

McDonald Creek Commission

Meeting Minutes for June 27, 2017

Present: Commissioners Harold "Hart" Kargenian, Jan Fuller, Jon Kindseth, Cathy Brady; volunteer Nancy Lutton; Alderman Larry Rosenthal

Absent: Rick Hartke

I. OPENING ITEMS

A. Minutes of 5/23/17 meeting approved as corrected by Jan F. (description of flood-prone area under New Business/ Purpose/ Flooding was incorrect; minutes amended to reflect Jan's corrections)

B. Next meeting - Jan suggested we meet in two weeks -- July 11, rather than waiting until 4th Tuesday. All agreed.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Communications with city, etc. Joe Wade is our point of contact with the city for now. All printed materials, website content or contacts with other agencies should go through him.

Ald. Rosenthal represents the area south of Camp McDonald Road where flooding is a problem. Other interested aldermen are Pat Ludvigsen, whose ward includes the creek south of Palatine Road, and Scott Williamson, who represents creek owners north of Palatine Road.

B. Historical information - Hart provided timeline and documents from previous creek committees and Ken Werner's 1980 report on flood-prone areas of the creek. Copies will be available at next meeting. Hart explained the distinction between a flood plain and a floodway, which is the narrow band of actively flowing water during a 100-year flood.

Ald. Rosenthal explained that the City no longer has fixed budgets for commissions; each must ask the City for money for specific purposes.

Discussion continued about ownership of creek vs. easements. Joe Wade's understanding (6/21/17 email to C. Brady) is that property owners own to the edge of the creek. Jan's property survey shows her property extends to the center of the creek. Hart's survey indicates he owns the creek because it isn't even shown as a creek on his map. Every property seems to be unique. All deeds include easements along the creek, but it is unclear the provisions/scope of such easements or to what party that easement is granted since many deeds pre-date the city's incorporation. These questions don't impact the commission yet, so discussion tabled until a later date and further investigation.

C. Communications with the community

Submission deadline is Sept. 1 for the city's fall newsletter. Some space will be reserved for us.

Weekly E-newsletter and city website are also available for us to communicate with residents.

City website uses Civic Plus software. It allows requests /comments to be sent directly to Public Works through its CRM online form. That function is important, per Hart; our webpage should allow

homeowners to post comments and photos about areas of the creek that need attention. Jon K. is familiar with this software. He can get digital copies of Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's many brochures for homeowners.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Creek walk

Per Joe Wade, this would be problematic as many property owners own the creek, not just up to it. Discussion tabled. For now, Commission's focus will be on education and outreach.

B. Clean-up Days

Nothing planned. Any such workdays should start at south end where flooding is the worst.

C. City Council presentation

Ald. Rosenthal suggested the Commission request time soon for a presentation at a City Council meeting to explain our Mission, Goals/Strategies, and Specific Plans (both immediate 2017 and later 2018) to meet those goals.

Initial goals should be building public awareness of the Commission, and providing information and education to creek owners. Long-term strategies may include advocacy and outreach to other agencies outside the City, and ecological restoration.

If funding is requested for specific purposes, the City Council expects a clear presentation explaining what the Commission wants to do and how it will be accomplished. The City will match any grants that require such participation.

Presentations to the City should emphasize that the creek is part of our infrastructure, per Hart and Jan. It is our man-made drainage system, not just a natural resource. As our main stormwater management system, it should receive the same maintenance and improvement attention as our roads and sewer systems. The Commission should be apprised of any Public Works projects that might affect the creek.

IV. ACTION ITEMS / ADJOURNMENT

A. Build a plan, then present that plan to the City Council. Decide who and when.

Start with Mission Statement and defining goals (July 11 meeting).

B. Education / Community outreach:

- Create page on city website -- Only content needed. Build a repository of information for residents. Start with digital copies of Lake County Stormwater Management Commission brochures (Jon K. will get these.)
- City newsletter -- Write copy and submit to Joe Wade by Sept. 1 (Cathy or ?)

- Edit / update brochure from previous Creek Committee. TBD: Printing and distribution. Plan to distribute personally in fall to creek property owners and collect emails for future contacts and informational newsletter subscriber database.

C. Adjourned 8 pm.

Next meeting July 11, 2017.

Submitted by Cathy Brady