

MINUTES

**Thursday, December 8, 2016
Martin Luther King Recreation Center
271 Mackubin Street
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Bishop, Rafael Espinosa, Dan Marckel, John Mountain, Melvin Robinson, Emily Shively, Andy Trcka, SuChann Yang

MEMBERS ABSENT: Clara Haycraft

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Hahm, Joan Phillips, Alice Messer, Rachel Coyle

VISITORS: Shirley Erstad, Michael Kuchta, Gary Brueggemann, Tom Reisner, Joe McElwain, Tonya Johnson- Nicholie, Betty Moran, Adam Yust

1. AGENDA, MINUTES, INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The meeting was called to order by Chair Trcka at 6:31 p.m.
- A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Mountain and seconded by Commissioner Shively. The vote was 6 to 0 in favor with three commissioners absent (Espinosa, Haycraft, Marckel).
- A motion to approve the November 2016 minutes was made by Commissioner Yang and seconded by Commissioner Robinson. The vote was 6 to 0 in favor with three commissioners absent (Espinosa, Haycraft, Marckel).
- Commissioner Espinosa arrived after the minutes and agenda were considered.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- No one reserved the right to speak.
- A motion to close the public comment period was made by Commissioner Mountain and seconded by Commissioner Shively. The vote was 7 to 0 in favor with two commissioners absent (Haycraft, Marckel).

3. DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS

A. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Update – Rachel Coyle

- Rachel Coyle, Urban Forester, presented the commission with updated information on infestation rates, planned removals and reforestation.
- Director Hahm stated that plans have been adjusted as a result of 2017 proposed budget funds placed in contingency. More information is to come on any reprioritization that may be required as a financial resolution is sought.
- Commissioner Marckel arrived during the Department Highlight.

4. ACTION ITEMS

A. Res 16-08 Victoria Park Renaming – Alice Messer



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- Alice Messer, Senior Landscape Architect presented a staff report on the item. She noted that the resolution differed from the norm as it comes with community concern.
- The Commissioners invited those in attendance to speak on the resolution. Gary Brueggemann, Tom Reisner, Joe McElwain, Adam Yust, and Tonya Johnson-Nicholie addressed the Commission.
- Commissioner Espinosa stated that he was concerned about the involvement of homeowners versus those who rent in the process.
- Alice Messer stated that the process was neither originated nor led by the Department of Parks and Recreation but by residents and the developer.
- Commissioner Bishop stated she was concerned that the name may reflect the history of the parcel of land but not necessarily all future uses of the park and had concerns about the breadth of community involvement.
- Commissioner Mountain raised concerns about the inclusivity of the process that occurred for all residents.
- Commissioner Marckel questioned if there would be additional time for the community to revisit the naming process and about the inclusion of City of Saint Paul Historical Preservation Committee (HPC) staff.
- Alice Messer indicated that she believed there would be enough time for additional work to occur that would not impinge on future fundraising efforts for the universally accessible playground at the site.
- Commissioner Shively stated that she is looking for additional information on the process as well as how those findings fit within the Naming Policy prior to making a recommendation on the name to City Council.
- Director Hahm stated that the Commission had the option to table the resolution to the February meeting that would allow additional work to be done by the community and/or staff, potential utilization of the master plan committee in that work and/or the HPC as well.
- Commissioner Espinosa motioned to table the matter until the February 2017 meeting. Commissioner Mountain seconded the motion. The vote was 8-0 with one commissioner absent (Haycraft).
-

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. **Finalize Annual Planning Retreat**

- Staff plans to provide focused, concise staff reports on areas of interest expressed by the Commission as opposed to report outs from the past year.
- The January meeting will begin with a social hour. Commissioner Espinosa suggested that the food provided by from a local restaurant in close proximity to the meeting location

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. **2017 Budget**

- Director Hahm reported that the budget was adopted as proposed with the placement of new funding items into contingency while the collection of ROW assessment fees is evaluated. Parks staff will continue to work on how to operationalize what delays in funding for EAB, rec centers and deferred maintenance will mean for work plans in 2017. The available 2017 budget for EAB remains the same as 2016 plus inflation.

B. Como Dockside Evaluation Process

- Director Hahm noted that the evaluation process was part of the Commission's work plan but that with the change in schedule for meetings, the sequence was out of order. The evaluation process will be added to the 2017 work plan allowing the report to be given to the Como Regional Park Committee first.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

A. Como Regional Park Committee – Commissioner Marckel

- Commissioner Marckel reported that the community evaluation process for Dockside at the Como Lakeside Pavilion was on the agenda for the next Como Regional Park Committee meeting with additional information to come.

B. Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission – Chair Trcka

- Chair Trcka reported that the committee had been provided a summary of the Smith Avenue bridge construction project. He noted that he was concerned about the disruption that construction will cause for bicyclists.
- Chair Trcka also reported that the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee is seeking applicants and that US Bicycle Highway 41 is expected to have a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony on May of 2017.

C. Community Engagement Reports

- **No update**

D. Other Reports

- The Scheffer Community Design Advisory Committee will be added to the agenda with updates provided by Commissioner Robinson who is a member.
- Commissioner Bishop noted that the America Walks Summit would be coming to Saint Paul in September of 2017 for those interested.

2. ADJOURNMENT

- A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Shively and seconded by Commissioner Mountain. The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.



RESOLUTION # 16-08

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Approval of a name selection for a new City park.

STAFF COMMENTS; in 2005, a new mixed-use urban village was adopted by City Council for the 65 acres of former Koch and Exxon Mobile properties at West 7th and Otto Street. This urban village was named “Victoria Park”.

In 2011, an overall master plan for the 40 acres of new parkland within the urban village was adopted which identified parkland as “Victoria Park”. During the master planning process for the park, renaming was discussed but never solidified.

Since the conclusion of the park master planning process, Fort Road Federation has held various meetings to select a new name and request a name change to Quarry Farm Park due to the sites historical context.

Frontier farmers James and Mary Williams farmed the land in the 1850’s to 1860’s until Mr. Williams’ death. Four years after Mr. Williams’ death the land became a stockyard with the adjacent land being used to raise cattle. In 1896, the old farms and stockyard property was transformed into a stone quarry by Jacob Lauer where limestone was quarried from the site until 1928. The land was then sold to “Wood River Oil Tank Company”, later taken over by Shell Oil.

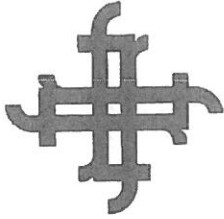
The park name was discussed at Fort Road Federation Annual Meeting in April 2016 and Fort Road Federation November 2016 meeting. Fort Road Federation voted to name the park Quarry Farm Park in recognition of the historical use of the site.

COMMISSION REQUEST: Approval of selected name.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS: A petition was received April 2016 from Chase Real Estate requesting the park name remain as Victoria Park. Chase Real Estate and Stonebridge Communities own and operate over 400 rental units within the urban village. “Victoria Park Apartments and Townhomes” is the name for the rental housing on site. An email was also received from a resident requesting the name remain as Victoria Park as it relates to an adjacent street.

Attached:

“Finding a Fitting Name for a Future Park” by Gary Brueggemann
Petition from Chase Real Estate
Email from Mr. Reasoner



West 7th/Fort Road Federation

974 West 7th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

651-298-5599
FortRoadFederation.org

November 21, 2016

Mike Hahn
St. Paul Department of Parks & Recreation
City Hall Annex
25 West 4th St. Suite 400
St. Paul, MN. 55102

Dear Mr. Hahn,
The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation would like to request time on the St. Paul Parks Commission's December 2016 meeting. At the Federation's November meeting the board passed a resolution for a name change of Victoria Park. Please inform the Federation when this will be on the agenda.

Regards,


Betty Moran

cc: Alice Messer

incl



West 7th/Fort Road Federation

974 West 7th Street

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

651-298-5599

FortRoadFederation.org

November 14, 2016

Resolution

Quarry Farm Park

Whereas, the West 7th/Fort Road Federation has been promoting the development of the former Texaco Tank located at Shepard Road, Otto and West 7th/Fort Road since 1995, and

Whereas, the development was initially named River Bluff, and then was named Victoria Park by Brighton Development Corporation, and

Whereas the Federation began working closely with St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department in 2012 to develop a Master Park plan for the site, and

Whereas, during this period of work it was determined that the name Victoria Park was an inappropriate name for the park, and

Whereas, the Federation held various meetings to select a new name and determined that Quarry Farm Park better described the historic context of the land within the community and city,

Therefore, be it resolved that the St. Paul Parks Commission formally adopt the name of Quarry Farm Park for this site.

From: Thomas Reasoner
To: [Messer, Alice \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Community Reporter
Date: Sunday, November 20, 2016 3:31:40 PM

Hi Alice.

I'm emailing in response to two articles in the November issue of our local newsletter the Community Reporter.

In one article, 'Creating Vibrant Public Spaces', it was heartening to learn that Penalosa's 8-80 Cities initiatives are a key part of City Planning in St. Paul and also that the Willow Reserve, 'restored and revitalized', project is moving forward despite some fears and negativity at the North End community meetings this past year

The other article 'Our Park at the River' was also good news. It's been exciting to watch the regrading and pathway extensions materialize as the park takes shape. However, the apparent necessary renaming and/or name choice puzzles me. Quarry Farm sounds like brand of pickled beets. I know the park area has been many things over the years from, a farm, a ferry landing, a quarry, an oil storage facility and brownfield site. It seems arbitrary and somewhat forced to rename the park just for the sake of not calling it Victoria Park.

The Park may well be 'Our' park, in the locale sense, however, it is a city park and will become a major one at that when it is complete.

Victoria sounds just fine and a street that runs all across our city.

I'm sure her majesty wouldn't mind, if indeed she was consulted or referenced, and if a name change is warranted, it would seem to be more than at a local subcommittee's discretion.

Regardless, the 8-80 Cities, Willow Reserve and Park with No Name are all good things

Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Cheers,

Tom



April 1, 2016

Michael Hahm, Director
Cc: Alice Messer, Senior Landscape Architect
Saint Paul Parks and Recreation
Re: Victoria Park Re-Naming

Mr. Hahm,

Chase Real Estate and Stonebridge Communities are the developers and owners of *Victoria Park Apartments & Townhomes* in the Victoria Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. We operate and manage 215 residential units with an additional 197 units coming later this fall at our new Phase 2 apartment building; currently in construction at the corner of Otto and Shepard Road. This project anchors the Eastern corner of the 40 acre park. We have been collaborating our site planning in conjunction with elements of the new park with the City for the past two years.

Our company bought into the vision of the Victoria Park Master Plan; seeing the area transition from once an oil tank farm to redeveloped property slated for housing. We began development agreements with the City and the purchasing of property in the neighborhood beginning in 2012. Our significant costs in environmental studies and soil remediation of these properties have been part of our investment in seeing housing work here.

We are committed to the neighborhood and its ongoing enhancements. Victoria Park has been the brand and identity since the original redevelopment vision was adopted with the ***Victoria Park Master Plan | 2005***. It is important to us to strengthen this neighborhood's identity by preserving its iconic park's name in being of the same name.

This letter is to petition the Park Board in the naming of this park to remain as 'Victoria Park'.

Our residents and staff are especially excited of the development of the park and many have attended the park design and neighborhood meetings in the past. The attached list of names are of our residents and staff members (Saint Paul Residents) at Victoria Park Apartments who support the park name: "Victoria Park".

We appreciate your consideration in this matter and look forward to enjoying the future park.

Best Regards,

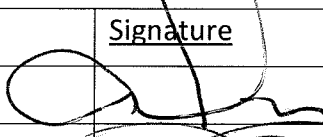
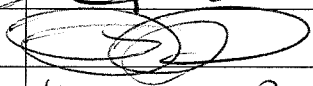
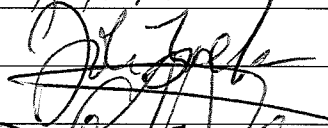
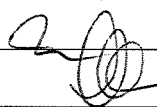
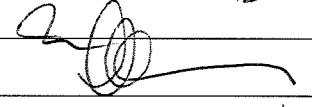


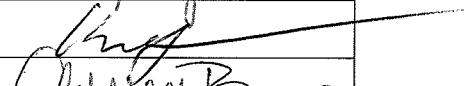
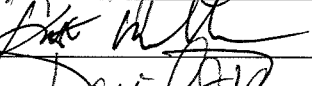
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe McElwain", with a large, stylized initial "J" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Joe McElwain
Development Manager | Architect
Chase Real Estate
2140 County Road 42 West
Burnsville, MN 55337

Petition for the renaming of Victoria Park to remain as 'Victoria Park'

'Victoria Park' is a 40 acre site encompassed by Montreal Way, Adrian St., Victoria St. S and the Mississippi River bluff along Shepard Road. The City began environmental cleanup on the park site beginning in 2011 while Parks and Recreation developed the "Victoria Park Master Plan" from 2012-2015. Refer to: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/design-construction/current-projects/victoria-park>

We, the undersigned Saint Paul residents, organization, agency and business representatives hereby request to the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission, Ford Road Federation and the City Council that the identity of the Victoria Park neighborhood be preserved and **petition for the official naming of the neighborhood park remain as 'Victoria Park'**.

Name	Address (Residence or Business)	Signature
1. Maurice W	740 Victoria St.	
2. Paul	740 Victoria St.	
3. Katelyn Bounds	740 Victoria St. S	Katelyn Bounds
4. Erin Hauser	740 Victoria St S Apt 248	Erin Hauser
5. Kathy Hennes	740 Victoria St Apt 125	Kathy Hennes
6. John Boetz	730 Victoria St apt 308	John Boetz
7. Gabby Boetz	730 Victoria St 328	
8. Phil Lindgren	740 Victoria St	Phil Lindgren
9. Joe Hasley	730 Mercer St.	
10. Anne Lucken	740 Victoria St. S. #117	
11. Mary Wiebush	740 Victoria St. #138	Mary Wiebush
12. Kristina Johnson	740 Victoria St. S 228	
13. Jennifer Campbell	740 Victoria St S 228	
14. Mallory Kirk	740 Victoria St. S #230	MK
15. Mike Krett	2958 Leyland Pl 55125	
16. Ashley Bauman	740 Victoria St. S apt 321	Ashley Bauman
17. Mary Mullins	740 Victoria St. S. Apt 235	Mary Mullins
18. Kathryn Pierce	740 Victoria St. S Apt 115	Kathryn Pierce
19. Kurt Mueller	740 Victoria St. S Apt 314	
20. David Penn	730 Mercer St. apt 334	David Penn
21. Jordan Strater	740 Victoria St. apt 242	Jordan Strater
22. Todd Schmitz	730 Mercer St #324	Todd Schmitz
23. Beefally	740 Victoria St. # 314	Beefally

24.	HARRISON Krupnick	740 Victoria St. Apt. 102	H. Krupnick
25.	Josie Johnson	740 Victoria St. S.	Josie Johnson
26.	DIXIE WHITE	740 Victoria St. S. 4th	Dixie White
27.	AMANDA O'CONNOR	730 MERCER ST. #303	Amanda O'Connor
28.	FAT WILLIAMS	730 MERCER ST #303	Fat Williams
29.	Tracy Chase	740 Victoria St #135	Tracy Chase
30.	Jeff Gibbs	740 Victoria St 301	JEFF GIBBS
31.	[Signature]	730 Mercer St #304	Jordan Buck
32.	L. Susan Gade	730 Mercer St #212	L. Susan Gade
33.	Shawna [Signature]	730 Mercer St A205	Shawna [Signature]
34.	[Signature]	Alincaplis, MA	[Signature]
35.	Katherine Tubbs	740 Victoria St #238	Katherine Tubbs
36.	Amanda Simpson	730 Mercer St #108	Amanda Simpson
37.	Lisa Huest	740 Victoria St S Apt 225	Lisa Huest
38.	Darin Wazidlo	730 Mercer St #128	Darin Wazidlo
39.	Amanda Chase	740 Victoria St. Apt 313	Amanda Chase
40.	Sarah Gattenberg	740 Victoria St S #344	Sarah Gattenberg
41.	Vinnie DeLuzo	730 Mercer St 322	Vinnie DeLuzo
42.	Christian Robie	1730 Granam Ave #452	Christian Robie
43.	Marcus De La Garza	730 Mercer St #219	Marcus De La Garza
44.	Eileen Taylor	740 Victoria St 115B	Eileen Taylor
45.	Cody Lightfuss	730 Mercer #230	Cody Lightfuss
46.	Kalene Mueller	730 Mercer #224	Kalene Mueller
47.	Zoe Benson	730 Mercer #224	Zoe Benson
48.	Mary Jane Ryan	740 Victoria St S. #236	Mary Jane Ryan
49.	Taylor Schillingman	740 Victoria St S. #242	Taylor Schillingman
50.	Pat Fahen	740 " " " B223	Pat Fahen
51.	Ali Roperti	740 " " " B109	Ali Roperti
52.	[Signature]	740 Victoria St. S. B302	[Signature]
53.	[Signature]	740 Victoria St S. #302	[Signature]
54.	[Signature]	740 Victoria St S #342	DAVE [Signature]

54-1 = 53 SIGNATURES

change.org
Victoria Park Apartments

Recipient: St. Paul Parks and Recreation, St. Paul City Council, and Ford Road Federation

Letter: Greetings,

Petition for the renaming of Victoria Park to remain as 'Victoria Park'

Signatures

Name	Location	Date
✓ Heidi Rousseau	, United States	2016-01-07
Gedy Lightfuss	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Alicia Rodríguez	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Pete Butikis	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Andrew Manthei	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Susan Vold	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Alana Alch	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Walt Skidmore	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Tara Brandner	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-15
✓ Brian Greig	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Joseph Pental	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Sarah Lewis	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Kyle Burr	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Sandra Elftmann	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Joseph Vossen	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Peter Sovell	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Becky Fillinger	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-16
✓ Sandy Algra	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-17
✓ Tamara Wagner	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-18
✓ Nina chase	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-18
✓ Heidi Mekalson	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-19
✓ ryan stanley	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-19
Marcus De La Garza	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-20
✓ Megan Kirkland	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-20
✓ Jon LeNoble	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-21
✓ Justine Conary	Saint Paul, MN, United States	2016-01-21

24 SIGNATURES

Finding a Fitting Name for a Future Park

By Gary Brueggemann

Someday in the near future a lovely new nature park will be developed along the river bluff in-between Otto Avenue and Montreal Circle, on the site that for most of the 20th Century was marked by rows of obtrusive oil tanks. Tentatively called "Victoria Park", after the Victoria Park housing complex built during the last decade on the east end of the old oil tank property, around the west end of South Victoria Street, the future park will soon receive a permanent name.

Several neighbors have criticized the name "Victoria" as not being truly identifiable to the West Seventh Street Neighborhood in general, or that special part of the neighborhood in particular. Named for Queen Victoria of England (reign:1837-1901), Victoria Street is clearly a city wide street traversing through several neighborhoods and even extending beyond Saint Paul's northern border into suburbia. Aside from that Street, the name "Victoria" has no direct connection to the part of the city where the park is located.

But what would be a suitable name for the new park? Perhaps a fitting name might be found by reviewing the unique history of the 35 acre site.

The first recorded residents of the site were frontier farmers James D. and Mary Ann Williams, who in 1850 – only a year after Minnesota became a territory and two years after the wilderness surrounding the town site of Saint Paul was surveyed – pioneered the land west of the survey line that became Otto Avenue, on the east end of Section 14. James, or "J.D.", born in Missouri in 1822, and Mary Ann, born in Illinois in 1833, were newlyweds when they started carving out their farm just a half mile up river from Fountain Cave – the celebrated natural landmark where Pierre "Pig's Eye " Parrant, "the founder of Saint Paul", built his first saloon in June, 1838. Inside their new cabin, sometime in 1851,

Mary gave birth to their first child, Stephen – the first baby born between Fountain Cave and the lake that pioneer Thomas Crosby claimed and named in 1858. Four more children followed in comfortable succession: Anna (1853), John (1856), Mary Ellen (1860) and Florilla (1864).

Together the steadily growing family was able to create an impressive 60 acre farm that ultimately included four horses, two cows, two calves, eleven sheep, two pigs, and a 180 bushel potato garden, a hayfield which yielded six tons of hay a year and a good producing wheat field. According to an 1866 inventory, the Williams' owned a \$300 threshing machine, two \$10 cultivators, a \$125 mower, a \$35 raker, two \$100 farm wagons, one \$25 cutter, an "old" \$10 buggy and a plow valued at zero. Beginning in 1857 their income was supplemented by Williams' river ferrying service. "Williams Ferry" ran from his river front property below the bluff marked by present-day Otto Avenue, to what is now the Lilydale boat launch, across the river. The Minnesota Legislature fixed the rates for ferrying at 10 cents for each foot passenger, 15 cents for each mule or horse, 25 cents for a horse or ox team, 25 cents for a single horse carriage, two cents for each pig or sheep, 10 cents per barrel, 50 cents per 1,000 feet of lumber, and three cents per 100 pounds of articles. How much money "Williams' Ferry" made is unknown but by 1857 there were a number of farmers who homesteaded west of his land that may have given him some business.

The Williams' nearest neighbors were Louis and Mary Taible -- a couple of German immigrants from Prussia and their four American- born children: Elizabeth, Martin, Casper and Ferdinand – who settled just west of the Williams' about 1854. By 1860 they had a productive 40 acre dairy farm that at least partly covered the west end of the future park.

Interestingly, Williams and all the pioneers west of Randolph Avenue had settled on the land before they had legal title to it. Legal title would only be obtained when they purchased their land at the federal land auction held at Stillwater, on September 11, 1854. In anticipation of that auction and

concerned that speculators might out bid them for their land, Williams and other settlers held an “open air [meeting] on the grass about where [the old] Omaha shops [were] built” (around present-day Watson and Drake Streets) and organized a Claim Association, in which J.D. Williams was elected Secretary. The end result was that all members of the association were able, thanks to their collective strength and their ability to physically intimidate other bidders, to buy their land at the minimum price of \$1.25 an acre.

The story of Williams’ farm and ferry ends in tragedy. On November 7, 1866, J.D. loaded his wheat harvest into his wagon and rode over to Minneapolis, where he sold it for cash. On his return home, somewhere “on the prairie between Minneapolis and Bloomington”, Williams was accosted by ax wielding highway bandits, who robbed him of both his money and his life. Williams’ butchered body, which the bandits dumped into his wagon, was soon discovered when his team of horses trotted toward home on their own. The murderers were never caught and their identities still remain a mystery.

Four years after Williams’ death, the southwest part of his land became Martin Delaney’s “Union Stockyards” – “the first regular stockyards in the city or state”. Covering five acres of land near where railroad tracks were expected to be laid, the stockyards included a slaughter house capable of slaughtering 20 head of cattle a day and a brick hotel built in 1875. The owner-developer of this enterprise was Martin Delaney, “a large man standing six feet in his stockings”, who was born in Ireland in 1828 and moved from New York to Saint Paul in 1853. After briefly working as a butcher at Fort Snelling, he “built the first exclusive meat market in the city” on Fort Road and Eagle Street and then in 1870 started his stockyards.

No doubt, one of the farmers who sold him cattle was his nearest neighbor, William Von der Weyer (Weir), the new owner of the Taible farm, who rented five acres of his land to Delaney’s son, Edward, and who was recorded selling five cows and five calves in 1879. Despite its size, the Von der

Weyer farm was quite productive. In 1880 its five cows produced 750 pounds of butter, its 50 chickens produced 600 dozen eggs, its one acre of corn produced 70 bushels, its 9 acres of potatoes produced 600 bushels and its 15 apple trees produced one bushel. Born in Prussia in 1825, Von der Weyer was one of the organizers of St. Francis de Sales German Catholic Church in 1884 and served as its first treasurer. His banker son Henry, who lived next to the church, at 416 Daly Street, was one of the founders of the old West End Commercial Club at the site of today's McDonald's.

In 1896 all the old farms and stockyard property between Otto Avenue and today's Montreal Way was transformed into a massive stone quarry by Jacob Lauer. Born in the German section of Alsace Lorraine in 1856, Jacob was the younger brother of Henry and Charles Lauer – founders of the renowned Lauer Brother Construction Company. Jacob and his three sons, Louis, William and George quarried limestone at the site until Jacob died at his home at 252 Erie Street on August 18, 1916. The quarry was continued by George Lauer until 1928 when the extensively excavated land was sold to the "Wood River Oil Tank Company", later taken over by Shell Oil.

Finding a Fitting Name for a Future Park

Part Two

By Gary Brueggemann

Last month I detailed the recorded history of that special 35 acre piece of local river bluff between Otto Avenue and Montreal Way that is now scheduled to become a nature park and playground. The name of that new park has yet to be selected, and it was the intent of my historical review to offer some potential name choices that are reflective of the parkland's actual history.

Here is a quick summary of the park site's interesting history:

Beginning in 1850 and continuing to about 1896, the site was predominantly the domain of family farmers. The first to farm there were American pioneers, James D. and Mary Ann Williams, who also added a ferry boat river crossing service in 1857, which "J.D." ran until his death by homicide in 1866. Two German immigrant families, Louis and Mary Taible and William VonderWeyer, were also known to farm on the site.

In 1870 Irishman Martin Delaney converted five acres of the site; about 400 yards west of the present-day corner of Stewart and Otto Avenues, into Saint Paul's first stockyard, and then five years later built an adjoining hotel there.

In 1896 Jacob Lauer, the youngest brother of the Lauer Brothers Construction Company, transformed the stockyard and surrounding farm land into an immense limestone quarry. The quarry was worked until 1928, when the first of many oil tanks were erected on the extensively excavated grounds.

In short, a few farms, a ferry service, a stockyard, a hotel, a stone quarry and an extensive concentration of oil tanks concisely summarizes the recorded history of the site.

What wasn't recorded was the use, if any, the local Native Americans (the Mdewakanton Dakota) – who used no written language – had for the site. Despite decades of searching, this researcher found no evidence suggesting that the site or any part of the land that is now the West Seventh Street Neighborhood held any special significance to the local Dakota. The *known* sacred sites of the local Dakota were all either downriver or upriver from today's West Seventh Street Neighborhood.

Downriver there were at least six special sites within the present-day city limits of Saint Paul: "Imnainjaska" (White Rock), the name the Dakota gave to the dominant exposed sandstone bluff, on top of which the town of Saint Paul began; "Wakon-teebee"-the "dwelling House of the Spirit" (Carver's Cave), in present-day Dayton's Bluff; the sacred, ancient burial mounds, where modern Mounds Park now preserves the six remaining ones; present-day Phalen Creek and Swede Hollow Park, the beginning of the old trail (dating back to at least 1680) that the Dakota used to walk from the Mississippi to present-day Lake Mille Lacs ("Mde-wakon"- Spirit Lake); present-day Pig's Eye Lake, the first recorded site of "Kapoja"(Kaposia), or Little Crow's village, where from the late 18th Century until 1837 stood the bark lodges of close to 300 Dakota people; (in 1837 the band moved directly across the river near what is now the corner of Butler and Concord Streets, in South Saint Paul, where their new village remained until 1853;)and Battle Creek (which flows into Pig's Eye Lake),which was the site of the historic 1842 "Battle of Kaposia", when an invading band of Ojibwe attacked Little Crow's band and ultimately killed 19 Dakota.

Upriver there were several more Dakota places, some of them shrouded in spiritual significance – like "Mdote" (Mendota), "the meeting of waters", where the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers meet, and "Owamniyomni" (St. Anthony Falls) -- but none of the known ones were located in present-day Saint

Paul. For all we know maybe there were some special Dakota sites in the land that is now the West Seventh Street Neighborhood. But if that was so, it is too bad one of the explorers, fur traders, missionaries, soldiers or frontiersmen, who were in that Upper Mississippi land back in the days of Little Crow's Kapoja village, didn't bother to report it. Interestingly, the one well-known and widely reported local natural landmark, Fountain Cave, located at the site of today's Archer Daniels-Midland grain elevator, in the heart of our neighborhood, was only known to the Dakota a few years before Major Stephen Long discovered it in 1817. That might be evidence that our little stretch of the river was not that frequented by the Dakota.

Given the rich recorded history of the park site, perhaps it is best to concentrate on what we know actually happened on that 35 acre tract; and in that regard we are lucky we have enough records to piece together a 150 year history of the place. What wasn't covered before was whether there are any surviving legacies of the site's early history? The evidence is strong that the still existing old, narrow road that runs down the bluff to the river, just south of the little railroad bridge, was the actual road that J.D. Williams carved out in the 1850s for his ferry service. Though the road was later paved in the 20th Century so trucks could reach the river, the road's width and grade down the hill was most likely the work of pioneer J.D. Williams. Incidentally, in 1857 his ferry was one of only four river crossing services from Fort Snelling to the Lower Landing at Jackson Street. (Saint Paul's first bridge across the river was built at Wabasha Street in 1858.)

A short distance from the top of "Ferry Hill Road", on the west side, in an area now covered by summer brush, are the probable ruins of Martin Delaney's old stockyard hotel. More research is needed to absolutely verify it, but those foundation stones are very close to where an 1886 plat map locates the site of Delaney's stockyard and hotel.

One other surviving legacy, that may be easily overlooked, is a road we still use today and people have used continuously for over 150 years: Stewart Avenue. Although modern Stewart Avenue ends at Otto Avenue, (and then re-emerges again about a mile west), it originally crossed over Otto (the City's western border from 1872-1885) right through the future park site. Part of that old Stewart Avenue followed the route of an even older road: the old frontier oxcart trail from the Fort Snelling Ferry, directly across the river from the fort, to Saint Paul. This was the original "Fort Road" that was later largely re-routed and then fully graded into a more direct five mile route to Saint Paul. In 1883 it was re-named West Seventh Street.

One of the mysteries of the park site are the origins of the man-made caves dug from the side of the ferry road bluff that as far back as the 1940s were called, "Seven Heavens" (the origin of that name is another mystery). More research is needed to uncover the true history of those caves.

Unfortunately, no visible traces of the farms that once dominated the landscape can now be seen on the park site; but we should always remember that the site began not as an urban development, but as rural farmland. In honor of the park's pioneer history, three apt names have been suggested: "Pioneer Park", "Ferry Hill Park" and "Fort Road Park".