



MEETING NOTES

CITY OF SAINT PAUL

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, April 24, 2019

LOCATION: HOPE Community Academy, 720 Payne Ave, Saint Paul MN 55130

ATTENDANCE: Cliff C., Catherine N., Brad G., Frank A., Lois & Carlos R., Trina M., Garth M., Dan S., Don L., Marjorie O., Mary M., Angela D., Karin D., Peter R., Regina R., Gary B., Ying L., Veronica B., Marilyn M., Ramilo R., Nate Z., Paul T., Chee Y., Brett H.

NOTES BY: Chee Yang, April 30, 2019

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

Chee welcomed audience, provided introduction, opened the presentation, and provided project schedule update. Refer to page 2-4 of Presentation.

- Outlined the presentation's agenda
- Went through Community Meeting Roles and Ground Rules
 - Community Member Roles
 - Define the community and neighborhood needs of the park
 - Review plan concepts and provide input on major design elements and themes
 - Bring suggestions from area residents to the attention of the project team
 - Help communicate project progress to community members
 - Provide guidance to the Parks and Recreation design staff on final design recommendations for the project
 - Ensure that the full range of issues are discussed during the design process
 - Ground Rules
 - Respect for different perspectives with an open-mind
 - Willingness to listen and hear different views/ideas
 - Courtesy of one another
 - Understand and balance needs of all park users
 - Contribute in a positive way
 - Attendance at every meeting
- Project Schedule
 - Three site tours from Sept. 2018 to Mar. 2109
 - Today's meeting focuses on developing goals and priorities for Swede Hollow Park
 - Two more meetings anticipated for May and June 2019

Chee recapped the site tours. Refer to pages 5-10 of Presentation.

- Fall Tour – Walked through the park examining the existing condition
- Winter Tour – Led by Karin D., and Peter R. to talk about the history and immigrants of Swede Hollow Park
- Spring Tour – Led by Barry H., and Maggie L. focusing the tour on the Dakota Culture & History
- Map of Kapo’za illustrating the connection of sacred sites from Swede Hollow Park to Wakan Tipi, and the burial mounds in Indian Mounds Regional Park.
- Historical images of Swede Hollow Park when immigrants lived in the ravine.
- The burning of the homes in the mid-1950s.
- Allowing vegetation to voluntarily grow in the park.

Chee presented the master plan process. Refer to pages 11-13 of Presentation.

- What is a master plan?
 - A master plan is a general plan or program for achieving goals and priorities.
- What are goals?
 - Goals are priority projects that define land use and programming.
- Graphics to illustrate the process and where we are in the process.
 - Currently in the design process & feedback.
- What is a strategy?
 - A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve goals and priorities.
- One example of goals and priorities
 - Goal #1) Connection stormwater systems flowing into site through creative design that becomes a site amenity and educational opportunity.
 - Strategy examples include:
 - Investigate best practices for stormwater management
 - Provide interpretation of stormwater systems
 - Explore wetland types and opportunities that result in a healthy urban wetland
 - Explore creation of flowing stream
- Graphics illustrating the process of concepts to the final master plan.

Chee presented context maps, and site opportunities and constraints. Refer to pages 14-17 of Presentation.

- Demographics
 - Railroad Island
 - 34.6% White
 - 28.8% Black/African American
 - 22.8% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 13.3% Hispanic/Latino
 - Dayton’s Bluff
 - 35% White
 - 32% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 15% Black/African American

- 12% Hispanic/Latino
 - 5% Two or more races
- Looking at the demographics, the park serves a diverse neighborhood.
- Site context illustrates the neighborhood Swede Hollow Park serves.
 - Not labeled on plan is Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Minnesota Dept. of Human Services southwest of map.
- Site Opportunities and Constraints
 - Three major constraints in Swede Hollow Park which limits major development
 - Public Works Easement
 - Topography
 - Water
 - Three owners in Swede Hollow Park
 - Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority owns the Bruce Vento Regional Trail highlighted in red line. Trail is maintained by the City.
 - Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) owns part of the northern park highlighted in pink line.
 - Saint Paul owns the rest of the park property.
 - Opportunities include:
 - Activating space in northern part of park. HRA is interested in having an outdoor space for Flat Earth Brewery customers. Creates an opportunity for access into the park.
 - Opportunity for an active and gathering space north of the park. Explore ways to incorporate public art.
 - Another potential access, which requires more investigation, is the old drive down to the park from Greenbrier and Beech Street.
 - Opportunities to expand picnicking includes the area above the bluff along Greenbrier St. Can begin to explore spaces for play, more picnicking, and strategically place signage and wayfinding. There is a disconnection to the rest of the park.
 - Opportunity to improve stairs and park trails conditions.
 - Opportunity to enhance water movement, quality, and find ways to control sedimentation. Explore daylighting options and find creative designs to be by the water. Find passive opportunities to enhance water habitat and create visibility from trail. Certain areas near the creek fall within the Public Works easement which may limit development.
 - Strategically explore key location for signs and wayfinding. Opportunity to tell the natural, historical, and cultural stories of Swede Hollow Park.
 - Management of natural resources by removing invasive species and low quality vegetation. Opportunity to enhance wildlife habitat and plant native species.
 - Bruce Vento Regional Trail has opportunity for safety design but limits any major development through easement. Explore ways to connect the water from trail.
 - Explore connection from the Payne-Bedford Overlook public art to Swede Hollow Park.

Veronica Burt, Lower Phalen Creek Project (LPCP) community engagement consultant, presented the community survey. Refer to page 18-31 of Presentation.

*Note: LPCP will continue to reach out and engage communities of color.

The survey results are based on the 318 surveys collected from October 2018 to end of March 2019. Refer to presentation for data information.

Key lessons learned from community engagement thus far:

- Neighboring Latinx and Black church do not know of Swede Hollow Park. Unsure how they would utilize the park.
- Additional education was needed during engagement with communities of color.
- Latinx family typically are gather in a large group and is loud. May not fit the serene environment of Swede Hollow Park.

Chee summarized the survey results and presented initial goals and priorities based on survey results. Refer to pages 32-40 of Presentation.

***These goals and priorities are not set in stone and can change based on the feedback from the community.**

- List of park users enjoy most about Swede Hollow Park in its existing condition from highest to lowest.
 - Nature
 - Escape of the City
 - History
 - N/A – People do not know of the park
 - Trails, Access
 - Exercise
 - Cultural/Spiritual
 - Events
- Park limitations from highest to lowest.
 - Safety
 - Accessibility
 - Not enough programming
 - No change -fine as is
 - Other – Flooding
 - Not welcoming
- List of desired improvements from highest to lowest.
 - Signage
 - Access to Creek
 - Natural Resource Management
 - Gathering Space
 - Lighting
 - Trail Improvements

- Public Art
- Other – no change, play area
- How do we get to the desired improvements while keeping what park users enjoy today about the park?
- Three (3) overarching goals:
 - **Transform:** Improve park access. Activate the park through sustainable design, partnering with stakeholders, and passive recreation and programming.
 - **Enhance:** Provide enhancement to the unique natural environment, water quality, stormwater management, and wildlife habitat through natural resources management.
 - **Connect:** Interpretation of the natural, historical, and cultural stories of Swede Hollow Park and connection to the neighborhood and nearby parks.
- Connecting the three overarching goals with the master plan goals.
 - Transform
 - Improve equitable park access
 - Increase visibility & security through design
 - Enhance
 - Natural Resource Management
 - Options to Daylight Phalen Creek
 - Connect
 - Historical & Cultural Interpretation and Signage
- Top five priorities from survey
 - Park Interpretation & Signage
 - Natural, historical, & cultural stories - Migratory Bird Flyway, Dakota culture, Immigrants
 - Investigate strategic key location
 - Connection to other destination - Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, Downtown Saint Paul, East Side Heritage, Hamm Park
 - Opportunity for creative public art
 - Access to Water
 - Daylighting Phalen Creek
 - Water quality with additional investigation on water source
 - Creative design by the water and education opportunity
 - Alternate trail type i.e. Boardwalk
 - Natural Resource Management
 - Removal of invasive species i.e. Buckthorns, green ashes, Siberian elm, & low quality vegetation
 - Enhance wildlife habitat i.e. Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, planting native plant species
 - Visibility/Safety
 - Lighting
 - Emergency Beacon
 - Removal of low quality vegetation
 - Activating the park brings more awareness i.e. partnering with Planning and Economic Development (PED) to activate north part of the park

- Park Access
 - Space
 - Provide space to gather & events
 - Spiritual/Cultural healing space
 - Activating spaces with passive recreation & programming
- Other desired improvements
 - Trail Improvements
 - Public Art
 - Play Space
 - Bathroom Facility
- Any additional improvements?

Chee asked for comments regarding the goals & priorities.

- **Overall Discussion:**
 - Daylighting
 - Definition: Daylighting – physically uncovering buried waterways and restoring the waterways. Suggested to daylight fresh spring water onsite versus uncovering buried stormwater system that has low water quality.
 - The Phalen Creek is restricted to the property line of the park. Anything outside of the park, regarding the creek, is not part of the master plan.
 - Many commented that they do not want more stormwater or runoffs into the creek in Swede Hollow Park. The existing Phalen Creek is currently fed through an underground pipe through Swede Hollow Park which feeds into the Mississippi River.
 - In this case, the term “daylighting” is not the correct term to use. Restoring the water or celebration of water would be more fitting.
 - Someone mentioned Mears Park and perhaps can mirror what is happening with the water in Mears Park in Swede Hollow Park.
 - More investigation and water feasibility study are needed for Swede Hollow Park.
 - Is one of the top priorities for the master plan based on the survey results.
 - Water as an amenity and not a detriment to the river.
 - Water quality to the river.
 - Provided a space for spiritual programs for local communities.
 - Have a park theme that connects the whole park.
 - Include natural in interpretation.
 - Use of the term “natural” with historical and cultural.
 - Separate signage from access.
 - Have Payne-Bedford Overlook as an access too.
 - Reach out to Labor Plaza and Lafayette Plaza as a focus group
 - Reach out to Mn DNR, MPCA, Dept. of Human Services
 - Tell the story of the migratory flyway in Swede Hollow Park
 - Connect with Mn DNR about wildlife in Swede Hollow Park
 - Consider homeless population

- Work with SPPD
- Sewage smell on south end of park. Is there a way to prevent this?
 - Coming from Pig's Eye?
- Lighting should not be included for the welfare of wildlife.
- Boardwalk would help to traverse
 - See through/sun shines to plants
 - Precedent: Big Bog Area State Park boardwalk
- Add safety with visibility to priority.
- Possibly add parks system map at destination points such as Eileen Weida Park
- No additional comments on goals and priorities presented.

Chee concluded meeting. Next meeting Wednesday, May 22, 2019 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm.

Next steps – refer to page 42 on Presentation.

- Produce Schematic Designs
- Propose park programs & key locations for signage and interpretation
- Find precedent images based on the vision
- Review with Parks Operation Maintenance, PW, and PED

Special thank you to everyone who attended and to Lower Phalen Creek Project for providing refreshments from Ho Ho Gourmet.

Next Meeting: Next meeting Wednesday, May 22, 2019 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. HOPE Academy – Cafeteria.

Please contact Chee Yang at 651-266-6414 if any items are missing from the meeting notes or items were listed incorrectly.