” However, the Summit Avenue Regional Trail 90% Draft Plan clearly shows a curb-to-curb expansion of 3 feet for segments A and C (Mississippi River to Fairview Avenue and Snelling Avenue to Lexington Parkway). Add another 2 feet for the construction zone and there will be significant disturbance reaching into the critical root zones of mature trees. Trail proponents are the ones spreading baloney when they insist the plan “stays between the existing curbs.”

Singer claims that the plan for the Summit Avenue Regional Trail is merely “switching the position of the bike lanes and parked cars.” Not so. In fact, it raises the bike trail from street level to sidewalk level and adds a raised buffer. This will require much more intensive construction.

Many trail proponents have been quoted as saying they are more than happy to sacrifice trees for safety. The false binary of “trees versus safety” is a zero sum game. SOS stands by its efforts to push the city on the known safety issues created by the 46 intersections and 150-plus driveways on Summit. Due to blind crossings and confusing rights-of-way, frequent crossings like these are more hazardous with sidewalk-level trails than with on-street bike lanes.

Remember all of the brand new curbs, ADA-compliant ramps, bumpouts and gutters that were installed in August 2022 during the mill and overlay project between Snelling and Lexington? All of that will have to be torn out for the sake of a raised and separated bike trail. Similar work has been scheduled for 2023 on Summit between the Mississippi River and Snelling and between Lexington and Victoria Street. That is most of the length of Summit. One has to ask, does the right hand talk to the left hand in the city of Saint Paul?

Singer also fails to mention that the city’s 90% draft plan calls for wider traffic lanes. Summit’s traffic lanes would expand by 1 foot in all segments except Snelling to Lexington. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) recommends narrowing traffic lanes to 10 feet to reduce car speeds and decrease the risk of death and critical injury to pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and passengers. Why would the city promote a design that goes against the safety guidelines of MnDOT?

SOS presents substantial evidence and research on its website showing that there are better options to improve cycling on Summit while preserving trees, protecting the historic streetscape, slowing traffic, letting renters and condo owners continue to park near their homes, and making real improvements for pedestrians.

*Alice Gebura and Marilyn Bach
Summit Hill*

Editor’s note: The writers are both members of SOS.

A lack in transit planning

One notion that guest editorialist Randall O’Toole mentions needs to be shouted from the rooftops (“Off the rails: the state of transportation after COVID-19,” *MyVillager*, February 22): the debacle of poor security planning for light rail in the Twin Cities. This problem is due directly to the fact that purchasing a fare on light rail is only a suggestion. It is why “the Twin Cities’ light-rail system sees more crimes per billion passenger miles than any other light-rail system in the country.”

That wise leadership was lacking for the taxpayers who foot the bills does not negate what should be the great benefits of public transit. Intelligent planning, not more cars on the road, is what we need.

*Celeste Riley
Mendota Heights*

STAR sheds light on proposed sales tax hike

By Peter Butler

Saint Paul city leaders concocted a simple plan 30 years ago: Collect a half-cent on every \$1 in sales in Saint Paul, use the tax revenue to remodel and expand the Civic Center, and dole out the rest as loans and grants to further residential, cultural, commercial and economic development. Dubbed the Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) program, the city’s new half-percent sale tax would expire once the \$65 million of Civic Center debt was retired. The Minnesota Legislature approved the city sales tax, and Saint Paul residents had no say.

Five years later, the Civic Center was slated for demolition and a new RiverCentre (with windows!) and hockey arena were in the offing. Saint Paul could now borrow up to \$130 million using sales taxes collected through December 2030. Cultural organizations started receiving STAR grants, and City Council members set aside STAR funds for their own ward projects, affectionately called “Wabasha wannabes” after the first earmark to the new downtown bridge.

To keep the property tax levy flat, city leaders diverted sales tax revenues that were intended for loans and grants to businesses and neighborhood groups to pay off general obligation debt for city buildings and leases for police and fire vehicles. In 2005, the “bad cop” Legislature stepped in to cap these new uses and ensure that the STAR loan and grant process remained “open, fair and competitive.”

Seven years later, the “good cop” Legislature agreed to pay off the remaining \$54 million RiverCentre debt (but not the arena). City leaders celebrated by issuing \$36 million in sales tax-backed bonds for reviving the Palace Theater, creating a downtown bike loop, and making street and park improvements citywide. The

half-percent sales tax was extended through 2042.

Fast-forward to today. All outstanding sales tax-supported debt will be retired by 2034. That is eight years before the sales tax is set to expire. Not ones to let an opportunity go to waste, city leaders intend to use the sales tax to support the borrowing of \$21 million for a new fire station and North End community center—uses with tenuous connections to economic development. However, bigger plans are afoot. City leaders have asked the current Legislature to approve an additional 1 percent sales tax for 20 years. The estimated \$984 million in revenues would be used to fund “street improvements” and “park and recreation facilities.”

Little of the city’s proposal fulfills state law for authorizing a local sales tax. Normally, cities cannot ask for local sales taxes to fund street work or more than five different projects or to add to an existing sales tax. But apparently the bar is either significantly lower or nonexistent when one party controls the House and Senate as well as the mansion at 1006 Summit Ave.

In fact, the bills before the Senate and House exempt most requirements for legislative approval. Thankfully, they still require the approval of Saint Paul voters to impose the new 1 percent sales tax (at least at the time of this writing). So, brace yourself, Saint Paul, for our third referendum in as many city elections. Mandated trash collection and rent control were just warmups to what could be a nearly \$1 billion, 20-year decision.

The referendum in 1999 for a city sales tax to help pay for a new Twins stadium in Saint Paul attracted a record 76,236 voters, 58 percent of whom said “no.” Will streets and parks do better? More important, do we trust our city leaders to stick with the original plan?

Peter Butler is a resident of Summit Hill and a former financial analyst in the city’s Office of Financial Services.

Charged up about Xcel levy

I hope all Xcel Energy customers pay close attention to the insert that came with their recent electricity bill and not just toss it. Xcel is proposing that all customers using their electricity pay for the erection and maintenance of 730 new high-speed public charging stations for electric cars across the state. This is like asking all citizens to pay for the building and maintenance of filling stations for people with conventional cars.

I don’t own a conventional car, let alone an electric one. I strongly protest this unfair cost levied on people who will not be using these charging stations. If you agree that this levy is grossly unfair, please contact the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place E., Suite 350, Saint Paul, MN 55101, email consumer.puc@state.mn.us or call 651-296-0406. Comments must be received by 4:30 p.m. on April 5.

*Kathleen Deming
Macalester-Groveland*

Simply safer on Summit Ave.

I have been following the frequent updates of the city of Saint Paul’s plan to “fix” the current bike path along beautiful, tree-lined Summit Avenue. It has reminded me of another plan back in 1997 that was supposed to provide safety to bicyclists along Mississippi River Boulevard. At that time, I made a plea on these pages for cooler heads to prevail when attempting to “fix” a problem that may not have been that problematic. Eventually, a strip of paint was applied to the southbound lane of River Boulevard, and for the last quarter century that solution has been to everyone’s satisfaction.

Now we are faced with the plan for a Summit Avenue Regional Trail. This plan has drawn a lot more attention, and for good reason. The “fix” appears to be far more obtrusive. In addition to major road work to update aging infrastructure, a complete redo of the bike path has been proposed. As a result, the entire project has been cancelled until a full review can be done to evaluate the impact of the changes. The city and surrounding neighborhoods have been meeting to hash out concerns over the best way to proceed with the least amount of damage.

While all that was going on, I noticed that just this past summer, in conjunction with a mill and overlay project

between Snelling Avenue and Lexington Parkway, new markings were added to the street, clearly defining the lanes for parking and biking plus an added buffer zone. This gives everybody—cars, bikes, rollerbladers and runners—the separation that makes us all safer.

As the city works this summer to complete more mill and overlay work between Lexington and Victoria Street and between Snelling and Mississippi River Boulevard, wouldn’t it be valuable to study the efficacy of these low-cost and unobtrusive painted lines? Is it possible that a solution has already been found? That while nobody was looking, the city fixed the issue for us? As I suggested 26 years ago, let’s not complicate the issue.

*Chas Jensen
Snelling-Hamline*

Not warming to Willow project

As a high school cross-country skier, I value the snow we get each winter. Skiing gives my teammates and me a much-needed escape from school, homework and the other stressors that come with being a high-schooler. With the rise of global warming over the past couple of years, that snow that we cherish and love could be at risk.

ConocoPhillips’ proposed Willow oil-drilling project in Alaska would be one of the largest producers of CO2 in the United States. Sure, it would create thousands of jobs and promote economic growth, but at what cost? The project, if accepted, would contribute more than 250 million metric tons of CO2 to the atmosphere and devastate efforts to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius. The project’s approval would increase global warming to a disastrous level and destroy the snow I know and love.

*Gavin Roberts
Highland Park*

MyVillager welcomes letters to the editor and longer guest editorials. All commentary must be signed, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and include a phone number for verification purposes. Please, send your commentary to MyVillager, 241 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105; email it to letters@myvillager.com; or submit it via our website at myvillager.com/editorial. The views expressed are not the views of MyVillager.

Crime Report

The following criminal incidents were compiled from Saint Paul and Mendota Heights police reports. For car and catalytic converter thefts, along with other crimes not referenced in this print edition, go to MyVillager.com.

Highland Park

Burglary—An apartment break-in was reported at Crosby Pointe, 1115 Elway St., at 2:56 p.m. on March 3.

Theft—A purse-snatching and the theft of items from a vehicle were reported at Crosby Farm Park between 12:15-1:10 p.m. on March 7.

Assault—A 31-year-old man was arrested for felony assault and DWI after police responded to a fight on the 1700 block of Norfolk Avenue at 9:22 a.m. on March 10.

Lexington-Hamline

Theft—A 20-year-old man was arrested for trying to steal more than \$600 in merchandise in the self-checkout lane at the Midway Target at 5:13 p.m. on March 4.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported at Speedway, 399 N. Lexington Pkwy., at 4:20 p.m. on March 12. Three shell casings were recovered.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—Em Que Viet, 1332 Grand Ave., was broken into and change was stolen from the till at 6:33 a.m. on March 11.

—An occupied residence was broken into on the 200 block of Stonebridge Boulevard at 6:47 p.m. on March 12.

—A man fled empty-handed after he was confronted while trying to steal items inside a garage on the 2100 block of Grand Avenue at 12:59 a.m. on March 12.

Theft—A theft from auto was reported on Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue between 1-3:15 p.m. on March 12.

Mendota Heights

Burglary—Police responded to a burglary in progress and arrested a suspect coming out of a house on the 1100 block of Dodd Road at 11:36 a.m. on February 26.

Theft—A resident on the 2100 block of Theresa Street reported being swindled out of \$9,500 at 10:16 a.m. on March 2 by someone claiming to be from Microsoft. The resident reportedly granted the swindler access to a computer and had money stolen from a bank account.

Former UST athlete charged with raping freshman in 2022

Jack Samuel Osborne, 23, of Macalester-Groveland was charged in Ramsey County District Court on March 13 with felony criminal sexual assault of a University of Saint Thomas athlete during an off-campus party a year ago. Osborne, who graduated from UST last May, was reportedly a former member of the school's track team.

According to the complaint, a UST freshman went with teammates to an initiation party for the track team at 7:30 p.m. on March 5, 2022. She said she and her teammates were served alcoholic drinks made by more senior track team members.

At around 9 p.m., she and her teammates went to an off-campus party on

the 2100 block of Lincoln Avenue, where Osborne lived. The woman recalled being highly intoxicated and throwing up at the party. She said she blacked out and woke up to find Osborne having sexual intercourse with her.

Witnesses identified the woman's assailant as Osborne and said the assault occurred in his bedroom and that both individuals were intoxicated. The woman kept saying that she didn't know who he was and that she didn't give her consent.

Osborne was later arrested. After being informed of the allegation, he said he did not do anything and then opted to not speak with police.

The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension tested forensic samples and found the victim's DNA in Osborne's bedroom. He faces a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison and a \$30,000 fine.

Merriam Park

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on Montrose and Riverwood places at 9:59 a.m. on March 9.

Burglary—A burglary and assault were reported at Episcopal Homes, 1850 University Ave., at 7:26 a.m. on March 2. The victim was taken to the hospital for injuries that were not life-threatening.

—Residential break-ins were reported on the 100 block of Otis Avenue at 5:02 p.m. on March 8, and the 2200 block of Summit Avenue around 12:40 p.m. on March 13.

—A unit was burglarized at the Quality Inn, 1964 University Ave., between 8-11 p.m. on March 12.

Theft—A theft from auto and felony damage to property were reported on the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue at 1:14 a.m. on March 5.

—Items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on Selby Avenue and Pierce Street during the evening of March 5-6.

Assault—Two men were found lying on the ground following a fight on the 400 block of Roy Street at 7:57 p.m. on March 1. Both parties said the other had started the fight and declined medical treatment.

—Officers responded to a domestic assault with a dangerous instrument at an apartment on the 400 block of Dewey Street at 10:31 a.m. on March 9.

Snelling-Hamline

Theft—Tools were reported stolen from a commercial vehicle on the 1500 block of Iglehart Avenue between 2-4 a.m. on March 7.

—A man threw a stolen bicycle at the front doors of the Western District Police Station, 389 N. Hamline Ave., at 6:11 p.m. on March 9.

Assault—A woman reported being assaulted near Hamline and Saint Anthony avenues at 3:23 a.m. on March 11.

Weapons—Shell casings and a broken gate were discovered when police responded to gunfire on the 1400 block of Iglehart Avenue at 1:37 a.m. on March 4.

Summit Hill

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 900 block of Fairmount Avenue around 8:16 p.m. Tuesday, March 14. The suspect pointed a gun at a woman and demanded her valuables. When she stated she was going to call the police, the suspect fled empty-handed.

Burglary—A home-break-in was reported on the 800 block of Osceola Avenue between 8:13-10:05 a.m. on March 11.

Theft—Items valued at over \$1,000 were reported stolen on the 900 block of Fairmount Avenue on February 28-March 1, and at the Union on Grand Condominiums, 1174 Grand Ave., on March 1.

Summit-University

Stabbing death—Police responded to a report of a stabbing on Marshall Avenue and Arundel Street at 7:17 p.m. on March 11. The male victim was taken to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Burglary—A 35-year-old man was arrested for burglary after he was found on the second floor of the Vietnamese Senior Care Center, 1058 University Ave., at 9:22 p.m. on March 2.

—A burglary was reported at the Avandale Apartments, 594 Selby Ave., at 12:30 a.m. on March 5.

Assault—A man said he was assaulted and his vehicle was damaged at the BP Station, 374 N. Lexington Pkwy., at 3 p.m. on March 7.

Weapons—Multiple callers reported hearing two or three gunshots near Victoria Street and I-94 at 9:15 p.m. on March 7.

—A 19-year-old man was arrested for possession of a gun without a permit and driving a stolen vehicle near Marshall Avenue and Mackubin Street at 12:30 p.m. on March 8. A 19-year-old male passenger also was arrested for possessing a gun without a permit and tampering with a vehicle.

West End

Burglary—A garage break-in and criminal damage to property were reported at the Waterford Bay Apartments, 380 Randolph Ave., at 10:53 a.m. on March 6.

Assault—An assault was reported at an apartment building at 313 Sherman St. at 3:53 p.m. on March 3.

—A man said he was punched in the face by an unknown suspect on Western Avenue and Superior Street at 3:05 p.m. on March 5.

—A stabbing was reported near I-35E and Kellogg Boulevard at 7:53 p.m. on March 5.

—A man said he was assaulted by an unknown suspect on West Seventh Street and Grand Avenue at 11:57 a.m. on March 5.

—An assault with a gun was reported on the 200 block of Wilkin Street at 11:50 a.m. on March 12.

Miscellaneous—A 24-year-old woman was arrested for drug possession after police responded to a report of a female walking around with a baseball bat at the Alvera Apartments, 337 W. Seventh St., at 2:01 p.m. on March 8. She also had outstanding warrants for criminal damage to property.

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ON THE TOWN

Liberté, égalité, sororité

In time of revolution, French women find surprising allies

By Anne Murphy

Park Square Theatre has waited three years to stage *The Revolutionists*. Playwright Lauren Gunderson's irreverent comedy about four women caught up in the French Revolution was originally scheduled to be performed in 2020. It will now open on March 31 for a three-week run on the proscenium stage at 20 W. Seventh Place.

As fate would have it, *The Revolutionists* is both the first and last production in Park Square's 2022-23 season. Dr. Paul Sackett, chair of the theater's board of directors, announced last week that after two years of fiscal difficulties brought on by the COVID pandemic and the cancellation of Park Square's two earlier productions in 2022-23, the theater's leadership "has adopted a strategic plan to address immediate fiscal matters and develop a stronger vision for the theater's long-term success."

The Revolutionists is produced by Park Square in collaboration with PRIME Productions, a theater company dedicated to promoting opportunities for mature women. The play is directed by PRIME cofounder Shelli Place. It stars Jane Froiland as Marie Antoinette, the deposed queen of France; Alison Edwards as playwright Olympe De Gouges; Tia Tanzer as Marianne Angelle, a character who encompasses various female freedom fighters of the era; and Summit Hill resident Jasmine Porter as Charlotte Corday, who is famous for assassinating Jean-

Paul Marat, a leading figure in the French Revolution.

The four characters and their respective crusades for equality and justice will resonate with contemporary audiences, according to Place. The play conveys serious messages about feminism, friendship, oppression and courage.

"This isn't the kind of comedy where doors slam and there are great guffaws," Place said. "It's not even Neil Simon, which is very smart, always very smart. This is more like verbal gymnastics." Audiences will hear what Place described as "snappy dialogue, Tina Fey-like dialogue."

The Revolutionists is the kind of comedy that requires great technique on the part of the actors, Place said. By mid-March rehearsals, her cast was ready to deliver what the playwright had in mind. "The cake has been baked and frosted," she said. "Now we're just putting on the sprinkles."

"I think women and men, from Gen Z and Gen X to millennials and boomers, will find something in the play," Place said. "Usually, when I'm directing, if I can make people laugh and cry, then it's a hit. With this play, I want people to walk out saying, 'Wow, I didn't see that coming.' I want the play to leave them thinking."

For Porter, *The Revolutionists* represents second chances. In addition to being rescheduled from 2020, the play presented another opportunity for her to work with Place. "I auditioned for Shelli when she was directing another production in 2016 or



Jasmine Porter is fitted by costume designer Sonya Berlovitz for her role as Charlotte Corday in Park Square Theatre's upcoming production of *The Revolutionists*. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

"Understanding the full breadth of the human experience is so important. We might all be fighting differently, but the goal is ultimately the same."

'17," Porter said. "I didn't get cast in that play, and I didn't audition for Shelli for several years. Then, for this show, Shelli reached out and asked if I would audition."

"What really excited me about Charlotte's character is that she's very driven, very committed, very spunky," Porter said. "She's fueled by a sense of justice and a love for her community and her country. She's also young and maybe naive and doesn't quite understand a lot of nuance. Her thinking is very black and white. It's just a cool opportunity to

reconnect with the part of me that was passionate in that sense, when it was this way or the highway."

"I hope audiences take away from *The Revolutionists* a recognition that we may hear about women living a full life, but we don't always have the full picture," Porter said. "I hope audiences leave saying, 'There's more to the story than I've been told.' In the play, there are times when certain characters don't always get along or they get a bit too quippy. They don't see eye to eye. But in those moments, there's also so much room to further understand each other's story and to further support the other women as they move the needle forward toward equality."

"The Revolutionists underscores the importance of women in fights for justice, not only in the French Revolution, but in today's battles toward equality

and equity," Porter added.

"It points to all the work that we do in different types of communities on behalf of folks who are fighting different battles. Understanding the full breadth of the human experience and being able to look at what we're all fighting for is so important. We might all be fighting differently, but the goal is ultimately the same. And being able to carry that sense of nuance and understanding, that sense of connection even in disconnection, is crucial."

The Revolutionists will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays, 3 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays through April 16. Tickets are \$16-\$55 with discounts for seniors, students, educators, military personnel, groups and anyone under age 30. Call 651-291-7005 or visit parksquaretheatre.org.

ON THE TOWN Briefly

Books

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host free readings and discussions with poets Diane Jarvenpa, Dralandra Larkins, Lora Robinson, John Medeiros and Michael Moos in a Literary Bridges program at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 2; poets Mary Moore Easter and Janna Knittel and their books, *The Way She Wants to Get There: Telling on Myself* and *Real Work*, respectively, at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 4; and Joe Milan Jr. and his novel, *The All-American*, at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 6. Call 651-225-8989 or visit nextchapterbooksellers.com.

SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will host free readings and discussions with author Christopher Vondracek and his memoir, *Dancing with Welk*, at 7 p.m. Thursday March 30; and Carleton College professor Deborah Appleman and her book, *Literature and the New Culture Wars*, at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 13. Call 651-493-2791 or visit subtextbooks.com.

Have your poetry stamped in concrete.

Enter the city of Saint Paul's 2023 Sidewalk Poetry Contest. Poems submitted by April 3 are eligible. Up to 15 winners will be chosen by a panel of professional poets. Contest guidelines are posted at publicartstpaul.org.

Exhibits

"An Interrupted Childhood," stories and photos of seven Polish World War II survivors in Minnesota, are being displayed through April 30 in the North Gallery at Landmark Center. The exhibit offers lessons in suffering, survival, resilience and gratitude. Admission is free. Call 651-292-3063 or visit landmarkcenter.org.

"Exquisite Creatures," an exploration of earth's biodiversity through reclaimed specimens of animals, is being displayed through September 4 at the Science Museum of Minnesota, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Arranged by artist and naturalist Christopher Marley, this seemingly endless variety of colors, textures and

structures creates a mosaic of the natural world with ammonites, beetles, crystals, lizards, parrots, urchins and other species. Admission to the museum is \$29.95, \$19.95 for children ages 4-17. For information, visit smm.org or call 651-221-9444.

The rise of self-governance in America from the Mayflower Compact to the present day is explored in a new exhibit on view through March 31 at the Minnesota State Law Library, located on the ground floor of the Minnesota Judicial Center, 25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. The exhibit examines Americans' long-standing practice to shape society through fellowship, mutual aid, labor unions, emergency services, political reform and community associations. Admission is free and open to the public from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Visit mn.gov/law-library.

Arts at the Oval, a juried show and sale by 28 artists working in jewelry, pottery, painting, photography and fiber art, will be presented from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Saturday, March 25, in the Olympic Room at the Roseville Skating Center, 2661 Civic Center Drive. Admission is free.

Film

Omnifest, a rotating schedule of five epic movies, will continue through April 9 in the Omnitheater at the Science Museum of Minnesota, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Lighting up the giant screen are *National Parks Adventure*, about the birth of the national parks system; *Born to Be Wild*, a tale of rescued orangutans and elephants in Kenya and Borneo; *Superpower Dogs*, stories about real-life heroes on four legs; *Amazon Adventure*, an 11-year journey into biodiversity led by explorer Henry Bates; and *Sea Lions: Life by a Whisker*, featuring this curious, playful and endangered species of seal. Tickets are \$9.95 for ages 4 and older. For reservations or more information, visit smm.org or call 651-221-9444.

10 ON THE TOWN BRIEFLY

Dance

Skoll, an original musical about a Viking clan and the young woman who is called to lead them in battle, will be performed from March 23 through April 9 by Collide Theatrical Dance Company. Inspired by the discovery of a Viking woman's grave that bore the marks of a warrior, the show will be staged at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Directed by Regina Peluso, the production features an original score of pop, rock and rap music. Tickets are \$32-\$55. Call 651-395-7903 or visit collidetheatrical.org.

Theater

Eurydice, playwright Sarah Ruhl's retelling of the Greek myth about Orpheus and Eurydice, is being staged at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays through April 2 at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Directed by Sophie Peyton, the play is a fresh take on a timeless love story with contemporary characters, new twists and breathtaking visual effects. Tickets are \$25. A pay-what-you-can show will be offered at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 29. Visit theatreintheround.org or call 612-333-3010.

Diesel Heart, a new play by Brian Grandison based on the autobiography of Melvin Carter Jr., is playing through April 2 at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Directed by Warren C. Bowles, the drama tells of a Saint Paul teenager who struggled in school and on the streets. The father of the current mayor, Carter enlisted in the Navy, won self-respect as a boxer and battled crime and racism as a Saint Paul cop. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$15-\$58. Visit historytheatre.com or call 651-292-4323.

By the Bog of Cats, which premiered at Dublin's Abbey Theatre in 1998, is being performed through April 2 by Theatre Pro Rata. Marina Carr's drama is loosely based on the Greek tragedy of Medea. It explores themes of land ownership, motherhood, betrayal and prejudice. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 3 p.m. Sundays and 7:30 p.m. Monday, March



Art and authenticity.

John Middleton and Jen Maren star in *Bakersfield Mist*. The comedy-drama by Stephen Sachs is now playing at Gremlin Theatre, 550 N. Vandalia St. It tells of an unemployed bartender living in a trailer park who purchases what she later suspects is a lost masterpiece at a thrift shop. A world-class art expert arrives at her home to verify the painting's worth and discovers something altogether different. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays through April 2. Tickets are \$32 with discounts for seniors, those under age 30 and everybody else at the whatever-you-can-pay performance at 7:30 p.m. Monday, March 27. Visit gremlinthetheater.org or call 1-888-71-TICKETS.

27, at the Crane Theater, 2303 Kennedy St. NE. in Minneapolis. For ticket information and mask requirements, call 612-234-7135 or visit theatreprorata.org.

My Fair Lady, Lincoln Center Theater's touring production of the classic musical, is being performed from March 21-25 at the Ordway Music Theater. Described as the most perfect musical of all time, *My Fair Lady* tells of a young Cockney flower seller and the linguistics professor who attempts to transform her into a "proper lady." The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and at 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday. Tickets start at \$44. Visit ordway.org or call 651-224-4222.

Music

The Scottish rock band the Red Hot Chili Pipers will perform in concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 25, at the Ordway Concert Hall. The nine-piece ensemble's signature sound is a fusing of such traditional tunes as "The Flowers of Scotland," "The Hills of Argyll" and "Amazing Grace" with contemporary anthems by Queen, Coldplay, Snow Patrol

and AC/DC. Tickets are \$49-\$70. Visit ordway.org or call 651-224-4222.

French classical guitarist Raphael Feuillatre will perform the works of Bach, Piazzola and others in a Minnesota Guitar Society recital at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 25, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. First-prize winner in the Guitar Foundation of America's 2018 International Artists Competition, the 26-year-old virtuoso is on a 50-concert tour. Tickets are \$10-\$25. Visit mnguitar.org.

Music from the Czech and Slovak regions will be performed by the Saint Paul Civic Symphony at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 26, in Roseville Lutheran Church, 1215 Roselawn Ave. Free and open to all ages, the concert will feature compositions by Suk, Kapralova, Martinu, Mahler and Smetana.

"Rising Tide," a concert highlighting the stories of incarcerated women and their experiences connecting with music and each other, will be presented on Saturday, April 1, by Encore!, See Change Treble Choir and Voices of Hope. The music will begin at 7:30 p.m. at Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$23,

\$20 for seniors, \$15 for children. Visit hervoicedproductions.org.

The Minneapolis string duo OK Factor will celebrate its new album, "OKX," in concert at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 1, at the Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Cellist Olivia Diercks and violinist Karla Colahan play a magical mix of bluegrass, Celtic, classical, Scandinavian and modern folk music. Joining them will be the tabla, fiddle and guitar trio Sprig of That. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$27 at the door, \$40 for VIP, \$15 for children. Visit theparkwaytheater.com.

The University of Minnesota Singers join the Bach Society of Minnesota in "Baroque Splendor!" at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 2, at the Ted Mann Concert Hall, 2128 S. 4th St. in Minneapolis. Kathy Saltzman Romey will conduct the free concert. It will feature Claudio Monteverdi's 1610 Magnificat for six voices and continuo and Handel's Four Coronation Anthems.

Family

The Tails and Tales of Dr. Doolittle, an adaptation of the beloved children's story about the eccentric physician who discovers he can talk with animals in their own languages, will be performed on March 28 and 29 by Out on a Limb Dance Theatre. The curtain rises at 7 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday in the O'Shaughnessy at Saint Catherine University. Tickets are \$32-\$35. Call 651-690-6700 or visit outonalimbdance.org.

Spend spring break from April 1-8 at Saint Paul's public libraries with cultural programs and hands-on events for children ages 7-12. The schedule includes Cooking with Chef Blong, noon-2 p.m. Saturday, April 1, at Latimer Library, 90 W. 4th St., and Wednesday, April 5, at Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St.; Pokemon Camp, 10 a.m.-noon Monday, April 3, at Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.; Clowning with Cahoot Theatre, noon-2 p.m. Tuesday, April 4, at the West Seventh Library, 265 Oneida St., and 1-3 p.m. Thursday, April 6, at the Saint Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave; and a game-making workshop with Leonardo's Basement, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Thursday, April 6, at Riverview Library, 1 E. George St., and Friday, April 7, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Admission is free. Registration is not required.

FRIDAY/MARCH 24

"CAN BLACK AND WHITE MEET AT THE CROSS?" will be discussed by the Reverend Kelly Chatman at 7:15 p.m. in the Hearth Room of the Anderson Student Center at the University of Saint Thomas. Sponsored by the Institute of Theological and Interdisciplinary Studies, the free program will also feature Henry Louis Gates' film *The Black Church*. The program is free, and so is the buffet supper served at 6:30 p.m. For reservations, call R. Alan James at 651-983-3846.

SUNDAY/MARCH 26

A FREE WORKSHOP ON RETIREMENT will be conducted from 10-11:30 a.m. at the Jewish Family Service, 1633 W. Seventh St. Retirement expert Stan Lapidos will discuss how to plan a successful and fulfilling retirement. For reservations, contact Anne Myers at amyers@jfsp.org or 651-359-7775.

MONDAY/MARCH 27

THE BASICS OF HAND DRUMMING will be taught from 5-6 p.m. at the Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. The cost is \$15. Drums are provided. For more information, visit womensdrumcenter.org.

TUESDAY/MARCH 28

SAINT PAUL ROTARY CLUB 10 will welcome former History Theater artistic director Ron Peluso as guest speaker at its luncheon from 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. at the Saint Paul Riverfront InterContinental, 11 E. Kellogg Blvd. Guests are welcome. For information, call 651-356-8096 or visit stpaulrotary.org.

KIOSK

"HOLY BUCKETS: Novel Water Management at Highland Bridge" will be discussed from 7-8 p.m. in a League of Women Voters Zoom meeting. Bob Fossum of the Capitol Region Watershed District will explain how the new development in Highland Park is bisected by a man-made creek that manages stormwater on the 122-acre site and reduces discharge into the Mississippi River via Hidden Falls. To register for the link, visit tinyurl.com/yz35nx4e.

THURSDAY/MARCH 30

JOIN OR EMET RITUAL LEADER Eva Cohen and president Allan Malkis to learn more about this congregation for humanistic Judaism from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Minnesota Jewish Community Center, 1375 Saint Paul Ave. Light refreshments will be served. People may also attend via Zoom. For information, visit orem.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 31

EMOTIONS ANONYMOUS, a 12-step program that helps people deal with stress and live a healthier emotional life, meets at 7 p.m. today and every Friday at the Twin Cities Friends Meetinghouse, 1725 Grand Ave. For more information, visit emotionsanonymous.org or call Paul at 651-402-6774.

SATURDAY/APRIL 1

MORE THAN 100 OF THE FINEST hot rods, customs, street machines and motorcycles will be displayed from

9 a.m.-8 p.m. today and 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday, April 2, at the State Fair Coliseum. The 65th annual GSTA Rod and Custom Spectacular will also feature a restored 1938 Ramsey County Sheriff's Department vehicle, a model car spectacular and an appearance by six-time NHRA drag racing champion Warren Johnson. Admission is \$18, \$7 for children ages 6-16. For discount tickets, visit gstarod-custom.com.

SUNDAY/APRIL 2

THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB will take a five-mile hike this afternoon from the state Capitol to Lowertown, Irvine Park, the James J. Hill House and the Cathedral of Saint Paul. New members are welcome. Hikers will step out at 2:30 p.m. from the southwest corner of the former Sears parking lot on Marion Street. For more information, call Sharon at 651-207-5926.

SATURDAY/APRIL 8

HAWAIIAN HISTORIAN David Chang will discuss the role of memory in maintaining an indigenous community across generations in forums at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Chang's 90-minute program, "Love, Death & Rivers," will emphasize the very different ways that the people native to Hawaii and California have remembered shared places. Tickets are \$10-\$16. Visit mnhs.org/historyforum.

REPRESENTATIVE DAVE PINTO (DFL-District 64B) invites his constituents to join him in an informal conversation about the current legislative session from 12:30-1:30 p.m. at the Palace Community Center, 781 Palace Ave.

SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

UST hoops headed in right direction

For the vast majority of the 363 Division I men's basketball teams, the season will end with a loss in either a conference or NCAA tournament game. The University of Saint Thomas was no exception. The Tommies' season ended on March 6 with a 70-65 loss to Oral Roberts in the semifinals of the Summit League tournament. It was the third time the Golden Eagles, who won the title but lost in the first round of the NCAA tournament last week, had defeated UST. However, that fact did little to diminish the Tommies' excellent sophomore season in Division I basketball.

"A year ago, we ranked near the bottom in the rankings of all NCAA DI teams," said UST head coach John Tauer. "Now we're about 200th overall. We have a lot of room to grow, but the ceiling for the program is quite high."

A look at the season's final numbers confirms Tauer's view. UST went 10-20 overall in its first season playing DI, but finished 19-14 this winter. As Tauer sees it, there's more to show the Tommies are making their presence felt.

"We did win more games than the year before," he said. "But more important, we competed better against the top teams in our league. We actually led Oral Roberts at halftime of that last game."

In UST's first season playing DI, Tauer relied on several holdovers from the school's DIII days. "Those kids did us proud," he said. "They signed up to be DIII players, but took on the challenge of playing at the DI level."

Given a year to recruit, the baton has been passed and the Tommies are now playing some of the more elite teams in the country. UST played five teams that finished with 20 wins or more. The road games featured journeys to Creighton (also an NCAA tourney entrant), Utah, Montana State and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, schools that one might have expected to see on the Gophers' schedule.

While the first steps in the new DI world weren't easy, jumping to the next level is even more difficult. Like many other coaches, Tauer and his staff will be scouring the transfer portal to see who's looking for a new place to showcase their talents.

"We'll evaluate who's out there and what we feel our needs are," he said. "The four transfers we had this year were all players we'd been in contact with before. Every school is different when it comes to how credits transfer."

The Tommies will graduate two seniors and had two

WRIGHT CALL ▶13

Just out of reach

Redhawk girls show resiliency in state hoops

By Bill Wagner

Minnehaha Academy started off soundly in the quarterfinals of the state Class AA girls' basketball tournament on March 15, coming back with a furious second half to dismantle New London-Spicer 50-28 at Williams Arena.

However, the Redhawks (23-9) weren't able to consistently play their A game, losing to top-ranked and eventual state champion Providence Academy 83-63 in the semifinals and then to second-seeded Goodhue 79-68 in the third-place game.

In the opener, the Redhawks were down 20-19 at halftime and there wasn't much of their usually potent game that was clicking. However, they came out in the second half to outscore the Wildcats 31-8.

Sophomore Addi Mack led the comeback for the Redhawks with 21 points, while junior Angel Hill pitched in 15. Minnehaha used its suddenly stingy defense to garner 15 steals, with Hill picking off seven on her own.

"Our girls showed great resiliency," said Minnehaha coach Matt Pryor. "Our game got better overall, but the big thing was that we started to play defense the way we're capable. We had a bad first half, but we knew that if we turned it up on defense, we'd be all right."

The Redhawks were looking forward to facing Providence again, even though they had lost to the Lions twice during the regular season. Providence star Maddyn Greenway, the daughter of former Minnesota Viking Chad Greenway, wasn't at her best, but her 35-point performance was enough to doom the Redhawks.

Mack tried her hardest to keep Minnehaha in the game with her 19



The Redhawks' Ava Cupito shoots a layup guarded by three Providence Academy players during Minnehaha's 83-63 semifinal loss to the Lions on March 17. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

points. Senior Aniyah Reuben added 13 and Hill 12. However, the Redhawks didn't have an answer for Greenway.

"With a player like Greenway, there's really no stopping her," Pryor said. "It's just a matter of trying to slow her down."

The third-place game found the Redhawks still a bit flat as they fell behind to Goodhue 37-34 at intermission. Hill led Minnehaha with 20 points, while Mack had 15.

Despite ending with twin losses, this season was another successful one for the Redhawks, who were making their ninth straight state appearance. They won big games against rugged competition from the outset and peaked as they headed into sections, including a 64-44 pasting of Saint Croix Lutheran in the finals.

Mack fashioned another stellar season, leading her club in points and steals per game. Eighth-grader Ava Cupito led the club in assists.

Minnehaha boys return to state

Minnehaha Academy was ahead 40-30 at halftime in the Section 4AA boys' basketball title game against Concordia Academy on March 17. However, the Beacons came out gunning in the second half and closed the

gap to 48-46 with 12 minutes to play. That's when Redhawk junior guards Lorenzo Levy and Jerome Williams went to work. Levy finished with a game-high 27 points, with Williams adding 20 as Minnehaha pulled away for a 90-61 triumph.

The Redhawks will make their ninth state tournament trip in the past 14 seasons under coach Lance Johnson. Fifth-seeded Minnehaha (21-8) will face fourth-ranked Maple River (29-2) in the state quarterfinals at 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 21, at Target Center. The winner will likely face top-seeded Holy Family (27-2) in the semifinals on March 24. The championship game is the next afternoon.

STA loses in section final

It would've been a great Cinderella story for Saint Thomas Academy. Unfortunately, the second-seeded Cadets saw their season end with a 65-48 loss to top-seeded DeLaSalle in the Class AAA section final on March 16.

The Cadets (23-6) got 26 points from senior Michael Kirchner and 12 from senior Jack Chamberlain. STA entered the section final on an 18-game winning streak, their only conference loss coming against Mahto- medi in early January.

CDH caps season with better showing in state hockey tourney

By Bill Wagner

The Cretin-Derham Hall boys' hockey team can certainly feel better about its state Class AA tournament appearance earlier this month than it did a year ago when it qualified for the first time since 2009.

The Raiders put together a dominating performance throughout much of 2022-23, posting a 19-11-1 record and outscoring opponents 134-90. They also played much of the season with heavy hearts following the tragic death of sophomore JV player Cormick Scanlan, who died on Christmas Day after suffering a stroke. His brother Colin, a senior, skated a regular shift as a forward for the varsity.

CDH put together perhaps its most rewarding game of the season in the first round of state, stunning second-ranked Maple Grove 3-1 on March 9 at Xcel Ener-

gy Center. Unfortunately, it wasn't able to follow that up in the ensuing rounds. The Raiders lost to Edina 4-1 in the semifinals the next evening and then to Andover 5-3 in the third-place game.

It was still quite an upgrade over last season, when CDH went two-and-out at state despite being ranked No. 1 at one point. Coach Matt Funk talked afterward about what a great experience this season was for his troops overall.

"This group has a lot to be proud of," said Funk, noting that his team's unseeded status made the win over Maple Grove all the sweeter. "It was a good run for us."

The Raiders, who finished second in the Suburban East Conference this season, were superb in the opening round of state. They got a first-period goal from junior Charles Owens, though Maple Grove tied it up just seconds later.

The turning point came just over the

halfway point in the second period when senior Holden Saumweber lit the lamp.

"Our third line had a really good shift and kept them hemmed in their own zone," Funk said. He added that the third line did an outstanding job on the fore-check throughout the season.

Freshman Max Anderson added an empty-net goal late in the third period to seal the victory. Funk said the game couldn't have been better executed by his squad.

"We took away the neutral zone from them and kept them outside," he said. "They were looking a little shocked as the game went on."

The semifinal game was not nearly as eventful as the Raiders simply couldn't put enough pressure on Edina. Attila Lippai scored CDH's only goal on a power play with 3:11 left to play in the first period, but the Raiders weren't able to get their high-octane offense in gear as the Hornets lim-

ited their scoring chances.

In the third-place game against Andover, CDH appeared in control. The Raiders were ahead 3-2 with goals by freshman Nate Chorlton in the first, Lippai in the second and sophomore Max Bennett in the third. But Andover scored three goals within a minute as time wound down.

"It was a frustrating end because we had the lead almost the entire game," Funk said.

He said the Raiders should be solid next winter, but probably not as dominating as they've been the last two seasons. They'll lose four of their top scorers to graduation, including East Metro Player of the Year Jake Fisher (63 points), Lippai (45), Simon Houge (37) and Colton Jamieson (28).

Junior Owens (28 points) and freshman Anderson (25) should be back, along with junior goalie Leo Miller, who posted a solid 2.49 goals-against average and .906 save percentage.

12-1 WRIGHT CALL

other graduate students on their roster. Andrew Rohde, who led the team in scoring with 17.1 points per game, is a freshman, as are Kendall Blue and Ahjany Lee, who ranked second and third in rebounds.

Assistant coach Mike Maker, who oversees the team's non-conference schedule, is busy on the phones looking for foes to play in 2023-24. There are a few games already set. Both Milwaukee and Idaho State will be coming to Saint Paul next winter, and UST will go to Green Bay.

While Maker looks for new foes, Tauer reflected on what he's looking for next season. "We're more versatile than we were. We made strides defensively," he said. "But we need to keep improving. It's all about getting better. People are aware of us now."

Travis Walch named STA football coach

For the past two decades, Travis Walch has been working in various football capacities. After a successful playing career at Winona State, he stayed in town as an assistant coach. Later, he moved to the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) in various roles at Carleton, Macalester and Saint Thomas. In addition, he served as a consultant to several high school and college programs, and directed regional football combines around the country.

One thing Walch hadn't done was run his own team. He has his first chance to do so after recently being named the head football coach at Saint Thomas Academy. Walch takes over from Dan O'Brien, who resigned after five successful seasons to lead Holy Family's football fortunes. It was a job Walch had always hoped for, but didn't expect to be available for a while.

"I thought Dan would be there for a long time," Walch said. "But this job has always been in the back of my mind. When he left, I decided the timing was right."

Walch already had ties with STA. His wife, Kirsi, and her sisters are Visitation grads and her brother is an STA grad. In his college assistant days, Walch recruited several Cadets to the programs he was working at.

Unlike the college programs, Walch comes to a school with a lengthy—and successful—football history. "It's one thing to go to a 2-8 team and watch it improve to 7-3," he said. "It's another thing altogether to go to a team that's been winning a lot of games and try to win one more the next season. That's the challenge."

And that's the goal. In 2022, the Cadets tore through the regular season undefeated with all but one game decided by 34 points or more. They outscored their opponents in their two section playoff games 100-19. The season ended abruptly when longtime rival Mahtomedi, which the Cadets beat 28-14 in the regular season, turned the tables with a 20-14 verdict in the state Class AAAAA

quarterfinal. (Perhaps not by coincidence, the only tapes Walch has seen of STA's 2022 season were the Mahtomedi games.)

Walch said he is working on putting together a staff immediately. "I hope to have 85 percent of it by the end of this week," he said. Along that line, Walch is hoping one familiar face is sticking around to help. Dave Ziebarth was O'Brien's predecessor as head coach and stayed with the program as an assistant.

"Having Dave would be a big asset as a sounding board," Walch said. "He knows everybody well and has a terrific football mind—particularly on special teams. We just need to define a role for him."

Though he has met some players, Walch's first meeting with his potential squad was scheduled for this week. He goes into it with the knowledge that, while Savion Hart—who rushed for 1,243 yards as a junior—and others return on offense, the defense will need to be rebuilt.

That'll be the first on-field priority when the Cadets convene for 2023. To Walch's way of thinking, the off-field priorities are just as important. "I want us to be a thoughtful club, humble and tough," he said. "I also want us to have a lot left in the tank at the end of the season. We need to stay healthy. If you use every resource you have too early, you run out of resources."

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

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Annual meeting—The Highland District Council will hold its annual meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 29, at Summit Brewing Company, 910 Montreal Circle. Attendees can learn about neighborhood projects, meet board candidates and purchase items from the Rustic Chef food truck. The meeting will also be streamed live at facebook.com/HighlandDistrictCouncil.

Board elections—Residents can vote online for HDC board candidates from 7 p.m. March 29 to 10 p.m. April 3. For a mail-in ballot, call the office or email Kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org. Mail-in ballots must be received by April 5. Learn more and vote at bit.ly/HDCelection23.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Board elections—Candidates for the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's board of directors may apply online at mac-grove.org/boardelections or pick up a paper form at the Edgcombe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. Applications are due April 13. A board information session will be held at 4:30 p.m. Monday, March 27, at Edgcombe. Register by emailing mgcc@macgrove.org. Board elections will take place April 20-27.

Century building plaques—All properties in Macalester-Groveland that will be at least 100 years old by 2028 are eligible to purchase an engraved plaque to identify their age. Order and pay at macgrove.org/100years by March 31.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

SHA plant sale—The Summit Hill Association is holding its annual plant sale online. Go to gertensfundraising.com, Store #191, to make your selections. Orders are due by 10 p.m. Thursday, April 6. Plants can be picked up from 4:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, May 4, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 Saint Clair Ave.

Summit Hill parents group—Join the SHA's Facebook page to meet other parents and kids in the neighborhood. Monthly events will be hosted in and around Summit Hill.

Reimagine Linwood Park—The SHA is working on a plan to refresh Linwood Park and its playground. Take a moment to fill out a survey on the SHA website. Those interested in being on the steering committee may send their contact information to info@summithillassociation.org.

Summit-University

summit-university.org • 651-228-1855

Park Champions—An updated concept for Central Village Park will be revealed at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 4, at Springboard for the Arts, 262 University Ave. Neighbors interested in shaping what the park looks like or talking about neighborhood issues are encouraged to get involved. A meal will be provided. Visit centralvillagepark.org.

Neighbors for a Safer Selby—Residents living near the Cathedral of Saint Paul have organized a group called Neighbors for a Safer Selby to address pedestrian safety issues in the area. Visit tinyurl.com/n8h8v7xe.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 5; and Transportation Committee with city crime prevention coordinator Patty Lammers speaking on CIB proposals, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 10. Meetings are held via Zoom. For access information, email info@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 info@unionparkdc.org.

Office hours—UPDC office hours are currently by appointment only. Contact leah@unionparkdc.org.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Run for the board—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation is seeking board candidates for its annual meeting and elections that will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 25, at Summit Brewing Company, 910 Montreal Circle. Visit the website or email fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org.

T-shirt design contest—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation is holding a neighborhood T-shirt design contest. All local artists are welcome to participate. Proceeds from T-shirt sales will help support the Federation's mission. Entries are due March 31.

Office notes—The Federation welcomes Julia McColley as its new executive director.

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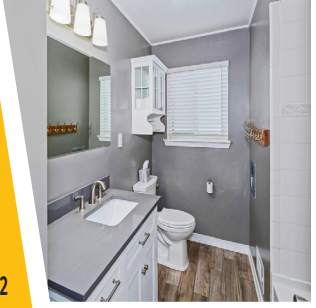
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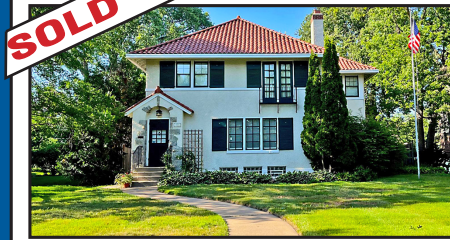
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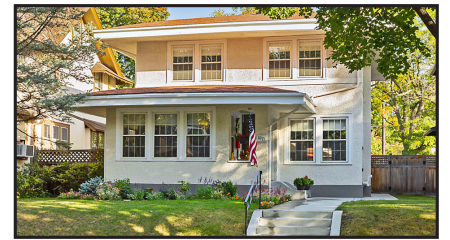
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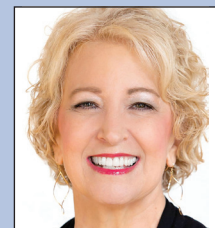
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