



Capitol Region Watershed District

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Approved

Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting -Site Tour Wednesday, July 15, 2015 – 5:00 p.m.

CAC Members Present:

Steve Duerre
Gwen Willems
Rick Sanders
Nicole Soderholm
Kathryn Swanson

Members absent:

David Arbeit w/notice
Bill Barton
Pat Byrne
Mike MacDonald w/notice
Ted McCaslin
Michelle Ulrich w/notice
Richard Weil w/notice

Others Present:

Mark Doneux, CRWD
Michelle Sylvander, CRWD
Anna Eleria, CRWD
Bob Fossum, CRWD
Mary Texer, Board Manager
Shirley Reider, Board Manager
Joe Collins, Board Manager
Jenifer Sorensen, MN DNR
Hallie Finucane, Ramsey-
Washington Metro Watershed
District CAC

The July 15th CAC meeting started at 5:00 PM at the CRWD office. The annual tour included a variety of projects focused along the Mississippi River corridor. CRWD staff member Mr. Bob Fossum reviewed a presentation on the former Ford site and the Hidden Falls Stream Restoration. The City of St. Paul recently held a public meeting on the former Ford site. The purpose of the public meeting was to share information, identify choices, clarify expectations and seek input from the public. Mr. Fossum shared excerpts from the public meeting showing how the former Ford site and Hidden Falls Restoration tie together for the City of St. Paul's vision of this area.

The group boarded a mini bus and proceeded to the first stop at Highland Ravine. The tour group was welcomed by three residents of the Deer Park Townhome Association located at Ravine 1. The Highland Ravine area has a total of three main ravine areas. Ms. Eleria reviewed how flooding and sediment problems were identified by property owners in 2007. CRWD staff were able to identify the larger problems contributing to flooding and sediment runoff. A natural groundwater spring and stormwater runoff at the top of the bluff contributed to the formation of the ravines and gullies. The spring is a year-round source of flowing water. Ms. Eleria shared a number of challenging obstacles the project had from planning to construction. The ravine was stabilized with a rock drop structures to slow down flowing runoff. An estimated 75,000 pounds of sediment per year have been reduced by this project.

The next stop on the tour was Crosby and Little Crosby Lake. Mr. Fossum shared that the water quality has steadily declining since 1999. Crosby and Little Crosby are part of a wetland area within the floodplain of the Mississippi River. Mr. Fossum explained how increased monitoring now includes depth measurements of the lakes. Just this year the area flooded approximately 10 feet. Parkland with trails for walkers and bikers

surrounds Crosby Lake. It is managed by the City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department. It is also part of the National Park Service's Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

The group was able to go on a short hike at the Hidden Falls. Mr. Fossum gave a brief history of the area and identified areas that were developed in the early 1900's. A limestone wall and staircase are still in use. The stream has poor habitat and is in need of restoration. In 2011 CRWD awarded the City of St. Paul a grant to develop a feasibility study to restore the area. Mr. Fossum identified areas of concrete lining developed in the early 1970's that would be removed and redeveloped. The City of St. Paul would like to see the water features in this area enhanced for more enjoyment by park visitors.

The last stop of the tour was at the former Ford assembly plant. The group was able to view the entire site from the northeast corner of the property. All of the structures have been torn down. Mr. Fossum was able to show the group areas where soil contamination were being addressed, mainly near the former paint application area. CRWD and the City of Saint Paul are partnering to complete a preliminary stormwater analysis to determine a comprehensive stormwater management approach and feasibility of a central water feature for the site. It is a goal and vision to bring water back to Saint Paul by reestablishing the Hidden Falls Creek on the Ford Site and incorporating sustainable, green infrastructure throughout the site that cleans stormwater and provides community amenities.

The tour adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Sylvander