

Hidden Falls/Crosby Park Master Plan

1/13/19 Meeting Notes by Ellen & Liz (edited by Anne)

9am Nibi Water Ceremony at Hidden Falls Regional Park (Anne and Liz attended)

After the ceremony, a group convened at the Quixotic Coffee Shop in Highland neighborhood.

Participants:

Emily Jarret-Hughes

Sandy Spieler

Nicole Christian

Sharon Day

Reena Petrich

Peg Furshong

Lloyd Hanson

Tara Norcross

Kathryn Sharpe

Tracy Roloff

Paul Eaves

City Staff:

Anne Gardner

Liz Hixson

Ellen Stewart

Resources:

Healing Stories Collaborative

MRPB – Lake Hiawatha (engagement run by MPRB, had meeting recently with lots of discussion on cultural healing. Dakota Language Table is involved)

Notes on discussion:

Park Staff introduced themselves and the project. Spoke briefly of the process and timeline for the project. The project report is underway and will be submitted to the Metropolitan Council in early Spring/Summer. Park Staff wanted to hear from this group and set up the meeting to listen to what the park means to them, how they use the space, and what they prefer to see in the master plan for improvements.

Nibi Water Walk and Ceremony Background.

Indigenous-led extended ceremonies to pray for the water. Every step is taken in prayer and gratitude for water, our life-giving force. Ojibwe Ceremonial Water Teachings. Honor the river and all water and speak to the water spirits so that there will be healthy rivers, lakes and oceans for our ancestors in the generations to come.

IMRP, Cultural Landscape Study – given Sharon Day’s name initially by Mona Smith, Allies, Inc. sub consultant to Quinn Evans (Brenda Williams). Ten x Ten also sub consultant and served on the team for the Fort Snelling, Bdote master planning work.

The first part of that establishing trust. Developing relationships, understanding

Emily - HFCF RP important access to the river – drive down and walk 20feet to get to the river. Near the Confluence. Coming together. What she experiences on water walks. Reconciliation, healing, heal invisibility of the indigenous people

Sandy - Layers of story, grounding history, important “primal” ripe with not doing too much. So much of the special thing of the place is the wildness. The river has been asked, besides being a life giving force and connected to all of the water in the world, to do many things that have been really nasty. Carrying genocidal exiles, poison. If there is some way to be able to see the significance of the work that Sharon has been bringing forward – coming forward in prayer to have a sense of what that means in terms of

healing. How do you do that in a public way? Would like to see the 're-wilding' of the park. She loves to see the eagles, protect their habitat. Part of the team that has worked on Bde Mkska – honor to be part of that. Less is more. Open hearts and vision.

Nicole – recently moved here. Not as familiar with the area and the river. Peacefulness. Always an eagle. Recognize that there is an airport.

Sharon – motorboat – disruptive. Usually doesn't start until March. Peaceful and quiet. Smell of gas. Noise. Move that activity closer to the parking lot? As many as 60 people at events. Going toward the path south - have that a quieter space large enough for groups of that size but away from the boats. Newcomers who have only been here since 1800s – still tension. Dakota and before other people. We are on Dakota Land here in MN. Moved at 16 and worked at MNHS as a student. Caves are not separate from the place. Laying down weapons before going into the cave. Access. Individual fences around each mound. They are imprisoned. Tributaries underneath. Mystery. Lived on Mounds Park – Bates Avenue – but has never felt as at home anywhere but Highland Park. Geography. Negative ionization of the water makes the water so important. Sharon is Ojibwe, she considers it that this is Dakota land. The Ojibwe came in 900 AD that's when their migration to this area began. Really all north, central, south America is indigenous land.

What else would affirm the feeling of belonging in the space. Rectangular shelter – ski bench. Area where larger groups gather. Fire pit would be a good place for full moon gatherings. Hard because of the timing of that. Cannot see the moon until late because of the shelter. Simplify. Leave ground natural. Place for a firepit with a roof structure for rain. Doesn't have to be like the other shelter. Problematic about parks system – Permitting so early. Some benefit to it as well. Put up a sign or something to signify that this is a sacred space.

Hidden falls is a jewel. Not Como Park. Want it to stay a hidden jewel.

Could go to the south end of Hidden Falls, but looking at Highway 5 and powerlines. Gate is closed often. Maybe boat landing should be moved over there. Access to river at Crosby – have to walk a little way. Maybe boat access could be there. Moving south makes sense because there is no reason to go north.

Peg Furshong – **I don't want to figure Commissioner for MRPT?** Siloed that we are a City park. Opportunity with this park – lift up and educate constituents to talk about the awesome responsibility of this as a public trust for all of the region. Number of Visitors Drove 2.5 hours for ceremony. Not just people who live here who value it. Yes, tax dollars involved. No one owns the water. We are here to take care of it for future generations. Introduce meetings to reflect that this is a process that we need to look both forward and back.

Lloyd – Three things that come to mind.

- Attitude that you bring towards this. Water is sacred. So few things are considered sacred. And if it's not, it is for sale. Not sure how to convey that but City staff attitudes are really important. Honoring the water, protecting the water, incredible reverence and respect for life. SO few places we can honor the place.
- Another attitude is gratitude. Expressed by everyone for the water. Living river. Gratitude for each other.

- Relationship. Reasons we can do such horrible things to each other and to Mother earth is because we consider ourselves as separate. How do we allow and encourage the possibility and relationship as we consider this sacred space

Bear Butte – Fools Crow great holy man. Visitors center. Plains Tribes have open access to the park. Have prayer ceremonies there. Instructions when you enter the park. Don't disturb anything you find there.

Tara – How sacred this place is to our people. Garden of Eden. It is a church is to us. Being able to relate to that area – what can ancestors relate to. How do people relate to what the ancestors felt here? Elders speaking softly in their tongue and the boats are extremely disruptive. Keep minimal and relatable to being a place of sacredness and prayer. Shelter would be great. Not a place where people are picnicking or for family gatherings. STAY SACRED for our children. This is a healing place. Animals and trees all part of it. Bathrooms need to be more sanitary.

Kathryn – Ally. Wishes we would turn the care of the land back to the indigenous people. They are central in planning this as possible. Publicly acknowledging that this is Dakota Land. Sacred space. NOT just birthday party space. National Cemeteries have language that this is a place of honor. Sunrise church service locations. Chapels in National Cemeteries. We have so much healing work to do, so much to do to fix ourselves and mother earth.

Tracy – works for the state of MN. To promote equity in policy and program and practice. As white people in positions of power. Not our land. How to partner authentically, rather than going out and getting input and coming back. Regarding sacredness, these are not “resources” and not “ours”. Decisions about this park now. Spirits of how you do anything is how you do everything. How do we make these decisions in a different way. Partner equitably and authentically to move forward.

Paul – Three

- Country ignores history. Any opportunity to give history whether signage or open ceremonies or storytelling. Peacefulness of voices should be central. Australia. Governmental meetings start with acknowledgement of aboriginal people. Practice could start here
- River living being. Not a function. It has a spirit.
- Park as developed as it needs to be. No more hardscape. Maintain as much wildness as possible. Balance between “human need” and the nature. Have a meeting with the land. Find out what it wants. See what comes through. Have public meetings there.

Sharon – there are places where tribes and government have maintained places together. – Grand Portage. Effigee Burial Mounds in Alabama (?) Mounds there. Interpretive center slide show with white ranger talking about the hundreds of mounds there. Disrupted a mound in the construction of the visitor's center. Rangers are always white people. Think forward. Monument at Big Sandy where 400 Ojibwe people died in 1854? Lack of provisions as promised in treaty. Provisions there were rotten.

The best way to tell the story is to tell the story. Have Dakota, Ojibwe people telling the story a few times of the year. Missing narrative. We see the story of Fort Snelling. Where do we see the story of the Ojibwe.

Peg - Met Council, DNR, Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails – have public history program. Offer scholarships. State parks programs – students work in those places as part of their fellowship. Legacy

money...How is that serving the indigenous communities? Pay them to be part of the system to share the stories with the community.

Sharon had asked Paul Wellstone for a way around park rangers being the only people “qualified” to tell stories in the national parks

Community engagement – outside of that training for professionals tasked with community engagement

Lloyd - Western ways v. indigenous ways – starting from the language.

Indigenous ways are verb centric. Everything is a process and learning as we go.

Understand

Not system of static, fixed objects.

Sandy – listen deep.

Paul - Lighting. Take it all out!!! Be really conscious about it. Night sky at least.

Improved surfaces for biking? XC skiing? NO! one place that is left to be as is. There is already a lot of access. Surfacing of trails ok to improve what is there, but no additional pavement

Parks being all things to all people doesn't develop a specific relationship to that land. It just doesn't.

Effigy mounds, Iowa and bear shaped mounds - most of the rangers are white men, they interpret the history but it is not their history.

Some local kids buried a time capsule in a mound. Maybe by the time the capsule is removed, they will realize what they have done.

Madeline Island used to be a place to receive provisions promised in the treaties. One winter no provisions came, or they came to late. By the time provisions were received , over 400 had died from hunger.

Should be telling stories from own experiences, and provide space for real discussion and openness.

State legacy funding should be used to benefit indigenous people - and it so often does not do this.

Resources are things to be exploited. As long as you come from the resource perspective, it is difficult to get past that all things to all people point of view.

Emily - Emily recommends setting up a group within the Met Council, comprised of parks people, to continue this discussion– make it easier to bring stories to everyone in the region. Amanda Lovelee – could she help to streamline the process. Continuity.

Lloyd – Hiawatha – Ramona Stately started out the meeting with story. Sharing.

Must understand process and realize there's no fixed outcome.

Hidden Falls Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Engagement Log -
2018 09 08 Pulling Together

8-Sep-18

WCCO Pulling Together at Hidden Falls

Anne had a table, handed out survey cards

<https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/pullingtogether/event/>

Comments:

Mosquito control needed

Most people who came for the event have never been to park before

Where are the falls?

Hidden Falls Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Engagement Log -
2018 09 10 West 7th Federation

Liz presented short summary to board meeting
West 7th/Fort Road Federation offices

7:00 PM

Are you working with the National Park Service?

Two people in attendance want to give input on Advisory Committee (Liz added to contact list)

Adjacent development pressures including Ford and Davern Road

Mobility map is fascinating (from parks system plan 2012)

Proximity to parks on a map looks easy but it also must take into consideration steep slopes. The bluffs prevent Sibley Manor from having good park access.

Transit access is very challenging in this area

Difficult for residents without cars to access these parks

Journal newspaper Jane was in attendance, will reach out to us and share survey link

Spoke with residents from Cleveland Hi Rise St Paul Public Housing Authority
Asha coordinated the meeting (Parks Ambassador)
Met Betsy Christenson from St Paul PHA

3:00 PM

Attendees:

Girard
John
Isaac
Shelly (with dog Rusty)
Kelley
Tony
Betsy
Beth
?? From PHA

We met at the picnic tables near the river's edge, by the boat launch area

Love visiting Hidden Falls, friend goes here and she is amazed how it feels like you are far from the city. "Why can't I hear cars? The city is right there!"

Most common activity for this group is fishing, sitting, and enjoying being outside
Boat ramp too steep for wheelchairs, wish that it could be more like a separate, easier slope for kayak launch that is also wheelchair accessible
Can put down snow fencing for added traction for wheelchair (temporary measure)
No access from lawn park area with picnic tables to water's edge if you are in a wheelchair – slope is too steep

Paved paths with more seating along them for people to rest – encourages activity for those with limited mobility
Want a shelter near boat launch, or a bathroom would be even better, with a water fountain with the bottle filling option

Pulling Together event was really great, one attendee had gone
Metro Transit should extend bus lines all the way to the river
If Metro Transit extends transit to Ford for new residents there, they should continue the line out to Hidden Falls as well
Would be nice to have tandem bikes or golf carts, some way to get less-abled people to experience more of the park

One attendee was related to Zack and Corey who work in Parks Maintenance
Upgrade the wooden bench shelter/gazebo structures with better seating (there are at least two in HF, one we saw with Emily and Maggie)
Appreciate that Lime Bikes and Kayak Paddle Share are down at HF
Please make sure some picnic tables are accessible, both with a path and with the extended table surface

Poor sight lines at top of bluff – can green paint be added to the intersection to grab vehicle's attention?
Not enough room for easy navigation/steering at top of bluff

Not enough trash or recycling cans. Thought that last year there were more, and the trash and recycling were more often right next to each other
More resting points with seating along trails, this applies to Crosby too.

If building new entry road, have more switchbacks with wide endpoints so that it's accessible and people can rest if walking or biking

Add a dog park here! Or, have a regular farmers market at the park, or get a restaurant like at Minnehaha Falls. Draw more people in.

Make the two entrances from Mississippi River Blvd more distinct, with better signage. They look nearly the same at top of bluff.

Meeting at Highland Rec Center with Parks & Rec Employees

12:30 PM

Highland Rec Center

Attendees:

Crystal Graham, Highland Rec Center manager

Jess Harkom, Edgumbe Rec Center manager

Patti Schwartz, Community Recreation director, Edgumbe, Groveland and Highland

Sharina Rodgers, Community Relations

Andy Rodriguez

Patti wants to do a camp for 20 to 50 kids, to do that she would need a weather shelter, access to water, would love an outdoor classroom like at Como
Without weather shelter, students are brought to Rec Center, bus to park, then bus needs to stand by at park in case of bad weather

Andy - could explore hosting a canoe camp, or expanding explore-a-tots (existing program)

Jess - summer blast at Edgumbe uses the parks

Depend on partners to lead programs

Would be great to have a signed walking tour, then wouldn't need others to come in and run a hiking program (for example)

Want a playground area, especially a nature-based play

Mosquitoes are a problem

Wider paths outside of the prairie area at Crosby

In winter want a safe fire pit and shelter

Want on-site storage

Andy - could the trails be groomed in winter?

Patti - Highland park building next to Circus Juventas has garage doors, "Booya Shelter", and is great for hosting groups

Fire pit, kitchenette in booya shelter too

Jess - Teens want hammock grove, area for slack lining, hanging out with trees closer together

Booya shelter could host things like paint nite

Add geocache to these parks, this typically happens organically from the community

Patti - nature and singing camp at Groveland could move to these parks if a shelter is added

Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm are both unofficial off-leash parks

Fishing happens through Police Activity League, PAL

Jess worked with Minnesota Adventure Company for day camps, contact name John Raty

Rec Center programs tend to fall into three categories

Fee-based programs

Camps

Special events/Drop-ins

Hidden Falls park visit with Skyline
Asha coordinated the meeting (Parks Ambassador)

11:00 AM

Attendees:

Ayob
Mangala
Buie
Carrie
Veronica

Feedback:

Add playground with a fence to keep the kids in
More toilets or port-a-potties
Add a drinking/water fountain; don't turn them off too early or on too late
Make sure there's a clearly marked bike path to Crosby
More bike racks
Fire ring is not shown in correct location on parks & rec map

Grade change makes it easier to walk to Hidden Falls than Minnehaha, there should be a better path
The group walked to the falls and then sat for a few minutes in quiet, Asha has picture of Mangala sitting in meditation

Calming to hear the waterfall

Trees and water help to make me feel better (Veronica)

Met council should add bus stops

Buie has lived in Skyline for 19 or 20 years, and this is his first time at Hidden Falls. Last year was his first time at Como.

Need better transportation options to get people like Buie out to our parks

Remote parks like this need a heated space, and a permanent storage area for programs

Hidden Falls Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Engagement Log -
2018 10 02_Cleveland Hi Rise

Cleveland Hi Rise Resident Council meeting
Liz presented

3:30 PM

18 attendees

John

Girard

Angela from PHA

Make sure the goats come back!

Stairs at Hidden Falls are not even, and need handrails. Please fix them.

Two paths are possible along the falls, one could be paved one could be dirt.

Must consider accessibility and smooth paths for limited mobility

Hidden Falls Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Engagement Log -
2018 10 04_Montreal Hi Rise

Montreal Hi Rise, St. Paul Public Housing Authority
Liz presented to Resident Council
2:00 PM

Attendees:

16 residents

2 from Cleveland were also in attendance

Plowing the trails

Adding XC ski trails, grooming them

Betsy mentioned before the meeting - re-alignment of Lexington Avenue to Elway



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service Midwest Region

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
111 East Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1288

Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting – Government Agencies and Non-Profit Organizations

Minutes

November 8, 2018

1:30 – 3:30 PM

National Park Service Office, 111 Kellogg Blvd, Saint Paul

Goal: Engage with personnel in the government agencies and non-profit organizations that use HFCEP in support of their programs and services. Gain input from participants about the value of the proposed priorities from the Great River Passage Plan and determine if additional priorities should be considered.

People Present:

Holly Larson, NPS
Barett Steenrod, NPS
Liz Hixson, City of Saint Paul
Anne Gardner, City of Saint Paul
Nancy Duncan, NPS
Jim Ford, NPS
Mary Mallinger, Wilderness Inquiry
Todd Rexine, Great River Greening
Whitney Claire, Friends of the Mississippi River
Auste Eigirdas, Mississippi Park Connection

- Welcome & Introductions
- Project timeline and presentation of abridged slideshow from 11/27 community meeting
 - Engagement Overview
 - Community Input Summary
 - Online Survey Results and Pop-Up Meeting
 - Permitting and Park Use Data
 - Natural Resources Inventory – summary
 - Updated Map
- Handout matrix to be filled in of yearly activities and questions to be answered; ten minutes of reflection and written response. Seeking input to refine our priorities for the master plan.
- Discussion from question prompts; answers written down on large presentation paper.
- Additional priorities added to the Great River Passage list of priorities.
- Dot exercise; each focus group member received 6 dot stickers to place next to the priorities that they deem most important.
- Priorities with two dots or more compiled into a short list of highest priorities.
- Ranking exercise; each focus group member ranked the short list of highest priorities from 1 (high priority) to 10 (low priority).
- Priorities ranks calculated and relisted from low to high.

Highest priorities ranked from high to low:

- 1 Environmental Education Center at Watergate location.
- 2 Reduce lawn area north of picnic area at Hidden Falls- be sure to preserve open space for the area commonly used by the Barebones Puppet Show.
- 3 (tied) Reduce pavement- remove some of the looped roadway at Hidden Falls at both entrances.
- 3 (tied) Restore Hidden Falls Creek to incorporate water quality treatment and habitat enhancement.
- 4 Develop rustic group tent camping area (must be developed near Env. Ed Center).
- 5 (tied) Add more land to the park at top of bluff from Ford Site.
- 5 (tied) Move Hidden Falls parking lot at top of bluff to other side of road and realign parkway to create more bluff top park space near the “ear lobe” shape part of the bluff top.
- 6 Add wayfinding signage- especially to the falls.
- 7 Restore wetland areas around lake and near storm outfalls.
- 8 Improve and extend Park trails from Watergate to Lower Crosby Farm and connecting to new parking areas.

Next steps: Focus group participants to be invited to open house and may be called back to review and provide feedback on the draft masterplan.

Open House in February 2019. Visit <https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master> for more information.



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service Midwest Region

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
111 East Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1288

Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting – Park and Trail Users

Minutes

November 1, 2018

4:30 – 6:30 PM

Highland Community Center, Saint Paul

Goal: Engage with members of the community who use HFCF for proximity and access to the Mississippi River. Gain input from participants about the value of the proposed priorities from the Great River Passage Plan and determine if additional priorities should be considered.

People Present:

Holly Larson, NPS
Barett Steenrod, NPS
Liz Hixson, City of Saint Paul
Anne Gardner, City of Saint Paul
Geoff Saign, Resident
Lisa L., Resident and Twin Cities Hiking Meetup Member
Ryan Lieske, Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC)
Shirley Erstad, Friends of the Parks and Trails of Saint Paul and Ramsey County
Janet Cass, Resident
Matt Andrews, Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC)
Shawn Sheely, Resident
Steve Moe, Friends School of Minnesota
Garth Morrisette, Resident
Sue Blum, Resident

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 - Natural Resources Inventory – summary
 - Updated Map
- Handout of questions to be answered; ten minutes of reflection and written response. Seeking input to refine our priorities for the master plan.
- Discussion from question prompts; answers written down on large presentation paper.
- Additional priorities added to the Great River Passage list of priorities.
- Dot exercise; each focus group member received 6 dot stickers to place next to the priorities that they deem most important.
- Priorities with two dots or more compiled into a short list of highest priorities.
- Ranking exercise; each focus group member ranked the short list of highest priorities from 1 (high priority) to 10 (low priority).
- Priorities ranks calculated and relisted from low to high.

Highest priorities ranked from high to low:

- 1 Restore native floodplain meadows to include water quality treatment in appropriate areas.
- 2 Add rustic trails with access to shoreline.
- 3 Develop managed mountain bike trail loops utilizing IMBC best practices.
- 4 (tied) Restore wetland areas around lake and near storm outfalls.
- 4 (tied) Selectively manage understory of invasive vegetation species in passive activity areas.
- 5 Restore meadows to improve passive recreation and picnic areas for large and small group events.
- 6 Improve and extend park trails.
- 7 Restore Hidden Falls Creek to incorporate water quality treatment and habitat enhancement.
- 8 Add looped rustic nature trails that provide a variety of opportunities for nature hikers including the mid-bluff trail.
- 9 Control the dog off-leash problem.
- 10 Implement signage and wayfinding systems in Crosby Farm (and Hidden Falls).

Next steps: Focus group participants to be invited to open house and may be called back to review and provide feedback on the draft masterplan.

Open House in February 2019. Visit <https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master> for more information.



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
Midwest Regional Office
Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program
Minnesota Field Office
111 East Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1288

Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting – Water Access

Minutes

October 17, 2018

4:00 – 6:00 PM

Highland Community Center, Saint Paul

Goal: Engage with members of the community who use HFCF for proximity and access to the Mississippi River. Gain input from participants about the value of the proposed priorities from the Great River Passage Plan and determine if additional priorities should be considered.

- Welcome & Introductions
 - Collete King, Urban Boat Builders
 - Adam Brunner, Concerned Resident
 - Jacque Hamilton, Minnesota Boat Club
 - Mary Hoffman, Minnesota Canoe Association
 - Michael Anderson, For the Rivers
 - Rebecca Hoye, Inland Sea Kayakers
 - Barett Steenrod, NPS
 - Holly Larson, NPS
 - Liz Hixson, City of Saint Paul
 - Anne Gardner, City of Saint Paul
- Project timeline and presentation of abridged slideshow from 11/27 community meeting
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- Priorities with two dots or more compiled into a short list of highest priorities.
- Ranking exercise; each focus group member ranked the short list of highest priorities from 1 (high priority) to 12 (low priority).
- Priorities ranks calculated and relisted from low to high.

Highest priorities ranked from high to low:

- 1 Programming on paddling and water safety
- 2 Environmental Education Center
- 3 Add canoe/kayak launch at C.F.
- 4 Boat Ramp Improvements (tied)
- 4 Ford site acquisition (tied)
- 5 Add boat storage
- 6 Cultural events (tied)
- 6 Environmental education programs (tied)
- 7 Add boat trailer parking signs
- 8 Add interpretive signage (tied)
- 8 Add two canoe/kayak landings to H.F. (tied)
- 9 Manage invasive species

Next steps: Focus group participants to be invited to open house and may be called back to review and provide feedback on the draft masterplan.

Open House in February 2019. Visit <https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master> for more information.



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Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting – Camps and Youth Programs

Minutes

December 11, 2018

10:00 – 11:00 AM

403 City Hall Annex

Goal: Review meetings to date and existing conditions plan. Discuss priorities culled from previous meetings, review for any new/missing items or edits. Talk about park use for day camps and events with youth.

We are particularly interested in the supporting the efforts to bring youth campers/school children and folks with lower mobility into the park who might not otherwise have a chance of visiting the park and the river. We want to encourage these meaningful opportunities for exploring in a natural setting with the recommendations in the master plan report that we are working on. We will also use the meeting time to review and discuss the ranked list of priorities that we have developed in working with our community advisory committee and from community engagement over the last several months.

- **Welcome & Introductions**
 - Hank Carlson, YMCA Mobile Camp and Outreach Coordinator
 - Niall Murton, YMCA Camp and Outreach Director
 - Patti Schwartz, City of St. Paul – Programs for Edgecume, Highland, and Groveland
 - Asha Shoffner, City of St. Paul – Outdoor Recreation
 - Mary Mallinger, Wilderness Inquiry
 - Liz Hixson
 - Anne Gardner
- **Project timeline and presentation review from 11/27 community meeting**
 - Engagement Overview
 - Community Input Summary
 - Online Survey Results and Pop-Up Meeting
 - Permitting and Park Use Data
 - Natural Resources Inventory – summary
 - Updated Map
- **Discussion of camp / youth program park needs**
 - Seeking input to refine our priorities for the master plan, both in terms of timing, and funding/phasing

Patti – walked through the park, need signage to help visitors find the falls. Hidden Falls badly needs maintenance attention. Foot went through wooden bridge. Concerns about safety for kids using the park, with rusty nails. Updates for safety should be a priority (safety for not getting



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hurt, not necessarily security). The park is used by the preschool group on Thursdays, not sure if the park facilities are maintained enough to serve kids well.

Hank – safety is a concern, with rusty fishing hooks on the beach. Hidden Falls needs ongoing maintenance. Also would like to have more parks staff presence at the park, for continuous oversight. Water from HF pavilion is safe to drink but some kids and families do not think it looks safe. YMCA knows it is clean city water but it does not look clean, rusty pipe, etc.

Would be great to have a shelter with walls, perhaps 3 sides, for bad weather. Not familiar with the Booya Shed at Highland.

Mary – pavement at boat launch especially is in bad shape. Jersey barriers block the roads. Should re-do turn around and parking lots to reduce un-necessary pavement. Lack of safe circulation; the bike trail is designed for circulation not safety. Would be great to have a sidewalk and paved path (designed for kids) to walk from boat launch to pavilion. Beach at boat launch has open sight lines which is nice, but not accessibility. Steep for launching boats, and impossible to navigate for ADA.

Niall – boat launch channels everyone to one spot, would be better if the activity was spread out. Separate motorized boats from smaller craft, and from fishing.

Hank – we should design the boat launch to minimize disturbance of river shore/edge. YMCA has to request a port-a-potty for camps and events. Requests go to D'Marie or Karin.

Niall – it would be great if we had a permanent bathroom, pit toilet or composting, and didn't have to request a port-a-potty every year. Can the city put in a permanent bathroom, not sewer connected.

May save money, considering how many events likely request bathrooms per year.

Anne – do you use Crosby or the other Hidden Falls entrance (south gate)?

Some Y camps use Crosby, generally this is in partnership with NPS.

Mary – WI only uses south gate of HF for parking. Sometimes might beach canoes at river shore near Crosby for a break, then continue to Harriet Island. This doesn't happen often though. Boats are always taken out and loaded onto trucks at boat launches.

Hank – we like the power supply set up as is, and also like the shade bench structures (for XC skiing). Would be great to have more shade, like those small roofs provide, in summer.

Mary – if River Learning Center happens, many of these modifications/projects in the park are not necessary.

Hank – YMCA does need storage for summer camp. In 2018, trucked most of supplies up from Burnsville on a daily basis, which is not ideal.

Niall – all the YMCA really needs are basic camp games, space for gaga pit. Would be awesome to get a ropes course. Phalen has storage similar to what is needed here at HF. YMCA operates 4 or 5 day camps in the area, for example at Spring Lake Regional Park. HF gives the opportunity to be really in the city where the Y can serve more people right here.

Possibility to expand to year round programming and camps (day camps or after school)

Hank – many of our camp attendees came from the Cleveland or Midway YMCA.

Asha- The steep roads and sidewalks into the parks area barrier. Also, lack of bus stop near the park entrances. The intersection from Hidden Falls is not easy for stopping people or having a drop off location if you don't want them parking down below, keep bathrooms unlocked for runners and park visitors, have improved signs and/or marketing material (maps that show 2, 4, 6, etc loops for running or hiking- Or how many miles of trails are in HF/CF park), make sure priorities are reflecting the preferences of diverse population, encouragement to go to Sibley Manor for input and to find a way to make safer crossing for people to get to the park.

Next steps: Representatives to send data and population information of user groups

Next meeting will be an Open House in January 2018, to review the draft report. Visit <https://www.stpaul.gov/hidden-falls-crosby-farm-master> for more information.



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service Midwest Region

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
111 East Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1288

Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting #2 – Government and Non-Profits

Minutes

March 22, 2019

1:00 – 3:00 PM

Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Office, Saint Paul

Goal: Engage with members of the community who use HFCF parks for land-based recreation. Gather feedback from the participants about the plan, and ensure content is clear and accurate.

People Attending:

Colleen O’Conner Toberman, Friends of the Mississippi River
Whitney Clark, Friends of the Mississippi River
Mary Hammes, Mississippi Park Connection
Barett Steenrod, NPS
Holly Larson, NPS
Liz Hixson, City of Saint Paul
Anne Gardner, City of Saint Paul

Welcome & Introductions

Meeting minutes of the Focus Group from 11/08/2018.

Overview of the draft master plan.

Discussion on all topics within the draft plan.

Participants were provided with printed copy of the draft master plan to review.

Website address for online comments (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HFCFMP19>) was provided on the agenda given to participants.

Meeting Notes

Trails & Connectivity Recommendations

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) advocated against placing mountain bike trails on the bluff, and instead recommended putting mountain bike trails on the river bottom in the floodplain. Reasons for this:

-Bluffs are fragile

-The floodplain naturally accommodates disturbance

-The floodplain ecological value is fairly low and would not be adversely impacted by trails.

Additionally, FMR believes that mountain bikers should be separated from other trail users and that the bluff trails are better served for people on foot.

Response: A number of mountain bikers have been involved in the engagement for this project, and they are very enthusiastic. Building up the trails to support them as well as handle erosion and traffic without adverse effects is one of their requests. Mountain biking is an expanding recreational activity that Parks

will support. The plan lists mountain biking as something to explore and add-in over time. In the park's current state, the use is not quite high enough to require separated trails.

Can trails be managed for both users at different times of the day?

Response: This is done in Colorado, but it is a difficult to manage. It's not ideal, but can be done.

Could there be two trails on the bluff area?

Response: There is not a lot of space on that steep bluff area, but it is worth exploring. In the future, there will have to be managed trail systems in this park.

Hidden Falls North

Discussion on Ford Site plan and potential land acquisition and expansion:

- FMR encourages parks department to pursue bluff-top land acquisition wherever and whenever possible.
- FMR desires Parks department to show south lobe of Ford Parcel as potential park expansion.
- FMR would like to see the Ford Site zoning plan depicted in the document that represents green space adjacent to Hidden Falls.

Response: St. Paul Parks and Recreation staff is aware of and involved with the Ford site planning process and acknowledges that the site plan is being developed and negotiated between the city and the developer. Park expansion is desirable and will reference the Ford site plan again to see if there are items that have been missed.

A suggestion was made to consider adding a port-a-john at the Hidden Falls boat landing rather than a full bathroom structure. A follow-up question about lifecycle costs of restroom vs a port-a-john was asked.

Response: St Paul parks staff will explore the best option whether it is a bathroom structure or a port a john screen. The location needs to consider the flood fringe, provide an amenity, and be low maintenance. Parks' process is to review the best option given O&M requirements and budget.

Hidden Falls South

Participant requested there to be limited structures in the park to make it feel less structured. Could port-a-johns rather than a building be considered for both aesthetic and cost reasons?

Response: That is a valid question and can be further explored. This is reflected in the cost range listed.

Crosby Farm West

FMR requests describing the River Learning Center (RLC) more prominently in the report, so that the active planning underway is reflected, as well as avoid having to make a master plan amendment for the park.

There are exciting connections with some of the work Mississippi Park Connection is doing. Having a facility would really make everyone's work more powerful and doable. You could make the RLC more prominent as it has its precedent in the Great River Passage Plan.

Response: The report acknowledges the RLC to the extent parks leadership allows. Talking points are in the conflicts and opportunities section. St. Paul Parks and Recreation Dept is extremely excited about this project and what it represents. The minimal detail is also due to the timeline of the master plan development as compared to the RLC studies which are in early phases.

St. Paul Parks and Recreation staff have been directing questions about the RLC to the Great River Passage Initiative group. The report will be updated to include more detail.

FMR reiterated the importance of making the RLC a high priority. Two years ago it was the number one bonding priority at the city of Saint Paul.

A participant asked whether shoreline erosion at the pine plantation is included as a priority.

Response: Restoration would require working with Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), and DNR to get permission to do this. The natural resources inventory, does talk about disturbances and restoration. Priority II can be modified to change 'bluff erosion mitigation' to just 'erosion mitigation' and include a sentence or two about the shoreline or bluff.

Crosby Farm East

FMR asked about the suitability of placing mountain biking to the east of the 35E Bridge.

Response: The master plan proposes trail connections through East Crosby. A pump track could be considered here, but it may be hard to access by cars there is no planned parking and limited options for emergency access.

FMR inquired whether part of the marina function will remain as part of the RLC.

Response: The upstream bay is shown as canoe/kayak launch on map 5. The plan includes adding a non-motorized boat launch in the smaller harbor. The Great River Passage Initiative will explore the future program of the site.

FMR noted that the Marina label should be changed knowing the proposed RLC.

Response: The report will be edited to reflect this.

General Comments

Has there been more talk on eliminating the HF South access?

Response: Not a lot of public feedback was received on the concept. It is feasible to eliminate Hidden Falls South as an access point except for emergency vehicles. Right now the plan proposes reorganizing the parking lot, minimizing pavement, and extending the tree canopy with more plantings and restoration.



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service Midwest Region

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
111 East Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1288

Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting #2 – Park and Trail Users

Minutes

March 21, 2019

4:30 – 6:15 PM

Highland Community Center, Saint Paul

Goal: Engage with members of the community who use HFCF for land-based recreation. Gather feedback from the participants about the plan, and clear up content unclear or inaccurate.

People Attending:

Garth Morrisette, Saint Paul Parks Conservancy
Barett Steenrod, NPS
Holly Larson, NPS
Liz Hixson, City of Saint Paul

Welcome & Introductions

Review the meeting minutes of the Focus Group from 11/01/2018.

Overview of the draft master plan.

Discussion on all topics within the draft plan.

Participants were provided with printed copy of the draft master plan to review.

Website for online comments (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HFCFMP19>) was provided on the agenda given to participants.

Meeting Notes

Project Priorities Lists

I like how the maps are tied back to the narrative with the lettering. I like the readability and being able to start with the list and to go to the map and the text section.

Consider listing all the costs of the high priority projects in the conclusion section.

There are a lot of high priority projects; possibly too many high priority projects to be realistic? It may be necessary to convert some of these medium-high ranked projects to a lower priority, or to change the timeline.

Response: The report should be clear on what is feasible in the next five years. Some of the funding sources come up every two years, so there are two-and-a-half funding cycles to prepare to get high priority projects ready for construction. Some of the medium-high projects could be changed to 7-8 years.

Before the final report is issued, this will be addressed by reading through the projects one more time and adjusting the rankings.

General Comments

This is a big list of project proposals. The presence of the maps and pictures in this plan helps for legibility and is starting to give form to what is possible in this park.

An executive summary would be helpful as a road map. Some things to consider: “How is this going to get done? How are you actually going to implement it? What are the budget constraints? What are the funding constraints?”

Where are the conflicts between uses?

Response: There is a section in the Implementation chapter that touches on conflicts- which may also be viewed as opportunities.

Parks staff has completed community engagement so far, and then at some point the construction plan is developed; would more engagement happen then?

Response: Yes. This plan identifies broader goals, and projects which then sets up for future shovel-ready projects. For any subsequent construction project, there would be community meetings and an advisory committee. Maintenance activities would not necessarily require engagement. Identifying which projects need additional community engagement is something that could be added to the priority list or in the paragraphs that describe the project if the budget allows staff to work on this.

What is the vision for this plan? Are all of these projects going to happen?

Response: Implementation of this master plan is flexible and will depend on available funding. There is a lot of review and oversight from the Metropolitan Council; they will be reviewing in early May. Instead of assessing phasing, the plan has priority recommendations that are organized on assumed timing and the importance of the project. The conclusion will identify the first seed projects for construction.

Parks staff should be trying to get efficiencies... if public works is doing something then maybe a park project gets shifted to align with their project. Better coordination with other departments should be important.

Response: This is addressed in the text on page 33. “The ranking levels are representative of the order for project implementation that was preferred in discussions, however, factors such as funding, sequencing, and logical combination with other City projects may shift the timeline.

The statement on page 30 would be good to put in an executive summary.

Response: This can be addressed by putting more detail into the conclusion and next steps.

Where is there a description on prairie plantings?

Response: There are sections that talk about invasive species and water quality; on page 40, item 1G details an expanding canopy and replacing turf with native species. The trees are one of the few plant types that can tolerate flooding disturbance, so it would be hard to establish other species. Prairie or other appropriate native species will be included as part of restoration and natural resource management efforts.

How were the ‘Guiding Principles’ established?

Response: They were written to express the project goals and address comments from the first community engagement meetings.

In the guiding principles, the text should recognize both new and existing partnerships, not just acquiring new partnerships.

Response: This will be edited in the final version.

Before you convert picnic area to native habitat, you want to make sure there is not a conflict with the demand within the park.

Response: The report includes formal demand data from the reservations that are collected from shelter permits. There is a lot of informal demand data that is difficult to capture.

The demand forecast seems to be only accounting for the Ford Site Redevelopment.

Response: The report text identifies the Ford Site and how that will change the flow around the site, and also the Met Council Park Use Estimate, so our data is broader than just the Ford Site. The report also includes mention of other adjacent developments including the Lexington Parkway realignment.

In the demand forecast section, there is content about demand and also about accessibility. These are separate issues; please ensure equity is reflected in the guiding principles as well.

Response: This report must comply with the Parks Policy Plan. That document lists topics that regional park master plans need to cover. The Parks Policy Plan has requirements about engaging with diverse communities, as well as building the park to allow for access. Equity and accessibility are important to St. Paul Parks and Recreation, and this report will more clearly address this in the final version.



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service Midwest Region

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
111 East Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1288

Hidden Falls / Crosby Farm Regional Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting #2 – Water Access

Minutes

March 20, 2019

5:30 – 7:30 PM

Highland Community Center, Saint Paul

Goal: Engage with members of the community who use HFCF parks for proximity and access to the Mississippi River. Gather feedback from the participants about the draft plan, and clear up content that is unclear or inaccurate.

People Attending:

Adam Brunner, Concerned Resident
Mary Hoffman, Minnesota Canoe Association
Nick Hammer, Concerned Resident
Ryan Lieske, Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists
Barett Steenrod, NPS
Holly Larson, NPS
Anne Gardner, City of Saint Paul

Welcome & Introductions

Review meeting minutes of the Focus Group from 10/17/2018.

Overview of draft master plan.

Discussion of the Implementation Chapter of the draft master plan.

Review of other sections of the draft master plan that participants were interested in.

Participants were provided with printed copy of the draft master plan to review.

Meeting Notes

Project Priorities Lists

Boat Ramp and Trailer Parking- New Restroom Near Boat Launch only describes the parking areas and does not address the restroom. This priority has a Medium-High priority level. Where restrooms are listed within the construction section, they have differing priority levels.

Response: These will be adjusted in the report.

Park Security (1D) is listed as Medium and Medium-High on pg. 35 but only as Medium High on pg. 40.

Response: Park Security concerns are listed twice in management; one aspect of security is technological such as cameras and the other aspect of security is staffing. Each aspect has varying costs and priorities, which is why they're separated. Security priorities will be clarified in the final draft

Park-wide Recommendations

1G- There is no cost associated with tree planting.

1F- I like that the text says that there are different methods for controlling different invasive species.

1E- When our boat club talks about water safety, we are usually talking about liability. The city should stress that the river is a powerful body of water in signage.

Have you been working with the tribes as part of your community engagement?

Response: We have reached out to Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) and are keeping them informed on the emails we send out. Our most significant input in this area was meeting with Sharon Day, of the Nibi Water Walk Ceremony; we continue to reach out to them and discuss the plan with them. We have another project in our department that is working on a cultural resources study at Indian Mounds. We are learning a lot about how we work through these projects and development proposals and are getting better at engaging with tribal groups.

Trails & Connectivity Recommendations

2G- I am very opposed to taking parts of the park and making them exclusive to one kind of use. There are a lot of parks where I can go and get a specific outdoor experience, but this park is different.

Response: Certain users can coexist better than others. Setting expectations by posting park ordinances and guidelines for users can be a reasonable solution.

Hidden Falls North

3C and 3I- Clarify wording of these items and their actual on-the-ground placement to address congestion and safety for motorized and non-motorized users.

3O- The boat launch restroom should be made a high priority because right now it is not ranked. A couple of port-a-johns would be a huge improvement; they are cheaper in price and would better protect the park and river resource and increase convenience for boaters.

Response: This will be adjusted in the final report, some items are not ranked due to being added later and not being discussed by the focus groups or advisory committee.

3B- How many acres of land would be added by this priority?

Response: This priority came out of another focus group and we do not have these numbers. This project would add parking at the top of the bluff in order to remove parking in with the parkland at the bottom of the bluff, enabling a reconfiguration of the parking lot while improving access. This project would be very expensive and require multiyear coordination with other city departments, the Historic Preservation Council, and the Ford redevelopers.

3A- Will this section remain open? It is great shore for anglers. If you could have one piece of property for shore fishing, you would want to have that spot.

Response: It is not open and is private property. The item 2L in the Trails & Connectivity Section addresses the access question on this property.

3D- The whole park is a nature-based play area, why do we need a dedicated area for this priority?

Response: A goal of the regional parks is to create an equitable approach to recreation so that the park is attracting users from all different areas of life. Play areas are familiar to people whereas a forest park is not as comfortable for some people. By providing some elements that people can relate to and understand, it will make the park more welcoming to a culturally diverse user group, so having a 'nature-inspired play' area addresses this.

Hidden Falls South

4D- I love the pavement reduction proposal.

4A- I wonder how a boat launch this close to Hidden Falls North would work. The Minnesota Boat Club has a launch at the marina. People will probably keep going to Hidden Falls North because it is familiar; not sure if people will come to this launch without strong visible signage directing them here.

Response: The City wants to hear where the best location would be for an additional launch.

Are there any plans to alleviate the steep grade of the roads into the park? If you want to get the road cyclists down there, you need to make it more inviting.

Response: There is language in the plan about an accessibility assessment. Grading and accessibility will be studied when the road is re-done.

Crosby Farm West

The North Bay from Watergate is regularly fished by anglers. In high water, the fishing is better, but the trees make it hard to cast.

5C- The canoe/kayak launch is indicated in the upstream bay from Watergate. This is a great spot as that is without current. The boat club and canoe/kayak launch should both be located here.

5F- I frequently run on the boardwalk near Crosby Lake and never see anyone using the pier. It is underwater half of the year. The DNR's surveys of Crosby Lake and Little Crosby have not found much aquatic life. Spending money on that fishing pier to me is not important, unless it is for children to learn to catch bluegill. It is a long hike to get to and there are lots of bugs and weeds and is not as convenient as other piers in the city where you can park your car right at a pier. The boardwalk gets used a lot. It should be changed to what they have at Minnehaha Creek, where the boardwalk is a composite wood product.

Response: From a project perspective, doing boardwalk construction would be one project the report can be modified to add some language that the fishing/viewing pier is a lower priority.

Crosby Farm East

6B- I think this is a great idea to connect Victoria Park to East Crosby Park. I suggest a trail loop within the park. Any trail improvements that may be needed for the tunnel should probably have a budget included here.

Response: Victoria Park is newly acquired parkland that is still being built out. There is a tunnel connection under Shepard Road that would connect East Crosby to Victoria Park.

6A- If the conditions are good, this is a low priced way to get users into the winter park in a whole different way. It is a cool opportunity notwithstanding the liability issues.

Response- The survey had a lot of responses from the ice climbing group. In the past, ice climbing was fully permitted. The landslides in Lilydale Park changed the policy to be 'Not Allowed' because of the liability to the city. This study recommends considering allowing it again

General Comments

Are signage, garbage and bathrooms, in the right places? Drinking water is good to have close to the boat launch.

Good to have universal signage, especially next to the river since you cannot always have staff on-hand. There are many people fishing with their families along the river, looking for catfish or carp. They also will make campfires. I run on the bluff trails behind Crosby Lake all the time and really like them.

Watergate Marina is a great place to launch a boat and I hope the ability to launch at this location is maintained with the development of the River Learning Center. Watergate Marina is very protected and is the easiest place to launch on the river, period. For \$10, you can launch a boat out on the river as late as you want. It is the only place like this and is the best option to get on the river for inexperienced motorboat operators.

Are there going to be campfire rings in this park?

Response: There is one fire ring in the north area of Hidden Falls near the boat launch, and another at the building structure at the Crosby Farm parking lot. The large fire ring created by the WPA can be found close to Hidden Falls, but is not used. New fire rings are not specifically called out in the plans, but one is recommended as part of the indigenous gathering area.

The park needs more garbage cans and dog waste receptacles. People do a good job with collecting dog waste in open areas, but in other areas it is a problem. Some folks let their dogs off leash. The park should be following the same policies as the rest of the city of Saint Paul for leashing dogs.

Response: Trash pickup tends to happen along buildings and structures. There is not recycling in the park and the plan recommends that this begin. Many of your concerns are operations and maintenance issues, which the plan spends time addressing at the end of chapter 4.

How many cross country ski users does the city get in a non-snow making situation? There are significant costs associated with trying to place cross-country ski trails into every park. Is this a park where perhaps we don't have them?

Response: We do not have those numbers on-hand,. The idea here is not to build new trails but to use the existing trails for classic cross-country skiing.

Are you designing to mind the flooding cycles?

Response: Anything we plan to build in this park requires an extensive review process. In addition, the Mississippi Critical Corridor Area is the law that applies to the park and governs structure placement and protection of slopes.

Regarding dam removal language on page 19, it is important to not give a subjective view of the impact of any Army Corps of Engineering work. There is a list of potential positives, but no discussion of any negatives that could arise from this, which gives the impression you support dam removal.

Response: That is a good point. the language in this section will be revised.

Cost for nature based play seems high.

Response: This estimated cost is for a play area in a regional park, must be durable and safe. Play areas require accessible surfacing and meet safety requirements, which is what some of the cost estimate is accounting for.

A lot of inexperienced boaters cannot get their boat back onto the trailer at the boat launch due to the very difficult current. A wing dam would definitely improve safety.

Response: This has not come up with yet. This would involve the Army Corps of Engineers and DNR. In the report, this could be mentioned as something to explore.