



## CITY OF SAINT PAUL

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## All Comments Received from Charette Follow-up

### 1.

*I support plans 2 and 5. They recognize that the railroad tracks are a realistic and appropriate divider between active use of the park and a retention of the natural use of the park. I believe Nova property is appropriate for tennis courts and kids playground. I do not support plans 3 and 4 since they do not retain the south side as natural. The fields should not be lighted. The comments of staff to plan 2 are contrary to Plan 2's members intent which is to leave the south side natural. I would think that Nova would like the south side natural so that the environmental and science classes would have an outdoor lab for wildlife and plants and water. There is no reason that the largest flat area on the south side of the park has to remain flat or that flat land cannot remain in a natural/ passive condition with gardens or nature trails.*

### 2.

*Alice, I forgot what group number I was in but I was in the group with Kent that strongly endorsed the south side being primarily a nature area--i.e., no ball fields, or anything not consistent with the natural area.*

### 3. Non Committee Member

#### *Plan 1*

*It seems to make sense to offer three succinct areas: defined athletic fields and features to the North of the tracks, a flexible open space to the south of the tracks and plenty of nature/wildlife areas with the river, bluff area and wetlands to the North of the tracks. The three zones would have a different uses and different "vibes". To the north would be the most public with street frontages and multiple playing areas but it would still have the wetland to integrate nature. The area to the south of the tracks would be less public and very open. This is what the neighbors seem to envision when they talk about the park they would like. Also, if there were to be lighted fields, Plan 1 would not have lights in this south of the tracks area which would be good for the neighborhood. I'm not clear about the usefulness of the orchard; who would tend the trees and keep what grows on them? Also, apples would be a favorite thing for kids at the park to throw at peoples and cars. The bluff to the river area would allow park visitors to forget they are in a major city. The exposed stone and steep grades and river views make this area very unique. Plan 1 would allow designers to make each of the three areas shine in their own right; it doesn't place added park features outside of their context.*

#### *Plan 2*

*Most of what I sad about Plan 1 could also be said about Plan 2, except there doesn't look to be enough parking either north or south of the tracks and both areas seem underutilized.*

#### *Plan 3*



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*I'm not sure that the bread oven would get much use and may just be a target for vandalism.*

#### **4. Non Committee Member**

*Like many in this neighborhood i would like to see as much green space as possible in the development across the street a few things came up for me as i reviewed the documents*

- Lack of "playing fields" having one just doesn't seem like an adequate use of the space*
- Perhaps it was easiest to keep them listed as soccer and hurling, but no mention of baseball?! i would like to see a field incorporated into baseball w/a backstop and all*
- Lighted fields, this has become a concern for a vocal few, but for myself and others in the neighborhood i would prefer this option on at least one field! i like the thought of lighted fields and find it interesting that it has raised the ire that it has, particularly since many of the fields are proposed to be closer to the bluff the people to be "affected" haven't even moved into the neighborhood as their housing units haven't been built yet!*
- My concern all along has been with the influx of housing in this area (more than what i was initially told 5 years ago). with this influx there will be more children into the neighborhood i know the names of quite a few people on the committee and many no longer have children in their homes, this does not mean they are not sensitive to this issue, but i would venture it is of less importance to them.*
- I love the concept of community gardens and am an avid gardner myself however, having witnessed the "community" garden across the street from me what i saw was that very few people actually game out to tend their plots some of the plots are beautiful!!! And when this spot is converted to housing I would be honored to have the raised beds and soil transferred to my yard! Allocating space for this is great, but i don't see it as a particular need or fit for this space i like what has been done along Jefferson and Victoria*
- A better use of green space for gardening*
- I love the concept of orchards and there are many fruits that can be grown in Minnesota, but who will be responsible for maintaining and harvesting? a partnership w/Mississippi Market and/or a local food shelf would be ideal*

#### **5.**

*Plan 5 could be adopted as is and I'd be happy. I like that the south side remains relatively untouched. However, to get some more "eyes on the park" on the south side, perhaps some passive, nature focused features could be added like a meditation labyrinth, or small community garden. Also, change the mound into a sledding hill.*

#### **6.**

*I have a few comments on the table work. The short version is that I have a preference for table work that leans to the big picture of More Natural, More Urban, More Connected - to neighborhood needs while retaining sensitivity to the needs of the river. Table #5 has the beginnings of that portrayed, but time did not allow enough thoughtful table discussion or even the selection of the proper symbol in some cases at our table. Since detailed pro/con critique comments were offered afterward, I will also be offering response in hard copy (thanks for the maps). My added comments are coming by next Tuesday's 2pm deadline or sooner.*

*Many ideas are interesting and helpful. Some of those ideas are:*

*A boardwalk in the wetland Table #2*

*Shared use of Nova land for mutual interests Tables 1, 4, 5*

*Multi use athletic fields in the north section Tables 1, 2 5*

*I do not agree with:*

*The high level of 'urban' activities shown on Table #3 and 4 in the southern section. A high level of activity can be offered in the southern section, but I would not characterize it as urban in this context.*

*The placement of Patrick's mound on the work of my own Table #5 is not correct for several reasons which I will outline further in my followup hard copy. Briefly, as a sliding hill I would wonder if the run out distance from the hill in all four directions would be safe, with off site building, bluff edge, quarry bins and the railroad track as obstacles in all directions. As a memorial the man made symbolic mound in this 2013 year of the Dakota, personally, seems quite insensitive to another mound tradition. A mound in the southern section is a man made insertion on the natural shelf bluff that is the same elevation and from the same geologic formation as the Ft. Snelling bluff and should be kept flat as it is naturally.*

*Parenthetically, I would add that all tables probably didn't have a chance to finish their work. I know for table #5, the map showed very little for the southern section because of lack of time. That lack resulted in a con comment post meeting that the southern section might be isolated, unsafe and such. This could not be further from the reality of what can be designed well and obviously should be avoided. Natural does not mean an isolated or for the homeless park!*

*Circuit training requested by Nova would work throughout the park, but especially well in the southern section. I would look to Pleasant Place Park for ideas of how to implement exercise stations and public art. There is lots more.*

*With regard to the notes from the meeting I would offer the following comments:*

*A - Point two of the discussion topics seems to indicate a discussion did or would occur regarding the easement. I do not recall that easement discussion taking place, but one should.*

*B - Under Youth Athletics ( Bill Driver) point three indicates a survey of respondents. To be complete this should indicate this was a survey of Business Association membership not the neighborhood.*

*C - Missing is mention that Don Ganje made two significant comments about space use in the north park section that resulted in free placement of cutouts without regard to features existing on the land currently. Those comments were and I am paraphrasing 1) The indication that the sewer manhole access road is temporary and could to moved to fit design needs and 2) the water management areas also in the north could be relocated or re characterized for the same reason. Both of these along with the broached idea, not included in the notes, of shared land use with Nova Academy need more clarification for the flexibility of available land space for the northern section design. I would add the importance of control of the newly created wetland size to what it is now or smaller.*

*D - Plan 5 summary notes refer to Table #5 verbal comments made about the south section to 'bring site back to pre-settlement'. This is not correct for the intent of what I said. I did refer to CA 1850, and that experts would have to pick a particular date. Pre settlement would be before 1800 I believe. To be more clear the reference is geologic and it's resultant vegetation, not in terms of Native Americans or settlers although that interpretation would be important. My reference point would be from the book by C. J. Sansome - Minnesota Underfoot, page 214 detail map of the Vegetation of Minnesota CA 1850.*

*PS: I am sorry, I totally forgot the funicular idea mentioned by Table #4 and commented on pro and con. I am totally in favor of exploring this idea further. Perhaps a further examination of the ADA access accommodation question might help us to understand this better. I understand valid vandalism concerns, but important ideas should not be dismissed so quickly. It should at least be kept on the table for when it is needed and appropriate. Why is there an impression that our park at the river will be isolated and not busy and therefore unsafe? I know of no outdoor place today*

*that is not subject to vandalism. Isn't his why we are gathering to come up with advice about a park with features that will be visited, well designed and interesting and therefore safer and less subject to vandalism. It may not be important next summer, but maybe in time when the access road needs repairs and ADA requirements might make that money difficult .*

*A time might come when we do reach the conclusion that we want the less able to touch the river, rather than be stopped at the overlook. I believe what we say should include this goal. I believe the incline is a solution worth exploring.*

## **7.**

*My preference would be for a combination of #3 and #4, particularly with regard to the amount of field space they each provide for a multiple athletic activities.*

*Because of the comments I have heard from area representatives concerning traffic and noise from athletic activities, it seems to me that locating those away from the residences on Adrian St. would be preferable. Fields located on the bluff would have the railroad tracks as a buffer.*

*The impression I got when I attended the first meetings of the Federation where the City proposed the 4-field soccer complex was that there was very little likelihood of funding without the 4-field configuration given the requirements of the potential funding source. In the absence of City funding in the foreseeable future for athletic fields, and given the need/desire of Nova and other interests (soccer, hurling, lacrosse, frisbee, rugby), is there a possibility that a portion of the undeveloped land could be set aside for a community project in which grass fields could be planted and maintained by the users?*

*This would be similar to the arrangement at Talmud Torah where the City has the responsibility to maintain the open space and is authorized to use it for recreational purposes, but HGRA actually takes care of the field (we pay for all the turf management and water). We have years of experience in growing and maintaining grass fields, and we also possess water cannon that could be used to irrigate the field without the cost of underground sprinklers.*

*In this scenario, there could be playable fields sooner than later (the fields at Cretin-Derham Hall were developed in one summer and used in the fall). Since there would be no permanent infrastructure, there would be little impediment to changing the fields should funding become available. Organizations that have a serious interest in more field space would be asked to provide contributions to the project. I think that HGRA and the St. Paul Association for Community Soccer would be open to that possibility.*

*This is just a thought but I wonder if it might be worth pursuing. The model has certainly worked well at Talmud Torah and, in addition to the soccer field; the open space is an attractive amenity for the neighborhood, especially compared to the dirt and weeds that characterized the space before this agreement was consummated.*

## **8.**

*I, of course, like all the elements of plan #2, which was the design I took part in. I did, however, add some things to the plan that were omitted due to lack of time at the charette. My comments about the design of the park are below:*

*North Side:*

- Multi-purpose field (striped for hurling, rugby, and soccer) located adjacent to Adrian Street*
- Add shade trees along Montreal Ave and perimeter of field, if possible*
- Splash pad – would like two or something extra-large (inspired by CityGarden splash pad in St. Louis) – something that would make Victoria Park a destination for Twin Cities families*

- Swings (to make up for lack of them at Nova playground)
  - Younger child play area (to make up for play area @ Nova which is built for older kids)
  - Restrooms located adjacent to new Thurston Way
  - Pond and hockey adjacent to wetland – ideally, it would be terrific if these could be the winter use of the splash pad area – if it were possible to design a splash pad that could be filled in for the winter for skating
  - Rambling boardwalk in wetland (inspired by Itasca State Park)
  - 2 tennis courts proposed on Nova Property – if this is something Nova wants
- South Side:
- Picnic pavilion
  - Restrooms – important for restrooms to be on both North and South side of park, esp. with train tracks as barrier between two sides
  - Wildflower garden located at east end of site – also add to this climbable/interactive public art (inspired by Teddy Bear Park in Stillwater, but can tie in Native American heritage or perhaps a steamboat) – which will altogether make charming view for new high-end apartments
  - Walking paths on either side of the new apartments – one from Otto Avenue into park, along railroad tracks; one from Shepard Road/Otto Avenue on south side of new apartments
  - Snowshoe trails throughout wooded area, down bluff
  - Canoe, kayak storage under Shepard Road
  - Picnic tables at concrete overlook (part of easement)
  - Informal flat area for kite flying, pick-up games, open practice field, etc. (as suggested in plan #3), bordered by slight berm, if possible, for sledding hill in winter (as suggested in plan #1)

I cannot at all support the “let it be” technique for the south side of the park as laid out in plan #5. I think this would leave it open and unkempt as it is now, which would be unsafe for children and also possibly invite homeless and vagrant populations back to the park and the bluffs. While I like the idea of an amphitheater in theory, I feel it would ultimately be underused and valuable space wasted. Same goes for community gardens.

## 9.

### *General Comments:*

*When it says that Staff reviewed the document is that park staff or city staff? Which departments?*

*Parks comments are inconsistent across the document. Items that are pros in one design are cons in another design or ignored in comments on other tables. Be more consistent and thorough.*

*Nova Classical Academy is on Victoria Way not Thurston. Staff comments refer to Thurston Way which is Thurston St and doesn't cross Adrian St. to edge the park. Victoria is the edge of the park as I understand it.*

*Since we have no program for the site stating that something ‘exceeds perceived need for site’ is a little vague. If it exceeds the system needs, then state that. Since I can never get a reservation at the Highland pavilion I don't see how two pavilions are too much.*

*Fort Road Federation voted at the public meeting against 4 artificial turf soccer fields. We were okay with two stripped un fenced grass fields. One of the objections was to infrastructure that supports tournaments and festivals. The neighborhood is hesitant to support something that creates the infrastructure for a festival ground.*

### *Design Comments:*

#### *Table 1:*

#### *Likes:*

1. *Decorative land berm to create areas*
2. *Sledding hill*

3. *Scheduled athletic field near school with lighting near current 24 hour lighting.*
4. *Amphitheater, could be in 5 acre easement to the north as part of the natural form.*
5. *Community garden near MM*
6. *Water walk in wet land.*
7. *Nova tennis courts*
8. *Open space at bluff edge Kite park?*
9. *More than one picnic shelter promotes more structured use of the site.*

*Dislikes:*

1. *Open space at bluff field could become a festival field.*
2. *Two hurling fields is the equivalent of four to six soccer fields. Neighborhood has voted against 4 dedicated soccer fields.*

*Response to Staff comments:*

1. *Pro comment #9 See Dislikes @2 above.*
2. *Con comment #1 and 2 please expand where this information comes from. The current temp community garden at Shalom is about a 1/2 acre.*
3. *Comment #3 no main entrance defined yet to make this assessment.*
4. *Comment #5 there is no program for the park, therefore no needs assessment has been done.*

*Table 2:*

*Likes:*

- *Combination winter sports with storm water runoff needs.*
- *Field is located near commercial property so overflow parking can bleed into the commercial property. Con apartments might have to get permitted parking*

*Dislikes:*

*Response to Staff comments:*

1. *Cons: Table didn't have enough time to develop the non-field side of the design. Open space is considered a pro in Table 3 Pro #1.*

*Table 3:*

*Likes:*

- *Storm water pond at Thurston and Adrian makes a nice bookend to water in the site.*
- *Play area near sports fields for families.*
- *Canoe Kayak storage*
- *Grass athletic field*
- *Shaded areas needed.*
- *Athletic field is multi use.*

*Dislikes:*

- *Parking on bluff side separates the most populated portion of the neighborhood from the park at the bluff.*
- *Lighting near 'high end' apartments.*

*Response to Staff comments:*

1. *Pro#1: This is con in other plans, explain please.*

2. *Pro #2: What is 'a informal lawn space' programmed as?*
3. *Con#1: update street name.*
4. *Con #2: For 35 acres what is the standard amount of toilets and shelters?*

*Table 4:*

*Likes:*

- *Meditation Labyrinth in 'secret' section of the park.*
- *Gardens near MM*
- *Cooperation with Nova for structured spaces (tennis courts)*

*Dislikes:*

*Table 5:*

*Likes:*

- *Picnic shelters along bluff line. Needs play areas near picnic areas.*
- *Amphitheater aimed at light in*

*Dislikes:*

- *Turn amphitheater to aim at light industrial area not housing.*

*Other thoughts:*

*Ravine walk?*

*Engage the bluff more thoughtfully.*

*Orientation of elements is critical. Amphitheaters especially.*

*Any creative thoughts on ADA access to river.*

*Creative temporary uses at the river to get people aware of the river access? Frozen marsh walk?*

*Use Booms for temporary theater/pool/? Barge access*

## **10.**

*I'm a bit biased in liking group 1's concept as I got to work on it, but here are a few further thoughts:*

- *In Group 1's concept, there is a concentration of active uses on the north side of the park, but I don't think that the south side needs to be exclusively passive recreation. Group 1's concept shows the potential for areas that are "field ready" but not intensively lighted, striped, etc. on the south side of the park. This could be a transition zone between the busy areas and the river bluffs (similar to Group 5's idea of going from "more urban" to "more natural" without dividing exactly at the railroad tracks). The group talked about taking the mound of fill and creating a berm along the edge of the fields that could create viewing opportunities as well as serve as a buffer between the informal/occasional use fields and the river bluffs.*
- *The orchards may not necessarily be fruit trees, but could be a type of tree plantation (ornamental trees) or at the very least represent additional canopy re-vegetation as a buffer between the park and the new development at Otto. Planting design can make other areas of the park much more interesting as well and can go a long way toward shaping spaces and creating different "rooms" of use and experience.*

- *The “field ready” spaces on the south side are still a lot of area to mow, but could possibly incorporate no-mow grass on the periphery along with additional landform, stormwater, and vegetation to make the space more visually interested and appear less expansive without compromising potential play area. The berm along the edge could also provide informal spectator seating.*
- *I like the idea of having other uses like a play area, swings, picnic shelter, etc. proximate to the athletic field (Group 3); although it might be better not to have them close to the railroad tracks. Perhaps an additional play area could be located on the south side of the park close to the parking/restrooms at the end of the access road (near the apartments). Otherwise, I like having these types of uses near the school and a parking area on the north side (Group 1).*
- *Hardcourt play areas could be located within the park on the north side with a bit of reconfiguring of the play areas/splash pad and community garden plots. They could also fit near the parking/roadway access on the south side.*
- *I like the idea of an open mown field area for informal games, gatherings and activities (Group 1 and 3 has it located on the south part of the park – could be on the north side too; perhaps smaller though?)*
- *Providing an overlook near Otto seems like a good idea as that view is particularly compelling. However, I’d like to explore the possibility to create viewing points along the bluff inside the park boundary as well (but likely with a different, less “built” character)*
- *It would be great to provide ADA access from the park right down to the river edge, but perhaps that opportunity can be made available from the Sam Morgan trail rather than trying to re-grade or use some mechanical means of transport directly down from the park.*
- *What happens at the river edge needs further exploration*
- *The area at the southwestern tip of the park also could use further exploration. Group 3 has community gardens here (issue with utilities being carried this far into the site?) and Group 4 has a meditation labyrinth there. This part of the site has a unique character with the mature trees surrounding it on nearly three sides – kind of a tucked-away hidden space, but also the first thing you see as you cross under the bridge. Could be a really cool part of the park! But also could have issues because of its relative isolation.*

## **11.**

*I do like the Table #1. I do like the funicular a lot, because it is unique and has some historical references to the railroad.*

*I think a dolman shaped berm would need some planning, to include winter sledding. I like the idea of the skating rink that meanders through the park.*

*I do not see a basketball court or a hoop. I think that this would be a statement.*

*This feels very rushed in planning the layout. There does not seem to be enough discussion.*

*A meditation labyrinth would be another special feature, like the funicular.*

*I think combining many of the ideas from each of the plans provide for a great foundation to the design process.*

## **12.**

*One common theme that came through on all 5 plans was the separation of the “active” recreation areas and “passive/natural” recreation areas. This allows for a balanced and shared use of the park even when there are events (neighbors can use the park even if there is a tournament). It also provides a diverse experience by combining the active and passive recreational opportunities in one park.*

*A suggested way to do this:*

- Place the “active” recreation and multi-purpose fields on the north side of the park to allow for minimal impacts to the riverine habitat and migratory flyway (especially if lights are discussed).*
- Cooperation with Nova to utilize some of their property for “active” recreation field use since they have a large list of “active” recreation field desires. Their property is on the north side of the park which fits with the idea of placing the “active” recreation elements there.*
- The south side could incorporate native plantings, trails connecting to the scenic overlooks and river access points, and informal lawn space that could be adapted for sporting use when needed. The “eyes on the park” concept is an important consideration and ensuring consistent use/draw to the south side is vital to ensuring safety.*

*Another tying theme was placing picnic tables, boardwalks, and/or an amphitheater in and around the wetlands. This would allow for great learning and interpretive opportunities.*

*An element that I think may have gone underutilized in the plans was the scenic overlook of the river. Ensuring adequate access and emphasis of the overlook will truly provide a unique visitor experience.*

## **13.**

*Below are my comments regarding Table Five’s Site Plan, the one that I, and almost everyone else, preferred.*

*Overall, having the north part of the site more urban and the south part of the site more natural, fits most appropriately with the Great River Passage Plan.*

*Additionally,*

*On the north side of the tracks:*

- There should be one multi-purpose play field on the north side, without synthetic turf.*

*On the south side of the tracks:*

- There should be no athletic fields on the south side of the tracks.*
- I challenge staff to develop an alternative that includes the following:*
  - 1. A connection to Williams Ferry Landing.*
  - 2. An oak savannah.*
  - 3. Community orchards and gardens.*

4. *Changing the topography of the site. It is currently flat because it has been graded that way, but it can be anything.*
5. *Incorporating Old Fort Road on the same axis as Stewart Avenue.*
6. *A proper site for a funicular, in order to get people, canoes, and equipment down to the river landing.*
7. *A bluff walk with overlooks.*
8. *Repurposing the old stone quarry.*
9. *Creating a meditation labyrinth memorial space rather than a grand mound.*
10. *Reaching out to the Dakota People to incorporate appropriate development respecting prehistory (e.g., Dakota County Regional Park Schaar's Bluff).*
11. *Lockable and enclosed canoe storage lockers above the flood plain.*

*And, regarding the HRA easement with the housing development at Shepard and Otto:*

- *There should be a public overlook that incorporates benches, picnic tables, gathering spaces, bread ovens and clean up sinks, and restrooms.*

#### **14.**

*Table 1: I like having plenty of parking on the North and South portions. I like the amphitheater by the wetland. I like the more structured field in the North portion. I'm worried about having so much open field space in the South portion. That would be pretty chemical-intensive. I'd rather see more natural prairie or woodland. We should probably group the orchard space into one area. I don't like the idea of building a lookout mound- but I do like sledding...so I'm torn. We already have a beautiful landscape with views.*

*Table 2:*

*I do not like having a giant field as the only visible portion of the park from the north. I'd like to see natural elements that hint at what people will find after walking further into the park. I love the idea of a boardwalk with the wetland- but only if that doesn't disrupt that ecosystem.*

*Table 3:*

*I'm worried about so much parking and big fields so close to the bluffs. community garden beds should not be on the south end- they need to be accessible for compost deliveries and hauling tools and such- plus easy water access. I'd like to see the bread oven closer to an access point. I like having a playground near the ball fields.*

*Table 4:*

*I like the use of the land that can be shared with Nova. I like orchard space and community garden on the North end and amphitheater near the wetlands. I do not like the ball fields on the South End. I do like the funicular for access to the water for canoes and those of differing abilities.*

*Table 5:*

*I like the use of the land that can be shared with Nova. I like the community garden and orchards on the North End with the fields. I like the shared field layout. I would prefer to see the bread oven near the community garden and a picnic shelter and playground added there. Those activities go well together. I'd like the amphitheater to be closer to the wetlands and not directly next to the parking. Bathrooms on both ends of the park is good. Open, wild space on the South end is great. I don't love the human-made overlook point- I'd rather enjoy the bluffs via the trails.*

Overall, my idea park would be Table 5's as long as we use native plantings and trees to landscape around the community garden area. The best part about parks is that you can feel like you aren't in the middle of a city when you are at one- The south end really captures this and can include trails, information about our landscape and flexible space with some benches along the way.

Thanks,

## 15.

*I wasn't sure if we're supposed to "reply to all" like Kent did, but I thought doing so might start an email debate and I thought that might not be helpful. I have general comments, based upon looking at the plans and walking the site again, as opposed to picking any one plan over another. I really think we (the task force group) should be focusing on the big picture and let you and Don do the actual design work. Anyway, a day late (and a few bucks short), here are my thoughts:*

- *There should be one large, multi-purpose playing field that can accommodate at least two soccer pitches (and be available for one hurling pitch). I don't believe the north side of the tracks is large enough to reasonably fit this, especially while trying to handle storm water, trails, etc. Therefore the sports field should be on the south side of the tracks. I don't know if the soccer fields should be laid side-by-side or end-to-end, but the overall field should not be so large as to totally dominate the site or crowd the bluff. I don't know how much additional playing time is available when a field is lit, but I would tend to favor a field with no lights due to the location on the river bluff and near residential.*
- *The area along the bluff line should be available for an ample walking/biking path with benches.. This path might want some serious landscaping to help insulate it from activities on the playing field. The southeast corner should be a good-sized, green landscaped area that might accommodate some picnic tables. This is the area that I thought might work as an overlook, but now I feel the real overlook belongs where you always thought it should.*
- *Parking to serve the south side activities should be reasonable but not too large. Bigger events should have to rely on the Nova lot and street parking as overflow. The parking should be adjacent to the cul-de-sac (at the end of the new Bluff Street). Rather than have it be right next to the proposed residential parking, I think it might be better to have it on the Exxon site itself. This will reduce the "sea of parking" effect and the misuse of the residential parking by Park patrons.*
- *Concessions and restrooms should be near this parking lot.*
- *I am ambivalent about the "Patrick's Mound" idea for many of the reasons stated by others. This area could be a quiet spot separated from the rest of the park activities for .....??*
- *I don't know if it's a good idea to try and utilize Nova's property. The tennis courts shown on Plan #1 were actually on someone else's property. A couple of tennis courts could easily be accommodated somewhere on the north site. The Nova property seems to work pretty well for the lower school recess activities, when I imagine the school would not want to have to be going back and forth across the street. I think they need the readily accessible green space for the young kids to run around on.*
- *Perhaps there is not a real need for another playground across the street in the park if the Nova playground is available, although a water/splash pad kind of play area might be a good idea.*
- *Community gardens shouldn't be right at an entrance to the park, but should be in the general area near Mississippi Market. If the Market is involved there is a better chance*

*that the gardens would be maintained. I would think any orchard, if it's meant to be used, should be near the community gardens.*

- *There should be some, not overly invasive, way to enjoy the wetland area.*
- *There should be more topographic features (mounds, etc.) added to the north side, especially if most of the south site is left relatively flat. Based on our experience with stormwater design on the north site, I would not advocate wholesale changes to the features that have been agreed-upon with CRWD, and installed at a fair amount of expense.*
- *The river bottom should have some trails that provide access, but otherwise left relatively wild (like Crosby). The access down the bluff needs to be welcoming. We need to encourage people to make the trek down the hill – more people using this area will improve safety.*

## **16.**

*I like the boardwalks in plans 1 and 2. I spend a fair amount of time down at Crosby and the boardwalks are always the busiest area of the park. I am curious if the parks system really needs more hockey rinks (especially if they are not refrigerated), as presented in plan 2. I love the orchard and wildflowers in plan 2. While I am not certain what a meditation labyrinth (in plan 4) is, I like the idea of some type of peaceful and calm space where a yoga instructor could host a session or tai chi could be performed. The amphitheater in plans 4 and 5 is something that would be unique and I think we could have some really awesome usage by Nova and Mississippi Market. I also like the separation of athletic fields in the north portion and keeping the southern portion more natural, potentially leaving the opportunity for trees or shrubs in the southern section.*

*I am still not convinced that any type of mobility enhancements down the bluff would be useful - I think we should conduct some type of informal survey to see if people with mobility issues would be interested in the idea, especially considering it would be at the back of the park and quite far from any parking facilities. To me, that type of expense and maintenance needs to be justified by some type of validation of interest among the population it is designed to serve.*

*I believe Kent had mentioned a community meeting - I guess I was not aware there was a planned official community meeting, but the neighborhood representatives should be soliciting nearby residents for their feedback and input. I think that if we laid a specific set of things we want to hear from the community, those of us that are resident reps would have a lot easier time approaching residents. Perhaps we can spend a little time on that if you think now is the time to be seeking out additional resident input from the broader community that the resident reps can bring back into the committee. If that time has passed, then perhaps we can serve more to distribute and disseminate the information and plans to keep the community abreast of what is happening.*

## **17.**

*I would like to see formal programming of the site occur north of the RR tracks as indicated in concepts 1, 2, 4 & 5. Proximity to the school and the neighborhood would make formal fields, courts, and park amenities accessible and would allow for better visibility. Roadways on the north side of the tracks are developed and allow for easy access. I like the idea of working with Nova to fit whatever is possible on their property (tennis courts, basketball courts).*

*South of the tracks, I am drawn toward concept #1. Useable, open space is in short supply in this area. The area south of the RR tracks is approximately 20 acres, but it is adjacent to and contiguous with Cosby Farm, which is over 500 acres in size. Balancing the needs of the community, while keeping this area more natural, can be accomplished by creating a level open space of turf to allow for sporting events and as a community gathering space. Carving out approximately 10 acres of land for this purpose would not compete with the desire to protect the bluff or to keep water on the land. Example: park visitors love the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, but they are often discouraged because Parks does not provide open space in the sanctuary for picnicking or community events.*

*If orchards or community gardens are developed on site, they should start small and their location should allow for expansion (don't forget water access at these locations).*

*If landforms are created on the south side of the tracks, I would caution you to consider how they would be maintained. Parks equipment has limits and prescribed burning may have limited applications on site if off-gassing of petroleum fumes continues to be a site practice. If any landforms are used for sledding, consider planting them in turf grass. Native grasses and forbs will stand up through a snowfall and the disturbance would encourage weed growth. If there is a landform, consider placing it so it could double as spectator seating during sporting or community events.*

## **18. Non Committee Member**

*Multipurpose athletic fields for hurling and soccer are not workable -- From my understanding, the hurling field needs to be grass. I know the design committee isn't taking a position on the whole grass vs. synthetic turf issue. Needless to say, I doubt the resources are available to properly maintain grass athletic fields. They would quickly become worn patches of dirt and dust covered with weeds. Design #4 takes this into account and uses the largest amount of available flat space to have two separate areas for each.*

*Parking issues in relation to soccer field -- I didn't see this mentioned in any of the critiques, but the designs that place the soccer fields in the north section would move parking from the entrance parking lot off of Otto on to the side streets of Adrian and Victoria Way. You'll have 20-25 vehicles and their passengers scrambling for access to the park on the north side, which doesn't really seem to be taken into account in any design.*

*Field lighting not necessary -- Nova would use the fields for their boys and girls varsity teams which take place in the late summer and early fall, usually right after school. I guarantee you this field will also get a lot of use from St. Paul Blackhawks Soccer Club. The main club soccer season runs April - early July, so there is plenty of daylight to cover this season and lights would not be needed. An added perk -- Blackhawks would be a paying customer, an additional source of revenue for the Park & Rec Department.*

*Hockey / ice skating rinks not necessary -- I understand trying to promote four-season use of the park, but in the current budgetary climate the City has been closing and consolidating rec center rinks for some time. Any skating / hockey rink would kill any grass underneath it. Also, there would not be a skate changing / warming house with it, which would diminish its appeal.*

*Isolation of the south end river bluff walk -- This was mentioned as a "Con" of design #5 and I saw Kent had a puzzled response to that critique. I think the issue of high-risk behaviors historically just down the river in Crosby Park is well documented. I wouldn't want that to be an*

*issue for the Ft. Road neighborhood or Nova Classical Academy. I think putting high-use facilities along the bluff walk makes the issue much less of a concern.*

*Non-athletic amenities that add value -- I liked the amphitheater, wetland boardwalk, and children's splash / play areas in the designs. They are all features that would draw people to the park.*

Here are a few of the things I am thinking about at the Critical Area easement

- 1) Right to place a significant and appropriate entry sign at Otto where the Stewart extension enters toward the park.
- 2) Seamless integration of the overlook with the park proper through signage that indicates the area is more park land than private
- 3) Continuation of the bluff trail east on the bluff to Otto and down to Sam Morgan.
- 4) Right to implement a funicular type incline at the bluff within the easement.
- 5) Right to appropriate appurtenances for the overlook and incline
- 6) Shared parking for resident and park users.
- 7) Right to include benches on the trail and at the overlook.
- 8) The development be in compliance with all city guidelines for buildings in the critical area of the river.
- 9) Easement should include Parks and Rec. control of all the bluff land down to the river edge or Shepard Rd.

## The Southern Half

This southern area would be the "More Natural" portion of the park. There would be opportunities to compare and contrast the urban and the natural. The section toward the river would have an interpretive trail that recreates and symbolizes from west to east the old Fort Road trail, the link between Fort Snelling and the Upper Landing and on to downtown. It would pass through a large open multi-purposed oak savannah with interpretive trails. This large open area would be used for gatherings that could be characterized as a rendezvous, an art fair, a fourth of July community picnic area, and an outdoor nature lab. Think High Line! Possible interpretive features that are not necessarily permanent structures along this trail would include native or immigrant camps, log or sod cabins, early quarries or other activities that occurred in the area. It would be a period interpretation of past history that also could have modern educational uses for teaching local history and natural history.

During 2013, the officially designated Year Of The Dakota in St. Paul, it seems fitting to recognize the natural land that was crossed by Dakota peoples and contains an overlook that may have been used over the millennia to look out onto the river confluence. This land will finally be returned to respectful public use rather than the abuse it received for over recent years.

Surrounding the multi-purpose space would be a forest edge with oaks and under-story fruit and nut producing trees and shrubs. Interspersed in the landscape and extending down the bluff into the river valley would be interactive stations with GPS related smart phone narration of local, native, river, wetland and natural history, or ecology lessons about native plants, animals, birds and insects. Support structures needed might be open-sided park-type shelters with a period flair, restrooms, and possibly storage space. Structures might be detailed with rock from the old quarry on the site. Parking would be needed closer and in the easement that is retained near Otto. Important signage at Otto at the new Stewart Street extension will announce the entrance to this natural park section linked to the river.

The overlook recently sold to Stonebridge Development will be retained by easement as a visual connection to the river as suggested in the Great River Passage plan. Amenities that fit the easement and critical area of the river that would benefit the development residents as well include shaded benches, connected trails, and possibly a community bread oven.

As currently understood, a significant problem exists in connecting the bluff park areas to the river bottom park areas. The existing maintenance 'road' which is more like a trail angling down the bluff to the river bottom is a slope of more than 11 degrees. This is a steeper incline than

specified by ADA for handicapped access. The trail will be in need of maintenance, but this improvement might not be possible if the requirements of ADA are not met. This is all a little beyond my level of expertise, but as an alternative means of access to the valley, it might be possible to provide a funicular incline at the bluff. The design would be tricky, but if ADA requirements could be met and at the same time provide a lift to lower and raise canoes, small boats, and fishing equipment to the river we could have a win for everyone. Nova Academy has indicated an interest in offering a competitive crewing team. Their equipment could be moved to the river this way as well. A protective dog house or other strategies and modern cell phone communication might overcome many perceived difficulties for when this strategy is feasible. Everyone should be able to reach out and touch the river. Currently many would be stopped at the overlook.

The area from the shared parking going west along the bluff should be restored to land as nature would have made it; land that protects the river bluff from erosion; land that retains in place the rain as it falls and filters it naturally into the river bottom; land that has less of man made permanence; and land that is designed with the sustainable principles of SITES in mind. Properly managed community gardens that are managed consistently with the requirements of the critical area of the river may fit.

To improve the connections of the city to the park and the park to the river the following should be implemented:

The north and south sections of the park must be linked by city sidewalks. The sidewalks should be completed into the neighborhood and to public transportation at W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Appropriate bus stops and improved stoplights with crosswalks implemented. All bike and walking trails in the area must be completed to the park and through to the river and Sam Morgan Trail. An incline should be built and the maintenance road improved. Both passages under Shepard Road to the river edge should be connected to the bluff. The portal passage under the rail bed is important as a link between the more urban and more natural sections of the park.

Here are some considerations for me regarding Patrick's Mound

- 1) So far, interest from advisory members over Patrick's Mound has been low.
- 2) Currently the mound has been placed in the Critical Area of the park which has possible adverse implications for erosion control toward the bluff
- 3) Our current conception of the south area as more natural is in conflict with an artificial memorial mound that is not in keeping with the flat bluff.
- 4) Some concern has been raised about how to manage the inevitable skateboarding and mountain bikers safely. For sledding the same would apply to a safe run out from the hill toward bluff, private property, RR tracks or the stone bins.
- 5) What was originally envisioned as an overlook of the river has been determined by P & R to not be the case. The overlook would be of the park itself and the downtown skyline which is of marginal importance.
- 6) I am thinking of a trail configuration from west to east in the natural area that could be a period recreation that could also feature the old fort road trail. The mound could interfere with that path.
- 7) I am concerned about the image of a mound that is from another cultural tradition. Native American. Might this not be offensive to Native Americans, during this Year of the Dakota 2013. I think they should have a role and representation at our park, but a mound would be up to them. I think it will be considered offensive to build a memorial Patrick's Mound at this location. I have heard this from others.
- 8) It has been suggested to have a configuration of several mounds. With one to Patrick. I would prefer to defer the exact designation of a memorial for a future time when specific features of the park are set and an appropriate memorial designation can be named. I see several opportunities for designated memorials including a playing field, an amphitheater, or a wetland all of which would be in the more Urban section, which seems more appropriate for a modern era guy.
- 9) The mound placement location is I believe in a natural low spot, not a raised spot.
- 10) I have not seen a rendition of this mound that has addressed how a spiral path mounting to the top would be constructed or maintained, how that would work as a sledding hill, what would be used for erosion control, exact dimensions of height, circumference, paths etc. with dimensional placement on the site.

Kent Petterson

Kent Peterson  
Comments

Like bulk of  
Urban activities  
in the north section  
for table #1

Like parking in  
NW corner of park

Tennis courts &  
other shared  
uses

would like to see  
parking shared

I like this concept with  
more program  
to make it safer & activity  
exercise but walk/run circuit  
open shade - natural trails  
school natural history  
some

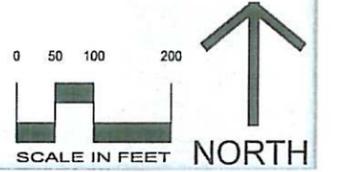
if open space  
is less turf  
more natural  
low berm

like this  
settlement

not  
appropriate at  
bluff edge

MV

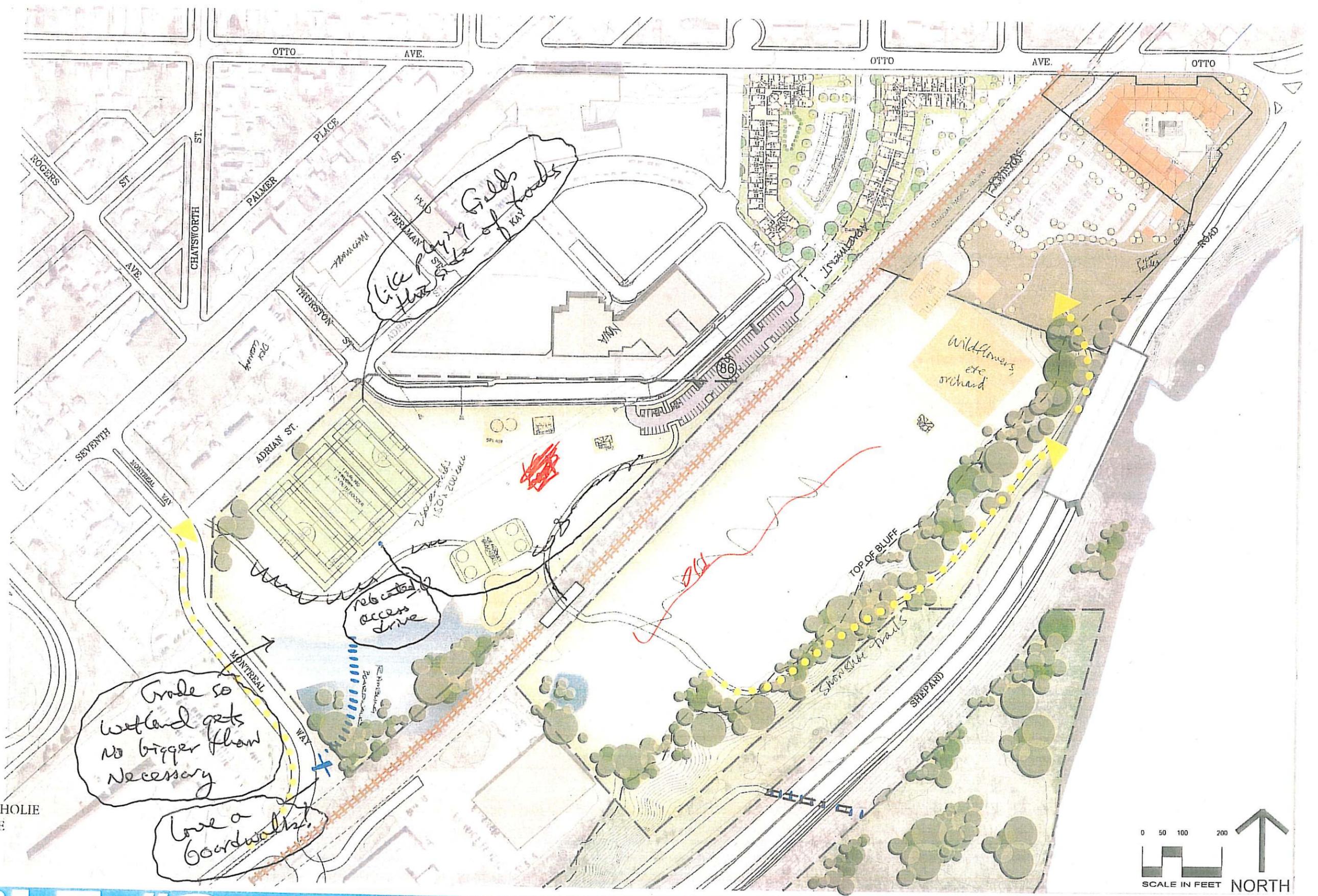
EMILY SHIVELY  
HALLE O'FALVEY  
MANUEL CERVANTES  
ADAM ROBBINS



**TABLE #1** **VICTORIA PARK**

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation design advisory committee  
Project Manager: Don Ganje / Alice Messer  
Contact: 651-266-6425 / 651-266-6412  
Email: Don.Ganje@ci-stpaul.mn.us / Alice.Messer@ci-stpaul.mn.us  
January 22, 2012 - MEETING #4

Keep Peterson  
Comments



TONYA JOHNSON NICHOLIE  
 JENNIFER VERBRUGGE  
 PETE REGNIER  
 KARIN MISIEWICZ  
 DEBORAH ROSE

# TABLE #2

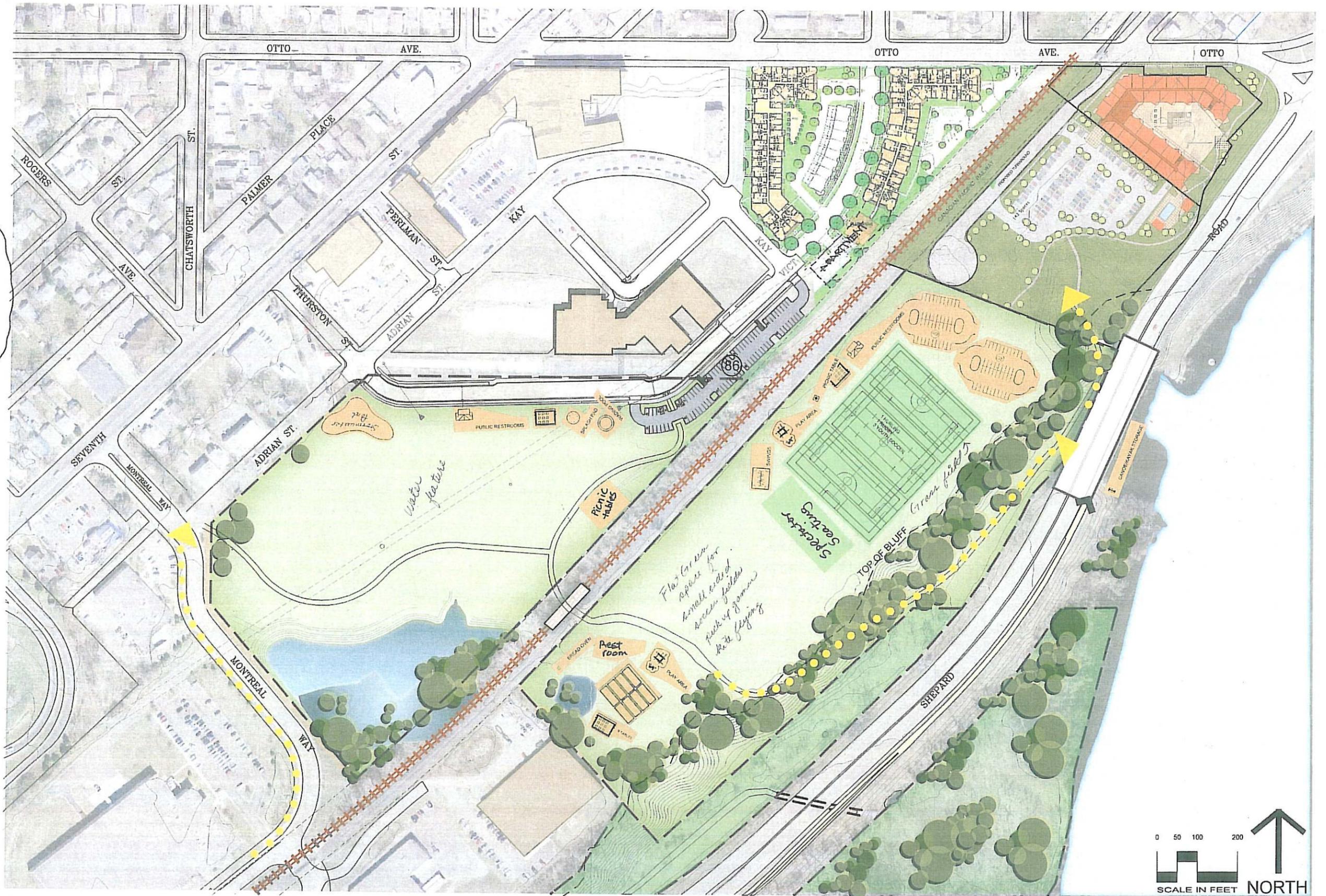
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

Project Manager: Don Ganje / Alice Messer  
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# VICTORIA PARK

design advisory committee  
 January 22, 2013 - MEETING #4

*Kent Peters*  
 Prefer to see, possibly, activities be ~~stop~~ stopped North/South Urban/Natural

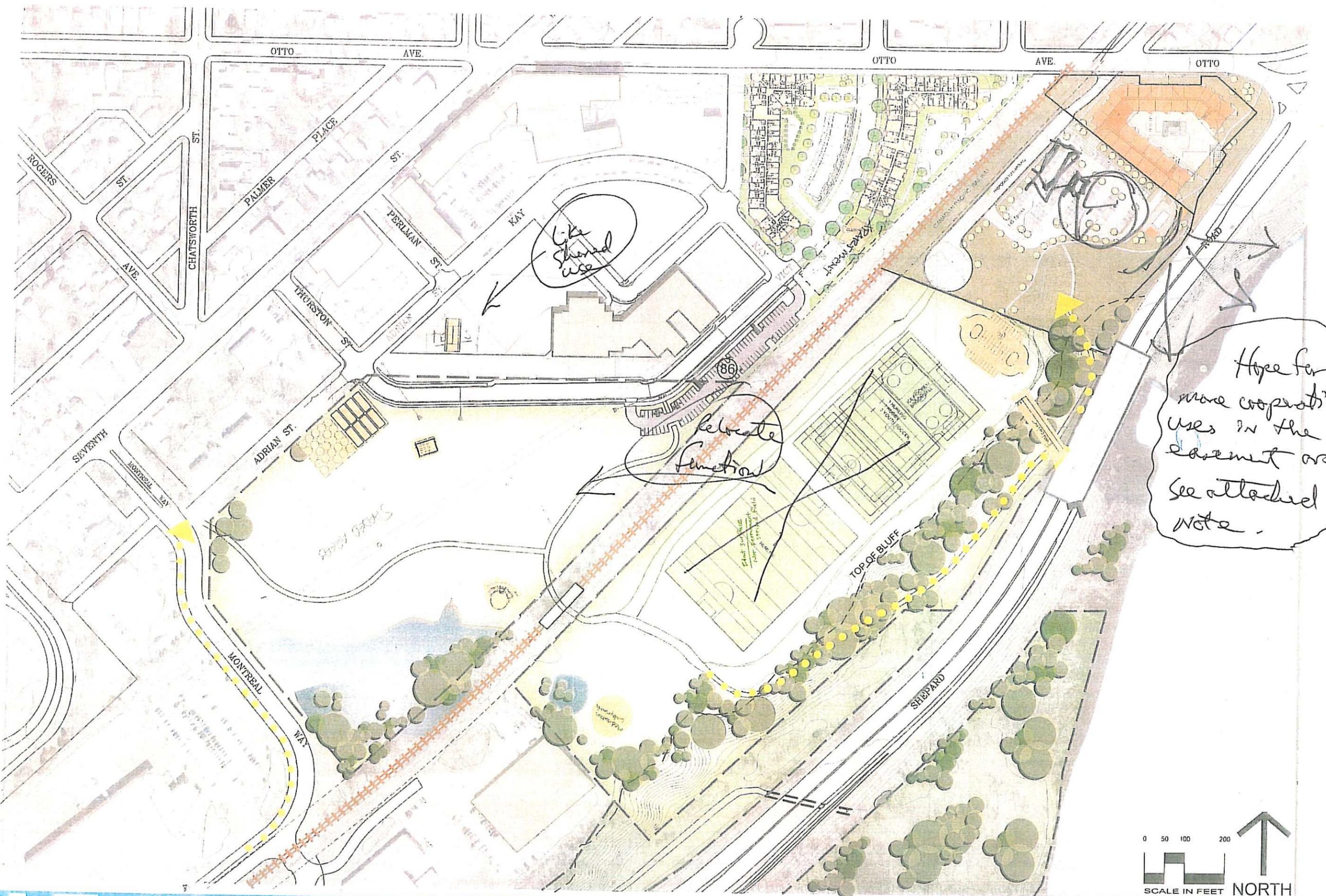


DAVE BREDUMUS  
 BILL DRIVER  
 PAULA FAUGHENDER  
 RORY STIERLER  
 AMANDA LOVELEE

**TABLE #3** **VICTORIA PARK**  
 Saint Paul Parks and Recreation design advisory committee  
 Project Manager: Don Ganje / Alice Messer  
 Contact: 651-266-6425 / 651-266-6412  
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 january 22, 2012 - MEETING #4

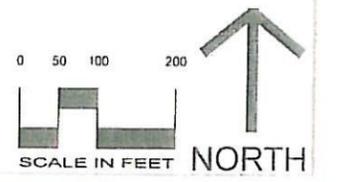
*William  
 Tony Bell  
 Tony Bell  
 Loner  
 Harry Bell  
 or Jim  
 Chas. Bell  
 Park*

*Keep  
Pettus  
Comments*



*Here for  
more cooperative  
uses in the  
easement area  
see attached  
note.*

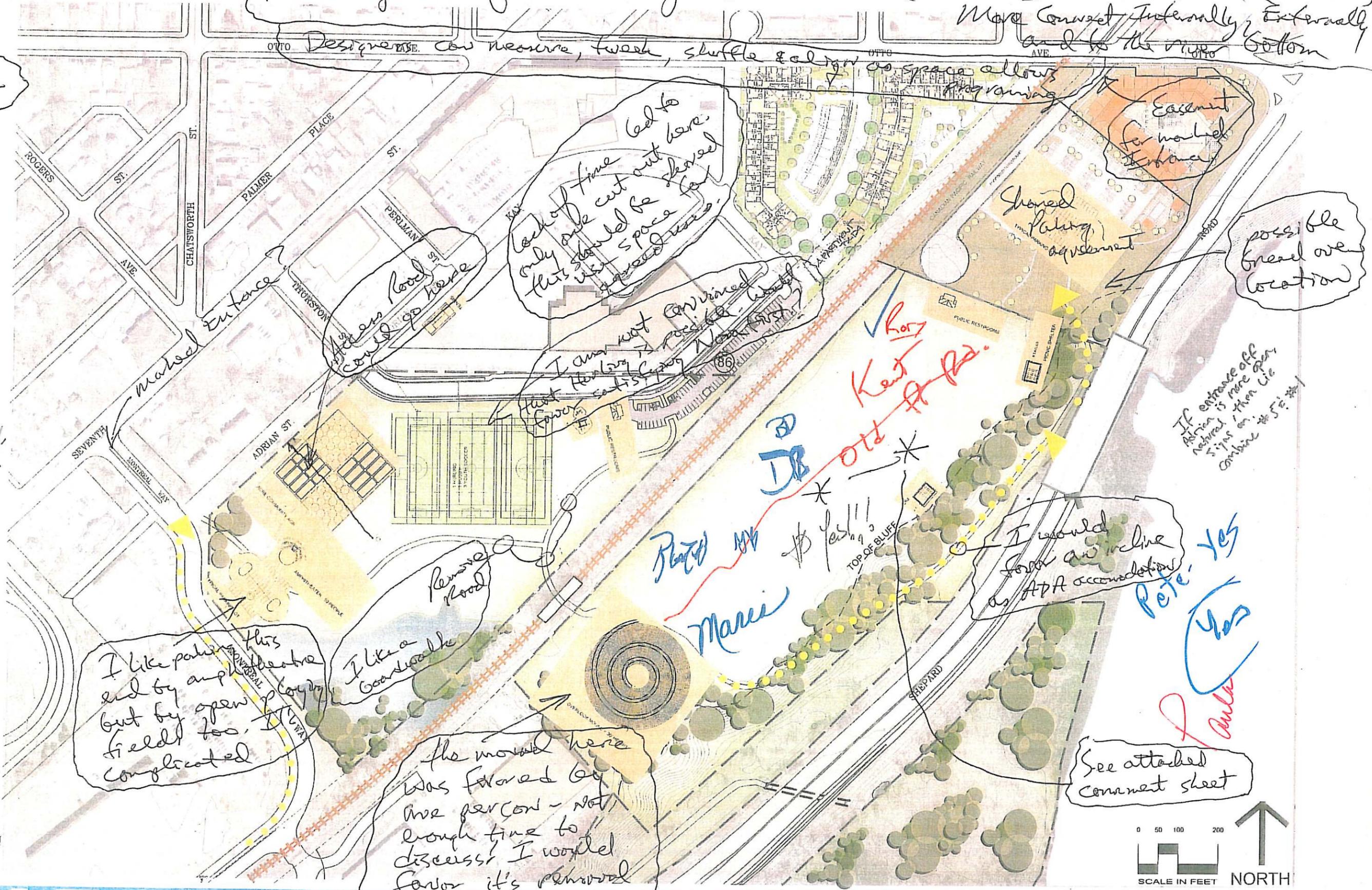
*Marie too*  
JOHN YUST  
BRIAN BLOOMFIELD  
ELIZABETH McMANN  
MARTIN SCHIEKEL



I prefer 'Big Idea' of GRP to guide More Urban (North section) More Natural (south section) More Connected Internally, Externally and to the rest of the city Bottom

Kent Peterson

- winter use
- design w/ water
- natural landscaping, rain gardens
- urban
- natural
- education opps.
- pkg. for park users



KENT PETTERSON  
STEPHANIE VAGLE  
GARY BRUEGGEMANN  
LUCY THOMPSON  
BOB FOSSUM

**TABLE #5**  
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

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**VICTORIA PARK**

design advisory committee  
January 22, 2012 - MEETING #4

