



## **Friends of Cedar Lake Minutes**

November 20, 2014

Attendees: Dale Todd, Felicia Wyrick, Martin Smith, Leland Frieie, Charlie Visek, Ryan Anderson, Ron Gonder, Tim Moran, Gregg Stark, Karen Erger, Rich Patterson, Ron Valenta, Gary Thompson, Joe Sanfilippo, Nate Whipple, David Andrews, Glenn Kimball, Mary Meisterling, Don Steichen, Mike Butterfield, Susan Marshall, Daniel Givvings, Mike Kuntz, Sandy Pumphrey, Dan Miller.

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

Minutes from October 1 were approved.

### **Outreach**

A pivotal article appeared in the Gazette, prompted by a letter from IDNR to Mayor Corbett showing support for the Cedar Lake project and advocating for flood protection in order to be eligible for the Lake Restoration Program. Mayor Corbett stepping up and has been showing support for our efforts, it is critical because the ownership issue is integral in being able to move forward. FCL had really done as much as we can do to this point and now we have the right people engaging in terms of ownership of the lake and its associated challenges.

Dale and Felicia recently presented to the Uptown District and they will be a great partner not only because of the lake's proximity to their district but they have some exciting things planned in terms of trail extensions, special events such as the Taste of Uptown next April. Their group sees our efforts as a potential boon to the vitality of their neighborhood.

Next Monday we're doing a follow up presentation to the Linn County Board of Supervisors to share the urban lake restoration success stories Ryan (Confluence) put together. They are interested in these stories because if they are going to be in the discussion about ownership, they want to understand what other communities have done when dealing with sedimentation, toxic material, etc.

FCL also have gave our initial presentation to Council members Gulick and Shields and we feel fairly certain that we have support for flood protection from the Council. The concern was funding for the extension to protect the lake. \$50 million has been thrown out but no one really knows. What the Mayor would like to do is ask the State Legislature to extend the local option tax to pay for flood protection.

FCL also did an interview on WMT. Great interest from Bob Bruce as well. A couple of supportive letters to the editor and we need to continue to keep them coming.

Sag Wagon Clean Up was lightly attended, but the good news is that the area around the lake was fairly clean. It appears that users are taking it upon themselves to pick up trash on an ongoing basis.

### **Debris Clean Up**

Charlie (Tuna) did a shoreline assessment of large items that need to be cleaned up, most of which are in the lake. He identified which entities should be responsible for those items. Mary Meisterling from Alliant gave an update on the demolition of the power plant which will take about a year. They have cut off access to the lake so they are no longer interacting with the water. The individual who is responsible for Lake Cleanup is also heading up the demolition so there hasn't been time to take care of any of the items in the lake. Felicia asked why volunteers wouldn't be allowed to help with this effort. Mary said it was her understanding that DNR has to grant permission to remove anything from the bed of the lake. Joe will check on this policy and the request would have to come from Alliant. Felicia raised the idea of volunteers signing a waiver of liability and use this manpower to get the debris out of the lake and overcome the time constraints on Alliant's part.

The decommissioning process involved removal of the steam lines, imploding of the plant, and then cleaning up the ash ponds. Most of the asbestos has been removed from the area and any material around the plant will be put in the ash ponds and capped. Alliant isn't willing to take the risk of testing the area around the lake and the bottom of the lake and suggested that if the City takes over ownership, they could take responsibility for testing. Joe will check on the parameters of decommissioning and what area Alliant would be responsible for.

### **Water Levels**

Alliant presented the recommendation that the planks that keep water levels up be reinstalled to the demolition contractor. The demolition contractor requested that this not happen until demolition is complete because water reentering the area would complicate the process. As soon as they're done, they'll be reinstalled.

### **501c3 Status**

The papers will be filed this week. The Greater Cedar Rapids Foundation has agreed to be a holding entity for pass through funds for capital improvements. We will start second rounds with all of the interested parties to start asking for funds.

### **FCL Task Force**

We believe this will consist of Mayor Corbett, Ralph Russell, Justin Shields, Brent Oleson and Ben Rogers. We met with them to start the discussion about entering into an agreement between the City and the County that would assume ownership between the two and responsibility for possible liabilities. The first phase would be an environmental assessment to figure out what might be in the sediment lake. This is an evaluation of prior studies. We take into consideration all of the data that has been collected to date from City, DNR, EPA, Alliant, etc. It would also be good to know what might have been found at the Terex demo site as this could possibly affect the lake from the watershed. From that we'll know that there are no red flags here, but maybe we've got just a bunch of muck. This should give elected officials enough confidence to go to the next phase which will be to write the EPA grant to help pay for core samples, water quality, hydrology, etc. This is the closest we have ever been to getting the lake cleaned up.

### **Beer Caves**

Interest was gauged in exploring the possibility of making them an attraction in the area.

**Fishing Report**

Charlie shared photos of the wide variety of fish that were caught in the lake. When we do presentations, people don't realize that there is good fishing there, very healthy. We could post these on our Facebook page to promote this.

**Watershed Awareness**

Leland suggested a project to put the do not dump on drains. We're presenting to the Women's League of Voters and this might be a great project for their Water Quality Committee. Also signs to designate the watershed.

**Introduced Sandy Pumphrey**

He recently joined the City as Project Engineer/Stormwater Manager. The City is very concerned with the storm sewer challenges and this is part of his responsibilities. He reminded the group of the City's flood mitigation public input meeting scheduled for Dec. 18, from 6-8, at the City Services building.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM

Next meeting: December 17, at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Felicia Wyrick.