



Capitol Region Watershed District

595 Aldine Street • Saint Paul, MN 55104
T: 651-644-8888 • F: 651-644-8894 • capitolregionwd.org

August 9, 2023
CAC Meeting
APPROVED

Community Advisory Committee Meeting **Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

CAC Members Present:

Gwen Willems
Mary Lilly
Bob Simonet
Steve Duerre
Mike MacDonald
Richard Weil
Michelle Ulrich
Cheryl Braun
Lauren Wheeler

Others Present:

Forrest Kelley
Anna Eleria
Alexandra Morrison
Nate Zwonitzer

CAC Members Absent:

David Arbeit (excused)
Tom Elko (unexcused)
Andrew Montain (unexcused)

I. Welcome, Announcements, and Updates

Ms. Lilly opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

II. Public Comment for Issues Not on the Agenda

Ms. Lilly asked for any announcements or updates. There were none.

III. Approval of Agenda

CAC Motion #23-013: *To approve the CAC May 10, 2023, Agenda.*

Ulrich/Simonet
Unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A) Approval of the *April 12, 2023, CAC Meeting Minutes*



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CAC Motion #23-014: *Approve the April 12, 2023, CAC Meeting Minutes.*

Willems/Weil

Unanimously approved.

V. District Initiatives for Review, Comment, and Recommendations

A) Thomas Building Update

Mr. Kelley gave an update regarding the new Hidden Falls Green Building, formerly known as the Thomas Building. Typical construction progress has been made in 2022 and Phase I and Phase II of construction are complete (exterior demolition, roof replacement, new vapor barrier, insulation, siding, windows and doors, relocation of utilities, repaving, and landscaping). Most of the contingency budget was used for the project, which was 10% of the Phase I and Phase II estimated costs. Phase III Plans include finishing interior systems and bathrooms. CRWD is partnering with Tree Trust to do some landscaping for the Thomas Building. The budget for the project is as follows:

Thomas Building Construction Project Costs	
Phase III Design	\$63,250
Phase III GMP	\$746,597
Permits	\$15,000
CRWD Contingency (5%)	\$37,330
Phase III Total	\$862,177
Phase I & II Total	\$2,233,934
Project Total	\$3,096,111

For informational purposes only. No motion was requested.

B) Rule Revisions Update

Mr. Kelley gave an update about the draft rules and the responses to those comments. Most of the proposed rules are minor clarifications. The most notable is the proposal to remove the exemption for bridges (exempt for stormwater volume reduction requirements for CRWD rules). Informal comments received from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) indicated that removing this exemption would cause significant hardship on bridge projects. Based on this input, CRWD staff have eliminated the proposed change, and bridge deck portions of projects will remain exempt from CRWD volume reduction requirements.

The purpose of volume reduction requirements was explained. These requirements quantify how much runoff comes from an acre using a value of 1.1 inches of runoff. Sometimes it's hard to meet volume reduction requirements (if the soil isn't good for drainage if the area of disturbance is a narrow area hard to fit any BMP's into, etc.). If this is the case, there is an alternative compliance sequence. If this is the case, CRWD sets a cap on this cost that you can spend to try and fix the problem. An example would be installing a small pond that hits the cost cap but doesn't meet volume reduction requirements.



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If there are really no options, the client can just pay the district. Sometimes this is just because there is a regional system that makes more sense to contribute to this system. Direct payment is not often pursued. Soil redoximorphic features were also explained using an example. If someone takes a soil sample and looks at the colors of the soil, it is possible to estimate how long the soil has been underwater and this indicates if the source area is a wetland.

For review and comment only. No motion was requested.

C) Stewardship Grant Program

Mr. Zwonitzer and Ms. Morrison spoke on the Stewardship Grant Program offered by CRWD. Stewardship grants consist of clean water project grants, native landscaping grants, well-sealing grants, planning grants, and maintenance grants. The 2023 Budget for these programs is 12% of the operation budget, \$230,000.

Alexandra summarized the 2022 stewardship grant program. . In 2022, CRWD awarded 21 Clean Water Project Grants, 22 Native Landscaping Grants, 17 Maintenance Grants, and 5 Well Sealing Grants. The total funding for all grant-awarded projects in 2022 was \$170,617. Notable projects that were completed in 2022 include Lake McCarrons shoreline restorations and Roseville Boulevard curb-cut rain gardens.

The CAC members vocalized their support of the maintenance grants program and how important the upkeep of these BMP's is. 390 projects were inspected in 2022 with the help of MWS and MG volunteers. 86% of the BMP's are being maintained and performing as designed.

The most common issues included blocked inlets, leaves/trash debris, and sediment accumulation in underground pretreatment sites.

Mr. Zwonitzer discussed Well Sealing Grants that CRWD has offered in the past. These are based on the Minnesota law that requires Minnesotans to seal unused wells. St. Paul has been providing water to homeowners since 1882 and connecting homes to the city distribution system. Today the city of St. Paul serves around 450,000 people. Abandoned wells pose a threat to public health since they provide a direct pathway for contaminants to enter groundwater. CRWD has completed 297 grants and estimates 92%-100% of known wells have been sealed based on the data. However, between 1880 and 1970, no data was collected. Ramsey County also offers a program for well sealing. Since there has been limited participation in the well sealing grant program, most of the documented wells have been sealed, and redundancy in public offerings for the program, 2023 will be the last year CRWD offers this program.

VI. CAC Initiatives

A) CAC Tour Update

Ms. Eleria gave an update about the tour schedule. The tour is rain or shine, and folks should wear good shoes. The Minnesota Water Stewards will be joining CAC on the tour.



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For informational purposes only. No motion was requested.

VII. Project and Program Updates

A) Swede Hollow Stream Enhancement Feasibility Study

Mr. Zwonitzer shared the history of Swede Hollow. The site has significant historic and cultural value to multiple communities and has an active stakeholder group. The Dakota people lived in the area before it was colonized. In the 1920s, Phalen Creek was almost entirely buried. The site was eventually renovated into a 25-acre city park and the goal of the study was to evaluate the feasibility of bringing water back to Swede Hollow Creek. Option 1 was to allow gravity drain groundwater inflow and infiltration, but there was no flow, and would leave 355 feet of the creek dry. This was discarded and the cost was not calculated. Option 2 was a recirculating pump to bring water from the lower pond area to the upper pond area. This cost approximately \$310,000 and would require regular operation and maintenance and a power drop. This could be implanted in tandem with stormwater diversion. Option 3 was groundwater sourcing (I&I) from the 108” storm sewer north of the Lower Pond, Hamm’s Brewery well, and a new shallow groundwater well. Regular operation and maintenance would be required, and a power drop. The cost would be over \$1 million. This was discarded.

The Phalen Corridor was also considered in terms of how to get the water from this area from the corridor to the creek via the surface. A feasibility study shows that there is a way to get a narrow feature throughout the area to the creek. This would cost about \$2.5 million. The next steps include continuing to monitor the Phalen Creek Daylighting project progress and waiting until more progress is made with the required systems/projects that this project depends on.

Upstream and downstream connection points were asked about by Bob and Steve. These areas have been previously studied and determined to be out of scope.

VIII. CAC Observer Update

Mike MacDonald attended the April 19th, 2023, Board of Managers meeting. The board approved permits. CRWD also put out a call for prequalifying contractors and firms that do work related to CRWD projects. These applications are reviewed and approved in advance so that contractors and firms can be on a shortlist for future work. The Board approved a contract for boulevard rain gardens in Saint Paul and for a “seep and spring” study.

Bob attended the May 3rd, 2023, meeting. The Board approved two permits, one involving a school building construction. The 2023 revisions of the 2019 rules will be brought to the board in the June 2023 meeting. Bob regrets that he could not go through the annual audit with the CAC.

IX. Discussion

A) New & Old Issues



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Steve mentioned Highland Bridge's construction and that he is concerned with the number of people who will live there. Discussion included clarification of the stormwater runoff rules that the construction contractors have to adhere to as compared to single-family residents.

A) CAC Observer for April 19, 2023, and May 3, 2023, Board of Managers Meetings.

CAC Observer for May 17th, 2023 is Cheryl.

CAC Observer for June 7th, 2023 is Bob.

X. Adjourn

CAC Motion #23-015: *To adjourn the May 10, 2023, CAC Meeting.*

Simonet/Weil

Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58.

Respectfully submitted, Lauren Wheeler