

Como Regional Park Advisory Committee
Como Central Service Facility
Minutes – May 12, 2015

Members Present: Kathy Korum, Dan Marckel, Art Oglesby, Pete Bolstad, Kimberly Johnson

Discussion Items:

1. Oak Regeneration Project: The Natural Resources unit is proposing a project designed to study effective ways of regenerating the oak population in Como Regional Park. This project would involve a Partnership with the University of Minnesota Forestry Department.

- 26 plots (groupings of 6 trees) 10 foot square plots/4 foot high trees. The research team will leave the best tree from each plot and take out the five others in each plot and determine why they did not do as well, as a research project to determine how to regenerate the oak population. Locations will include: West Picnic Grounds and by NE corner of Lexington and Como (formerly Horton).

Follow-up to CRPAC member questions about this project:

What type of Oak and when can they start? **The plan is to plant a mix of Bur and White Oak before the end of summer – probably mid-July.**

Why can't they do more? **Forestry would love to do more but Oak establishment in Como has been difficult and the area is heavily used. With a modest trial they hope to find a soil amendment that increases planting success to use for Oak establishment in Como and throughout the City.**

Why do they have to take trees out as part of the study? **They are planting the Oaks together in small test areas to limit soil and moisture variability. After the trial they will select the 1-2 best trees in each plot and remove the rest so the healthiest trees can develop into large canopy trees. They will relocate as many of the removed trees as possible.**

2. Como Dockside:

- Facility project updates – Owners have asked for assistance with projects including an elevator update so it opens on both sides on second floor, and work on the lake side of the building. Big rocks went out, pavers were replaced, bike racks were added and the gardens were cleaned up. Striping for possible two way traffic and to include surrey bikes may be added to the paths. The Committee discussed keeping trails one way for safety reasons and talked about possible problems with two way trails. The Committee suggests Wheel of Fun provide maps showing one-way bike routes, and discussed the problem areas—North and South of Pavilion.
- Soft Opening/Grand Opening – Soft opening took place on 5/5 and 5/6. Good report on the appearance of the facility, use of picnic tables, upstairs coffee shop feel. Grand opening is scheduled for May 31.
- Community Advisory Committee – A Community Advisory Committee is required of the Dockside management as part of their agreement with the City. Kathy proposed that they use the CRPAC as they group to whom they 'report.' A few questions remain about how often this

group should report to us and when they should start to report. Dockside will organize and manage the committee. The CRPAC strongly recommends that representatives from District 10 and possibly District 6 be included on this committee. We also talked about opening a spot for individuals from the South Como Facebook group. Dan talked about having the selection of this committee and the reporting of Dockside's performance be as transparent as possible. We would like one of the owners and representative from the committee to be present at our meetings.

3. Updates:

- Historic Pedestrian Bridge – The Historical Society has approved the bridge railings. Paths will be done after heavy bridge work is completed. Expected completion date is July 31. Pete brought up the idea of having the bridge dedication at District 10's Ice cream Social.
- Como Transportation Project – Two consultants have been selected for McMurray and closer to Como campus. Parks Design and construction staff will be ready for initial public input in August regarding the McMurray part of the project. Schedule of anticipated public input and traffic counts would be part of McMurray. An information session of some sort will be facilitated as an update about the work planned on the Como Campus. Snelling work will skew traffic counts. Will consult with Public Works about plans for intersections.
- Como Golf – Prom Management submitted a year one report to Parks and Recreation. Both the City and Prom are pleased with partnership. There have been numerous improvements in the past year, especially in the two club houses (Como and Phalen). The majority of improvements planned for this year will be on the golf course. Como golf rounds were up. Food/beverage was up significantly.
- Orchard Tennis Courts – Scheduled to be re-built this summer - two courts.
- Metro Council – Jon Commers of Met Council wants input from City of St. Paul regarding Route 83. Might be on agenda for one of the upcoming meetings.

4. Other Business:

- Drainage Ponds by Como Pool – Easterly basin performing as expected. Clay discovered on western basin. Additional work occurred. Should see better drainage now. Capitol Watershed District gave Como \$10,000 for the work done by City of St. Paul.

5. Next Meeting:

The next meeting for the committee is Tuesday, August 4, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete Bolstad/Kathy Korum