



Capitol Region Watershed District

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Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting October 14, 2009 – 7:00 p.m.

CAC Members Present:

David Arbeit, Jim Cotner, Steve Duerre, Paul Kammueler, Michael MacDonald, Ole Olmanson, Shirley A. Reider, Michelle Ulrich, Jerry Wagner

Members absent with notice:

Bill Barton, Judith Monson, Brandon Wiarda

Others Present:

CRWD Manager Mike Thienes
Mark Doneux, CRWD Staff
Dawn Nelson, CRWD Staff
Karen Solas, Friends of the Mississippi River

1. Welcome, Announcements, and Updates

Paul Kammueler opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with a request for announcements. Administrator Doneux announced that guest speaker Karen Solas, Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) would be arriving shortly and providing an update on the Gorge Stewards Program. Mike MacDonald announced that there is a Buckthorn Bust removal in two weeks at Como Park starting at 8:00 am.

2. Public Comment – For items not on the Agenda.

Paul Kammueler noted that the St. Paul Parks Board has a Master Plan for the Trout Brook Regional Trail. Administrator Doneux noted that District staff was not aware of that plan.

3. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Kammueler asked for additions or changes to the Agenda. There were no additions or changes to the Agenda.

CAC 09-10-01 Motion: *To approve the CAC October 14, 2009 agenda as presented.*

Reider/Arbeit
Unanimously approved

4. Approval of the September 9, 2009 CAC Minutes

Mr. Kammueler asked for additions or changes to the September 9, 2009 CAC Minutes. Shirley Reider requested adding the U of M Landscape Arboretum as the Waterosity Exhibit that she had spoke about during the meeting.

CAC 09-10-02 Motion: *To approve the CAC September 9, 2009 CAC Minutes as amended.*

Reider/Duerre
Unanimously approved

5. Items for Review and Comment Requested by Board of Managers

No Items for Review

Project and Program Updates

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) – Gorge Stewards Program (Karen Solas, FMR)

Administrator Doneux introduced Karen Solas from the Friends of Mississippi River who provided the Committee with an activities update. Ms. Solas explained that FMR is a St. Paul non-profit that mobilizes community members and promotes personal actions that improve water quality in the Twin Cities' stretch of

the Mississippi River. The river corridor stewardship engages citizens in a variety of educational, recreational, and volunteer stewardship activities. Ms. Solas said the Gorge Stewards project brings neighbors together to work toward a common goal of protecting and restoring the Mississippi River gorge, a natural oasis of limestone bluffs, natural springs, oak savanna, and hardwood forests carved out by Saint Anthony Falls over 10,000 years. Ms. Solas said the Crosby Park Restoration Project engages local citizen volunteers to be stewards of the river and its watershed. Improves soil stabilization and water quality through prairie restoration and improves wildlife habitat. The prairie restoration area was formerly turf grass. There was major flooding in 2001 that caused extreme erosion and sediment deposition in the river. Ms. Solas explained the benefits of the prairie restoration include deep roots to anchor the soil. It also provides an opportunity for public education: prairies, water quality, the watershed, and more. Ms. Solas said a prairie planting occurred on Saturday, May 31st 2008 and included 51 volunteers who planted, mulched, and watered almost 1,000 native prairie plants, and installed species name signs. There were three separate prairie weeding events in 2008 that included 92 volunteers who weeded and installed mulch paths in the interpretive garden, and worked to continue site preparation efforts on the surrounding land. October 25th there was a prairie seeding and volunteers helped sow native prairie grass and wildflower seeds in the area surrounding the interpretive garden. Educational & interpretive events included a spring birding hike and project introduction where 9 participants saw over 40 species of birds, as well as many different spring wildflowers. There were two prairie weeding events in 2009 where volunteers removed invasive species from the prairie as a component of an overall restoration and management strategy coordinated by City of St. Paul Parks staff. On Saturday, October 17th there will be a prairie grass planting and volunteers will plant native grass plugs to strengthen the prairie and provide additional fuel to ensure a successful burn in the spring.

Ms. Solas said the Gorge Stewards blog is <http://gorgestewards.blogspot.com> for anyone who would like to learn more.

Ms. Solas said restoration needs include the Garlic mustard control at high quality mesic forest. The benefits include retaining native plants and improving wildlife habitat. The volunteers do the removal work in the spring. Restore the oaks at the openings on the bluff slopes will increase slope stabilization, improve wildlife habitat and reduce exotic species invasion. The volunteers gather acorns and monitor new seedlings and add tree protectors. Ms. Solas said the wildflower plantings on woodland bluffs will stabilize bare soils, enhance the plant diversity and improve wildlife habitat. The volunteers will install plants, fencing and mulch. Restoring oak savanna at the old field on the bluff top will reduce runoff to bluffs, restore native plant diversity, improve wildlife habitat and provide public education opportunities. Mr. Arbeit inquired about the funding Capitol Region Watershed District provides for the Gorge Stewards Program. Administrator Doneux said it is \$10,000 - \$15,000. Mr. Arbeit asked if the District will continue to budget for this program or was it a one time grant. Administrator Doneux said the 2009 grant was a one time grant however the Partner Grant Program is funded every year and FMR could apply again next year. The Committee thanked Karen for her presentation and the Friends of Mississippi River for their hard work and the update.

Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Stormwater BMP Update

Administrator Doneux said CRWD staff and consultants have been meeting periodically with Met Council, City of St. Paul, and Ramsey County staff to discuss stormwater BMP design. On October 1, 2009, CRWD staff sent out a memo regarding volume reduction calculations and how the eligible costs for the design will be determined in regard to the cost cap. Administrator Doneux reviewed with the Committee the current proposed cross section of the tree trench plan. Administrator Doneux also reviewed technical considerations for what items would be considered under the cost cap. Those elements included the infiltration trench below the overflow elevation, pervious pavers and structural soil required to receive up to two inches of runoff from the sidewalk area. Administrator Doneux then reviewed the current concepts for additional BMPs along the corridor. Administrator Doneux clarified that going forward CRWD funding would be used

exclusively for the additional BMPs and City funding could be applied towards the tree trench concept and/or additional BMPs. Administrator Doneux noted that the Board concurred with this approach at their last meeting.

Gottfried Pit Lift Station Improvement Project – Update

Administrator Doneux reviewed the proposed Gottfried Pit Lift Station Improvement project with the Committee. Administrator Doneux said CRWD awarded the sale of Watershed District Improvement Bonds in the amount of \$1,555,000 for the Arlington Pascal Stormwater Improvement Project in January of 2007. In 2008, the final payments were made on Phase II of the Project. An evaluation shows that there is a surplus of funds from this project in the amount of \$294,071. At the April 15th and May 6th Board meetings, staff reviewed with the Board a list of potential projects that could be completed with the surplus funds from the 2007A Bond sale. At the May 6th meeting it was the consensus of the Board to move forward with the Gottfried's Pit upgrades as detailed in the District's 2003 Como 7 Subwatershed Analysis. At the August 5, 2009 board meeting, the Managers authorized Bonestroo for the design of the Gottfried's Pit Lift Station Modifications. At the October 7th meeting, the Board approved the remainder of the engineering required to complete the Gottfried's Pit pump upgrade. Administrator Doneux noted that the engineer firm; Bonestroo has completed preliminary engineering and a cost estimate for the project. Administrator Doneux reviewed the plans and cost estimate. Administrator Doneux noted that District staff met with the project partners to discuss the design and costs of the project on September 24th. The consensus of the partners was that with some design changes the project should move forward. Administrator Doneux continued to say that District staff has submitted draft cooperative construction agreements to Falcon Heights, Roseville, St. Paul, and Ramsey County for approval by the City Councils in the next month.

6. Board of Managers and CAC Observer Update

Manager Thienes said that recent Board actions included a permit close out and the surety was returned. The draft 2010 Watershed Management Plan was authorized for distribution. The Board also authorized an amendment to the City of Saint Paul's Special Grant for the Fire Department's green roof.

7. Discussion - New & Old Issues

No items were discussed.

8. November 12, 2009 Agenda Overview

Meeting was rescheduled from November 11th to Thursday November 12th because the District is closed on Veteran's Day.

9. Adjourn – 8:09

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Nelson

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