



## FOREST PARK SOUTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

# MARCH 2024 MEETING MINUTES

19 March 2024 / 6:45 PM / Missouri Foundation for Health & [Zoom](#)

### Public Comment

- Parking District Permits Status
  - Resident concerned and frustrated that she and other neighbors have been unable to apply for their parking permit for 2+ years.
  - Ron Coleman and Dan Doelling will cover parking permits later in the meeting.

### FPSE Neighborhood Business

#### **Ward 9 Updates** (*9th Ward Alderman Michael Browning*)

- **April 2, 2024 General Municipal Election** – On the Ballot:
  - **Wastewater Bond Proposal - MSD Rate Increase ( Proposition W)**
    - Sewer rates will increase whether this bond passes or not, in order for MSD to make necessary infrastructure improvements. If the bond passes, there will be an incremental rate increase. If it does not, there will be steeper rate increases in the future. Over time, residents would pay about the same amount either way.
    - Alderman Browning encourages voters to consider voting yes on the measure.
  - **Stormwater Property Tax Proposal - MSD Property Tax (Proposition S)**
    - This initiative would put in place a tax on 'impervious surfaces.' So for a typical homeowner, this would add maybe \$2 to your bill, because your single family home or apartment does not actually take up that much space in terms of surface area. Property owners like Schnucks or Home Depot, who have large surface parking lots, will carry more of the financial burden. This is meant to encourage better land use and mitigate stormwater runoff and damage in the future.
    - The money from this initiative will help upgrade system to deal with the more violent storms we have been seeing, like the flooding in July 2022.
    - Alderman Browning encourages voters to take a look at this and do some more research on it. You can always reach out to MSD directly. They are very willing to talk about it, as this is a complicated subject.



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- **Board of Alderman News**

- **[New Ordinance Pertaining to Complete Streets \(Board Bill Number 217, 2023-2024\)](#)**

- As reckless driving has become a major issue in the city, it's a top concern of Alderman Browning's to make sure that everyone feels safe in our walkable neighborhood, whether you're a pedestrian, cyclist, or motorist. Part of that is making sure we have good infrastructure with sidewalks, but the other part of that is making sure that our roads are designed with the most vulnerable road users in mind. That's what the complete streets ordinance update is supposed to do.
- The bill is sponsored by Alderman Anne Schweitzer of the 1st Ward, with Alderman Browning and BOA President Megan Green co-sponsoring it.
- The bill will be running through the Public Infrastructure Committee, who will have a public hearing on it at 10: a.m. on March 25th at City Hall. You can also attend online if you go to the [Public Infrastructure and Utilities Committee](#) page on the city website, you can find the link there.
- This policy has not been updated in 10 years. We've learned a lot about how to design safer streets since then. We are trying to prioritize the communities who have been underserved and make sure that we are targeting areas where you do see the most violent incidents happen.
- Making sure that roads are designed with every road user in mind, but especially the people that are the most vulnerable. The first step is policy – making sure that we pass good policies like this – and then the next step is making sure that we have the infrastructure to follow through with that.

- **[Streamlining the Liquor License Application \(Ordinance 71819\)](#)**

- The main emphasis of this bill is to eliminate the “plat and petition” requirements for an initial liquor license application for Restaurants with liquor, providing an alternate process that will not require them to obtain signatures from nearby residents. This bill only applies to restaurants, i.e. an establishment who makes over 50% of their money on selling food. So this will not apply to nightclubs or bars.
- There's still a chance for the public to come and be heard.
- The “plat and petition” is a difficult and burdensome process. This alternative method will reduce that burden and make it easier to open up new restaurants, which in turn serve the community and are a large part of our neighborhood's identity.



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- **Mandatory Registration Process for Residential Rental Units (Ordinance 71835)**
  - This is meant to get a better hold on property owners in the city that lack accountability, making sure that we know who is behind the LLCs that own every piece of rental property, that we're doing routine inspections throughout the city (not everywhere in the city is currently under an inspection program – part of the new 9<sup>th</sup> ward does not currently get housing inspections), and the housing stock ends up deteriorating. Landlords know they're not getting inspections, so they don't make updates, and people end up living in outright squalor. This is meant to address that, to make sure that we have good, habitable housing for people, because it affects your day-to-day life, and that affects people's ability to thrive in our city.
- **Property Tax Credit to Freeze Property Tax Rates for Eligible Seniors**
  - Property owners who are 62 years or older or eligible for social security benefits and whose primary residence (in the City of St. Louis) is appraised for \$500,000 or less in value, can apply to freeze the city portion of their taxes.
  - This is the implement of a law that was passed at the Missouri State Legislature last year.
  - BOA tried to do it as responsibly as possible in the city. The portion of property taxes that go to our schools, Special Business Districts, art museums, parks, etc. are exempt from the freeze. But the portion that goes to the city will be frozen.
  - Alderman Browning has paper applications, so if anybody does want to apply for that or know someone who might be eligible for that, please pick one of these up. You can also [apply online](#) at the Assessor's website.
- **Automated Camera Enforcement Act** ("Red Light Cameras")
  - In terms of reckless driving, the city has seen a lot of people running red lights. A couple weeks ago, a sixth grader was hit crossing Kingshighway by a red light runner. The sixth grader was sent to the hospital. Thankfully, they're going to make a full recovery, but the BOA is trying to make sure that we create some sort of accountability here.
  - The BOA is looking to reinstitute red light cameras, as well as speed cameras. So these would also pick up the speed that someone is going when they run the red light and issue a steeper fine if they are blowing through the red light at 80mph vs. if they make a full stop and then creep through it.
  - This is an attempt to be a force multiplier for our police. Reckless driving has been on the increase and it's getting quite dangerous out, so the BOA is doing what they can.
  - Baltimore instituted this (red light and speed cameras) and saw a 15% reduction in crashes. It's not going to stop every single red light runner, but the idea is that if we can reduce crashes by 15%, those are people that are not getting injured or killed.



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- **FPSE News**

- 4101 Manchester Avenue
  - This property is still in limbo. The status of it is that it used to belong to the city, the city sold it to a developer, they installed about a million dollars worth of pylons to start building a building there, and then they ran out of money.
  - The difficulty here, and why the city hasn't taken the property back, is because as part of the way that the contract was written, the city would have to buy it back, plus the cost of improvement. So the property is now worth what it was worth plus the \$1.5M of pylons that they put in, and the city is not in a position to reacquire that property. We are actively seeking another developer.
  - The good news is, is that any developer can use those pylons, so they've already got a head start on the building. But the bad news is that that really prominent corner of our neighborhood continues to sit.
  - It is a priority for Alderman Browning and he is trying to get it moving, as that also affects the walkability of the neighborhood down at that corner
- NorthPoint Open House
  - Saturday, April 20, 10am-12pm
  - Si Commons at SLUH, 4970 Oakland Avenue
- [MoDOT - Missouri Route 100 Pavement Resurfacing in St. Louis City](#)
  - MoDOT is community engagement to redesign and reconfigure the MoDOT corridor.
  - They take care of Chouteau Avenue from all the way downtown all the way to our neighborhood and then they take care of Manchester from our neighborhood all the way out into the county. They are right now looking at how they can make that street safer for all of us.
  - Keep an eye out for future engagements on that subject.
- Parking District Permits
  - There continue to be issues with residents applying for parking permits.
  - Alderman Browning and Ron Coleman continue to talk to the treasurer's office about this weekly.



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- **Questions**

- Concern about owner's not being prioritized and the city chasing people out with permit requirements.
  - Response: Over half of the city is renters. Some of the conditions in previously uninspected rentals include roach infestations, leaking water, and mold. A woman in South City was renting a house that didn't have working bathrooms.
  - If you do need help with home repair, PCD has a healthy home repair system.
- There has been a substantial increase in reckless driving on Chouteau – any calming measures that could be implemented?
  - Response: Chouteau is way too wide for its current use and could use traffic calming. Alderman Browning has had early conversations with planning and zoning about creating a plan on Chouteau.

### **Crime & Safety Report** (*Officer Walker*)

- Officer Walker could not make it tonight.

### **Neighborhood Updates** (*N.I.S. Ron Coleman*)

- Parking
  - Do want to listen to feedback on parking district
  - Citizens can't even apply for a parking permit, because their address isn't in the system.
  - *Audience comment: WashU is the problem. They should remove some of the no parking north of 64.*
- City trees should be getting to our ward soon.
- Please reach out to Ron Coleman if you have any issues.
- Questions from residents:
  - Would Arco Avenue be able to add 45 degree parking?
    - Response: The street has to be a certain width. This would add 33% more parking.
    - If you and your neighbors think it would work – give me the block
    - West Pine wasn't wide enough, doubt that Arco would be wide enough.
  - They've painted the potholes yellow – will those be fixed soon?
    - Response: Alderman Browning has reported all of the potholes on Taylor
    - You can report potholes through [CSB](#). You can call 24 hours a day and it transcribes your voice.



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### Treasurer's Report *(Evan Veremakis)*

- February 2024 Review
  - Expenses: \$15.99 (for Zoom)
  - Revenue: \$426.00 (dues and donations)
  - Ending Cash: \$2,422.25
- Membership Dues
  - General Membership dues start over in new year.
  - Dues are pay-what-you-can.
  - Members get voting privileges.
  - How to pay
    - Cash App: \$FPSENA
    - Cash/Check: Send an email to [forestparksoutheast@gmail.com](mailto:forestparksoutheast@gmail.com) to coordinate

### Neighborhood Events *(Dan Doelling)*

- **Tree Mulching:** Each 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday at 10am, from November – April
  - Next event: Chouteau Park Mulching: April 7 @ 10AM; meet at the southwest corner of Chouteau Park
  - Previous work: Chouteau & Taylor, Chouteau & Gibson, Dog Park, Corner garden at 4351 Gibson, Chouteau Park
- Parking districts – [see our website for more information.](#)
- NorthPoint Open [House – see our website for more information.](#)
- New Restaurant – [Neon Greens](#) at 4176 Manchester Ave
  - Salad restaurant that grows their own greens in their hydroponic greenhouse next door.
- **Monthly Clean-up:** Each 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday at 10am, from March – October
  - Next clean-up: March 23 @ 10AM; meet at Newstead & Manchester
- **Young Professionals Happy Hour at Pie Guy:** April 11 @ 5PM – 7PM at Pie Guy STL
  - Join your friends and colleagues for a night of fun at Pie Guy STL! From 5 – 7 pm, all beverage and pizza sales support Midtown Community Services's Youth programs, including Afterschool, Teen Club, and Summer Academy Day Camp.
- Join the Infrastructure Committee
  - Applications are open
  - Apply at PCD website



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- Join the Development Review Committee
  - Apply at PCD website
  - Projects they will be reviewing
    - Single family home on Hunt
      - 2 story
      - Secure carport
      - Waiting for conditional use hearing
    - Update on townhomes at Vista and Tower Grove
      - Made modifications to their previous renderings

### Guest Speaker

#### **Tower Grove-Cortex Connector Update** ([Trailnet](#) & [Lochmueller](#))

- An update on the project's progress and Phase 2 designs. This is just one cycle track project among a whole series of projects in the whole St Louis region.
- Presenters:
  - Adam Treaster – bike and event planner for TrailNet
  - Lee Frea – planning manager with Lochmueller, a small engineering firm
- Overview
  - The Tower Grove Connector will connect Tower Grove Park to the Brickline Greenway
  - Phase 1: Tower Grove Park to Vandeventer-Sarah Intersection
  - Phase 2: Vandeventer-Sarah Intersection to Forest Park Ave
  - Traffic Signal Optimization and Fiber Optic Signal Interconnect
    - Traffic lights will “talk” to each other
  - New Traffic Signals
    - Tower Grove Ave & Shaw Blvd
    - Tower Grove Ave & McRee Ave
    - Tower Grove Ave & Vandeventer Ave
    - Vandeventer Ave & Boyle Ave
    - Vandeventer Ave & Sarah St
    - Sarah St & Papin St
    - Sarah St & Clayton Ave
  - Sidewalk and crosswalk improvements
  - Intersection improvements
  - Traffic management upgrades
  - Repaving of Tower Grove Ave



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- Schedule
  - Construction Phase 1: Summer 2024 to Spring 2025
  - Design Phase 2: Fall 2023 to Summer 2025
  - Construction Phase 2: Spring 2026 to Winter 2027
- Cycle Track Design
  - There will be a consistent cycle track, a two-way facility with bikes riding in both directions on one side of the street.
  - The whole corridor is going to be elevated at the sidewalk level, but separated but from pedestrian path. It's sharing the space with pedestrians and separated from cars by the curb height and some landscaping, and, in most places, a lane of parking spaces.
  - **Tower Grove Ave, from Tower Grove Park to McRee St:** The cycle track will be on the west side of the street.
  - **Tower Grove Ave and McRee St:** At this traffic light, there will be a raised crossing, diagonally from the SW corner to the NE corner, transitioning the cycle track from the west side of the street to the east side of the street. There will be a bike pedestrian-exclusive phase in the traffic light cycle where bikes and pedestrians can cross over and all cars will have red lights.
  - **Relocating Central Industrial Drive:** This is the entrance to the school bus facility. Right now, this entrance is part of the intersection at Tower Grove Ave and Vandeventer Ave. The new design will relocate it farther east on Vandeventer Ave.
  - **Vandeventer Ave, from Tower Grove Ave to Sarah St:** The cycle track will be on the south side of the street.
  - **Sarah St and Vandeventer Ave Intersection:** This is where Phase 1 transitions into Phase 2. Right now, there is not a traffic signal at this intersection. There will be a new traffic signal, as well as improved crosswalks. The cycle track will cross here, west of the intersection.
  - **Sarah St, from Vandeventer to Manchester:** The cycle track will continue on the west side of the street. There is not enough width to maintain parking with the cycle track, so there will no longer be parking along this stretch. There was a whole study to determine how to make the best path to Forest Park Ave with this with this project. Sarah was chosen as the ideal path out of the three different options that were explored through traffic studies.
  - **900 Block of Sarah St:** There will also not be parking on this stretch, due to width constraints. GreenStreet, who owns Chroma, will open up the parking lot at Chouteau Ave and Sarah Ave to public parking.





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- **Sarah St at Bridge of I-64 Ramps:** The cycle track will be level with the street. There will be an 18" barrier wall between the cycle track and car lane. MODOT did not want any more complications along this route.
- **Sarah St, between I-64 and MetroLink Crossing:** The cycle track will return back to a raised path.
- **MetroLink Crossing:** The cycle track will return back to street level. The Brickline Greenway is also at street level.
- **Sarah St and Duncan Ave:** Transition to shared use bike paths on either side and maintain the left turn lane.
- **Questions:**
  - To confirm, the residents along the 900 block of Sarah will not have parking in front of their houses?
    - Response: Correct. The planning team has spoken with Chroma owners, GreenStreet. They will be opening the parking lot at Chouteau Ave and Sarah St to public use.
      - GreenStreet is very supportive of having the cycle track along their property.
      - Also spoke with Alderman Browning, stakeholder meetings with BJC, and other commercial properties.
      - Plan on having an open house mid-to-late-May at Cortex Building, where we will have a full set of plans.
  - Concern that this project only serves the area between Tower Grove Park and Forest Park Ave and that no one rides bikes.
    - Response: Great Rivers Greenway will have a track that goes down Spring Street all the way to Fairground Park
    - Response from Zoom Audience: Tower Grove Ave is a popular biking route.
  - Request for clarification at the Tower Grove Ave and McRee St intersection.
    - Response: There will be a little waiting box. Trying to make these bicycle paths more comfortable for people who do not usually bike.
  - Are there any plans to repave Tower Grove Ave and make it a smoother path (north of Vandeventer Avenue)?
    - Response: No plans for Tower Grove Ave north of Vandeventer.
    - Tower Grove Ave, between Tower Grove Park and Vandeventer, will be repaved, as will Vandeventer Ave, between Tower Grove Ave and Sarah St.
    - Adam Teaster personally wanted to continue this up to Chouteau Ave, but that would sacrifice a lot of parking.



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- Comment: There is a very steep decline at NE corner of the Vandeventer Ave and Tower Grove Ave and it tends to be a blind spot for cars.
- Request for clarification about crosswalks along Vandeventer Ave.
  - Response: There are not any plans to change crosswalks between Boyle Ave and Sarah St.
    - The cycle track will reduce the distance that you have to cross Vandeventer – down to 3 lanes instead of 4.
    - All the money is being spent on touching this curb. Maybe could pour a concrete island for \$20K further down.
  - *Audience echoes that the crossing near Rockwell Brewery is not ideal.*
- Since the purpose of this is to increase walkability, is there anything that can be done, in terms of signs or lights, to alert drivers to the right of way of pedestrians?
  - Response: All of this will include really high visibility, good quality, good paint crosswalks, more visible, with 10ft wide crosswalks. Where there are crossings for pedestrians, there will be traffic lights.
- There were previous plans to close Sarah St (between Vandeventer and Manchester) – is this still a possibility?
  - Response: This was part of an early concept. We are 60% done with design and they don't see that happening as part of this project. But not impossible in the future.
    - The city is all for lane diets – they do not like taking away public parking – they tried really hard to keep parking spots.
    - An idea would be to take one of those driving lanes and make it a parking lane and make it a one-way street.
- For more information, to sign up for updates, or to contact the project team, see the [project website](#).

## ADDITIONAL FOREST PARK SOUTHEAST ORGANIZATIONAL MEETINGS:

**Grove CID :** 2nd Monday of every month @ 11:00AM via Zoom

**Development Review Committee:** ([INFO](#))

**Infrastructure Committee:** ([INFO](#))