

Parks+Public Art March 11 Meeting Summary

Committee Members present: David Crary and Andrew Morse, (co-chairs), Louis Raymond, Grant Johnson, Mary Binkley

Dog Park Design Updates

David Crary presented updates on three parks, including new draft plans and a follow-up from the previous week. They discussed the design of a dog park area, which will feature LED lighting poles at 9 feet high and potential sitting areas around them. The lighting is proposed to have an orange hue for a warmer feel, though the exact color is still being determined. Crary also mentioned that the flooring for the park has been largely figured out, though the exact type is still being finalized. Crary discussed challenges in coordinating meetings between MnDOT and Parks staff, awaiting dates from a contact who promised to send them, so plans for the dog park can move forward.

Bassett Creek Project Coordination Challenges

Crary plans to arrange walks of the riverfront park and Bassett Creek outlet area with Park Board Commissioners to nudge them to move forward on the long-range planning for this area.

Earth Day and Park Stewardship

The group discussed upcoming events and tasks, including Earth Day and the launch of Service Saturday. Crary will follow up with Caroline about being a park steward for the playground area. If Caroline does not respond, Crary can reach out to Jan and others who checked that box at the annual meeting.

2024 Service Saturday Events Calendar

Andrew Morse discussed the 2024 Service Saturday Events calendar, outlining activities for each month. In May, they plan to focus on weeding and early weed removal, while June will involve mulching. July will be dedicated to Bassett Creek Day, where they will work to clean around trees and walkways. August will be a slower month due to people being out of town, with general invasive removal activities planned.

Tree Planting Plans for 2026

The group discussed plans for tree planting activities in 2026, with \$7,500 already secured from the tree fund. They noted that September is the ideal month for planting due to weather conditions, and they are waiting for the Park Board's calendar to avoid scheduling conflicts with other events like pickleball. The group also mentioned plans for bulb planting in October and a wildcard event in November, depending on the weather.

Expanding Art Team Support

The Parks and Public Arts committee discussed supporting Jan, their art volunteer, by expanding the team with more artists. They also discussed inviting Dustin, an artist who

ran for the board, to join the committee. Louis Raymond shared his role as a culture correspondent and mentioned Louis' first assignment to write about the Open Loop event at Form+Content Gallery. The committee expressed interest in connecting with Moira, one of the gallery owners, and other potential members of the art community.

History Walking Tour

Grant Johnson discussed plans for a history walking tour and proposed creating physical postcards to promote public art installations. They explored the idea of highlighting stormwater infrastructure and the historical river channel through painted streets and GPS mapping. Binkley also mentioned resurrecting a history and art walking tour to boost local businesses and discussed the need for volunteers for various events, considering the broader volunteer pool for maximum participation.

Zero Waste Neighborhood Initiative

Crary discussed a Zero Waste Initiative aimed at reducing waste in communities, focusing on residential buildings and businesses. The goals include engaging two full-service restaurants and one coffee shop as test sites, with North Loop Green being a preferred location for a residential building. Morse emphasized the importance of reducing plastic usage and highlighted Sweetgreen's successful approach to zero-waste packaging. The team is collaborating with Clean Water Action to develop a system that other neighborhoods can replicate, with the ultimate goal of becoming the first zero-waste neighborhood in the state.

Stormwater Management and Drainage Initiatives

The group discussed stormwater management and drainage issues in local parks, with Morse expressing concern about unmediated drainage into the Mississippi River. They explored the possibility of connecting with Free the Drains, a group that works on maintaining clear storm drains. Crary suggested raising the topic of zero waste initiatives at the main board meeting, tying it to clean water efforts, and recruiting interest from the community.

Trail Access and Meeting Updates

Grant Johnson shared excitement about the newly opened Cedar Lake trail, noting its accessibility and the ease of reaching Cedar Lake Beach by bike. Binkley asked for his video to share on Instagram.

Meeting adjourned at 6:38pm
Next meeting is April 8.