

WISCONSIN POINT COMMITTEE
February 21, 2019
Room 204, Government Center

Members Present: Tom Bridge (Superior Citizen Rep), Keith Allen (Douglas County), Ruth Ludwig (City Council-alt), Karina Heim (NERR), Thomas Howes (Fond du Lac Band, via phone).

Excused: Jenny Van Sickle (City Council), Nick Danz (UWS), Kevin Feind (WI DNR).

Also Present: Linda Cadotte, Angie Harker, John Broihahn (via phone), Terry White, Shelley Nelson, Erick Flood

1. Approval of November 13, 2018 meeting minutes.

MOTION by Ludwig, seconded by Allen, and carried to approve the Wisconsin Point Committee minutes of November 13, 2018.

2. National Register of Historic Places

John Broihahn, the State Archaeologist from the Wisconsin Historical Society joined the meeting via phone and reviewed the timeline and history of the work that has been done in cooperation with the Fond du Lac Band, to list Wisconsin Point on the National Register of Historic Places. He explained that they have solid evidence of 19th or early 20th century Ojibwe occupation. He explained the area of the point that would be designated and indicated it would be concentrated in the forested area. Broihahn stated a map would be prepared within the next month, once the society chooses a consultant. Advantages and disadvantages of the designation were discussed. Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director Cadotte explained that portions of sites 15, 16, 18 and 19 would be included. She indicated that any projects in the designated areas would require formal consultation with the Historical Society. Broihahn confirmed this and gave an example that if the city were to improve the road in that area, there would need to be a consultation with the Historical Society. If the improvements were going to have a negative impact on the site area, the Society would come up with a way to mitigate that impact such as adding additional fill rather than cutting the road down. Any additional archaeological surveying that may be requested would likely be incurred by the city. He stated the hope would be to come to an agreement, however if an agreement could not be reached, the city could proceed with the work regardless. Committee members asked if an increase in visitors to the point would be expected as a result of the designation. Broihahn explained that when archaeological or cultural sites are added to the registry, the locational information is restricted. The Wisconsin Point designation is unusual however due to the name and the fact that the point is well known. Therefore it is unknown if the designation would increase visitors. There would be no plaque or signage designating the area unless the city would want to install one, however based on feedback from the Fond du Lac Band during the Point project, their preference was to not have any new signage installed.

Next steps include having a consultant selected by March and a site visit in April or early May. It would go the Historical Society Review Board this summer and in November or into 2020, to the National Park Service Board. In summary, the anticipated designation would likely be finalized sometime in 2020.

3. Wisconsin Point Artifacts

Cadotte explained that the previous Douglas County Historical Society Director indicated that the society was not interested in the Wisconsin Point Artifacts, however that director has since left the position and the new director has asked for the list again. Once this director indicates their preference formally, that decision will be brought to the City Council (likely on March 19) along with a formal deed of gift for the transfer of the artifacts, which Broihahn is drafting.

Broihahn left the meeting via phone at 5:22 p.m.

MOTION by Allen, seconded by Ludwig, and carried that if the Douglas County Historical Society declines the Wisconsin Point Artifacts, that they be gifted to the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

4. Wisconsin Point Restoration and Access Improvement Project

Cadotte gave an update on the project and explained that all of the boardwalks have been installed. The City's Environmental Services Division has applied for a CN tree grant to add additional tree plantings to the project. Cadotte listed the varieties/sizes/numbers of trees to be planted. Recycle bin and garbage combination units will be ordered out of the contingency project funds. The gate is not included in the project currently, along with a number of other items. Depending on contingency funds remaining, they still could be added. The project should wrap up in the fall of this year.

5. Wisconsin Point Trail update

Cadotte provided an update on the trail and indicated that she spoke with the Army Corp today. They have been in consultation with the Historical Society regarding the archaeological survey as the Historical Society did not approve the permit due to a number of concerns. The Army Corp is requesting additional information and comments from Duluth Archaeology. It's anticipated that more information will be received from the Army Corp in the next couple months. (Thomas Howes left the meeting via phone at 5:37 p.m. however there was still a quorum).

The Wisconsin Conservation Corp has determined that the project would take them 3 summers to complete. Bids have been received for the two bridges, however since we do not have a permit, we can't move forward with much at this time. Members asked what it would cost to add a bike lane to Moccasin Mike Road, which will be redone after the landfill closes in approximately 2025. Cadotte will ask Public Works for an estimate.

6. WI DNR access to Bird Sanctuary

The Wisconsin DNR has provided two options/locations for the gate to the bird sanctuary. Cadotte reviewed these and shared photos of the type of gate and locations. One location is set further back off the road and would not require boulders or additional barriers around the gate. This is the DNR's preferred location. The second is closer to the road and would need rocks or barriers of some sort to prevent vehicles from driving around it. After discussion, the committee recommended the first location, set further back off the road. They also requested the gate be painted so as to blend in with the landscape a bit more.

MOTION by Allen, seconded by Heim, and carried to recommend the gate be set further back off the road in the DNR's preferred location and the gate must be painted a neutral color.

8. Parks, Recreation & Forestry Director's Report.

Cadotte gave an update on the Howard's Bay Remediation Project, which had stalled due to federal contractual funding issues. There was a draft partner agreement completed in 2017 and a refresher on the project will be presented at the March 5th City Council meeting by the Wisconsin DNR and Fraser Shipyards. The formal agreements will then be brought forward to the March 19th council meeting for consideration. Cadotte shared the proposed funding for the project.

MOTION by Allen, seconded by Ludwig, and carried, and the meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

Minutes submitted to the Council Meeting of March 5, 2019.