TRAIL WATCH INCENTIVE PROGRAM UNDERWAY

By Lauren Fulner

In spite of the increasingly chilly weather, Trail Watch has continued to expand, both in number of rides per week and in number of riders. Midtown Greenway Coalition outreach and two recent crime incidents as a motivator have brought a significant number of new Trail Watch riders out. These new recruits join a core of Trail Watchers who have been dedicated to safety in their community and on the trail since May 2009.

The Coalition and accompanying Safety Committee, led by board member Gabriel Hoffman, has created an incentive program for Trail Watchers. Not only will committed Trail Watchers be specially mentioned in the Coalition’s quarterly newsletter, but the top three riders in nights per quarter will receive the distinguished ‘Paul Caspersen Dedication Award’ (see page 5), and will be entered into a drawing at year’s end for a custom bike frame and fork. Total incentives for Trail Watchers are as follows:

• 6 plus rides per quarter: 10% discount on in-stock parts/accessories, 5% discount on bikes at Freewheel Bike; gift certificate from Common Roots Café; merchandise from New Belgium Brewing
• Top three riders from each quarter: entered into a drawing for a custom Peacock Groove frame at year’s end
• Free pizza night once a month being pursued (sponsored by Old Chicago, Bedlam Theatre, others TBA)

Future additions to the incentive program will be announced on the Coalition website (www.midtowngreenway.org/trailusers/safety)

Want to join a ride? Email trailwatch@midtowngreenway.org or call 612-879-0106!

La Coalition y su Comité de Seguridad, liderado por Gabriel Hoffman, miembro de la junta directiva, han creado un programa de incentivos para los vigilantes del sendero. Estas personas muy comprometidas serán reconocidas especialmente en la publicación trimestral de la

(continuado en la página 5)

Traducción:
Acentos, Inc.
Translation by Accentos, Inc.
HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL ON XCEL’S PROPOSED HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINES

By Tim Springer, Executive Director

As frequent readers know, Xcel Energy submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) a route permit application for two high voltage transmission lines along the Midtown Greenway in April 2009. Two new substations are also planned. The case has been defined as a contested case, which means there will be hearings before a judge to formally introduce more concerns and evidence to aid in decision-making. By state law, the PUC does not have the authority to turn down the project, but only to direct where the wires go.

Community concerns related to these lines include health impacts from electric and magnetic fields, visual blight, hindrances to future corridor improvements including transit, plazas, and walkways, and a crushing blow to the idea of the Greenway as a spine for smart growth (developers tell us they won’t build under these lines). These impacts are exacerbated by the fact that the communities where the lines would go are largely low-income communities of color that already suffer from higher rates of asthma, lead poisoning, and soil arsenic contamination than people in surrounding neighborhoods and cities.

The Public Utilities Commission’s final decision about where the substations and the lines go, and if the lines are on towers or underground, will be informed by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) produced by the Minnesota Department of Commerce. The draft EIS will be released in January 2010. The PUC will also receive a recommendation for transmission line routes and substation locations from Judge Beverly Heydinger after she hears testimony and counter arguments from all sides including the public. Fall 2009 was a lull in the struggle as the EIS was being produced, but 2010 is a time of critical importance as the Midtown Greenway Coalition and other parties prepare testimony and make their cases at the hearings.

When our April issue of Pathways goes to print we’ll have only a few days to rally the public to show up and present at the public hearings, so we are encouraging people to mark their calendars now for:

- Monday, April 5, 2010, 2:00 p.m.
  and again at 7:00 p.m., and
- Tuesday, April 6, 2010, 2:00 p.m.
  and again at 7:00 p.m.
  (location to be announced)

Talking points and the location of the hearings will be posted at midtowngreenway.org as the hearings approach. The Midtown Greenway Coalition also invites volunteers and donors to pitch in, as this struggle is costing us about $70,000 over two years and only about $12,000 has been raised. You may email me at tim@midtowngreenway.org to ask that your name be added to our list to receive updates and calls to action regarding this Xcel struggle. Thank you to everyone who has helped and donated so far, please stick with us through this struggle.

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SUPPORT OUR WORK.

JOIN TODAY!
See back page.

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Hearings Scheduled for April on Xcel’s Proposed High Voltage Transmission Lines

By Tim Springer, Executive Director

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See back page.
By Gina Bonsignore

Transforming a wasteland to verdant vista—what does it take? For the landscape at the base of the Sabo Bridge it takes lots of compost to reintroduce life into the depleted alkaline soil, lots of seeds to sprout into a thick groundcover and hardy trees to withstand the constant prairie winds that buffet the trail. Of course an army of volunteers to plant, a Tree Trust crew to maintain and a bit of timely rain are also key elements. Most of all it takes time.

Two years after trees were first planted here on Arbor Day, much has happened on the site. You may not see all of the change, because much of the action is taking place underground. Prairie plants and trees expend much of their initial energy creating a root structure. Little bluestem may grow to only one to three inches the first year, up to six inches the next, and finally in year three it may reach a foot. In harsh environments, such as the Sabo site, this process will take even longer, requiring reseeding bare patches where seeds weren’t able to germinate.

To control annual weeks, the site has been mowed monthly, before weed seeds can develop. Eventually, the mowing will happen only once a year to control volunteer tree seedlings from developing. In the area near the intersection of the paths, a low-mow mix has been planted, so that area will be maintained at a shorter height than the short prairie grasses and flowers that provide the groundcover for most of the landscape. Establishing native plants in an urban environment is a process that takes a bit a patience to see the results—but it is an example of if you plant it they will come—meaning all the birds and insects that will repopulate the area with life above and below the ground.
MISSION
We empower communities to develop, improve, protect, and enjoy the Midtown Greenway as a green urban pathway to improve people’s lives.

MISIÓN
Nosotros habilitamos a las comunidades a desarrollar, mejorar, proteger y disfrutar del sendero urbano Midtown Greenway para mejorar la vida de la gente.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPRING 2009 DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS! (Please call if we have missed you!)

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REACH Team
Wedge Community
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West Calhoun
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West Calhoun NRP
Whittier Alliance
Whole Foods

Thank you to our Spring 2009 Donors and Volunteers!
Paul Caspersen has been bicycling since attending the University of Minnesota for college several decades ago, and in recent years has become the most devoted rider in the Trail Watch program. Currently there are Trail Watch rides in the Midtown Greenway and on the Hiawatha LRT Trail almost every night of the week, with Paul attending nearly every ride! In addition to riding because he “has time, and it’s something that should be done,” Paul can regularly be found out on the trail “acting as an information source for [other riders] on the trail.” The information Paul shares runs quite the gamut, from ideas on the causes of decline in the city—poverty, high crime, failing churches, high unemployment—to stories of his struggle with the airport to have bike racks installed. Paul has seen the ebb and flow of involvement and commitment in the city, both by citizens and government officials while riding continually and speaking his mind. His recipe for making positive change in the bicycling community? “Persistence, energy, and a certain level of reasonableness… I focus on the people and positivity and make a direct connection.”

Four areas frame the site. The lower left provides a performance area with sitting on the hillside. The upper left is designed to provide casual children’s play under a few canopy trees. The upper right is an open lawn area, providing an active play area and the lower right will offer fixed swings that overlook the trail. Vegetation will include flowering fruit trees, native grasses, bands of flowers and an Oak canopy with Aspen.

Thanks to the Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association for funding consultants and a community involvement process to create this Site Improvement Plan. Maintenance and ownership issues still need to be addressed before implementation and it is most likely the plan will be phased in as resources allow.

**COMMITTED CASPERSEN: AN INSPIRATIONAL TRAIL WATCH RIDER**

*By Lauren Fulner*

Paul Caspersen has been bicycling since attending the University of Minnesota for college several decades ago, and in recent years has become the most devoted rider in the Trail Watch program. Currently there are Trail Watch rides in the Midtown Greenway and on the Hiawatha LRT Trail almost every night of the week, with Paul attending nearly every ride! In addition to riding because he “has time, and it’s something that should be done,” Paul can regularly be found out on the trail “acting as an information source for [other riders] on the trail.” The information Paul shares runs quite the gamut, from ideas on the causes of decline in the city—poverty, high crime, failing churches, high unemployment—to stories of his struggle with the airport to have bike racks installed. Paul has seen the ebb and flow of involvement and commitment in the city, both by citizens and government officials while riding continually and speaking his mind. His recipe for making positive change in the bicycling community? “Persistence, energy, and a certain level of reasonableness… I focus on the people and positivity and make a direct connection.”

**TRAIL WATCH SUPERSTARS**

*September 2009 – November 2009*

6–11 RIDES:  
Annie Dressen  
Jim Holm  
David Kim  
Laura Kling  
Susan Priem  
Kathleen Sullivan  
Nick Dellwo  

12–17 RIDES:  
Mark Ambroe  
Scott Campbell  
Ted Duepner  
Gabriel Hoffman  
Hoka  
Andrew Paule  

18+ RIDES:  
Paul Caspersen  

**THE PAUL CASPERSEN DEDICATION AWARDS:**  
Scott Campbell (13 rides)  
Hokan (13 rides)  
Paul Caspersen (30 rides)

**PROGRAMA DE INCENTIVOS PARA LA VIGILANCIA DEL SENDERO (TRAIL WATCH) EN FUNCIONAMIENTO**  
(continuado de la página 1)

Coalición. Además los tres vigilantes con más salidas nocturnas en el trimestre recibirán el prestigioso premio “Paul Caspersen Dedication Award” por su dedicación y esfuerzo (ver página 5), y participarán en un sorteo de fin de año de un bastidor/cuadro y una horquilla de diseño particular para bicicleta. Estos son los incentivos para los vigilantes del sendero:

- 6 o más salidas por trimestre: 10% de descuento en partes y accesorios, 5% de descuento en bicicletas en Freewheel Bike, un certificado de regalo de Common Roots Café, y mercancía de New Belgium Brewing.
- Los tres ciclistas con más salidas de cada trimestre participarán en el sorteo de fin de año de un bastidor/cuadro de diseño particular marca Peacock Groove.
- Noche de pizza gratis, una vez al mes (patrocinado por Old Chicago, se anunciarán otros patrocinadores).

Se anunciarán otros incentivos para el programa Trail Watch en el sitio web de la Coalición (www.midtowngreenway.org/trailusers/safety).

¿Desea participar en una salida con los vigilantes?: Envíe un correo electrónico a trailwatch@midtowngreenway.org o llame al 612-879-0106!
BE A TRAIL WATCH SUPERSTAR! (SEE P. 5)

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION FORM

Name ________________________________
Address ________________________________
City, State, Zip ____________________________
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☐ $250 – Greenway Angel
☐ $100 – Greenway Patron
☐ $50 – Greenway Advocate
☐ $25 – Greenway Sponsor
☐ Business $__________
☐ Any amount comfortable for you $__________
☐ Yes, I want to volunteer
My main interest is: _________________________

Please make your check payable to: “Midtown Greenway Coalition” and mail to: Midtown Greenway Coalition 2834 10th Avenue South, Greenway Level, Suite 2 Minneapolis, MN 55407

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Fourth Thursdays (except January)
Thursday, January 28, 7:30 a.m.
(Note: January meeting is a joint meeting with Lake Street Council at the Sheraton Hotel)
February 25 and March 25, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Second Monday of the month
January 11, February 8 and March 8, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

SAFETY COMMITTEE
Third Tuesday of the month
January 19, February 16 and March 16, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

XCEL PROJECT HEARINGS
Monday, April 5, 2010, 2:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m., and Tuesday, April 6, 2010, 2:00 p.m. and again at 7:00 p.m.
(Location to be announced. See article, p.2)

All meetings, unless indicated otherwise, are at the Coalition office (2834 10th Avenue South, Greenway Level, Suite 2, Minneapolis, MN 55407).

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