

## **MPRB**

**Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan**

**Tuesday, July 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.**

**Lynnhurst Recreation Center, 1345 W Minnehaha Parkway**

## **CAC #8 Notes**

**Meeting Purpose:** To solicit input from the CAC and the general public on the preferred concepts in order to identify which areas have consensus and which areas need additional design work or discussion

**CAC Members in Attendance:** Caitlin Ross, Devin Olson, Francesco Marraffa, Frank Burton, Jim Tincher, Jonathon Heide, Lesley Lydell, Martha Grant, Mary McKelvey, Michael Jishke, Richard Nyquist

**CAC Members Absent:** Betsy Brock, Bill Shroyer, Cory Schaffhausen, Jessica McKenna, Michael Torres, Rebecca Johnson, Richard Duncan, Ryan Seibold

**Approximately 146 members of the public in attendance.**

**Project Team in Attendance:** Adam Arvidson (MPRB), Madeline Hudek (MPRB), Michaela Crowley (MPRB), Emma Pachuta (MPRB), Bryan Harjes (HKGi), Jody Rader (HKGi), Tiffany Schaufler (MCWD)

### **1. Planning Process Status / Meeting Ground Rules**

**MPRB Staff provided an update on the status of the planning process, as well as identified some ground rules for conduct at public meetings:**

- Show respect to the CAC members and their time
- Show respect for others while they are speaking

### **2. Refresh on Creek Ecology (15min.)**

**Tiffany Schaufler with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) provided a refresher presentation on creek ecology in the corridor, highlighting the example project of the recently completed Minnehaha Creek Greenway project.**

#### **Summary of CAC Comments/Questions:**

- **Q: What is the status of the CSO (Combined Sewer Outlet) on Minnehaha Creek?**
  - **A: The single remaining CSO is controlled by the City of Minneapolis. As far as we know, this has not overflowed in many years due to infrastructure updates upstream from the outlet.**

- **Q: Do you have a target for increasing length or capacity of the creek with proposed remeanders?**
  - **A: Once the concepts are finalized, we will begin to quantify the proposed remeanders. This take a lot of effort to determine. Ultimately, we'd like to increase the capacity of the creek as much as possible, within reason to accommodate recreation, etc.**
- **Q: Which outfalls are a priority for restoration efforts?**
  - **A: Outfalls and areas that serve the largest pipesheds and have the biggest opportunity for impact, as well as outfalls that are located in areas that are suitable for restoration (shallower slopes, large enough area, etc.)**

### **3. Parkway Road – Report Back**

MPRB Staff provided a summary of feedback related to the Parkway Road discussions of previous meetings and online engagement. Following this, MPRB staff proposed the following next steps, which were approved by the CAC following a discussion:

- **Eliminate the proposal for medians at Lyndale and Nicollet, allowing for largely continuous vehicular travel along Minnehaha Creek**
- **Continue to evaluate designs for the Parkway + Portland and Lynnhurst focus areas in terms of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle safety and comfort**
- **Work to implement immediate improvements at Parkway + Portland to the extent possible**
- **Initiate additional traffic data collection and explore piloting solutions at the two critical focus areas**
- **Pause the master plan process to allow time for additional exploration, then reconvene the CAC in September/October**

#### **Summary of CAC Comments/Questions during discussion:**

- **Q: What will be the role of the traffic consultant?**
  - **A: The consultant will fill the gaps in the data that we already have through the City of Minneapolis/MnDOT. They will also help to provide guidance for near-term or temporary/pilot measures. At this point, we have not written the entire scope for the study yet.**
- **Q: Will the data collected be vehicular data, or include bike and ped data?**
  - **A: The data will include vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian data.**
- **Q: Can we have traffic accidents be included in the study, and will the study be public?**
  - **A: Yes, traffic accidents will be factored into the study, although near-misses are difficult to quantify, and the number of accidents will not be the only telling piece of data. This data needs to be combined with what we are hearing, and have been hearing from the public through community engagement and further study. Yes, the study results will be public.**
- **Q: Are you collecting information from people on the trails?**
  - **A: Yes, additional in-person community engagement will be happening throughout the summer along the trails.**
- **Q: I'm concerned that traffic data collected through the study will be skewed because of present construction on 35W. Will the study be mining older data or collecting new data?**

- The study will likely combine existing data with newly collected data to fill in the gaps where data doesn't exist today. Transportation engineers can calibrate findings to adjust for increased traffic caused by concurrent construction nearby, which influences patterns.
- I'm in favor of the pause in the design process to allow for further study. I would love to see a temporary median at the Y intersection (west of Portland Ave) to be installed now.
- Q: What is immediate? What are the temporary measures that will be taken?
  - A: Potential temporary or immediate measures may include crosswalk markings, signage, tree trimming, stop signs. A median would require more effort/planning/decision-making and would probably fall into the category of pilot project.
- I'm concerned that if we implement temporary measures now, we will skew the baseline data needed to complete the traffic study.
  - A: Baseline data will be collected very soon (over the next few weeks), before temporary measures can be installed.
- Q: Will the scope of the traffic study involve modeling of potential new traffic diversions?
  - A: Once we have the baseline data, we can move towards scoping the study to what makes sense for the project. We will try to be as transparent as possible with the study.

**Summary of Public Comments/Questions:**

- Concern/suspicion raised about the methodology and transparency of the process of the traffic study
- Concern that there isn't enough time for the public to weigh-in on the scope of the study
- Suggestion to consider seasonal factors that influence traffic along the parkway during the study

**4. Lynnhurst Focus Area Discussion/ Recommendation**

MPRB staff reviewed the revised concept for the Lynnhurst Focus Area, which was approved by the Lynnhurst Subcommittee on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019. A note has been added to the focus area, which reads:

*"Final determination on retention or removal of the parkway segment north of 51<sup>st</sup> Street will be made by recommendation of the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Community Advisory Committee. Other recreational amenities in this area will be as shown, regardless of the roadway decision. Accessible parking for the ADA launch will be provided, with final location to be determined at the time of implementation."*

Discussion was opened up to the CAC regarding the Lynnhurst Focus Area.

**Summary of CAC Questions/Comments during discussion:**

- Q: Will the at-grade crossing at 50<sup>th</sup> Street and the Parkway remain in this concept?
  - A: Yes, it is needed to provide bike/ped crossing during flood events when the trail under the new bridge will be inaccessible.
- I don't feel we had full consensus on the creekside water play area and losing the splash pad / water quality issues in the second subcommittee meeting.
  - A: There are a mix of aquatic facilities in all of the parks surrounding Lynnhurst. The idea in the concept is to create a unique water feature that can't be created in the other parks.

Also, there are no parks in the MPRB system that have multiple aquatic facilities, so having both a splash pad and a creekside feature would be unprecedented. Regarding water quality, all aquatic facilities are monitored for water quality, and this would be no different. If the water quality falls below standards, the facility is closed until the water is safe for swimming. Similar to any of the other beaches in the system.

- **Q: What is the predictability of flow in the tributary (for the water feature?)**
  - **A: The tributary almost always has flowing water (from Lake Harriet).**
- **Q: I have a concern for potential over-demand of parking at the ADA launch.**
  - **A: Until the road configuration is determined, the location of the parking is undetermined. Parking will be ADA compliant; there is no plan to add any additional parking in this area beyond that.**
- **I've heard a lot of people who are in favor of this plan (for Lynnhurst) and people are generally excited about it, especially daylighting the tributary.**

The CAC then opened discussion to the public regarding the Lynnhurst Focus Area. *(It should be noted that this was not part of the meeting agenda.)*

#### Summary of Public Questions/Comments on Lynnhurst Focus Area Concept

- **Concern raised over water quality after a rainstorm**
  - **A: MPRB monitors all aquatic facilities for water quality and safety.**
- **Q: Is there a way to make room for a creek splash pad in the future?**
  - **A: It does not seem balanced to have more than one aquatic facility in this park, when no other parks have multiple aquatic facilities.**
- **Q: Can you describe the new bridge concept on 50<sup>th</sup> Street?**
  - **A: The bridge concept involves raising the roadway and lowering the trail below. Preliminary study shows this is possible. Detailed design and engineering will occur at the time of implementation.**
- **Q: How will these improvements be funded?**
  - **A: We have \$1.2M in funding to complete near-term projects, which will be identified through the master plan process. The plan will provide guidance for collaborative implementation through partnership with MCWD, City of Minneapolis, and MPRB. The master plan will also serve as a tool for future grants and other forms of fundraising. The plan will help to guide future capital improvement funding allotted through MPRB as well.**
- **Q: How can the public communicate with the CAC?**
  - **A: The CAC is not responsible for collecting public input, that is the role of the project team and MPRB staff. All comments, questions can be submitted either through the online survey, found on the project website, or by contacting Adam Arvidson (email: [AArvidson@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:AArvidson@minneapolisparcs.org)). The project team forwards community input to the CAC, which is also found on the project website (in both summary and direct forms).**

- I have a concern over the lack of diversity at these meetings, in the plan process. I have a proposal to have a big meeting with everyone who is impacted by the plan.
- Concern that there is a 'veil of secrecy' about the project, lack of communication about the project in general. I'm upset that I learned about the project from my neighbor.
  - A: Re-iteration of the outreach efforts over the last year (emails, meetings, social media, events, signage along the parkway). Communication is a shared responsibility; we should all be talking to our neighbors.
  - A: Clarification that CAC meetings are public, this is a public process and there are no private meetings between CAC members to discuss the project. All information shared is public, and as up-to-date as physically possible.

After the public discussion, the CAC voted to approve the Lynnhurst Concept, as approved by the Lynnhurst Subcommittee, with a vote of 10 CAC members in favor and 2 CAC members opposed.

At this time in the meeting, it was decided by the CAC to allow for further public comment, in lieu of continuing with the meeting agenda.

#### Summary of Further Public Questions/Comments

- Q: How late will lighting be turned on in the activity area shown in the Nicollet Focus Area?
  - A: The master plan concepts don't address this level of detail for any of the areas. For these projects, as well as any other MPRB project, further detailed design occurs with community engagement with the surrounding neighbors at the time of implementation.
- Q: Has a tree inventory been completed? I have concerns about loss of significant trees.
  - A: MPRB keeps an inventory of trees through the forestry department. For any project, we try to preserve as many healthy trees as possible and it is not our intention to remove trees unnecessarily. At the time of implementation, further design, engineering, and surveying will be completed to ensure that trees are preserved as much as possible. Trees provide significant flood and erosion mitigation and are very valuable for many reasons.
- Q: Can we have a meeting to just talk about Segments 2 and 3? I have concerns about Nicollet Hollow area.
  - A: That was the plan for this meeting, but it was decided to use the time for public comment rather than discuss the plans. We will have to discuss these areas in future meetings.
- Q: Can the traffic study include examination of the closure of the lower road at Nicollet?
  - A: Yes
- Concern over trees to be removed for stormwater wetland areas.
  - A: Detailed design at the time of implementation will consider the location of existing trees, with restoration efforts working around existing trees as much as possible. We can include design principles in the master plan that address the preservation of existing trees.
- Q: Can the traffic study plan/methodology be made public? I'm concerned about transparency in the process.

- **A: The study will be made public. Until we know the scope, we can't say what will be included in the study. This will need to be determined with the help of the traffic engineering consultant. We will do our best to make all information public and transparent.**
- **Q: Was Burrough's Elementary School consulted on the Lynnhurst Focus Area Concept Plan?**
  - **A: Yes, and staff is supportive of the plan.**
- **Q: Is there information on numbers of people who use the creek for business purposes? I'm concerned about a kayak/canoe drop-off service I've seen recently.**
  - **A: We are looking into this.**
- **Q: How much did the Lyndale Avenue trail project cost? I'd like to get an idea of costs.**
  - **A: We don't have that information on-hand at this meeting. Please contact Adam Arvidson to request this information and he will provide it.**

**Items from the agenda that were not addressed during CAC #8 due to lack of time:**

**5. CAC Discussion - Discussion of Segment and Focus Area Concepts (+/- 60 mins)**

- **Review/ Discussion of Segment 3**
  - **Review Segment 3 Concept**
    - **Summary of Feedback**
  - **Review Portland + Parkway Focus Area**
    - **Summary of Feedback**
- **Review/ Discussion of Segment 2**
  - **Review Segment 2 Concept**
    - **Summary of Feedback**
    - **Revised Concept 7/8/19**
      - **Picnic and Creek Access moved from Pratt Ave. area west to area south of the Parkway between Garfield and Harriet Ave.**
      - **Open area east of Harriet Ave, south of the pedestrian bridge designated to be seeded for future pollinator lawn**
  - **Review Nicollet Focus Area**
    - **Summary of Feedback**
    - **Revised Concept 7/8/19**
      - **Parking area under Nicollet Avenue revised with pull-off spaces from existing roadway. Bike trail in this area to use existing trail with modification west of the Nicollet Bridge.**

- Area designated for recreation limited to below the Nicollet bridge with surrounding area designated to be seeded for future pollinator lawn with existing trees to remain.
  - Median removed from Nicollet Avenue intersection, with note to enhance intersection treatments for improved pedestrian crossing.
  - Creek access and picnic area near Pratt Avenue moved to area between Harriet and Garfield Ave. (see Segment 2 Revised Concept 7/8/19).
  - Open area east of Harriet Ave, south of the pedestrian bridge designated to be seeded for future pollinator lawn (see Segment 2 Revised Concept 7/8/19).
- Recap previous Discussion of Segment 1
  - Review Segment 1 Concept
    - Summary of Feedback
    - Revised Concept 7/8/19
      - Natural surface trail between Forest Dale and Upton Avenue revised.
      - Enhanced intersection crossing for pedestrians added at Upton Avenue for natural surface trail connections
      - Picnic area and creek access area moved west to existing picnic area
  - Review Penn – Newton – Morgan Focus Area
    - Summary of Feedback
    - Revised Concept 7/8/19
      - Revised Stormwater BMP design east of Penn Avenue with further consideration of existing tree location. Removal of Creekside natural surface trail in this area.

## 6. Public Comment

## 7. Next Steps

- Next CAC Meeting date to be determined (September/October), dependent on transportation study
- Online Survey for Preferred Concepts (launched 5/30) to close on Friday, July 12.