

CITY OF ST. ANTHONY
PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION WORK SESSION MEETING
MAY 21, 2025
5:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairperson Fee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL.

Commissioners Present: Chair Lily Fee, Commissioners Yaacoub Hark, Kristen Peterson, Jessica Swiontek (arrived at 5:50 p.m.), and Natalie Synhavsky

Absent: None

Also Present: Assistant City Manager Ashley Morello, City Planner Stephen Grittmann, and Sustainability Coordinator Minette Saulog

III. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 21, 2025, PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA.

Motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Hark, to approve the May 21, 2025, Parks and Environmental Commission agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 2, 2025, WORK SESSION PARKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES.

Motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Hark, to approve the April 2, 2025, Work Session Parks and Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

V. WORK SESSION TOPICS

A. Climate Plan Overview: Transportation

Sustainability Coordinator Minette Saulog reviewed a PowerPoint presentation, "Climate Plan Overview Transportation Focus Area." Ms. Saulog provided the background:

- The Transportation section is a Climate Plan focus area for the City in 2025, along with the Energy section.
- PEC will focus on supporting action items and strategies that are policy-oriented, which are being reviewed tonight. The Climate Plan includes the full list of strategies that include these, as well as education and operations-oriented strategies being owned by staff.

- The previous PEC group completed a ranking activity in December 2024 to provide input on how the City should consider prioritizing the pursuit of these strategies.

Ms. Saulog reviewed the Initiatives along with the current status.

- Transportation Initiative 1 – Improve accessibility and safety of non-motorized transportation infrastructure.
- Transportation Initiative 2 – Increase electric vehicle ownership across St. Anthony Village.
- Transportation Initiative 3 – Reduce avoidable vehicle emissions.

Assistant City Manager Morello reviewed Initiative 3, Collaborate with Metro Transit on public transit planning, trends, and options for future services to advance goals in this plan. She provided the status, stating Staff has been in contact with Metro Transit regarding BRT opportunities and Kenzie Terrace. In April, Metro Transit hosted planning-level workshops to identify future BRT routes. The City does not have the final say on any plans, but will continue to advocate with the Counties and Met Council to consider inclusion of services in/through St. Anthony.

Ms. Saulog continued, Initiative 3 action is to collaborate with local schools and businesses to redesign drop-off and pick-up areas and install signage to encourage drivers to limit idling. Staff are working on the overall strategy for establishing contact with schools and businesses to propose these changes that make sense for the nature of their facility. The Active Transportation Planning Process may provide the opportunity to start these conversations with the school district. There will also be an opportunity for public education about idling behaviors. PEC may be interested in engaging in those efforts.

Commissioner Peterson asked about the bike/pedestrian side of things and asked what the opportunities are to explore that, as different streets have different jurisdictions. Some residents may like a safer bike path to Silverwood Park. Ms. Saulog stated that the busier roads are County roads. Some preliminary outreach has been made to Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, and St. Anthony will continue discussions on collaboration. Ms. Morello stated that the Active Transportation Plan will be worked on throughout 2025. This document is for planning purposes.

Commissioner Synhavsky stated she volunteered to be on a committee with MnDOT representing the PEC.

Commissioner Swiontek arrived at the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

B. Ordinance 2025-0x – DRAFT – EV Charging.

City Planner Gritman reviewed at a previous City Council work session the City Council discussed EV charging and whether to regulate new multi-family and commercial projects. In addition to being an action item in the City's Climate Plan, exploring the topic was identified as one of the City's 2024 goals during the annual Goal Setting. The following models were considered:

- 1 1. Incentives to encourage – but not require – EV charging installation.
- 2 2. Requirements for installing infrastructure (such as power supply and site plan
- 3 provisions, but forgoing installation of chargers until a future date. The future date
- 4 sometimes relates to a fixed period, or a time at the owner’s discretion.
- 5 3. Requirements for installing EV charging facilities as a component of new or upgraded
- 6 development. These requirements often create a tiered standard for the number of
- 7 charging facilities based on the size of the project.

8

9 During the work session, the City Council agreed to focus on option 3 – requirements for

10 installing EV charging facilities as a component of new or upgraded development. Staff

11 agreed to draft the ordinance language for this option for Commission and Council review.

12 Commission members are tasked with reviewing the ordinance language and providing

13 feedback.

14

15 Mr. Grittmann stated that research was done on both Roseville and New Brighton’s models.

16 Both Roseville and New Brighton establish a basic threshold of 30 spaces as the lower

17 threshold for requiring EV Charging. Below that size, no requirement would be applicable.

18 Additionally, both communities exempt certain levels of parking lot maintenance from

19 triggering the addition of EV charging – essentially, only full reconstruction or major patching

20 project (25% or more of the parking surface) would require a retrofit with EV charging

21 facilities.

22

23 A new parking lot supporting a residential project of fewer than about 20 units would be

24 exempt. A parking lot supporting a new commercial development of about 8,000 sf or less

25 would also be exempt. These thresholds would typically require parking lots of fewer than 30

26 vehicles.

27

28 The one aspect of the comparison codes that raises a potential administrative issue is the

29 suggestion that a project may choose to only develop the electrical infrastructure for EV

30 charging, but without going the final step to provide the charging equipment. The language in

31 the code draft referring to that option is highlighted. The draft language is modified to create

32 some limitations around that choice by inserting a timing deferral for final construction. As

33 with any deferral of this sort, there is an administrative burden in tracking the deferral and

34 then enforcing the construction later. The alternative would be to disallow the option for

35 “electric infrastructure only”. This approach could be simpler to administer, although it would

36 offer less flexibility for the property owner. The draft creates a fixed percentage of charging

37 units, distinguishing between Level 1 and Level 2 requirements, based on land use (multi-

38 family residential vs commercial/industrial) and parking lot size (0-29 spaces, 30-49 spaces,

39 and 50+ spaces). This draft follows New Brighton’s structure, which is slightly less complex

40 than the Roseville model, although the two communities have comparable standards.

41

42 Mr. Grittmann noted the discussion items for Commission feedback:

- 43 • What input does the Parks & Environmental Commission wish to provide after
- 44 reviewing the draft language of the EV Charging Ordinance?

- With regards to the highlighted sections (A)(12)(f) of the draft ordinance, what feedback does PEC have for the option to defer equipment installation apart from the initial development of EV-ready infrastructure?

Chair Fee asked what the rationale was for the City Council's decision to go with Option 3. Mr. Grittmann stated that the Council liked the idea of diving in and that the neighboring communities had code. Chair Fee further discussed incentives. She asked if, from a State Level, there are things businesses could take advantage of. Ms. Morello stated that one of the things reflected in the conversations with the City Council was related to the size of the developments in question. It is not intended to affect smaller businesses.

Commissioner Swiontek asked in St. Anthony in the last few years how many large new developments have there been. Mr. Grittmann stated that the Ruby, Haven Grove Senior Housing, and a small apartment building on 37th Avenue were the "larger" residential multi-family projects within St. Anthony. Commissioner Swiontek asked if any of the other cities have both an incentive as well as a regulatory aspect. Mr. Grittmann stated that they focus on the regulatory number. She asked if the goal was to encourage electric vehicle charging within St. Anthony. She also asked what would draw people to put in EV chargers now.

Commissioner Hark stated he would lean towards incentives and asked if low-income housing would be exempt from this. Mr. Grittmann stated not the way the Ordinance is written. There are limited exemptions, but not based on land use. Other strategies can be implemented. The market will build on some of this. Most of the EV charging facilities he is familiar with were done by private businesses.

Chair Fee asked how this would work, and does the user pay for charging, and if that would alleviate the cost for the business. Mr. Grittmann responded that the business may wish to provide this for their tenants.

Commissioner Peterson stated that Level 2 costs approximately \$2,000 to install, and a Level 1 is a few hundred dollars. Mr. Grittmann stated he has seen Level 2 between \$2,000 - \$5,000.

Commissioner Synhavsky asked about the 2-year waiting period, and with the size of the projects, the cost for installing EV chargers is very low. She would not be in favor of the waiting period.

Commissioner Peterson stated she agrees. She referred to a strip mall, and does the number of parking spaces apply to the entire strip mall? Mr. Grittmann stated this applies to a building over 8,000 sf.

Commissioner Swiontek referred to the Dairy Queen and asked if the burden would be on the strip mall owner rather than the tenant. Mr. Grittmann stated he assumes the cost would be passed on to the tenants.

Commissioner Hark stated they could do a cost share for the chargers. Commissioner Hark stated the cost of the charging stations is \$15,000 - \$20,000. He is in favor of a hybrid of

1 requiring the infrastructure while attempting to incentivize installation. He would like to
2 explore the options for incentives because of the lack of future development. As we are not
3 seeing development in St. Anthony, going with Option 3 is a harsh move.

4
5 Mr. Grittmann stated that another division point in the code would be to apply this to multi-
6 family residential and not commercial. The thresholds for Commercial could be raised.

7
8 Chair Fee asked Commissioner Hark if he wanted the infrastructure to be put in for future
9 implementation. Commissioner Hark stated Yes. When retrofitted after the cost would be
10 much higher. Commissioner Hark stated he would prefer Option 2 and try to explore
11 incentives for the installation of the EV chargers.

12
13 Ms. Morello reviewed some of the City Council conversation regarding this matter and noted
14 they had selected the third option. She suggested that if there are additional considerations
15 from the PEC, they could be relayed to the City Council.

16
17 Commissioner Synhavsky asked if the bulk of the cost is for the infrastructure, and
18 Commissioner Hark stated that it is correct. Commissioner Hark stated that commercial
19 projects are drawn to Roseville. St. Anthony is not thought of in that way. If we add more
20 burden, it may encourage potential developments to go elsewhere. Commissioner Synhavsky
21 stated she would like to see low-income housing and commercial development incentivized
22 for coming to St. Anthony.

23
24 Commissioner Hark stated that the Level 1 chargers are very low-cost.

25
26 Commissioner Swiontek stated she would like to see it sooner rather than wait for commercial
27 development to come to St. Anthony.

28
29 Commissioner Peterson stated she would like to talk about having the residential requirement
30 for less than 30 parking spaces. She believes there is room to introduce some requirements for
31 current multi-family buildings.

32
33 Ms. Saulog stated that the draft ordinance is written for new future developments or
34 reconstruction. There is no requirement for retrofits. There was limited discussion about EV
35 chargers in public facilities.

36
37 Commissioner Hark suggested having no requirement for non-residential and a minimum
38 requirement for multi-family housing. Chair Fee stated the requirement has already been
39 determined by the City Council. Ms. Morello will note the comments received.

40
41 Chair Fee stated the ultimate goal is to encourage EV cars over gasoline cars within the City.
42 More charging capabilities should be available throughout the City. Commissioner Hark
43 suggested adding a requirement for smaller multi-family buildings.

44
45 Commissioner Peterson stated she would support some level of requirement for commercial
46 non-residential developments.

Commissioner Synhavsky stated she is not a proponent of deferring installation. Commissioner Hark stated on average commercial owners don't want to settle for Level 2 charging. They want faster charge, and that is a substantial cost.

Chair Fee asked if the infrastructure is for Level 1,2, and 3. Commissioner Hark stated that Levels 2 and 3 are very similar as far as infrastructure.

Commissioner Peterson asked if the delay could be applied if a business added infrastructure for Level 3. The rest of the Commission agreed that it would be a good idea. Commissioner Peterson referred to solar projects where there is a group RFP for installers to bid on a large-scale project. The bidding helps get the prices lower. The City doesn't need to provide cash, but there is a cash benefit.

Commissioner Hark asked if property tax cuts were a possible incentive for cities to do. Ms. Morello stated she could not respond to that. Commissioner Hark stated this would be an incentive for property owners.

VI. COMMISSION REPORTS.

Commissioner Hark reported that clean-up day was a huge success at Central Park. He commended the St. Anthony Boys Volleyball Team for their help. He is now a rain barrel owner.

Chair Fee stated she also supported the Salo Park clean-up day. She organized workers at Silverwood on the berm.

Commissioner Swiontek stated that clean-up day at Trillium was fun. 2025 is the last year that the State Fair is selling tribute benches. Other cities have been successful doing tribute benches, playground sets, etc. She is putting together a small packet about what other cities are doing. She spoke with some neighbors, and a concern was having no dog park. The suggestion was made that Emerald Park skating rink be used for a dog park.

Commissioner Synhavsky participated in a clean-up at Silver Point Park.

Commissioner Peterson did a clean-up at Emerald Park and had a great time. The MN Climate effort offers opportunities for resident feedback. Google Out Minnesota Climate.

Chair Fee thanked the Commissioners for their participation in the clean-up.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS.

Ms. Saulog stated that all 15 rain barrels were sold. The ground was broken on the solar installation at the water treatment plant. Public works is further down the horizon.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT.

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Motion by Commissioner Swiontek, seconded by Commissioner Hark, to adjourn the May 21, 2025, Work Session Meeting of the Parks and Environmental Commission at 7:00 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

IX. NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Parks and Environmental Commission will be held on June 2, 2025.
Discussion will be on pickleball at the Wellhouse location.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Wolfe
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.