



Citizen Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

February 9th, 2021 6:30-8:30 pm – VIA Zoom

1. 6:30 PM: Welcome & Introductions: Paige Ahlborg, Bill Bartodziej, Seth Bartodziej, Jill Danner, Randee Edmundson, Hallie Finucane, Mark Gernes, Sean Gosiewski (Resilient Cities & Communities), Jennifer Gruetzman, Lauren Hazenson, Kathryn Keefer, Dana Larsen-Ramsay, Linda Neilson, Scott Ramsay, Karen Wold
2. 6:50 PM: Annual organizational meeting items
 - a. Officer Elections (Chair and Vice Chair) – Dana
 - Dana was re-elected as chair by consensus
 - Mark Gernes was re-elected as vice-chair
 - b. Update our CAC member contact list – Dana
 - Michele Hanson is still volunteering at Yellowstone and plans to do so for another year. She has resigned from the CAC until she can be local. She is very interested in helping with plantings and events when around.
 - Dennis McComas also resigned due to his busy work schedule that prohibits him from committing to the CAC as he would like to. He may reapply after retirement.
 - Members contact information/email preferences were reviewed.
 - c. Update on CAC inactive members and new member recruitment – Dana & Carrie/Lauren
 - See past meeting minutes for the outreach strategy which went mostly as planned.
 - Eleven people have applied. Roseville (2), White Bear Lake, Woodbury (3), New Brighton, St. Paul (2), Maplewood, North St. Paul.
 - Several also fit the Water Stewards, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, & school volunteer/staff categories.
 - d. December Meeting Date Issue – Dana
 - There were mistakenly two different dates on documents for the December 2021 CAC meeting, 12/7 and 12/14. After a discussion, the majority of the group preferred the 7th or were neutral. The date will remain on the 7th as shown on the calendar given to CAC members and volunteers.
3. 7:05 PM: Water Trail Video Project – Seth Bartodziej, Lauren Hazenson
 - a. Lauren collected goals/vision ideas for the Phalen Water Trail video project
 - Add to the [existing drone footage video](#) with interesting ‘person-based’ content.
 - Motivate people to get out and experience the chain of lakes.
 - Audience: experienced recreators, and people who are new to the area or sports, etc. The group wanted to include all of these. Show both groups (experienced and non-experienced) how they fit in there.
 - Add enrichment to the users’ knowledge of the area regardless of experience level; either as a new skill or a fact about the area.

- To raise awareness even with local people who may not know about the chain as a resource.
 - To teach visitors/residents about the watershed district.
 - Highlighting public access points.
 - Highlight what fish you can catch in each lake and historical points.
 - Create footage for each point on the paper map.
 - Point out that at Phalen you can boat without motor boats around you.
 - Walking trails are great opportunities for dog walkers, runners, swimmers, triathletes, bird watchers, cold water athletes, etc.
 - Include opportunities for those who don't have the physical or financial means to get on the water.
- b. May be good to take these goals and products to develop something similar for the Owasso Chain, but the goal is to finish this one first.
- c. Lauren has been looking at the metrics and most people only watch our videos on social media for about a minute. The water trail map video could be divided up into several short but impactful content clips.
- d. Seth has shot a lot of footage over the last few months
- Street drains, leaf pileups, showing where RWMWD office is in relation to Gervais, access points, ice fishing (walleye hole), etc.
 - Seth showed last winter's video work on snow/ice on Lake Phalen ([link here](#))
 - Suggested getting more footage of diversity.
 - Tuj Lub courts at Keller Park, an aerial view or eye-level would be great.
- e. Other ideas:
- Get in touch with partners to collaborate:
 - Corrina from Boys and Girls Club– ask students and staff there “what do you do at Lake Phalen?” “Why do you go there?” “Why is the lake important to you?”
 - Lower Phalen Creek (Indigenous input)
 - Adventure Scouts (St. Paul) teenage, all genders
 - Youth artists
 - Aloun Phoulavan (aphoulavan@yahoo.com), St. Paul art teacher
 - Local schools
 - Go out to the lakes and interview people who are already there
 - Seth suggested developing mini interviews or surveys to ask use/meaning questions. Randee says for schools, a survey would be good. For Boys and Girls, call to interview.
 - Bill: sees lots of ‘spontaneous recreation’ like kids on bikes with fishing poles, and big groups picnicking/family gathering point. He is observing many more kayakers in the last few years. Having proper access points are helpful. Bill has observed that the demographics change from the north side to the south side of Phalen Chain. Do we point that out or not? If so, how? Or how can we get the different groups to go further up or down the chain?
 - Linda: when she dropped off maps at REI and the Roseville Library, people commented how great the maps were. It would be nice to have this video format to boost that physical map resource.
 - Ask people to create their own mini-videos on their phone and submit their ideas.

4. 7:50 PM: Maplewood Climate Action Plan strategies – Sean Gosiewski
- a. The document being reviewed was developed by a collaborative planning team and is ready to go to the City Council.
 - b. Sean walked through parts of the plan. The group thought the graphics and content were interesting and thorough.
 - c. The outline included stormwater management plans and flooding mitigation/adaptation. These goals align well with RWMWD goals.
 - d. BARR Engineering and Maplewood Public Works are cautious about the costs of upgrades, so partnering with RWMWD is important.
 - e. Sean asked staff members present at the meeting how/if the goals in the plan for flooding and street improvement projects aligned. Paige and Bill responded that RWMWD does coordinate with the city on such efforts to try to install rain gardens, create restored buffer areas, etc. when those areas are being modified.
 - f. Sean asked CAC members to add their ideas on projects or areas of flooding in Maplewood. He said it would be good to have people comment in the survey to communicate what they value. Ideas from the CAC included:
 - Redevelopment opportunities tend to focus on job opportunities. Economic priorities can overtake the goals for natural green spaces and protection of habitat.
 - Preserving mature trees – can we encourage Maplewood to put in place a tree preservation ordinance?
 - Maplewood seems very focused on commerce, which is important, but the land, while essentially developed, continues to redevelop. Can we get them to think more about corridors and green infrastructure?
 - Post-covid, will people build differently with lighter plans for pavement and increased plans for safe/accessible spaces?
 - Education is needed to get residents on board.
 - Trees: Need a diversity of species. RWMWD does not do a lot with upland tree management unless it's part of a restoration buffer.
 - Scott attended a meeting about two properties that Ramsey County wants to dispose of, possibly for development. One is the Ponds at Battle Creek Golf Course. This course has an innovative and popular youth program. The other property is the 77-acre open space just north of the Ramsey County Correctional Facility/Nursery on Century Avenue. St. Paul Audubon has conducted a bird survey and recorded several species that are unique and rare in the metro area, including Dickcissel, Bobolink, and Clay-colored and Savannah Sparrows. The Mayor of Maplewood seems interested in keeping the golf course as is. Scott suggested Ramsey County residents read the information at the provided links and share their opinions via a March Zoom meeting or by writing to their County Commissioner. RWMWD has done a lot of work around the wetland on the golf course, and the city has been doing an amazing job maintaining those. The links will be emailed to the CAC.

Here are a couple links to the two properties in question:

- [Ponds at Battle Creek – now referred to as South Maplewood – Century Avenue Redevelopment Properties | Maplewood, MN](#)
- [Ramsey county-owned properties near Battle Creek Park | Saint Paul Audubon Society](#)

This is a link from Mark McCabe, Director, Ramsey County Parks:

- <https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/projects-initiatives/maplewood-properties-site-planning>.

- g. Maplewood Climate Action feedback page <https://palebluedot.llc/maplewood-cap-review-menu>
- There isn't a place for general comments, but those can be added in other areas in the survey or by attending a Zoom meeting being scheduled for some time in March.
 - They would like feedback by the end of March. The plan will go to the Maplewood City Council in April. The links to the information will be emailed to the CAC so they can participate.
- h. CAC members (or their friends/family) can contact:
- Sean Gosiewski, Program Director, Resilient Cities & Communities, 612 250-0389 sean@rccmn.co and Alliance for Sustainability sean@afors.org
 - Shann Finwall, City of Maplewood Environmental Planner 651-249-2304 shann.finwall@maplewoodmn.gov
 - Ted Redmond, Co-Founder, Pale Blue Dot, 612-669-7056 tredmond@palebluedot.llc
5. 8:15 PM: Project, Activity & Event Updates
- a. Environmental Forum – Dana
- Still in planning stage, reaching out to potential speaker. It will be held before it gets warm outside.
- b. WaterFest – Carrie
- WaterFest Event Coordinator, Maddy Bohn sent out a survey to exhibitors and key participants (some CAC members responded, thank you for doing so).
 - Survey results we shown.
 - Maddy will work closely with staff and likely plan a few satellite mini-events throughout the summer or over a 10-day period. These could be a story walk, opportunity, spaced-out vendors in a park, a scavenger hunt, tours of important natural areas such as Tamarack Nature Preserve, Snail Lake Wetland restoration, etc.
- Other ideas:
- Self-guided pop-up events to capture people in the park at that time. Have water stewards or naturalists etc. to engage people at the site for a few hours on days that tend to be busy.
 - Adaptive Rec Specialist set up a sort of Clue game. Scott said the City of Richfield staff did this - they developed five different tools that were used, several suspects, several different parks. Very clever, and people really enjoyed it and got to know city staff and parks as a result.
 - This would be a great opportunity to get people to explore the watershed.
 - Get people to send photos and post to website.

- Randee; Farnsworth teacher David Barrett: Geocaching for trash. Scavenger hunt.
- Could have scavenger hunt that includes the website.
- A follow-up e-mail will be sent to the CAC asking for more input on WaterFest.

6. 8:20 PM: 2020 CAC Project Review and 2021 Project Plans – Future Meetings

- a. Salt Use Outreach/Education – CAC
- b. Create Invasive Species Education Pieces – CAC
- c. Annual RWMWD Excellence Awards – Dana
- d. CAC Visit to Artist Eric Sommers’ Glass Studio (2021?) – Dana
- e. Education Topics:
 - Invasive Species – Simba
 - Cultivars vs. Natives – Simba
 - Permitting – Nicole
- f. Water Trail Map
- g. Other ideas?

7. 8:25 PM: Community Announcements

- a. Have we been doing any salt use education? Scott talked to a couple businesses and inquired about their practices. Some use outside services and he found there was more awareness of salt concern than he thought. The post office and a few other places are on the far end of the spectrum, however, with piles of salt visible.
- b. Encourage use of brine instead of grain salt as it uses far less salt. H.B. Fuller has started making a transition to this, and so far, it is working well.

8. 8:30 PM: Adjourn

Future meetings:

- April 27th
- June 8th
- September 28th
- October 26th
- December 7th