



Friends of Cedar Lake Minutes

May 21, 2015

Attendees: Dale Todd, Felicia Wyrick, Martin Smith, Charlie Visek, Bugs Moran, Nate Whipple, Greg Nalley, Steve Kalkhoff, Molly Tackaberry, Leland Freie, Karen Erger, Kate Hawkins, Stacie Johnson, Marty St. Clair, Dan Miller, Rich Patterson, Mari Phelan, Ryan Anderson, Ron Gonder, Daniel Gibbins, Greg Sundberg, Kurt Nilsson, Mari Phelan.

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

Minutes from 4/21/15 were approved.

Outreach

Presentations include Trees Forever and we see opportunities to partner with them in the future. We also presented to ITC, who have been good stewards of the lake's trail, repairing any damage they may cause when doing work on their lines. They also have a program where they plant wildflowers underneath new lines. They've already done this on the Sac and Fox trail. We tabled at EcoFest and despite the weather, had 75+ engaged conversations. We are presenting to the Regional Sustainable Business Alliance next week and incorporating a walk around the lake. We are tabling at the Irish District Fest and we need volunteers for this event, June 20. The Voice of Cedar Lake Band will be playing again this year. We also sent a letter of support for the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.

Treasurer's report

Karen reported that it is very easy to donate to the Friends of Cedar Lake Fund through the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation site, gcrf.org. They automatically send you a receipt after you donate which you can use for tax purposes.

Dale said the first thing we need to get funding for is completion of the Confluence Master Plan. This is important to progress with the MOU group because some members are struggling with defining our goals for end use of the lake. Confluence's estimate to finalize the plan is \$15,000. Ryan added that even though that may seem like a big number, it will be critical for progress because we'll have a very cohesive plan to guide us.

Great news!

We just learned that the DNR has removed Cedar Lake from the impaired list and will be lifting the fish consumption advisory that has been in place since 1986. There will be a story in the Gazette and we're trying to secure coverage from the television stations.

MOU

Kurt presented Terracon's findings of the World Class Graphics site and surrounding properties to the MOU group. They definitely viewed this as good news as we move ahead with further testing. We requested that Alliant share their plan for closing the ash ponds and right now their plan is to cap them and plant grass seed. The EPA has two levels of ash pond deregulation: one is closure, which this plan qualifies for, and the other is remediation. We pushed back and said that if this is really going to be a study group, other options should be considered. We're pushing for the sediment testing to be done to give the City the comfort level it needs to take over ownership of the lake. We are asking the City to apply for an EPA Assessment Grant that will help pay for some of these costs.

Trail signage for ER

Charlie requested that mile markers be posted to help first responders find lake users who have called 911. Daniel reported that LCTA painted markings on the trail but it didn't weather well. Ron Griffiths from the City is working with LCTA and others to develop a system that will translate to the different trail names. The importance of implementing this plan gets increasingly important as the trail becomes even busier.

Invasive Species

Rich talked about the proliferation of pollinator-friendly plants that are growing along the lake shoreline, i.e. Canada Anemone, False Wild Indigo, Iris and a lot of Milk Weed. He will work with Felicia on a press release about our support of the Parks Department keeping these native species in place and encourage people to come out and see the wildflowers and the butterflies that they will attract. Because EVERYBODY loves butterflies.

Watershed Management Efforts

Stacie gave a comprehensive report on the size of the Cedar Lake watershed. She shared maps that showed the boundaries and it was enlightening to comprehend exactly how big it is. To give some perspective, Washington High School and All Saints Church are in the watershed. There are 1000+ storm drains that feed into the lake. There are very few retention basins or storm water easements. A successful management plan will depend on educating the 7000+ households and the large businesses with a lot of impervious surface to become stewards of their properties. (The attached maps provide detail on total acres, residential vs non-residential, impervious vs non-impervious surface, etc.) Stacie will continue to work with Casey Hutchinson with the City to study the watershed and put together a management plan required for DNR's Lake Restoration Program.

Kiosks

The key to the kiosks has been found! Felicia inspected them with Ron Griffiths, City Bike Coordinator, and there was a fair amount of damage to the acrylic doors. These are owned by LCTA so we'll be contacting them to see what they have planned for repair.

Water Levels

There was discussion about the flow diverter at McCloud Run that currently isn't functioning. Alliant is sensitive to water levels while it is completing decommissioning of the plant so nothing can be done now. We will keep this on the radar screen as a lot of silt comes into the lake from there and diverting the flow during heavy rain events to the river might be a good long term solution. It has also been pointed out that preventing McCloud Run from flowing into the lake would reduce the size of the watershed, something that is a consideration for watershed management funding. Clearly, a thorough hydrology study is needed.

USGS

Representatives from United States Geological Survey attended the meeting and reported that they have experience taking core samples from the bottom of lakes. Determining what's on the bottom is important because it could be impacting the health of the fishery and will be critical if dredging is determined to be the best method to improve depth. They may be able to assist in updating these samples with funding through their cooperative program. USGS pays 40% and a municipality or non-profit pays 60%.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 PM

Next meeting: June 18, 2015 at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Felicia Wyrick