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Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2008 9:53 PM

Subject: RE: Roosevelt Park Southside Lighting - On Appeal Feb 4th

Roosevelt Park neighbors and city officials... I heard a report today that an initiative which the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Watch Group has been championing for over a year has been rejected at the Planning Commission level and will now come up on appeal at the Feb 4th Council meeting. I am extremely surprised to hear of this change in plan since I believed we had law enforcement, the parks department, ACE, all expressing support for the project and no one on the city council ever contact me regarding concerns. I admit that when I received my "special exception" registered letter on Jan 10th, I thought the project was a "Go". So I am hoping that the apparent rejection at the Jan 24th Planning Commission meeting was the result of well-intentioned individuals not being aware of the effort and thought put into this project.

Attached are just a couple of the documents related to this issue. One is the 03-Dec-2007 "Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Watch Group Greenway Recommendations". The pond Southside lighting is mentioned in Item 1). At the time the Greenway recommendations were presented, it was already assumed that the pond lighting project was a given, so we did not rehash the detail of the safety benefits to having the lighting, as compared to the possible downside of these ten light poles being in existence in the flood plain. Also attached is the 13-Nov-2006 neighborhood watch group meeting notice which references lighting of the pond being key issues (Item 3) and the benefits of the project being acknowledged by Lon VanDeusen and Jerry Cole.

Again, I am of the belief that the council, parks, and law enforcement people who have been involved in this project all happened to miss this meeting and the facts and background were not properly communicated. Therefore, on the assumption that the majority of park users and Rapid Citizens are definitely in favor of the pond lighting, I am requesting that you take just a few moments to pass on your feelings and beliefs to the city council prior to the up-coming meeting on Monday. You can find their e-mails and phone numbers at <http://www.rcgov.com/citycouncil/council.htm>. There are lots of neighbors not on the e-mailing list, so please share this situation face-to-face.

Even more importantly, I request that the law enforcement, parks, and council people aware of this project make their voice/vote heard. If I have misunderstood the importance of this project over the past couple of years, I apologize for any misrepresentation, but I personally believe the lighting will add to the value of Roosevelt Park, as outlined in the attached.

As always, please contact me with any questions or to share your views. This isn't the time to be shy. Thanks.

Bob Case

RPNW Contact

218 E New York Street

Phone (605)718-4680

Neighbors of Roosevelt Park... the city has given us an opportunity to present our views prior to decisions being made about the greenway that runs through our adopted section of Rapid Creek in Roosevelt Park. We have been working to clean up this area of the creek for a few years and have been working with Parks & Rec to express our ideas during several of our neighborhood watch meetings. The public meetings on the use of \$1.7M in federal greenway funds to be held this Thursday, Dec 6th, and again on Jan 8th will be a great forum to share our ideas with the rest of community.

I had planned on attending both public sessions, but will be out of town for both meetings. So I am requesting your help in sharing the ideas we have talked about on several occasions. The following information is my view of what we have talked about and I think the pictures speak for themselves on a couple of the topics. The meeting this Thursday will be at the City/School Administration Center (CSAC) at 300 6th Street, and the Jan 8th meeting will be in the upstairs meeting room at the Swim Center in the park. Both meetings start at 7pm.

The ideas we have kicked around, follow the mission statement of our neighborhood watch group; to improve the security in the neighborhood and to beautify the neighborhood.

- 1) **Bike Path Lighting:** We have heard on several occasions that the Roosevelt Park lighting does not extend to the bike path side of the pond because walkway lights in the floodplain are considered structures. It is our perception that lighting is no more a structure than are the garbage can holders along the bike path, and therefore the lighting should be permitted. To fully open the park to evening use (which includes lots of walking), it is requested the greenway funds be used to light the South side of the Roosevelt Park Pond, and the bike path between the Maple Street and Omaha Street bridges. It is believed that this would be such an enhancement, that the bike path lighting should be extended all the way to Canyon Lake, if the funds are available.
- 2) **Under Bridge Lighting:** We have been frequently taught by the police department that proper lighting is key to reducing crime and the environment for unacceptable activity. In our regular clean-ups, cleaning up under the Maple Street and Omaha Street bridges is always a challenge. The "Under Maple Street" picture shows how the South end of the Maple Street Bridge looked after a few hours of recent cleaning a few weeks ago; it likely doesn't look like that anymore. It is our belief that complete and durable lighting under the bridges will discourage inappropriate congregation, and will make use of the bike path more welcoming in the evening or at night. It would also make patrolling the surrounding area easier due to better visibility. Lights have been installed in the past under the walkway portion of the bridge, but they don't last very long before being broken out. It is our request that greenway funds be utilized to procure durable security lighting that will resist vandalism, and that these lights be installed under all sections of the bridge to discourage unacceptable congregation. Again, if it works in the Roosevelt Park area, we suggest that the same practice be extended to all bridges along the bike path.
- 3) **Stump Removal:** The clean-up of banks of Rapid Creek by Operation Safe Path and Ken Edel's volunteer groups has dramatically changed the look, security, and accessibility of Rapid Creek. As the Roosevelt Park group conducts its clean-ups, we notice a big difference in the amount of trash that accumulates in the high/rough grass areas as compared to those that are mowed like the rest of the park. So we have invested a lot of time weed-whacking where the city mowers can not safely go. Although this is great exercise, we think it would be more efficient if the city mowers could cut closer to

the creek, without risk of damaging their equipment on tree stumps and rocks. Therefore, it is our request that some of the federal greenway funds be used to remove many of the dozens of stumps that are on both sides of the creek between the Maple Street and Omaha Street bridges. This is not an effort that has to be completed at one time, but could be executed on section at the time. Efforts could be coordinated with the volunteer groups to assist in removal or burying rocks that could also damage city equipment.

- 4) **Erosion Control:** Several of the attached pictures highlight the severe bank erosion that is occurring at the NorthEast corner of the Maple Street bridge. The water doesn't seem to know where it is supposed to flow, and as a result, there is a 4-5 foot abrupt drop off into the creek. The erosion is affecting some of the vegetation that is trying to hold the bank in place as well. We see this situation as only getting worse over time. There is a fear of serious injury of someone falling into the creek due to the condition of the bank. We request that the appropriate heavy rock be placed to stop the erosion. This along with the improved lighting mentioned above should make the Maple Street bridge area a much safer place; especially at night.

- 5) **Roosevelt Pond Aeration:** The final request from the Roosevelt Park group at this time is to follow through with the addition of a high flow fountain in the Roosevelt Park Pond. This may be outside the scope of the greenway, but the fountain(s) has been discussed as a valuable aesthetic addition to the park; and more importantly as something that could improve the capability of the pond to support more fish for the anglers that like to use the pond. The fountain may need to work in conjunction with a higher flow rate of inlet water to the pond, but it may be an appropriate investment on its own merit.

It is hoped that the above ideas will be considered collectively, since they all play off one another to achieve the goals of the Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Watch Group.

Again, I apologize for not being able to attend the public meeting, but really hope that some of you can take a friend to either or both of the sessions and present the ideas described above.

Thanks for your support.

Bob Case

RPNW Contact
218 E New York Street
Phone (605)718-4680

















Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Watch



Where: Hope Christian Reformed Church
202 East Philadelphia Street

Time/Date: 7:00 PM on Monday, November 13th 2006

The Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Watch meeting on Nov 13th will be a review of the great ideas that came out of the September meeting from the Parks & Recreation department and other city officials in attendance. Here's a repeat of some of the future ideas our neighborhood brought up (repeated from the Sept 11th meeting highlights).

- 1) *Chicago Street drainage ditch on the south side of Rushmore Little League complex needs to be dredged and culverts on the ends cleaned out, or culvert'ed along its length and filled in for additional off-street parking for the park and little league. Lon VanDeusen indicated support of culvert and fill, but needs to check out details.*
- 2) *Pond was intended for fishing (with concrete walkway around one side), but can't support fresh-water fish because of minimal water flow. Take another look at getting enough creek diversion to support Trout and then stock as needed. Lon confirmed that the slough is there for filtration to the pond. Some fresh water feed to the West end of the pond has been considered, but it would not be enough to support Trout.*
- 3) *South side of pond is not lighted. Reduces evening time use of the pond area. Would like enough lights to allow 360-degree lighted walkway around the pond. Lighting the bike path along its course through the park would be even better. (A subsequent walk-through on Oct 5th with Lon and Jerry Cole confirmed the need.)*
- 4) *Removal of the tree stumps remaining from Operation Safe Path would allow the city to mow closer to the creek, which would open up more park area for the residents and visitors, and would make it easier for the RPNW group to maintain the overgrowth and trash along our adopted section of the creek.*
- 5) *Additional security lighting in neighborhood alleys and other dark spots is out of the park geography, but fits the mission of the neighborhood watch group, and Mayor Shaw indicated that the city will review and often entertain requests for additional street lighting.*

Jason LaHaie, our CPO covering for Ron Terviel, will hopefully be able to attend and bring us up to date with the crime statistics in our neighborhood over the summer. It looks to me like we had a very peaceful summer in that regard but the statistics will bear that out.

I would also like to settle on the fall clean up date of our adopted section of Rapid Creek. We seem to be heading into that very busy holiday season, so I would like to try a Sunday afternoon clean up this time and see if it allows more neighbors to make an appearance. If you don't receive a communication of a different date, please plan on meeting at the North side of the creek at the Maple Street bridge at 1pm on Sunday, Nov 19th. We will plan on going as late as 4pm, if the light is still good. As always, we will do a sweep for trash (I will bring the bags), with those who love to do weed-wacking or brush trimming encouraged to bring their favorite tool. Everyone is responsible for his or her own safety gear.

As always, we will wrap up with news about neighborhood members coming and going, those who might need help with special projects, and any other problems or opportunities in the neighborhood that we should be addressing.

Hope to see you there this coming Monday!

**Working together for crime deterrence,
to build community, and beautify the
Roosevelt Park Neighborhood. Invite a
friend and neighbor to take part!**

Bob Case
RPNW Contact

Ron Terviel/Jason LaHaie
CPO





Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Watch Highlights from 11-Sept-2006 Meeting



Our September 11th meeting, although on a very somber anniversary, certainly demonstrated that life goes on in our land. Our featured speaker was Lon VanDeusen from the Parks and Recreation department to give an update on changes and improvements for our Roosevelt Park area. Apparently, many people were interested in this topic because we ended up holding a joint meeting with the Deb Hadcock and Sam Kooiker Ward 2 Task Force. We were also joined by a significant number of city and county officials. Lon VanDeusen listed a number of planned and anticipated developments in the park including:

- Replacing the equivalent of two Picnic Shelters removed during the main park renovation
- One of which will be a large community shelter North of the pond (can be used through reservation system)
- Add smaller canvas-topped shelters for open use
- Possibly move the restroom facilities to the North
- Pond aeration at three separate locations
- Sprinkler system for turf between the swim center and ice rink

Although these ideas are still in the formative stages, it is believed that some dollars will be available in 2007 to work on some of them. 2012 is expected to have funds still available for park improvement (subject to other project overruns).

Mayor Shaw advised that "Stormwater Phase 2" is a nationwide requirement which will put additional requirements on the city; and we can expect to be hearing more about it in coming months.

Because our neighborhood watch group had such an interested group of city representatives in the audience, we reiterated several of our past ideas for park area improvements, including:

- 1) Chicago Street drainage ditch on the south side of Rushmore Little League complex needs to be dredged and culverts on the ends cleaned out, or culvert'ed along its length and filled in for additional off-street parking for the park and little league. Lon VanDeusen indicated support of culvert and fill, but needs to check out details.
- 2) Pond was intended for fishing (with concrete walkway around one side), but can't support fresh-water fish because of minimal water flow. Take another look at getting enough creek diversion to support Trout and then stock as needed. Lon confirmed that the slough is there for filtration to the pond. Some fresh water feed to the West end of the pond has been considered, but it would not be enough to support Trout.
- 3) South side of pond is not lighted. Reduces evening time use of the pond area. Would like enough lights to allow 360-degree lighted walkway around the pond. Lighting the bike path along its course through the park would be even better. (A subsequent walk-through on Oct 5th with Lon and Jerry Cole confirmed the need.)
- 4) Removal of the tree stumps remaining from Operation Safe Path would allow the city to mow closer to the creek, which would open up more park area for the residents and visitors, and would make it easier for the RPNW group to maintain the overgrowth and trash along our adopted section of the creek.
- 5) Additional security lighting in neighborhood alleys and other dark spots is out of the park geography, but fits the mission of the neighborhood watch group, and Mayor Shaw indicated that the city will review and often entertain requests for additional street lighting.

On behalf of our entire neighborhood, I would like to express our appreciation for the on-going support the city council and city departments are providing to make out part of town a better place to live.

Submitted by

Bob Case

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