



Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles Master Plan
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Water Quality Subcommittee Meeting #1

3/8/2022 7:00-8:00pm
Zoom Online Video Call

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

CAC Subcommittee Members Present: Anna Eleria (Subcommittee Chair), Constance Pepin, Craig Wilson, Drew McGovern, Laura Kinhead, Nan Dreher, Win Rockwell (CAC Chair)

CAC Members Absent: Jim Romlin

Public: Throughout the evening approximately 12 members of the public joined the meeting

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Anna welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked the subcommittee members to introduce themselves followed by staff and project consultants. Following introductions, Anna thanked the CAC subcommittee members for their time to this topic and MPRB for responding and allocating additional resources to taking a deeper dive into water quality. Following introduction slides, Anna turned the presentation over to Adam.

STRUCTURE, PURPOSE, TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Adam thanked the CAC for taking extra time for this subcommittee work and then outlined the role of a CAC subcommittee. Adam then turned the presentation back to Anna to talk about topics and schedule for the water quality subcommittee. Water quality details – what are the trends, what does the data tell us about the conditions of the lake and how that is used to inform water quality goals and strategies to achieve the goals. Initially thought this work would be limited to developing high level water quality recommendations but has evolved to a subcommittee to get additional details to make informed decisions and reflective of current conditions of the lakes. Looking to schedule up to five meetings to follow process of learning more, discuss what we hear, ask questions, and then reflect and strategize to bring recommendations to the full CAC.

Following the kickoff meeting, the consultants will compile and review data related to the lakes. The second meeting will be a learning opportunity related to past water quality goals and move

to meeting three to discuss water quality goals for the master plan. The last two meetings will be a learning opportunity at the watershed level and development of watershed level goals.

Anna then turned the presentation over to Pat to add any additional information about the meetings. One of the things we'll be doing is developing a common understanding of how lakes operate and what the key metrics are for evaluating a lake, challenges posed by the watershed, and developing a common language. Pat then turn the presentation over to Emma who talked about how the CAC meetings along with the water quality subcommittee and community engagement is intended to inform the preferred park concept.

(CAC, *in chat*) FYI ~ the CIDNA website has a compendium of reports and other materials related to water quality at <http://cidna.org/cedar-isles-master-plan>

SCOPE AND GOALS DISCUSSION

Following the introductions and subcommittee overview, Anna led the CAC subcommittee members through a discussion around a few specific questions. See below for the questions, feedback from the CAC members and feedback from the public in the chat.

Question 1: What does improved water quality mean to you?

- Context regarding regulations that defined water quality - MPCA - standards and where we fall. What was clean water at predevelopment levels - phosphorus loads, etc.
- Out of context without data and requirements.
- Reducing inputs to the lake (ex: salt, invasive species) - what can we effect within watershed
- Improved clarity
- Reducing blue-green algae blooms
- Make sure human recreation is possible
 - Swimmable and fishable lake
 - Make sure boating, paddleboarding is possible - difficult later in summer with vegetation
- As water leaves project area, is cleaner than when it arrives in project area (wq improves within lakes in project area)
- Controlling milfoil
 - Maintenance issue
- Reducing smell
- Halt harmful algae blooms
- Important because there's so much interest/expectation on CAC/community on biodiversity and ecosystem function - human recreation will follow. Make sure target specific target species can live in the lake – identify species and what it means for them.
- All of the items noted here are important

Question 2: What questions do you have related to water quality and/or the proposed water quality strategies in the initial park concepts?

- What are the phosphorous loads? What current metrics does the MPRB use to define a healthy lake?
- Partnership and agreement on goals at the watershed level - what's in place and/or what's possible.
- Metrics - in lake treatment ideas - understanding how much of an improvement can be made in the lake vs an upstream issue
 - Focusing on just the lake may not get us to metrics
- Cost and benefits of water quality strategies that have been proposed. Cost, not just financial, but how it connects to other amenities.
- Concern with initial park concepts: no measurable goals
- When will the MPRB 2021 Water Quality report come out?
- Impact on water quality for items proposed in the master plan Ex: addition of impervious surface - will that mean sand/salting?
- Addressing runoff from the parkways
- Understand differences between two lakes and if there needs to be prioritization.
- What is already in place regarding existing water quality infrastructure in place (ex: existing BMPs)
- (CAC, *in chat*) I know this might be a challenge but it would be great if we could monitor the water quality entering in each of the pipes entering the lake. We could use this to identify the sewersheds that are delivering the largest amount of contaminants. This data might be useful when discussing partnerships with other agencies.
- (CAC, *in chat*) For our next meeting, I assume you have this data but SLP has their sewershed and existing pond/BMPs identified on a map
<https://www.stlouispark.org/home/showpublisheddocument/14084/63700080764930000> page 21

Question 3: Are there any other things you'd like to discuss related to water quality and the master planning process?

The group did not get to this question.

Public comments from the chat:

- Healthy Water Quality = Reliably safe to swim + supports wildlife habitat
- Halt harmful algae blooms
- Deceptively delicate and fragile in appearance, the Eurasian watermilfoil forms thick mats in shallow areas of a lake, quickly growing and spreading to block sunlight, killing off native aquatic plants that fish and other underwater species rely on for food and shelter. Freshwater ecosystems are often severely impacted by milfoil invasion. Milfoil form dense canopies in the water column (extending to the water surface) altering

water chemistry, displacing native plants, and creating habitats that are unsuitable for wildlife

- The MPRB makes a water quality report every year. I think the 2020 one just came out — reflecting that water quality in Cedar was continuing to decline. But the committee will want up-to-date water quality data. When will the 2021 report come out?
- I appreciated CAC member's viewpoint. Thank you!
- Please take a look at the research on biochar as a treatment option (think pyrolyzed invasive buckthorn charcoal to mitigate harmful algal blooms)...example here: https://mdpi-res.com/d_attachment/water/water-12-02871/article_deploy/water-12-02871-v2.pdf
- Has anything been learned from MPRB's aeration pilots at Wirth Lake and Powderhorn?: <https://www.minneapolisarks.org/news/2022/01/11/winter-aeration-systems-are-on-at-wirth-and-powderhorn-lakes-2/>
- Also work at Sweeney and Twin Lake over decades: <https://www.startribune.com/sweeney-lake-residents-wage-a-40-year-fight-to-save-lake/281149322/>

PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

Following the discussion, Emma transitioned the conversation to public comment time and explained that it was a time for community members to make comments related to the master plan. Emma asked folks to write 'yes' or their name in the chat box if they wanted to share feedback verbally. Folks could also write feedback in the chat box during this time (recorded below).

- (Commissioner Abene) The subcommittee is a nice response to community concerns. As you look through the data, you may notice a degradation of water quality, would ask you think about why that might be. Cedar Lake includes some wetlands, will you also be thinking about riparian edges as you think about scope? More interest in not giving land over for stormwater improvements.
- (Public, *in chat*) Mark Schmidt could not attend tonight but asked that I represent his request that a restoration ecologist be part of the Water Quality effort.
- (Public) Whether internally or as part of the master planning process, Mark Schmidt has requested a restoration ecologist be part of the process for this subcommittee.
- (CAC, *in chat*) I like the idea of a restoration ecologist being included
- (CAC, *in chat*) I agree that a restoration ecologist is important to include.
- (Project staff) Our consultant, EOR, is providing restoration ecology and natural resource support for the team.
 - (Project staff) We have terrestrial and aquatic ecologists on our team all of whom have restoration experience
 - (Project staff) Many of you have met Jason - our ecologist from EOR - <https://www.eorinc.com/services/ecology.html>

- (Public, *in chat*) Excellent!
- (Public) Who owns the lake? MPRB or DNR? Many laws already exist regarding shoreline that could be followed.
- (Public, *in chat*)
https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/model-with-comm.pdf