

**June 20, 2012 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Great River Passage Plan**

**June 20, 2012
Phalen Golf Course Clubhouse
1615 Phalen Drive East**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Bishop, Jonathan Carter, Erick Goodlow, Dave Haley, Dan Marckel, Betsy Mowry, Emily Shively, and Andrew Trcka

MEMBERS ABSENT: John Mountain

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Hahm, Brenda Ullrich, Donna Drummond, Don Ganje, Jody Martinez, and Ellen Stewart

GUESTS: Lorrie Fowler, John Gust, Kent Petterson, Bob Spaulding, Kerry Stone, and John Ulven

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Chair Carter called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Introductions of the Parks & Recreation Commission were made. Chair Carter explained that public comment had already been given so there would be no further public comment taken during the meeting. Chair Carter then went on to explain the format for the meeting.

a. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Process

Jody Martinez reviewed the Process section of the staff report dated May 23, 2012, summarizing the main issues raised during the February 29, 2012 – March 5, 2012 public comment period for the Great River Passage Master Plan. This staff report also includes a comment matrix addressing each comment (Attachment A), a list of recommended changes to the Master Plan document (Attachment B), and a list of Great River Passage Master Plan sections suitable for adoption as part of Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan (Attachment C).

In response to the comments section (Attachment A) of the Staff Report, Commissioner Marckel inquired whether the regular review process would still apply for any individual projects in the future or if the Great River Passage Plan would replace that review process.

Jody Martinez explained that this would not replace or change the review process currently in place.

Director Hahm added that the questions and comments section of the Staff Report is already part of the record. All referenced attachments are available on the Parks and Recreation website (<http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=244>).

Commissioner Trcka requested further explanation of how this plan will affect other plans. Jody Martinez and Donna Drummond, Planning Department, explained that the Great River Passage plan was created with the District plans as a base. The intent was to create a comprehensive plan, minimizing any inconsistencies among them. The City's comprehensive plan is adopted by the City Council, updated every ten years by the Metropolitan Council.

b. Management and Funding

Jody Martinez and Director Hahm reviewed the Management and Funding section of the Staff Report addressing the concerns expressed regarding implementation, the annual expense and impact on limited City resources.

Director Hahm provided more detail on the concept for the creation of a Great River Passage Division as well as the proposed organizational structure, which is based on the public / private organizational structure of Como Regional Park, in response to a question from Commissioner Mountain.

c. Proposed Park Development

Jody reviewed the Proposed Park Development section of the Staff Report addressing concerns regarding text and mapping inconsistencies; the lack of mention of increased safety concerns due to greater recreational use of the river; potential environmental damage from mountain biking trails within Hidden Falls Park and Island Station; locating an environmental learning center at the Watergate Marina Site; and locating a destination commercial sports activity center on land behind the levee adjacent to Harriet Island Park.

d. Transportation / Connection

Jody Martinez reviewed the Transportation / Connection section of the Staff Report addressing comments and concerns regarding a pedestrian bridge being shown over Shepard Road at Walnut Street; the existing rail line which runs through the Victoria Park Urban Village and terminates at the abandoned Ford Plant; and the plan's recommendation to lower the speed on Shepard Road to 35 mph and the proposal that it be redesigned as a "parkway-like" road.

e. Environmental Impact

Jody Martinez reviewed the Environmental Impact section of the Staff Report addressing concerns regarding the plan lacking a delineated process for following environmental policies and regulations; the recommended river shoreline revetment solution through the Passage; the impact of Watergate Marina; and the proposed acquisition of potentially contaminated Ford riverside parcel.



Commissioner Marckel brought up the possibility of sharing responsibilities for storm water, to which Director Hahm responded that Parks and Recreation and Public Works have developed policy and criteria allowing for sharing of public storm water and that it is already in place, as well as additional ideas currently in progress.

f. Economic Development

Jody Martinez reviewed the Economic Development section of the Staff Report addressing concerns regarding the Plan indicating industrial activity along the river being in decline and the plan recommending phasing out industrial uses along the river; the Plan discouraging on-going industrial activities and proposing to limit industrial uses on the river; current barge fleeting areas not clearly shown on the Plan maps and the significance of the Saint Paul Harbor not clearly emphasized; and the concern that exact setbacks from the riverfront are not described in the Plan and that buildings are recommended to be close to the river, especially on the Westside.

g. Mapping / Graphic

Jody Martinez reviewed the Mapping / Graphic section of the Staff Report and addressed the concern about confusing and incorrect items noted on various maps and graphics.

h. Staff Recommendation and Parks & Recreation Commission Request

Parks & Recreation staff recommendation is to approve.

b. ACTION ITEM

a. Resolution #12-05 Great River Passage Plan

A motion was made by Commissioner Marckel and seconded by Commissioner Trcka to approve Resolution #12-05. The vote was 8 to 0 in favor with one commissioner absent.

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.



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