

CAC #1 Meeting Notes

Master Plan of Aligned Use and Water Management at Hiawatha Golf Course Property, a part of Nokomis-Hiawatha Regional Park

Meeting notes by Tyler Pederson, MPRB, 4/4/2018

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #1

March 28, 2018 – 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Nokomis Community Center Gym

Meeting Goal: Get to know each other and the process.

1. Welcome and Team Introductions
 - a. Chair David Kaplan introduced himself and requested other members of the CAC to take about 2 minutes each and introduce themselves and say a few things about themselves.
 - b. Michael Schroeder introduced himself as the Assistant Superintendent of Planning Services.
 - a. Tyler Pederson introduced himself as the Project Manager, and announced the presence of District 5 Commissioner Steffanie Musich, At-Large Commissioner Meg Forney, At-Large Commissioner Latrisha Vetaw, Ward 12 Council Member Andrew Johnson, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Manager Brian Shekleton, and State Senator Patricia Torres Ray.
2. CAC Charge
 - a. Chair Kaplan read the Charge of the CAC
3. Creation of Meeting Ground Rules
 - a. Radious Guess, MPRB Community Outreach, Equity & Inclusion Manager, facilitated a discussion of meeting ground rules. The ground rules were recorded and given to staff to prepare for adoption at the next CAC meeting.
4. What is a Master Plan?
 - a. Tyler gave an overview of what a master plan is and the process for approving a master plan.
 - b. Tyler reviewed other similar advisory groups with which the MPRB will be working, including the Technical Advisory Panel and Project Advisory Committee.
 - c. Tyler reviewed the master plan goals for the course property.
5. Regional Park Overview
 - a. Tyler gave an overview of the regional park and its relationship with the Hiawatha Golf Course property.
 - b. Tyler explained the CAC's meeting binders and the CAC's assignment of getting to know the facts of the project and encouraging them to contact Tyler with any questions or comments related to the project.
6. Next Steps and Commenting

- a. Tyler gave an update on the hiring of a consultant team to conduct the master planning work.
 - i. Questions about the process of choosing and contracting with a professional design and engineering consultant were raised by a member of the CAC. Staff members of various divisions of the MPRB will review the consultant proposals and ask proposing consultants to be interviewed who meet the requirements of the project. Interviews will be ranked by MPRB staff members and a recommendation of one proposing consultant will be sent to the Board of Commissioners for contract approval.
 - b. A comment was raised by a member of the CAC: How can we master plan when we don't know all the answers related to the water issues? MPRB response: There will always be some information missing in a master plan process, but that knowing where the master plan is headed can help frame other investigations. In addition, information gained from parallel processes will be brought to the CAC as it becomes known.
 - c. Tyler announced the upcoming CAC Meetings. Locations to be announced.
 - i. CAC Meeting #2 – April 30, 6:30pm to 8:00pm
 - ii. CAC Meeting #3 – May 30, 6:30pm to 8:00pm
 - d. Tyler asked that any off-line comments and questions to the MPRB and/or CAC should be directed to him at: tpederson@minneapolisparcs.org or by filling out an online comment form at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/lake-hiawatha>. He will then forward necessary information to the CAC as a whole. CAC members should refrain from "reply all" in CAC emails or initiating emails with the entire CAC in order to preserve the intentions of Open Meeting philosophies.
7. Public Comment Period
- a. Chair Kaplan opened the floor to the members of the public in the audience who wished to make a comment to the meeting attendees.
 - i. They have the cart before the horse. The creek has been changing for the last 50 years. They say that they have the science that they will change their vision based upon science that comes in, I don't believe them. I don't believe anything I hear from them. I have been to many of these meetings. It is sad to say but they have had a pre-determined agenda all along. This CAC is out of order, this is not the time for this. They need to establish the root causes and the possible solutions to the existing property use which has been there for 90 years.
 - ii. Lived by and swam in the lake all my life. I was the guy that went out and drilled holes here after the flood that first spring to find out the depth. I'm just wondering if somebody could get with the DNR and have somebody actually come in and chart Lake Hiawatha so that we know what the depth is? [MPRB staff response: yes, we can talk with the DNR about charting the lake] I think that it is way shallower than you'd read online. I think that would help. All of us are interested in the lake and some of us are interested in the golf course, but for sure all of us want the lake to be healthy.
 - iii. I want to clarify one thing, is this CAC predicated on the premise that the only option is reduced pumping? [MPRB staff response: That was the charge that was given by the Board of Commissioners.] Who are the Board of

Commissioners? [MPRB staff response: They are a publicly elected body that guides the direction of the parks in Minneapolis.] And how did they decide that? [MPRB staff response: This was the decision that was brought to them last year in a resolution that David cited earlier.] Resolution by the Park Board or DNR? [CAC Chair Response: Park Board of Commissioners.] That is a problem, we have one small option. There are many other options. I've heard that the DNR said that you can pump as much as we want. It doesn't make sense to me.

- iv. I've lived right across the street from the golf course for 5 or 6 years and I've been following the Park Board's work on this. I've read a lot of the materials that have been presented. I am excited about what you guys are going to come up with in the next phase of Hiawatha. Me and my neighbors are pumped to have that fence come down so we can enjoy our public land and be responsible stewards for the environment.
- v. Congratulations to the CAC, and good luck. I want to respond to this idea that yes, this golf course has been here for 90 years, but what was here before that? It was a wetland, and how it became a golf course was that the wetland was dredged to make a lake. Completely man-made lake and that dredged material was brought over to the other side of the wetlands to make the golf course. 90 years is a fairly small time in geologic time scale, but my point is that things have changed through these 90 years and we have things like climate change now and we have more rain coming and this has not changed. There is a larger watershed, and I know from going to the meetings for the past two years that the Park Board is well aware of the watershed's scale. I just want the CAC to be engaged with the scale of the watershed but also fully engaged with the site and what it is.
- vi. I have a related comment to the resolution or the charge of reduced pumping which is how can you come up with a plan for the site when you don't know what the results of that reduced pumping will be. Are you going to have 100 percent of the dry land, are you going to have 50 percent, are you going to have 5 percent? Because if you stop pumping and it reverts back to wetland, well then what's the plan for that going to be?
- vii. I've been involved in the process for a while, and if this group is going to be transparent, I think that you should pick your own leader (CAC Chair Person). I think that this group should pick the leader as opposed to Commissioner Tabb picking the leader. Because she has categorically said she does not want a golf course.
- viii. It is obvious that there is still a lot of questions about how much water is being pumped out of the golf course and the fact that I have heard that thirty percent or so is seeping back into the ground water under the golf course from the lake. Has anyone proposed that the pipes that are pumping water out of the golf course actually instead of dumping into the lake get dumped into the creek on the other end of the lake? Will that change anything? I wonder how much water actually comes down the creek and goes down to the falls. Do we have

measurements on that? And does some of that water seeping into the ground increase the water table? Do we have a history of the water table over the last 50 years? And how is that affecting flooding and basement flooding? Dredging the creek is not an answer necessarily because of the elevation changes so gradually, but maybe there are a few places down stream from where the water leaves Lake Hiawatha that there are a couple of places that could be floodplain areas for the drastic rains that we have once in a while. It's going to be a combination of things that's going to have to be looked at and there is still a lot of questions. I've also heard that the DNR has said that actually we don't care how much water you pump out of the ground because there is so much there.

- ix. State Senator Patricia Torres Ray: I am so happy to see you here and am incredibly hopeful after hearing you ask these questions. I have proposed to many people in the community that we form a committee and that we look into finding out how the community can provide input into the process. The Park Board was way ahead of me and I appreciate that. Two things I would like to say. Please remember that we have the best park system in the country. We have the best staff in the country. However, I understand the questions that you are asking, and I am incredibly attentive to the questions that you are asking with respect to your property, to the lake, and to the golf course. All of these aspects are aspects that I care very deeply about. I would like to offer to the Board and to the committee that if you need expertise, if you need the DNR, you can ask for that. It is not that you have just the Park Board in front of you, this committee is working with the Park Board and the City and the County, you're working with all of us. If you need the expertise from the DNR or any other resource, please give us a call and we will collaborate with the Board and ensure that this decision is made scientifically, with community support, or if we need to look into funding. Representative Wagenius has been here. We are working to figure out if the DNR needs to assign a staff person to this group. I wanted to let you know that this is your process. I am incredibly thankful for your presence here tonight. This is what it takes to do a good project. I think that you will make this decision and if you need to stop for now and ask these questions, you are entitled to do that. [Member of the public asking question: Who do people call if they want a funded investigation?] This is an important question because this is democracy at its best. You elect a Park Board, and you elect people who are directly responsible for figuring out the processes for the parks. That's what they do. They have staff assigned to do that. They have expertise. They are supposed to do this with the community. Then you have the Watershed District. Which is in charge of taking care of water. And the question the first person asked about where all this water is coming from and how do we determine the volume, they do that. The properties in the City, the City Council has a responsibility to work with all of us. The County as well. The Department of Transportation is a part of this. And us, your elected officials. This is not a simple task for a citizen. What we can do for you, and please feel free to call me or send me an email any day,

sen.patricia.torres.ray@senate.mn, you can google me. The DNR is a state agency, they don't work for the Park Board, so call us and say we need the DNR in this process and we need to hear from them. The Park Board staff is really well trained to respond to these questions. They will know, and they will connect with us. Call us directly, call the Park Board member, call your City Council Member, and we will figure out who has the capacity and the information you need to come to the table. You can start thinking about what those questions are right now. Consult with other people and experts who are in the audience and let us know. I know that the Park Board will be open to bringing those experts to the table, because that's what they do. This is what this process is all about. Thank you.

- x. Brian Shekleton: I serve in one of the most unknown units of government around. I sit on the Board of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. In the mid-1960s there was a lot of flooding on Minnehaha Creek. State Legislature acted then and created the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. We have taxing authority, we can tax any land within the watershed. A watershed is the geographic area where water flows from to a certain point. Any water that flows through Minnehaha Creek, Chain of Lakes, Lake Minnetonka, we have levee authority over that. We were created in the 1960s to regulate the flooding within the watershed, our prime directive. Coupled with that, is water quality issues, because to prevent flooding, you have to slow down water. We have a dam at Lake Minnetonka. Many people above the dam say "it's raining, you've got to open the dam, let the water downstream" and the people downstream say "it's raining you've got to close the dam." We manage this. We've been attending these meetings since 2014. We pay attention to the weather, and when there is a forecast of heavy rain we let water out from the dam. So that when we get these massive rain events water is held upstream. And instead of a heavy pulse coming down the creek there is water that comes down the creek before the rainfall water that comes down after the rainfall, and it mitigates the flooding. Yeah there is a bump in water, but it is not a spike. How many people here have been on the creek or next to the creek during a rainfall? It bounces. How many people have been in the creek during that bounce? How many of you have had swimmer's itch? That comes from all the bacteria that comes off of roads, primarily. And that's something we try to work with. One of the issues we've been dealing with on this site is a massive pipe on the north side of the lake. The two main sources of pollution in the lake are the creek itself and all the roads that dump into that creek and that pipe. At some point you'll learn more about the pipe and at some point you'll learn more about all the pipes that dump stormwater into the creek. We have a partnership with the Park Board and the City of Minneapolis such that when any one of those entities does work along the waterbody we all work together to think through the planning. To come up with a good solution. Which is why I am here tonight. We've been partners and we want to continue to be partners. Our mission is to help people, entities, companies, and units of government to have better water

quality when they do a project. If any one of you redoes the foundation at your house, we have permit authority. There are rules you have to follow, we'll help you achieve your goal and meet our rules. And that is why we are here as partners with the Park Board. I am happy to have conversations with any of you. I look forward to being a resource.

- b. A comment by MPRB staff: A link to the City's neighborhood groundwater and stormwater project will be placed on our project's webpage. We've be working with the DNR, specifically Director Skinner of the Division Ecological and Water Resources to further clarify questions posed.
8. Adjourned at 8:15pm by Chair Kaplan