

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
DRAFT**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Citizens Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Community Room at the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District offices.

**2. CAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bill Bushnell, Colin Cox, Peter Rechelbacher, Jerry Ciardelli, Jacqueline Di Giacomo, Brian Girard, Richard Manser, Cristina Palmisano, Neil Weber and Marc Rosenberg

**MANAGERS PRESENT**

Jeff Casale

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Darren Lochner, Brett Eidem, Becky Christopher and Lars Erdahl

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*The agenda was approved.*

**4. APPROVAL OF February 11<sup>th</sup> MINUTES**

**4.1 February 11, 2015 minutes**

Ciardelli moved to approve minutes of the meeting as amended and seconded by Cox. Motion carried, none opposed.

**5. REPORT FROM STAFF**

**5.1 Legislative Update** – Administrator, Lars Erdahl provided an update on current legislation. Some of the issues being discussed at the Capitol include: AIS decal and rules, inspections, and statewide buffer policy. Joel Carlson, the MCWD lobbyist also provides regular updates to partners. There is an opportunity to share these updates with CAC members.

**5.2 Non-point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) update** – an update was provided on programming from 2014. Several education programs are planned for the upcoming year including: on the water boat tour, education program in conjunction with Clean Water Summit and fall program on chlorides hosted at Minnetonka Public Works.

**6. REPORT FROM CAC MEMBERS**

All CAC members provided a brief introduction on their backgrounds and reasons for serving on the CAC.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

**7.1 MCWD Comprehensive Planning process** – Planning staff, Becky Christopher, provided an overview of the 2017 comprehensive planning process. The comprehensive plan is a 10 year planning document that is designed to be a guiding document for the watershed district. The CAC will be updated regularly on the planning process and be asked to provide input on the plan development. Some of the focus of the plan will be exploring ways to strengthen partnerships and identify core focus areas for the next 10 years. A pdf of the presentation will be included along with the CAC minutes.

## **7.2 Cost Share – Nokomis Neighbors for Clean Water Project, Minneapolis**

Last year, Metro Blooms and MCWD collaborated on a demonstration alleyway stormwater management improvement project as a community engagement opportunity to treat residential runoff, create wildlife habitat corridors within an urban fabric, and celebrate a neighborhood scale effort that aligns goals of government entities and the public to protect Lake Nokomis. This initial alleyway retrofit was implemented to increase awareness of stormwater management on a residential and community scale and leverage greater opportunities within the subwatershed. Metro Blooms has collaborated with the City of Minneapolis and MCWD to apply for a BWSR Clean Water Fund Grant, which was recently awarded to the city for this project. The project also received funds from Hennepin County, stretching the budget and minimizing the cost to homeowners for the construction of these BMPs.

As part of its review of the project, staff applied the new cost share evaluation criteria. Staff reviewed this process at the March 5, 2015 Operations and Programs Committee meeting, where the committee recommended to hold a public hearing and project funding at the Board of Managers meeting on March 26, 2015.

The project has a three year implementation plan that will install 180 BMPs in 15 alleyways in the Lake Nokomis subwatershed. Homeowner and community awareness of water quality is the main focus of this project, and will be ongoing throughout the three year construction of the project. Metro Blooms has aligned the goals of the project with that of the District, by identifying areas of the Nokomis subwatershed for residential BMP implementation with District areas of focus (identified in the MCWD Water Resource Comprehensive Plan). They have identified 15 block leaders to conduct the peer to peer outreach to gain community capacity for getting enough interested homeowners to construct 12-15 BMPs per alleyway. MCWD funds will be administered by Metro Blooms, and will go directly towards the construction of the alleyway BMPs as well as design and construction management. Staff recommends funding 75%, not to exceed our Community Engagement project cap of \$100,000. With the new program structure and reporting requirements of community engagement projects, staff has worked out a phased reimbursement of the project. There is a detailed construction schedule, which has 5 install dates for 2-4 alleyways with each time period. Staff proposes 5 installments of \$20,000, one after each 2-4 alleyway construction and receiving the annual reporting requirements on outreach impacts within the community.

CAC members were in favor of this targeted neighborhood approach for implementing stormwater BMPs. This project could be a good model for other neighborhoods. After discussion on this project Bushnell moved to approve funding and Weber seconded the motion. The motion was carried and none opposed.

## **7.3 Cost Share – Parkway Place Townhome Association, Minneapolis**

The Board of Parkway Place Townhome Association (Parkway Place), a 22-unit association in South Minneapolis, intends to contract with Earth Wizards for construction of a major stormwater runoff retrofit. They will use all of the best management practices to improve water quality and significantly decrease the quantity of water runoff from our property, which is adjacent to Minnehaha Creek. The project will also include demonstration and education outreach beyond the association, including potential partnerships with the larger townhome management group and nearby schools. The project will be possible only through grants from MCWD and Hennepin County. Terry Hammink, a 2013 Master Water Steward, has taken the lead on this project and has been working with his Townhome Association, the District, and multiple contractors for 2 years to develop the entire site retrofit. Terry installed a rain garden on his property as his capstone project through the MWS program, and has been an advocate for stormwater management since.

The project proposes above ground BMPs and proposes shrinking the impervious surface within the Townhome complex drainage area by 22% to minimize runoff. With the site's close proximity to Minnehaha Creek (immediately to the north), several BMPs would have a positive impact on reducing peak flows normally directed to the creek untreated. The proposed project has potential to capture 387,000 gallons of runoff onsite, and would reduce runoff volume by 99%, total suspended solids by 99% and total phosphorus by 98%. Although the site total reductions are only capturing onsite runoff, the project also has great potential for outreach through demonstration of what a townhome complex creates for stormwater runoff and how to minimize the impact of natural resources through smart design. The townhome association has identified multiple partners, some of which are already involved in the project like Master Water Stewards (Freshwater Society), Macalester College, Cities Management, Mayflower Church and Nextdoor Page (a social network within the Page neighborhood). The THA has also received a \$50,000 grant from Hennepin County for the project as well. Future potential partners are Friends of Diamond Lake, Washburn High School, and the City of Minneapolis.

Staff has worked on a phasing plan with the association, based on their contributions and what could be installed as separate phases. Staff has reviewed the project through the new cost share evaluation criteria, and recommends funding 75%, not to exceed our Community Engagement project cap of \$100,000. Preliminarily, staff is proposing funding the project at \$100,000 over a three year period. We would reimburse the project up to \$50,000/yr for the cost for year one's construction, followed by \$25,000 each of the next two years based on construction of phase 2 construction, and would require annual reporting on outreach plan. This would include numbers of people reached through tours, implementation of educational signage, and contingent on formalizing the potential partnerships with schools and the city/county.

CAC members emphasized the need for this project to focus on education and outreach to the surrounding neighborhoods. After discussion on this project Weber moved to approve funding and Bushnell seconded the motion. The motion was carried and none opposed.

### **7.3 Cost Share – Union Congregational Church, St. Louis Park**

Union Congregational Church is a small congregation in St. Louis Park with large opportunities for water quality improvement and education and outreach within the community. This project is led by two 2014 Master Water Stewards, Sue Nissen and Randy Holst. The church is located just west of Hwy 7 and Hwy 100, and is less than a mile from the Districts geographic focus of the Urban Corridor in St. Louis Park. The MWS worked with District staff, Metro Blooms and Ecoscapes to create an entire site retrofit to capture as much of the runoff from the 1.2 acre site as possible. After reviewing their budget, there is not an opportunity to implement the entire site retro fit even with District funding assistance. Similar to the past funded cost share project at St. Luke Presbyterian Church in Minnetonka, we identified the most visible BMPs with the highest potential for water quality impact. The project proposes a two cell rain garden on the most visible corner of the property, capturing a majority of the sites impervious surface. This raingarden will capture a majority of the sites parking lot, and will have a catch basin to contain a majority of the sediment from runoff before it gets into the rain garden, increasing the longevity and minimizing the maintenance needs for it. The project is also proposing a large above ground cistern to capture and re-use roof runoff for their existing vegetable garden.

The church is connected to KidZone, a neighborhood daycare (voted best daycare in SLP in 2014-SLP Magazine). The staff at KidZone already embraces authentic curriculum about the environment and sustainability. They raise organic foods for their

own kitchen and donation in the church vegetable garden. This spring all five classrooms are starting plants (including native plants) from seed, for their garden plots at the church and their home gardens. The daycare is highly enthusiastic and committed to incorporating numerous lessons about rain gardens, water usage, native plants, and pollinators into their curriculum. Hopkins and St. Louis Park high schools both have Environmental Science Clubs. Students in the clubs often need volunteer hours. Kirk Shoeger, who teaches at Hopkins High School, is contacting the clubs to explore strategies for students to volunteer. The church proposes creating an outdoor area to rest and reflect, study or connect with others, by installing a 10' by 10' Chilton stone nestled between the second garden and the church at the corner of Alabama Avenue and Oxford Street. Stepping-stones will lead from the sidewalk along Alabama Avenue into the sitting area. This area will be a highly visible, welcoming space for the community. It's a place for classes to study, students to take their parents, congregants to gather and neighbors to explore. District staff will work with the church to create educational signage on benefits of the raingarden, but also will connect this project to other District initiatives in the area for greater education of MCWD.

The total project cost is approximately \$21,850, which includes the raingarden outreach sitting area and an estimate of \$1,500 for educational signage. Staff reviewed the project through the community engagement evaluation criteria, and is recommending funding of 75% of the project, not to exceed \$16,387.50.

CAC members were in favor of this project however they discussed the value of the stepping stone area near the rain gardens. The stepping stone area provides direct access to the rain gardens and provides more opportunity for outreach and education. After discussion on this project Weber moved to approve funding and Bushnell seconded the motion. The motion was carried and Rechelbacher opposed.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

8.1 **Brainstorming of CAC agenda topics for 2015**

CAC members recommended moving this agenda item to the next meeting.

8.2 **Formation of CAC sub-committees**

It was suggested to consider forming a sub-committee to discuss cost-share grant proposals. The sub-committees would be asked to review proposals only when there was several cost-share grants on the agenda. Some CAC members valued having these discussions as a full group vs. using the sub-committee framework. The CAC will discuss the formation of sub-committees as the need arises. Another example of a CAC subcommittee is the Cynthia Krieg education grant program.

9. **SPECIAL ITEMS TO ADDRESS BY CAC/STAFF BEFORE NEXT MEETING**

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

***Bushnell motioned to adjourn the CAC meeting at 9:05 p.m. Rechelbacher seconded the motion. Motion carried, none opposed.***