



Friends of Cedar Lake Minutes

August 21, 2014

Attendees: Dale Todd, Mike Kuntz, Felicia Wyrick, Martin Smith, Leland Frieie, Gary Thompson, Charlie Viser, Ryan Anderson, Ron Gonder, Tim Moran, Kurt Nilssen, Greg Sandberg, Kandy Sands, Robin Kash, Gary Driscoll, Steve Krug

Meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m..

Minutes from July 24 were approved.

Media Outreach

Presented to State Rep Art Staedt and future Rep Liz Bennett. Goal was to educate them about our efforts to date and talk about what they can do at the State level to gain support, i.e. making sure the Lake Restoration Fund gets funded so when we reach the point that we can apply there is money available. Staedt posted on his FB page after our meeting that "It is crystal clear that the right thing to do is clean up Cedar Lake and make it a great recreational amenity for our city." We'll also be reaching out to Rep. Wally Horn and Sen Rob Hogg (after the election).

Sag Wagon is planning a fall clean up on October 18. We'll be helping Marty promote it. Also talking to them about permanent FCL signs, More details at next meeting.

Friends of Cedar Lake has 1150 friends on Facebook. Invite your friends to like our page to build our audience. Need letters to the editor to start flowing again to let the players know we're not going away and to keep our efforts in the public eye,

John Campbell's Big Ol' Fish segment with Moran fishing at the lake ran last week. Kudos to 'Bugs' for catching fish AND capturing the urban lake fishing experience for the audience. He also put in a great plug for the future of the lake.

5013c Status

Erger is getting close to finalizing our application for submission to the state.

Cedar Lake Past Rain Events

Smith and Robin Kash went down to the lake after the last rain event to try to assess how it may have contributed to the back up. The City believes that it had no impact. Smith presented data that theoretically refutes this.

Dale: I pulled this from Martin's email. Does this capture what he said?

The rapid rise in lake level and subsequent slow fall is due to the outlet from the lake not having a way to increase its flow in response to lake inflow, but only to lake level. Further, the response to lake level results in an outflow rate far smaller than the inflow rate of any significant rainstorm. For major storms, we saw the result on the news today (30 June), unless you were in it.

The Kenwood Ditch and Meadowbrook drainage basins make up most of the Cedar Lake watershed area as shown on "Streamstats". The remainder of that watershed is some narrow areas around the lake that drain directly into the lake, without reaching either McCloud's Run or the "E" Avenue storm sewer and a sliver that reaches up to Daniels Park and Garfield School. On the City's watersheds map, these areas are most of the area shown as "Downtown", but "Streamstats" is more accurate regarding what actually goes into the lake

Like the McCloud's Run drainage, the topography is steep in many places and soils in many places are highly erodible. The largest branch of the Kenwood Ditch begins in the area of Elmcrest Country Club, with other branches coming from the east near "C" Avenue in the Kenwood area. Other branches begin above Arthur School and near Washington High School. At least some of the branches are perennial, with springs, I think, in the Elmcrest area and upstream of Arthur School. The flow from near Franklin Middle School is now augmented by the school's heat pump well.

The Meadowbrook branch arises somewhere near Memorial Drive and Meadowbrook Drive SE. Because it is and has long been entirely underground in hard sewers, it is difficult to characterize the normal flow. Probably it is perennial, because the stream through Bever Park (which drains to Indian Creek) seems to always have some flow. This branch follows Meadowbrook Drive and then somehow gets to Grande Avenue. It is where the sewer backups in the Redmond Park area get the water supply.

Kuntz shared his thoughts on other factors that impacted the flooding. He made the point that the storm system isn't a closed system. It's open to handle a tremendous amount of water. More research needs to be done to know exactly what happened and what needs to be done to prevent it in the future.

The river definitely backed up into the lake and brought in significant amounts of sediment. As the South cell continues to fill in, the backup will continue to increase. It also impacts the future of the lake as a fishery because that's where the deepest water is.

We're still pushing for flood control with the City. We're being told that discussions about expanding flood protection at this point could jeopardize their application that's in front of FEMA. Elgin assured us that after the money is in hand, he would support going back for protection for the lake. We will also need five votes on the council.

Confluence Presentation/Contract Extension

Anderson gave a great presentation on urban lake restoration success stories at our last meeting. He cited the Dyko project in Des Moines as an example of a multi-faceted project with residential and retail amenities. It was a very toxic area which is adjacent to the Racoon River so it was complicated. Cedar Lake cleanup seems small in comparison.

Freie asked about the viability of both developing the area around the lake and maintaining it for future wildlife habitat. Anderson believes that there is a way to balance both so that the habitat can also be an attraction.

The Mayor and most of council seem supportive of amending the Confluence contract to include the lake. Confluence estimates that it will take an additional \$15,000 to complete the preliminary plan that they have already completed. Our goal is to get some hard costs to the proposed projects so that we can start raising funds to accomplish them. Wyrick made the point that while we're supportive of the Greenway project, it seems wrong to invest in those areas that were created because of the flood and ignore an urban lake that has always been in the heart of our city.

Liability Concerns

There are legitimate concerns about liabilities on behalf of Alliant and the city, but inaction without accurate information is unacceptable. There are numerous examples of utilities decommissioning a plant and investing significantly in the area during the process. Community reinvestment can garner significant amounts of good will for the utility. In Iowa, decommissioning isn't regulated by the Utility Board. Two parts of DNR oversee it and are involved with the ash ponds. In other states, there is a public process.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM

Next meeting: ????, at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Felicia Wyrick