



Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Cedar lake and Lake of the Isles Master Plan
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting #6

11/9/2021 6:00-8:00pm
Zoom Online Video Call

MPRB Staff and Consultants Present: Emma Pachuta (Project Manager), Adam Arvidson, Madeline Hudek; Maura Rockcastle (TENxTEN), Erica Christenson (TENxTEN), Sydney Shea (TENxTEN), Zakcq Lockrem (Asakura Robinson)

CAC Members Present: Win Rockwell (CAC Chair), Aaron Shaffer, Adam Braun, Alice Lehman, Ben Surma, Constance Pepin, Drew McGovern, Jim Romlin, Joshua Christensen, Laura Kinkead, Linda Mack, Michaela West, Nan Dreher, James Reid (Alternate)

CAC Members Absent: Anna Eleria, Eric Gangl, Lilia Theisen, Will Stensrud (Alternate)

Public: Throughout the evening approximately 25+ members of the public joined the meeting

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Emma started the meeting by thanking everyone for joining the sixth Cedar-Isles Master Plan Community Advisory Committee Meeting (CAC #6). CAC members were then asked to introduce themselves and share a fun fact related to the project. Emma then reviewed the project and CAC meeting timeline outlining what has happened so far, that this is the start of the design phase, and what the next steps are.

Following an overview of the project timeline, there was a brief overview of what to expect for the night's meeting. During the first half of the meeting members of the CAC and public would be in divided into three breakout rooms followed by a CAC discussion for the second half and concluding with time for public comment at the end.

Emma then turned it over to Maura to introduce the main activity for the evening. Maura went through the far-left column of the Mural board, summarizing the previous meeting where the CAC compiled themes from community engagement across 4 different topics (access/circulation; history; program, use, community initiatives; and resilience). She also reviewed the draft guiding principles and vision, which were revised based on feedback from the previous meeting and can continue to evolve as the project moves forward.

Following this background information, Maura outlined that members of the CAC and public would be divided into three breakout rooms to discuss a portion of the draft sketches and then come back together as a large group for a CAC discussion. Maura gave an overview of the draft sketches and questions that would be discussed in the breakout rooms. Each breakout room would be focused on different draft sketches based on guiding principles topics (Room 1: Celebrate (Programming and Amenities), Room 2: Connect (Circulation and Access), and Room 3: Protect (Water, Climate Mitigation, Ecology, Wildlife)).

- (CAC) Will there be an opportunity to provide feedback on the guiding principles and vision in advance of design concepts? At the next meeting?
 - (Project staff) Making note – we will see about how to incorporate that at a future meeting.
 - (CAC) Would suggest having a set time for comment on the guiding principles.
- (Public *in chat*) Are all those items equal in importance? For example is water equally important to inclusive welcome? I think probably not — but how do we address that?
 - (Project Staff) Guiding principles are being held equally.

Following Maura's overview, Madeline divided everyone into their breakout rooms for discussion.

BREAKOUT ROOMS

CAC Members were broken out into 3 groups with project staff to discuss different guiding principles topics. Members of the public who joined the meeting were also broken into these different rooms to listen and participate in the conversations. Breakout room comments and draft sketches can be reviewed on the [Mural board](#).

CAC DISCUSSION

After everyone returned to the main room, project staff from each breakout room provided an overview of their group's conversation, which followed with a CAC discussion of the breakout room topic(s).

(Public, *in chat*) What is the opportunity to comment on areas in which we were not part of the break out group?

- (Project staff) We will have time at the end for the public to respond to anything they would like to verbally. Members of the public can also add comment in the chat through the end of the meeting and it will be recorded by us to inform next steps.

Breakout Room 1 Overview – Celebrate (Programming and Amenities)

In this breakout room, gathering spaces, new amenities (ex: skating ribbon, skating rink of Cedar, volleyball courts or expanded athletic fields), considering the identity of each lake, water access (ex: potential boardwalk or lake deck locations, proposed docks), what would go where and how many was discussed.

Some of the feedback included: keeping Cedar Lake light, picnic pavilions could be good on Lake of the Isles, cafes didn't seem like a good fit, seasonal warming house with restrooms at Lake of the Isles, a skating ribbon on Lake of the Isles and skating rink of Cedar Lake sounded good, expanded athletic fields sounded good, volleyball be moved to be near a beach, a boardwalk on Lake of the Isles would maybe work along the northern part of the lake but would work to cross the lake. (See [Mural board](#) for additional notes on discussion from breakout room 1)

Breakout Room 1 CAC Discussion

(CAC) Pavilion could go on the point where there have been existing opportunities for seasonal performances (*at Lake of the Isles*). Concerned the cluster of activities on south end of Lake of the Isles would be unnecessary with lack of parking and proximity to Bde Maka Ska.

- (CAC) Pushcart vendors like in New York City rather than a permanent vendor is appealing, would be low cost, and help to identify demand. Food truck opportunities would be another option.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) Good idea!!
 - (CAC, *in chat*) Like that idea of pushcart or mobile coffee/snacks.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) good idea
 - (Public, *in chat*) Food trucks can generate a lot of noise, consideration of the user experience is needed; noise and odors can be a nuisance.
 - (Public, *in chat*) Concession carts are lower impact and offer similar amenity as food trucks
- (CAC, *in chat*) I'm not against having more activities near the south end of the lake since it's easier for a lot of Uptown residents to get there. Also close to transit access and the Midtown Greenway
- (CAC, *in chat*) I would be concerned about adding more to the south end of Isles, lots of congestion.
- (Public, *in chat*) Is there an identified need/demand for pavilions?

- (Public, *in chat*) I think a pavilion on isles north end or at the point is a good idea
- (Public, *in chat*) Please reconsider the necessity to construct permanent structures around Lake of the Isles. Its so beauty and uniqueness is in its natural state.
 - (Public, *in chat*) What benefit will adding pavilion vs the natural state of sitting in the grass - writing this comment and agreeing.

(Public, *in chat*) That's a great idea!

(CAC) Can recommendations be made around the warming house on Lake of the Isles as part of the master plan?

- (Project staff) Yes
- (CAC) Year-round facility at a different scale and with different lighting in same location.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) A permanent warming house + bathrooms could be a great spot for a pad for food trucks as well.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) Lighting can contribute to light pollution, so require lighting that is safe for birds and wildlife.
 - (Public, *in chat*) YES to lighting
 - (Public, *in chat*) Light is can also be a nuisance
 - (Public, *in chat*) I don't think a year round structure is a good choice
- (Public, *in chat*) The temporary warming house currently costs an extraordinary amount to put in and take out. It is also unattractive and needs a lot of maintenance. I hope replacing it with something more functional would be part of the Master Plan.

(Public, *in chat*) Channel area by Dean Pkwy might be good area for lake deck (tho concern about impact on habitat)

(Public, *in chat*) A CAC member (*earlier in the meeting*) expressed the nature of character of each of these lakes. When LOI underwent its renovation in the 1990s, the then-CAC gave each lake a description. LOI was the "pastoral" lake. Cedar was the "natural/wild" lake. Bde was the "recreational" lake. It is out of character to commercialize LOI and put in things like cafe's, permanent structures, destinations that require parking, rental kiosks. LOI should be left alone, as the pastoral lake it is.

- (Public, *in chat*) I agree with comments about maintaining unique character of each lake. Cedar as natural/wild; Isles as pastoral.

(CAC) With new lightrail stop, may need to consider facilities in the East Cedar Beach location.

- (Public, *in chat*) yes curious about café near the LRT station? that could be a used amenity
- (Public, *in chat*) I'm concerned about the paddle rental idea for the Cedar East Beach - this beach is the only one that still has a wild, less developed, natural feel. Rental can be available other places that already are more developed. Please reconsider removing this idea.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) I agree about limiting rental spots, since more facilities will fragment habitat and disrupt the nature experience.

(Public, *in chat*) A picnic pavilion at Cedar Lake “south point” would be good for gathering, education activities, and programming

(CAC) There's a note about possible land acquisition near East Cedar beach?

- (Project Staff) This is a 20+ year master plan, that was shown as something that could be considered as an idea.

(CAC) Consider signage to accompany anything that's built to tell stories about the lake. Use kiosks rather than structures.

(Public, *in chat*) Boardwalk n.w. cedar would change charter of Cedar

(Public, *in chat*) Agree regarding maintaining the pastoral natural of the lake. These structures will constitute a major change to the nature of the lake. Is that intentional?

(Public, *in chat*) LOI does not have the infrastructure for permanent buildings on parkland. It does not have the character for permanent buildings, picnic shelters, or boardwalks. This lake must be maintained with an eye to the picturesque, pastoral, quiet nature that it has. Do not force a recreational element on this lake. Stay in your lane....

(Public, *in chat*) One year there was a skating trail much like is proposed. It was well used and seemed more fun than going around in circles. A multi-use building combining warming house, toilets and picnic shelter would be much better than the very expensive eyesore.

Breakout Room 2 Overview – Connect (Circulation and Access)

The breakout room discussed opportunities to circumnavigate Cedar Lake and bike connection opportunities. Project staff have work to do in framing the different opportunities for mobility

in the project area. The group was also thinking about safety, especially prioritizing pedestrian safety and thinking about accessibility and access. (See [Mural board](#) for additional notes on discussion from breakout room 2)

Breakout Room 2 CAC Discussion:

Bike two-way directional path opportunity

(CAC) As a park user who bikes for recreation and commuting, it was a missed opportunity in the Bde Maka Ska-Harriet Master Plan to not include 2-way trails. There's a demand for 2-way trails. Need to be thinking about how people move from place to place with the proposed amenities.

- (CAC) How to keep everyone safe since trails are not for just bikes. Important to focus on recreational use, don't object to commuter use – view that as a benefit, but design should be for recreational use – not increased speeds or trail widening to accommodate other uses.
 - (CAC) Second the idea that trails should be focused for recreational use.
- (CAC) Two-way trails for the Bde Maka Ska-Harriet plan would have involved taking out a lot of trees.
- (CAC) Two-way trails seems like a hot topic that should be discussed with the CAC as a whole. There are a lot of elements to consider. Many have expressed desires to keep things as natural as possible. Limitations to breakout sessions, we will need discussion as a whole for these different topics.
 - (Public, *in chat*) Yes, agreed!
- (CAC, *in chat*) For safety and recreational reasons, one-way bike lanes are important.
- (CAC, *in chat*) It is not just bikes anymore, it is scooters, skateboards, motorized skateboards.
- (CAC, *in chat*) I think bidirectional paths would be safer. I have to bike in the street and get punished by all the cars if I'm going the opposite direction of the bike paths
- (Public, *in chat*) Commuting is not part of the park board mission. Initial trail separation between peds and wheels was because a pedestrian casualty. Parkways are available.
- (Public, *in chat*) I agree, there should be two way paths, but there should be larger trails. take out two way roads and put in paths

- (Public, *in chat*) bidirectional makes lots of sense when thinking about access around the lake and increasing access to all of the great rec amenities. also it seems that bidirectional would be safer with the multiple ways people move - having a scooter zoom the wrong way towards you on a bike path is terrifying!! *on a narrow one way bike path
- (Public, *in chat*) Would the bike trail have to be wider to accommodate two-way traffic?
- (CAC, *in chat*) I frequently encounter wrong-way cyclists on Lake Harriet who don't want to circumnavigate an entire lake. Not accommodating that desire creates more dangerous conflicts when that happens, when we could fix the problem properly as part of this process.
- (CAC, *in chat*) Uni-directional makes more sense than bi- when thinking about safety and access to recreational amenities.
- (CAC, *in chat*) While recognizing that some people desire two-way bike trails, accommodating that desire would not prevent or eliminate wrong-way cyclists. People can circumnavigate all the lakes on existing parkways
- (Project Staff) I don't think Zakcq mentioned this in his overview, but one of the two-way bike options was an on-street bike lane that would not increase paving around Isles

(Public, *in chat*) It seems the park board staff goal is further development around the lakes. Is that a forgone conclusion?

(Public, *in chat*) Visitors coming from LRT can equally appreciate a natural environment as nearer living users. Any new paths should not over rule littoral objectives.

(CAC, *in chat*) Not sure if this is in the MPRB control, but a pedestrian crosswalk on the NE side of LOI at Franklin/Logan is sorely needed to improve safe access.

(CAC, *in chat*) On the proposed trail map I don't see the existing trail around the cedar ponds and the connection to Cedar Lake Parkway & France Ave. Hopefully we are not suggesting removal of that trail. A lot of St. Louis Park residents use this as the entrance to the trail system around the lakes.

(CAC, *in chat*) Access from Cedar Lake Ave and the Jones-Harrison home down toward Cedar Lake Parkway exists but is far from accessible due to the grade change. Let's keep that in mind since there currently is a desire path but not something all folks can use.

- (Public, *in chat*) Folks (in wheelchairs) from Jones Harrison regularly access Cedar Lake at Cedar Lake South Beach. This was a guiding design principal in the recent renovations.

Also there is a trail to the filtration ponds that is accessible. The missing piece is a public sidewalk from Jones Harrison to the trail along France Avenue.

Interconnectedness options

(CAC) Trail connection between Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles (#3) should be a high priority. Land along the channel is parkland and right now is used more for private use. A lot of boat traffic goes through this area. I care less that there's a path there and more that MPRB retakes control over the land it owns on the east side of Cedar Lake (#5) rather than have it be for private boats and docks.

- (Public, *in chat*) I agree on the note made about the connection from cedar to isles (3). making a connection there would be a good idea
- (CAC, *in chat*) I agree. Path connecting Isles and Cedar along the channel should be a high priority. And one way bike traffic around cedar is necessary as there are too many constricted spots already for pedestrians and two-way bike traffic.
- (Public, *in chat*) The MPRB land in front of the private homes would be well used as littoral zone.
- (CAC, *in chat*) Completely agree on the Cedar water access
- (CAC, *in chat*) I agree about access via the Kenilworth Channel and along Cedar Lake.
- (CAC, *in chat*) Agree. Maybe even consider a boardwalk there.
- (CAC, *in chat*) yes I agree as well.
- (CAC) Like this perspective, thank you.
- (Public, *in chat*) While in agreement on the public lands, care should be given to not characterize the homeowners as villains. They are using the MPRB land with the licenses and permits that were issued by MPRB.
 - (Public, *in chat*) the homeowners along Cedar are our neighbors.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) The homeowners on Cedar Lake are only doing what the Park Board has permitted them to do. No quarrel with their doing it. I disagree with the suggestion that they are villains. The point is that the Park Board should not have allowed that situation to develop. So we need to work from where we are. The path forward is for the Park Board to adopt a clear plan, over a reasonable time frame, to end the private licenses, clearly mark the boundary between

public land and private land along the southeast section of Cedar Lake shoreline, work with the homeowners to assure that publicly owned lakeshore is preserved and practically designated for public use and invite the participation and cooperation of the adjoining homeowners in realizing the purpose for the public ownership of that stretch of Cedar Lake shoreline, bringing that stretch of shoreline into the broader vision of public access to our shorelines, one of the foundation principles of our Minneapolis parks philosophy.

- (Public, *in chat*) My meaning was not to call property owners as villains, they often characterized as such by others, which is not warranted as you carefully describe. Thanks
- (CAC) I agree with this perspective on #5.
- (Public, *in chat*) #5
- (Public, *in chat*) We don't need a path two feet from the water. It's not too good for lake water quality. The best thing to do south of the channel is to create a natural shoreline. That should satisfy the folks that are getting bent out of shape by the current situation.
 - (Public, *in chat*) Agreed!

(Public, *in chat*) Is paving required when upgrading east beach pathway segment for ADA? Can other softer materials be used? On Cedar Lake #1 on the map?

- (Project Staff) Yes, softer materials can be used when thinking about increased accessibility.
- (Project Staff) Soft Materials can be used and still increase accessibility.
- (Project Staff) paving is not required for this to be ADA compliant
- (Public, *in chat*) Thank you everyone.

(Public, *in chat*) If the existing bike paths around Isles are 10 feet wide and 12 feet is the minimum for two-way I think two feet could be added without much difficulty.

(CAC, *in chat*) I wanted to share one more thing with the group vs. the breakout room (but not waste everyone's time listening). Re: trails/access on east side of Cedar Lake... Protecting nature is very important -- but we also need to recognize that public input informed us about the feeling that the east side of Cedar is private land/private property. We can't artificially limit traffic or pretend it won't come. The 21st Street light rail station is coming no matter what, and

we need to recognize an increase in pedestrian (including those in wheelchairs) and cyclist traffic that'll grow organically.

Breakout Room 3 Overview – Protect (Water, Climate Mitigation, Ecology, Wildlife)

Landcover for the lakes was grouped as natural areas and turf. There were three ideas shown that ranged in their level of rewilding. The first idea had a focus of increasing restoration on Cedar Lake, with some restoration on Lake of the Isles. The second idea shows an increase in rewilding from the first idea around both lakes and the third idea shows a full rewilding of both lakes.

The discussion was fruitful. There were questions about the nature of restoration on Cedar Lake and around adding natural areas on Lake of the Isles – concerns about blocking views and reducing programming. The group also talked about littoral edge as an opportunity to increase water quality as well as other opportunities to increase water treatment landscapes into the water body such as floating wetlands. (See [Mural board](#) for additional notes on discussion from breakout room 3)

Breakout Room 3 CAC Discussion:

(Public, *in chat*) What is a concrete measure of water quality for the user experience at Cedar and Isles? How can that guide design concepts?

(Public, *in chat*) I wanted to know if there will be any additional accessibility to this area like spoken about in past meetings. Improvement to parking areas or changing of traffic lanes on cedar lake? Is there any chance of still making Cedar Parkway one way traffic only? Or closing part of it to vehicles?

(CAC) Dean Parkway area – a number of trees planted in this area. Should be careful and thoughtful about what to do here. The more on water quality that can be done the better. What can you afford and what is going to be most effective.

(CAC *in chat*) What do the floating wetlands look like?

(CAC) Water quality is important, but the tree canopy and tree preservation are also important. Could be added to guiding principle and visions statement. Alum treatments and a reliance on chemicals long term is concerning because of the impacts to fish and wildlife. An alum treatment facility jumps out as something that doesn't fit with the natural feel of the lakes. Excited about the ideas of the floating wetlands.

- (CAC *in chat*) I completely agree with you. Yes!

- (Public *in chat*) The comment on trees is important. The plan should contribute to the Tree Advisory Commission canopy goal of 40%. It is essential to increase canopy to counteract Urban Heat Island effects.

(CAC) Floating wetlands look like they would cover the entire area – would that mean there wouldn't be access to the northern part of Isles for boating?

- (Project staff) The blue area that's shown would be a wetland and wouldn't be an area that could be navigated, but this is an early idea and was discussed as a potential trade off.
- (CAC) If there were wetlands on the north end of Lake of the Isles there wouldn't be space for the ice rink or proposed skating loop.

(Public, *in chat*) Is there any chance of still making Cedar Parkway one way traffic only? Or closing part of it to vehicles? YES!

(CAC, *in chat*) Have we looked at creating rainwater catches/swales on the west side of Cedar Lake Parkway in the pinched zone on the NW, where homes sit on top of a hill and rainwater drains right into the two way road after the hill.

- (CAC, *in chat*) I agree with the idea about rainwater catches/swales.
- (Project staff) The land area on the NW area of Cedar is very limited and thus rainwater swales will be difficult to accommodate in that particular area.
 - (CAC, *in chat*) That's my thought too. That's a very tight space but by changing land use and using the few feet of park land west of that road as it stands now, we could accomplish it, if we want.
 - (Project staff) got it - thank you for your comment!

(CAC) With regards to everything in the chat: I can't read it and participate fully in the discussion. The input is shared (*in the chat*) and what happens to it?

- (Project staff) The meeting notes and mural board will include the discussion and feedback from the chat.
- (CAC, *in chat*) Apropos to this CAC comment, could the chat be shared with CAC members post meeting?

(Public, *in chat*) Since 1942 the properties on the SE part of Cedar have had stewardship of that very narrow strip of land. Some of us recently spent in excess of \$20,000.00 for maintenance of the retaining wall for just our property

(Public, *in chat*) Again, in keeping with letting Cedar Lake East Beach remain natural and wild, keep enough trees so the forest feel remains (very precious to have a small forest in the city) on the Northeast/North of the lake. Do not take the entire understory. There are a lot of birds that use this area who will be displaced without the forest.

- (Public, *in chat*) If you add amenities to attract more people to East Cedar Beach, PLEASE add parking. Will there be a traffic study to evaluate the additional traffic that will be generated?

(Public, *in chat*) The Kenilworth channel must remain as a water thoroughfare. The current restoration in the channel should help immensely with run-off

- (CAC, *in chat*) I don't think we would want to lose access down the channel for canoes, paddle boards.. so highly used now.
- (Project staff) Noted, my understanding is that we aren't considering not having the channel be a thoroughfare. Double negative in my sentence, hope that makes sense.
- (Public, *in chat*) There is no removal of accumulating sediment in the channel—it will be narrow and shallow when done—down from 40 feet to 20 feet in some areas
- (CAC, *in chat*) I don't think we want to lose boating/skating access to the whole north part of Lake of the Isles, either.
- (Public, *in chat*) "Buffer" around LOI is gradually disappearing. Shrubbery was cut. Weed trees and bushes have grown up. I think a buffer that is sustainable and consistent with the historical character of LOI could be created. First the paths need to be moved farther from the edge of the lake. The vegetation in the channel is water lilies.

(Public, *in chat*) Have you had a look at the Kenwood Park master plan? It includes wetlands across Franklin from the north arm of LOI.

PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

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. Additionally, if questions were asked, Project Staff would try to answer them at future meetings as much as possible. Emma also 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).

- (Public) A CAC member had said in a previous meeting that in all this planning, a major underlying principle should be water quality. Most people agreed with that. We should use that as the criteria to measure everything by and a primary guide for what we do.

It's nice to have amenities for people to have fun. Do we want to destroy existing amenities so people can have a little bit more fun? Need to go back to the principle that we have these beautiful resources, and our primary responsibility is to preserve them. We can recreate around them but can't destroy them as we enjoy them.

- (Public) We are neighbors and residents who live on Cedar Lake Parkway and spend most evenings at the beach and walking around the lakes. The ideas are exciting in thinking about rewilding the edge, reducing turf grass, thinking about habitat, improving access to beaches and other fun ways while keeping water quality in mind.
- (Public) Two-way traffic on the bike trails would be very dangerous. Trails would have to be widened. Not a good idea, even if it would be convenient for some people.
- (Public *in chat*) Designing to be all things to all people will not be a successful master plan; there is a place for certain activities and not all activities are compatible.
- (Public) There is no buffer between the houses along the (*south*) east shore of Cedar Lake if a path was put there. A path would be right in backyards. There's only about eight feet of parkland along the shore.
- (Public *in chat*) How much impact does park land have on water quality of the lakes? Looking at the watershed/pipesheds of these lakes, I bet it's minimal. Most of the water originates on streets and private property. Before giving up parkland, the cities should be made to clean up their acts.
- (Public *in chat*) Trails/access and protecting nature are possible to include while making public aware that Cedar east is not private property. Do not need to develop to make others aware of availability.
- (Public) I understand adding amenities but am concerned about the incremental benefit of adding a picnic shelter and picnic table or other amenities compared to what would be lost. Concerned that adding more will have less benefit than what would be lost.
- (Public *in chat*) There are immense resources that have already been developed and vetted by past CACs regarding many or even most of the issues that are being resurrected tonight. The current CAC should review and take advantage of those resources.
- (Public *in chat*) Tonight's discussion seems to underscore the value of having a specific vision statement for key assets and unique companion guiding design principles to be used as a lens to develop design concepts.

- (Public *in chat*) Is there a way to assess the overall environmental impact of these amenities?
- (Public and CAC *in chat*) *Varied thank you messages.*
- (CAC *in chat*) *(to an earlier point made)* The appropriate step in my view is simply to reclaim public use, not theoretical but practical public use of that section of shoreline. But I also am not advocating for any trail along that section of shoreline at present. A good step for the next 25-year masterplan would be simply to reclaim that practical perception and practical indicia of public ownership. That would be an appropriate step in visioning the future.

THANKS AND NEXT STEPS

Emma thanked everyone for joining the conversation. *Public comment went to the very end of the meeting. Next steps and Emma's contact information are outlined on the last two slides of the presentation.*