

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Cedar lake and Lake of the Isles Master Plan
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #3

11/30/2020 6:00-8:00pm
Zoom Online Video Call

MPRB Staff and Consultants Present: Emma Pachuta (Project Manager), Adam Arvidson, Madeline Hudek, Alyssa Gilmore; Maura Rockcastle (TENxTEN)

CAC Members Present: Win Rockwell (CAC Chair), Aaron Shaffer, Adam Braun, Alice Lehman, Anna Eleria, Ben Surma, Drew McGovern, Eric Gangl, Jim Romlin, Laura Kinkead, Lilia Theisen, Linda Mack, Michaela West, Nan Dreher, Will Stensrud (Alternate), James Reid (Alternate), Constance Pepin (Alternate)

Public: Throughout the evening approximately 40+ members of the public joined the meeting

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Emma started the meeting by thanking everyone for joining the third Cedar-Isles Master Plan Community Advisory Committee Meeting (CAC #3); and by thanking the community members and neighborhood organizations that helped generate the meeting content and video content. Win Rockwell (CAC Chair) also gave an opening statement to welcome the CAC and ground them in the goal for the meeting, which was to provide an opportunity for people to learn about the project/park area. Hopes to keep incorporating opportunities to learn so that people continue to appreciate the value of parks, the environmental and social history of the park and the benefits that parks bring to users.

Emma thanked Win for his introduction and then asked the MPRB Project Staff, CAC Members and Alternates to introduce themselves. Emma gave a Land Acknowledgement statement, reminding folks that one of the goals of this process is to understand and learn from history in order to create a park that is welcoming for everyone.

Emma went over the agenda for the evening, the CAC Group Agreement, and the Online Forum Guidelines [*Staff Note: All these can be found in the [CAC Meeting #3 Presentation](#)*]. Emma emphasized that there would be an opportunity for everyone to speak, but that the meeting would be centered around the CAC Members being able to ask the community panelists questions. Emma showed a map of the project area and gave an overview of the project timeline, reminding folks that the CAC is almost finished with introductory overview meetings; after upcoming CAC meeting about resiliency and Open House in February, planning on reflecting on the virtual process before potentially continuing on to the design phase.

Community Panel Q&A

Overview

Emma explained how the goal of this meeting was to give the floor to community members to share their expertise on projects that have happened within the previous few decades, initiatives that weren't covered in CAC Meeting #2 due to time constraints [*Meeting materials from CAC #2- Indigenous Legacy – mid-1900s are available [here](#)*].

Emma provided an overview of the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan (1997), which was meant to provide a strategic framework to the Chain of Lakes Regional Park; focus on big, looked at how lakes are linked, focus on water quality. Emma showed the improvements proposed in the plan for both Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles. [*More information about this plan and consequent improvements can be found in [this video](#)*].

Emma also provided an overview of the renovations at Lake of the Isles from the early 2000s. The renovations responded to severe and prolonged flooding of the park land and amenities, was influenced by the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan (1997), had a 19 member CAC, and a Citizens Joint Review Committee was formed by community to make additional recommendations and inform the work of the CAC. [*More information about these renovations can be found in a series of [videos](#)*]. Emma also went through some of the issues that are still prevalent in this area (ex. type and height of some of the shoreline plantings, placement of amenities, etc.)

Cedar Lake Park Association Work—Keith Prussing representing as panelist

- The video overview provided by the Cedar Lake Park Association (CLPA) can be found [here](#)
- Work that's been done by CLPA has spanned over the past three decades, to accomplish a vision for Cedar Lake Park through their 4-part mission. Initiatives done by CLPA informed by the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan (1997).
- Important to think about the past when thinking about the future, many people who have invested time and interest in these parks and their development. Important to remember accomplishments, gave the example of the comfort station at Cedar Lake South Beach which was the first non-gender specific restroom facility in the MPRB park system. [*Staff Note: to MPRB Staff knowledge this is the first stand-alone all gender restroom in the MPRB system—the first all gender restroom in the system that is not connected to or in a building. There are handful of family or unisex restrooms in buildings, but MPRB does not have consistent signage to identify these as all gender*]

East Cedar Beach Improvements—Will Stensrud representing as panelist (Kenwood Neighborhood Organization)

- The video overview about the East Cedar Beach Improvements provided by Will can be found [here](#)
- Hidden Beach because of its secluded nature resulted in some partying, excess noise, illegal activities, etc. so, KNO and the MPRB employed strategies to make the area more family friendly, increasing the amount of programming in the area.
- Hope the CAC continues to think about how to preserve old growth trees, while also considering increased use by people. Hope the CAC considers moving a canoe rack currently at East Cedar Beach to an under-utilized area north of the beach. Think about spacing out uses of the area moving forward with plan/process.

South Cedar Lake Beach (CIDNA)—Claire Ruebeck representing as panelist (Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood Association)

- The video overview about the South Cedar Lake Beach Improvements provided by Claire can be found [here](#)
- CIDNA worked to host community engagement and create a plan in conjunction with the MPRB to address the growing number of beach goers. 2017, the plan was constructed, some items still are not implemented due to funding. Funding was secured by CIDNA and private donors to improve walking and biking, crosswalk, add a comfort station (restrooms, foot wash, drinking fountain), additional plantings and seating, formalized the beach, add bike racks, regrading.
- Hope that what hasn't been implemented yet get incorporated into this current plan.

Emma served as the panelist for questions related to Lake of the Isles Improvements but explained there were community members on the zoom call that helped create the meeting materials that may be called on.

The panel was opened to CAC members, Emma prompted them by asking what they wanted to know about these initiatives in relation to the current master plan process.

Discussion

(CAC Member) Curious if anyone had ideas about utilizing a sliver of Cedar Lake on the northeast end (where Cedar Lake Regional Trail passes through on the north and northeast end)

(CLPA panelist) Explained that there are lots of possibilities for this area, future improvements could be informed by previous plans. This area is part of the land bought in 1991. Advocate for underutilized space.

(CAC Member) Expressed concern about the trail systems and their heavy use/traffic, especially at pinch points around the lakes where a lot of people are concentrated into small spaces of both directions of bike/ped traffic (gave the example of Cedar Lake South Beach). Any thought

that's been given to how bike/ped traffic can be moderated? Thinking about more people commuting again as we shift from working from home.

(CLPA panelist) Encouraged CAC to think about the landscape as a whole, think about how other methods of transportation can move through the landscape in a way that's harmonious and safe.

(CIDNA panelist) Explained that when South Beach improvements were made, the trail alignment was improved, added almost six (6) feet of width to the trail. Additional considerations to be made about crosswalks, complications because of the way the sidewalks opposite the park do or do not line up. Lot of crossing that's happening in tricky places because it's not intuitive where pedestrians should cross. Have been improvements to safety for bikers/peds but agree that it's tricky when it's crowded/busy and there have been accidents.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Question for Emma or Claire: Was there any discussion with returning to parkland the tiny driveway-esque connection from Cedar Lake Avenue to Cedar Lake Parkway?

(CIDNA panelist) Explained the area she believed the CAC Member was referring to (Road called the Depot, to get from Cedar Lake Ave to Cedar Lake Parkway). Most obvious to a pedestrian crossing the street, tricky area for bikers. This area was looked into, but there were funding limitations and there would have to be a larger process with the city because of right of way conflicts.

(CLPA panelist) Explained that the driveway like structure was there because of emergency response requirements (used to get an emergency vehicle through there)

(Public *in chat*) This is near South Beach, for reference.

(CIDNA panelist) Can get an emergency vehicle through on Sunset as well (east bound). Depot comes below the triangle of land if understanding the question correctly.

(CLPA panelist) What side of the LRT corridor are we talking about?

(CIDNA panelist) North, sort of west, but north

(CAC Member) West of Cedar Lake Road

(Public *in chat*) Mostly west

(CLPA panelist) CAC should think about if there are better solutions for that area.

(CAC Member) Question for Emma or other MPRB staff. Regarding the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan (1997), noted that most of the recommendations for Cedar Lake haven't

been implemented, really struck by that statement. Improvements were made at Lake of the Isles but not Cedar, why is that the case? What's in that plan (about Cedar Lake) that should be priorities for the CAC to consider?

(Project Staff) The 1997 plan was never adopted by the Board of Commissioners. It was accepted by them as a report as a way of acknowledging that it exists, but it was not adopted as official policy direction. The work around Lake of the Isles had a subsequent community engagement process because that work was necessary due to extreme flooding. There was not a lot of funding for Cedar Lake improvements at this time because Regional Park plans need to get submitted to the Met. Council to access state and regional dollars. CAC should think about what priorities they want to include from this plan within the context of today's environment.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Is there a reason why the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan (1997) was never adopted by the Board of Commissioners?

(Project Staff) Because the plan overall was quite controversial the Board decided to accept it as an informational report rather than make it the official policy direction of the Board.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Can it be determined whether the work that wasn't done at Cedar Lake was due to budget limitations, or conflict over priorities? Either way, if there is a constraint that needs to be addressed the CAC should know.

(CAC Member) Can confirm that the extreme flooding around Lake of the Isles was such an obvious issue that had to be dealt with. Sounds like as a CAC need to look at the recommendations made for Cedar Lake in the Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan (1997), mostly dealing with erosion and water quality. It would be great if MPRB Staff could help the CAC understand the impact of not making improvements in the late 1990's/early 2000s and how to address that in the future.

(CLPA panelist) Important to also consider work done on Cedar before the 1997 plan. There was a CAC process that started in 1991 that generated a master plan that led to Cedar Lake Trail and improvements over time, then the 1997 concept master plan built off that process.

(CAC Member *in chat*) What about the 1997 Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan was controversial? That feels important to know.

(Project Staff) The addition of soft surface trails and additional connections between and around the lakes (particularly Cedar). There were conflicting opinions about how

the shoreline and lawns of Lake of the Isles should look, and how restorations and stormwater management fit in within that context. Questions about different eras of history, and what the governing aesthetic should be.

(CAC Member) Specifically, the renovations around Lake of the Isles were trying to improve water quality by managing stormwater at the water's edge. Changing the look of the shoreline/aesthetic was reacted to; so, the lawn was kept on the upper part of park land, with plantings and vegetated buffers added at the water's edge. It would be helpful and interesting to get a report on water quality and if the improvements to the area had an impact on water quality.

(CIDNA panelist) Would refer to the tagline of the 1997 Chain of Lakes Comprehensive Plan, something to the effect of "with a mind to future water quality", feel like that's what's most important from the plan that should be lifted out. In the future facing increasing water quality issues, important to hone in on the initiatives that were identified in previous plans to see if they still work or if there are better approaches now.

(CAC Member) Seeing patterns of improvements not being implemented due to budget constraints and conflicting priorities. Important to understand more about what the conflicting priorities were. Were these previous decision making meetings public and documented, does the CAC not have access to previous decisions in that way?

(Project Staff) Haven't been able to find a lot of formal documentation that helps outline decisions made at that level.

(CLPA panelist *in chat*) Largely budget, small conflicts, like off leash dogs and bicycles everywhere, and others

(Project Staff) Although 1997 doesn't seem like that long ago, there was a much different process for how formally meetings at the community level were documented. Discussion minutes theoretically available at the Board level. Re: comment in chat, definitely budget considerations; important to note that master plans tend to be aspirational, don't implement everything at once because can't predict budget available. Plan to create a Master Plan for Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles NOW that will gain community consensus and be adopted as official policy direction. This is the process by which the previous plans can be integrated to the degree the CAC wants to recommend. Important history to look at in the context of the needs today.

(Public *in chat*) Some discussion about no one formally taking notes at the 1997 meetings, that there are some informal notes available from community members.

(CLPA panelist) Can get access to A-track video recordings of CAC's from 1991-1993. That resource is available if it can be made viewable with present technology.

(CAC Member *in chat*) How far did talks of the 26th Ave bridge across Lake of the Isles go during the 1997 plan? Was funding just not there due to the flooding improvements? Interested to hear opinions on that bridge placement.

(CAC Member) Involved in that previous process. Don't remember the bridge being discussed. Don't think that conversation went very far, would guess that's because the bridge would be a structure that would change the natural environment. Weren't sure that it would be a bridge everyone would like the design of.

(Project Staff) Informal takeaway after speaking to an MPRB Staff Member was that this suggestion didn't come from community, came from an outside lens (Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, a renowned designer that came up with some visionary ideas for the area)

(Public *in chat*) Reiterated this was the case, push back from neighborhood because they felt it would impact the wild and natural effect of the area.

(Public) Involved in the process. Some neighbors didn't like the plan, wanted the aesthetics of the area to stay the same. Main goal was to address the water quality issues. Became a very divisive plan for the neighborhood.

(Public *in chat*) A bridge at 26th street doesn't seem like a high priority from a budgetary perspective

(CAC Member *in chat*) Asked the CLPA panelist to speak on the CLPA commitment to a "thriving park preserve"

(CLPA panelist) Gave examples of some of the nature people can experience at Cedar Lake Park (ex. Cedar Lake Trail embedded in prairie, habitat enhancements for wood ducks, pollinators, blue bird houses, cattail marsh).

(CAC Member *in chat*) Has there been discussion on expanding the "obvious" trails to less-used beach areas at Cedar Lake East Beach, so more people disperse and to eliminate congestion and future congestion due to LRT?

(KNO panelist) Thinking about congestion, especially in relation to the LRT, is important for the CAC to think about. Can think of some areas where trails around the beach could

connect better, when thinking about wayfinding to the beach the main gravel path is a peninsula that just juts out, doesn't connect much. If you look at the video KNO put together ([here](#)) you can see some of the work that's been done already to open up the area and provide more space for people (ex. clearing of buckthorn). Explained that continued removal of buckthorn will be necessary to increase and maintain areas where you can view the lake. With LRT coming, thinking about the trees down at the beach, thinking about how to continue to open up that area of parkland space around the beach. Would love to see more parkland leading down to the shoreline be utilized, which will be necessary when the LRT comes in and increases traffic. Want to make sure the trees are protected, and the character of the nature is protected. Intention to make sure that more people don't continue to deteriorate the forest/shoreline.

(CLPA panelist) Important to remember that the DNR school forest is in parkland that surrounds East Cedar Beach. There has been environmental education there, school activities with Kenwood, environmental field trips. Should support this moving forward.

(Project Staff) Gave an overview of some of the discussion that was going on in the chat, explained that some of the questions about water quality will be saved for the next meeting. Gave an overview of the discussion in the chat related to not changing the natural feed of East Cedar Beach.

(KNO panelist) Agree that nature has to be preserved, but also need to recognize that if nothing gets done to address the increased traffic the area will most definitely be degraded. Need to intentionally design with infrastructure that is environmentally friendly and also helps manage increased traffic.

(Project Staff) Did any of the previous planning efforts related to Cedar Lake look at the impact of the LRT station? CIDNA planning once the station location was identified?

(CIDNA panelist) Held off on planning around South Beach until the route was selected. Even when the route was selected, still held off on planning because there was additional conversation about a tunnel connection. Foot traffic from 21st Street has less of an impact on South Beach than it does on East Beach. Emphasized the efforts that have been done by volunteers to improve the sightlines and viewshed around Cedar Lake (i.e. through buckthorn removal) hope that can continue with resource support from MPRB.

(CLPA panelist) Have known since 1980s that there would likely be a transit corridor through this area. When they're finished with the LRT project construction there will be 42+ acres of remnant land that will be left over that will have to go somewhere. Hope that there will be consideration for this land, there's an [MOU](#) between the City of

Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Council that these 42 acres becomes park land. The panelist pointed to a map behind him to show the area he was referencing,

(Project Staff *in chat*) Provided a link to the map the panelist was utilizing:

https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/community_initiatives_at_cedar_lake_experience_cedar_lake_park.pdf

(Public *in chat*) Can't tell if this map includes the remnant land. It's a critical issue. It was a key part of the SWLRT negotiations between the Met Council and City of Minneapolis.

(CAC Member *in chat*) At a future meeting can the CAC learn what the plans are for the 21st Street station? It seems that the CAC must know the needs around this station, what will be covered and not covered by the LRT work?

(Summary of the comments in the chat re: SWLRT, occurring while the panelists and CAC were discussing)

- Neighborhood association requested that the SWLRT planning group (Met Council) consider the impact on East Cedar Beach but they declined
- Safety is an issue for East Cedar Beach, it has been, and will increase with LRT (this was mentioned several times in the chat)
- Love that the lake will be more accessible because of the LRT, but also feel that nice walking paths are necessary to make the lake feel safer
- Does the park board still need to buy the remnant land from the Met Council?
 - o (Response from the CLPA panelist) The remnant land will be millions of dollars, who pays remains to be seen
 - o (Response from public) The Met Council owns the remnant land. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Minneapolis and the Met Council saying that the land should go to the MRPB — or remain in the public domain.
- So far, the Met Council hasn't been very engaged on the impact of the \$2 billion initiative

(CAC Member) Pivoting the discussion back to the panelists, asked if there are still improvements on the table from previous plans for Lake of the Isles.

(Public) Some things warrant priority: There is some shoreline vegetation that exceed the height guidelines for shoreline plantings; should address height obstructions around the shoreline (cut down vegetation, plant vegetation in the future that will only grow 2-3 feet). South parklands and shoreline of Lake of the Isles; called for native plantings and flowers, never did what was intended (potentially because of flooding the plants couldn't grow as planned), this is a major area around the lake that could be revisited,

could look for better solutions). Also would like to see formalized maintenance protocols for Lake of the Isles shoreline management and forestry.

(Public *in chat*) Echoed that formalized maintenance plans would be beneficial for Cedar Lake as well (ex. maintenance plan for burning and removal of invasive species from Cedar Lake park prairie, as well as maintaining regional trail).

(Public *in chat*) As for wheelchair accessibility, how would a cedar lake path be maintained, particularly in winter? I'd rather see existing accessibility paths and amenities be maintained better, before adding another.

CAC DISCUSSION

Project Staff started off the conversation by responding to a CAC question in the chat: "are there plans, if any, to maintain and improve the existing rustic trails on the north end of Cedar and the east side going north and south from the east side beach?" [*Staff note: the chat function was highly used by participants during this meeting, chat comments are summarized and integrated into the conversation as best as possible*]

(Project Staff) There are no plans currently in place. This CAC process is meant to help develop the plans for these lake areas for the next 20-30 years.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Must delineate between bike paths and walking paths in the rustic part of Cedar Lake.

(CLPA panelist *in chat*) Bikes and off-leash dogs are two high priority issues that should be looked at

(Project Staff) Asked for clarification of discussion in the chat, asked if folks were talking about mountain biking on the "rustic trails". Not any formal biking/mountain biking trails in this area, need to emphasize that?

(CAC Member *in chat*) Not official trails but they are still used by mountain bikes

(CAC Member *in chat*) It seems important for the next 20 years for people to be able to loop Cedar Lake on pedestrian trails, and possibly, bike trails.

(Public *in chat*) Agree there should be pedestrian access to this entire area. Parkland is for the entire public, not just residents near the lakes. A safe, comfortable path would be accessible to seniors and mobility challenged individuals. Limited, token access is not suitable or equitable.

(CLPA panelist *in chat*) Responding to the member of the public, expressed that he believed that view is in the minority. This CAC will consider the notion of trails deeply from a variety of perspectives to make the best decisions.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Expressed agreement with public's opinion on access.

(Public *in chat*) Agreed with accessibility comments. Expressed that without consistent maintenance paths can still cause issues for accessibility.

(Public *in chat*) Please include at minimum, adding wood chips to the “rustic” paths. Without the wood chips erosion and bike destruction has greatly increased, as well as walking hazards due to exposed roots, cement, rocks, etc.

(Public *in chat*) When suggesting trails and paths, think about what’s best for the lake, not most convenient for recreation. Expressed they are more interested in what is best for the lake (think a natural shoreline is most beneficial)

(CAC Member) Feel a bit like a cat with a laser pointer, there are a lot of moving parts, components, histories, and values tied up in this area. Feel strongly that the CAC moving forward needs to develop some sort of integrated approach to help them all address all the different kinds of spaces/needs/uses at these parks.

(CLPA panelist *in chat*) There is paved access over there, coming down from Kenwood Parkway

(CAC Member *in chat*) yes, definitely paved (asphalt) along noise barrier and then again at 21st St. Nothing in between.

(CLPA panelist *in chat*) No access, but if you look close there are 2-3 leftover staircases from the days the railroad workers went up and down the Kenwood bluff

(CAC Member *in chat*) That area near the future Bryn Mawr station is the so-called “remnant land” this process could and should address this

(CAC Member *in chat*) Agree. It seems important nothing is left out if we are helping “define” future directions for these parks. Several of these areas “don’t show up” on our primary maps, or those in the packet that have looked at past efforts.

(Public *in chat*) The land is owned by the Metropolitan Council now, and the City of Minneapolis asked that it be turned over to the MPRB after the SWLRT construction is done.

(Public *in chat*) memorandum regarding Met Council and City of a Minneapolis.

<https://metro council.org/METC/files/f7/f7d41cfb-a062-46c7-942d-0785989da8a0.pdf>

(CAC Member *in chat*) It looks like the Met Council has granted an easement to the MPRB for both pedestrian/bike trails through the remnant ... would those connect to the SWLRT Bryn Mawr station? Is there a map that shows all of that together, including the staircases that allow access?

(Public *in chat*) Not seeing that the Met. Council granted an easement.

(Public *in chat*) this area, now woods and prairie restoration, is intended to be protected as public park space based on a 2014 Memorandum of Understanding between Met Council and the City of Minneapolis which states “The council intends that any property located in the Kenilworth Corridor that it may acquire from the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority that it will not actively use for either the (SWLRT) Project or freight rail shall be conveyed to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board for use as parkland upon terms and conditions that are agreeable to both the Council and the Park Board.”

(CAC Member) might be useful to have a map that calls out additional areas the CAC has continued to learn about (ex. future remnant land), and other areas that the CAC should focus on developing solutions for (water quality, connectivity, etc.) CAC is just starting to get its feet wet in getting to know the area at this point.

(CAC Chair) Have heard in the previous two meetings that water quality is a priority for a lot of community members as well as CAC members. Have the opportunity to approach this work within the framework of improving water quality. Look comprehensively at water quality and what tools are available to improve and how they can be applied, where there are challenges, tensions, etc.

(CAC Member) Agree this toolbox is important. Need additional understanding of what solutions are available to address water quality at these lakes. Under what is impacting and driving water quality issues in these lakes. Water quality data can inform the best tools to utilize to protect and improve water quality. Also need to look beyond park land to understand water quality impacts (what's happening upstream in the rest of the watershed). This will require additional work with partners.

(CAC Chair) Asked if CAC Member A. Eleria would help develop/inform the creation of these materials/presentation

(Project Staff) Agreed. Going to connect with CAC Member as well as do additional thinking about who else (internally and externally) to bring to the table.

(Public *in chat*) Have seen reports that Cedar Lake has better water quality for some factors when compared to the rest of the Chain of Lakes.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Expressed agreement that a water quality meeting/presentation would be helpful

(Public *in chat*) Agreed that water quality should be a focal point of this CAC process and master plan

(Public *in chat*) Thanked CAC for mentioning water quality. While significant improvements need to be made and some are outside of what MPRB and CAC can directly address, the root cause analysis of the watershed can clarify what the CAC can do. Everything that can be directly done should be considered and highlighted.

(CIDNA panelist *in chat*) Understanding the water impact from the future SWLRT tunnel is also relevant. A chart showing all relevant agencies with jurisdiction on the water quality would be helpful. MPRB has specific water quality reports posted, 2019 annual report not yet been released but monthly testing results are posted.

(Public *in chat*) The forested areas around Cedar are essential for water quality. They're also essential for the character of the area. Paving will ruin it.

(CAC Member) Thought it was interesting to see different thoughts arising, different groups of people focusing on different issues. One of the things he's thinking about are congestion points/pinch point zones (Ex. South beach where all the paths come together; southern portion of Isles). Excited to get creative with solutions that will give people enough space to be safe.

(CAC Alternate) Appreciate CAC Chair's comments on water quality. Would like to see water quality as a frame to be more effective with work the CAC does. Encourage the CAC to think more broadly about ecological function, reminding folks that water quality is just ONE indicator of environmental health. Would like to see additional partners brought in to help inform on topics beyond water quality. Encouraged CAC to think about wildlife/habitat, the animals that humans are dependent on for a healthy and thriving environment.

(Public *in chat*) Yes, get Friends of the Mississippi to advise. Expressed belief that ecology and wildlife will not benefit with paving

(Public *in chat*) Expressed opinion that the lake does not need more people walking more closely to it; the lake needs habitat/wildlife.

(Public *in chat*) Agreement—expressed that bird watching is an important activity in Cedar Lake Park.

(CIDNA panelist *in chat*) Agree birding is important: Privileged enough to see Bald Eagles, Baltimore Orioles, Forrestes's Terns, mergansers

(Public *in chat*) Good point, know that the environment is a holistic system.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Project Staff asked the public to either write their names in the chat to speak verbally or write their comment in the chat (to be read aloud by project staff). Reminded folks that this was not meant to be a time where project staff were answering questions or responding to comments; meant for public to be able to raise opinions to CAC.

(Public) Glad that water quality and ecological thinking have come up during this meeting, and this early in the CAC process. Encouraged the CAC to consider bringing in the Minneapolis Tree Advisory Committee (MTAC). The City is currently failing its tree canopy coverage goal (because of storm impacts and disease impacts), there are areas around the lakes that are ripe for helping to launch and meet that tree canopy goal.

(Public *in chat*) Question on how the MTAC can participate in this process

(Public *in chat*) Project Staff read out this question: has there been any historical work to introduce a café or pop up on the west side of Cedar Lake (what is today Point Beach parking lot) or South Beach? Envisioning a place that can serve soups, sandwiches, salads, coffee and other beverages.

(Public *in chat*) This question wasn't answered

(Project Staff) Apologized, explained again that during the public comment period questions typically aren't answered. Don't believe that there have been previous conversations around pop ups.

(Public *in chat*) Apologized, missed that explanation

(CIDNA panelist) Evaluated this kind of amenity for South Beach, decided not to pursue it at the time

(Project Staff) will be talking about programming and ideas around programming needs more at upcoming meetings.

(Public) Would love for the CAC to continue thinking on how to address the old growth trees and overgrowth of other vegetation around East Cedar Beach. Also, happy that the plan will be looked at through the lens of ecology and water quality.

(Public) Maintenance plans are important for both lakes. Have never really seen maintenance plans (ex. prescribed burns for prairie at Cedar Lake). Wonder if maintenance plans are a part of this CAC and what can be done to support maintenance. Also expressed that Cedar Lake Park is unique, that there is access all the way around the lake, just not paved access. Believes that water quality at Cedar Lake is better than others. Believes that Cedar Lake is unique from the rest of the Chain of Lakes and that it's okay that it would remain unique.

(Public) Resident of East Isles, active volunteer. On the south side of Cedar Beach there are paths lined with buckthorn branches. Believe this is an effective way to both delineate paths and create habitat. Keeps people on the paths and out of the rest of the wooded areas, prevents erosion. Would like to see wooded areas restored with more biodiversity. Critical to work to restore that. Question about the Mound.

(Public *in chat*) Lining paths with woven buckthorn seems like a great compromise - delineates path without paving!

(Public *in chat*) How long would woven buckthorn last? Expressed appreciation for the work so far.

(Public *in chat*) The Burnham Woodlands Restoration project has been led by Mary and the late Ruth Jones for 20 years. The kids call the woven work "Buckthorn Village"

(Public *in chat*) Believe he has heard "the Mound Area" is a glacially created Mound.

(Public *in chat*) Yes, the mound appears to be created by a hole in the glacier.

(Public *in chat*) the mound was restored in 2018 https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/community_initiatives_at_cedar_lake_experience_cedar_lake_park.pdf

(Public *in chat*) CLPA has created some plans for the Mound. Funding is needed.

(Public) Challenge the CAC to think about these areas from the perspectives of seniors and mobility challenged people so that more people have the chance to walk along the shoreline. Don't want a paved path to ruin the natural character, think it could be designed to be inclusive

and environmentally friendly. Thanked community members for the work that's been done, thanked South Beach efforts which improved accessibility and safety for pedestrians. Hope that public access will be provided all around/along the lake. Brought up Theodore Wirth's vision for increased connectivity.

(Public) Cedar Lake is intentionally unique, feels more natural. Other lakes have paved paths and more recreation options. With every decision, CAC should keep in mind what's best for the lake and not necessarily best for human recreation.

(Public *in chat*) Part of the reason it's difficult to get around Cedar right now is because the existing path has been so poorly maintained.

(Public *in chat*) MPRB doesn't keep Bde Maka Ska or Lake of the Isles paths clear for mobility or sight challenged individuals, can't imagine a path around Cedar will be maintained.

(Public *in chat*) There are many lakes with paved paths all over the city, this one needs to stay the way it is. The main path to East Cedar is easily walkable.

(Public *in chat*) No room for a path on SE Cedar, only have 8-12 feet for Peds/bikes possible.

(Public *in chat*) Agree with comments to keep it natural (unpaved) but also believe there are intentional ways to keep more of this area accessible AND natural.

(Public *in chat*) Agree, all other city lakes have paved paths, Cedar is special. Improving water quality and environmental management are paramount.

(Public *in chat*) Regarding the people who live on the lake front, please enforce a natural shoreline, no lawn chemicals. It's not good for water quality to allow a walking path in front of their houses close to the lake.

(CAC *in chat*) Comment about being able to loop Cedar on foot and by bike was not intended to need pavement. Wanted to point out there is an existing path but that it needs to be maintained, to his knowledge nothing has been done to it for 30+ years. Maybe include something as simple as signage so novices can figure out how to loop the lake, including sections on Burnham Road and North Cedar Trail.

(Public *in chat*) Senior, gets around the lake fine, likes the winding trails, which is so unlike other lakes. For folks with different mobility needs, CLPA has suggested "hardened" points of access, such as East Cedar Lake Beach and off the bike trail to the north to the Mound area, this is in line with ADA provisions.

(Public) Question about the Natural Areas Plan and how it's been integrated with this master plan. Have areas of Cedar Lake been assigned an ecological rank yet to identify what areas are appropriate for restoration and which aren't?

(Project Staff) Will check in on this; the Natural Areas Plan is being managed by MPRB's Environmental Management Department (Planning Department isn't directly involved).

(Public) Important that the Natural Areas Plan is integrated.

(Project Staff) Agree, just don't know the answer to the question at this time (what the rank is for Cedar Lake/parkland) but will work to figure it out.

(CLPA Panelist) Asked for clarification on the plan that's been asked about, different than the Ecological System Plan?

(Project Staff) MPRB recently adopted the Ecological System Plan which is meant to be an overarching guiding document on a variety of topics from energy consumption to habitat corridors. The Natural Areas Plan is a more detailed parcel by parcel look at the whole system, it is a technical document that identifies and grades spaces so that detailed management plans can be developed for landscape types.

(CLPA Panelist) Seems both plans are very pertinent to the CAC.

(Project Staff *in chat*) Added link to the [Ecological Systems Plan](#); added link to information on the [Natural Areas Management Plan](#)

(Public) Asked for clarification about whether or not these two plans will be integrated into the current Master Plan; they seem to intersect.

(Project Staff) Understanding is that all plans that overlap should of course be integrated to a degree. Getting perspectives from MPRB staff who've worked on these plans through the Project Advisory Committee (PAC). Making sure that the overlapping plans will speak to one another.

(Public *in chat*) What is the timeline for the Natural Areas Plan? When does the community engagement process start?

(Project Staff) All these plans operate at different scales. This (Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles) master Plan will respond to and be driven by the ecological system plan which is a policy document meant to provide guidance for the system as a whole. There will be no formal community engagement process for the Natural Areas Plan. That plan is a more detailed, technical plan that will set the management regimes for new and existing natural areas.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Seems like there should be a presentation on the Ecological Systems Plan for the CAC.

Additional comments captured in the chat box throughout the meeting:

(CAC Alternate *in chat*) These lakes are part of the Chain of Lakes Important Bird Area (IBA), used by hundreds of species and hundreds of thousands of migrating birds every year. The IBA designation means that this area has international significance for birds.

(CLPA panelist *in chat*) the Audobon Society was one of the first donors, of their sanctuary fund, to Save Cedar Lake Park. Audobon Society does Christmas bird counts, with dozens of species noticed. Larger view, over 400 bird species have been site in CLP over the year.

(CAC Alternate *in chat*) Provided information about the Christmas Bird Counts (starts December 14; <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>)

(Public *in chat*) Can anyone talk about the knob overlook on northeast of Cedar Lake? This is a very special space! Need to restore the stairs and add plantings to the slopes.

(Public *in chat*) How does the removal of wooden barrier along Kennilworth Channel and 'natural edge' effect future water quality with the water level rising and falling up to 3 feet.

(Public *in chat*) The Cedar Lake Forest is so previous, an area that feels wild in the city, rare; don't want to see paving or loss of forest.

(CAC Member *in chat*) Expressed desire to see talk about Lake of the Isles more in future meetings, talked a lot about Cedar. Wonder if anyone knows what happened to the information kiosks that are missing/never got placed around Lake of the Isles.

THANKS, AND NEXT STEPS

Emma responded to a CAC question in the chat box about the status of the walking tours. Emma explained that those tours had not been finalized at the time of CAC #3 but that they would be shared out hopefully by the next CAC meeting (#4; planned for late January), apologized for not having those ready before the winter. Emma thanked everyone for joining the meeting and participating.