Resolution 2016-322

Resolution Approving Strategic Direction for the Calhoun Refectory Building and Immediately Surrounding Park Areas at Lake Calhoun, Which Lies Within Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is a steward of the Minneapolis parks;

Whereas, Lake Calhoun is the largest park within the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, a popular local, regional, and national attraction receiving millions of visitors each year;

Whereas, The Calhoun Refectory at Lake Calhoun houses the popular *"The Tin Fish"* restaurant and has served as one of the primary gathering places on the lake;

Whereas, The Refectory was originally constructed in 1930 to provide shelter, restrooms, and a refreshment stand and was remodeled in 1988, 1998 and 2012 with building improvements, additional outdoor seating, paving and planting areas;

Whereas, The Refectory has operated seasonally as *The Tin Fish* under a concession lease agreement with SNP Enterprises, LLC (SNP) since 2004;

Whereas, an Extension and Amendment to the Concession Lease Agreement with SNP includes agreement for MPRB to conduct a study of the facility and grounds paid from funds currently held in the Escrow Account, present SNP with the findings of the final study, and for MPRB and SNP to use best efforts to create a plan to implement the study findings and enter into a new lease agreement;

Whereas, MPRB staff led by the Planning Division staff formed a project team, contracted professional services and engaged the community to prepare a strategic direction for the Refectory and immediately surrounding park areas;

Whereas, A community engagement process, including two public intercept surveys, were held on-site and on-line to determine design alternatives and identify priorities;

Whereas, The MPRB project team has used community and stakeholder input to arrive at the proposed concept plan, associated budgets and suggested phasing – all of which comprise the Strategic Direction;

Whereas, The Strategic Direction can be implemented over time through MPRB capital improvement programming, vendor lease contribution and use of other outside funds; and;

Whereas, This resolution is supported by the MPRB 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan, which envisions “Dynamic parks shape city character and meet diverse community needs;”

RESOLVED, That the Board of Commissioners approve the Strategic Direction for the Calhoun Refectory Building and immediately surrounding park areas at Lake Calhoun, which lies within Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park;

RESOLVED, That Board of Commissioner approval of the Strategic Direction allows staff to pursue the financial resources, including lease negotiations, necessary to determine appropriate timing for final design and implementation of the three implementation priorities; and

RESOLVED, That the President of the Board and Secretary to the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

TO: Planning Committee

FROM: Michael Schroeder,

DATE: November 30, 2016

SUBJECT: Resolution Approving Strategic Direction for the Calhoun Refectory Building and Immediately Surrounding Park Areas at Lake Calhoun, Which Lies Within Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park

---

BACKGROUND

This Board action considers approval of a long term strategic direction plan for the Calhoun Refectory and immediately surrounding grounds at Lake Calhoun.

Lake Calhoun, Bde Maka Ska, is part of the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, and is 518 acres, including 422 acres of water. The park includes 3.1 miles of pedestrian paths, 3.19 miles of bike paths and features three beaches, canoe/kayak/paddle board/pedal boat and bike rentals, boat docks, fishing piers, picnic areas, restroom facilities, sand volleyball court, soccer and softball fields, and pay parking areas.

Constructed in 1930, the Lake Calhoun Refectory Building was built on the northeast corner of the lake at what is now 3000 E. Calhoun Parkway to provide shelter, restrooms and a refreshment stand. The building and grounds have undergone a number of modifications since that time, most recently remodeling the building for operation as a seasonal restaurant in 1988 with additional outdoor seating, paving, and planting area improvements along the lakeshore completed in 1998 and 2012. The Calhoun Refectory Building has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing building within the Grand Rounds Historic District.

The building has operated seasonally as *"The Tin Fish"* under a concession lease with SNP Enterprises, LLC (SNP) since 2004. *The Tin Fish* operates and manages the majority of the roughly 4200 SF building as concessions while the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) operates and manages the attached restroom facilities. The operating season of the building is currently April 15th to October 31st annually.

The grounds around the Refectory include public seating, drinking fountain, walking and biking paths, public boat launch, including an information kiosk and boat check, "Wheel Fun" rentals, and the meeting/launch location for the Lake Calhoun Sailing School. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) is in the final stages of completing a Calhoun–Harriet Master Plan. Recommendations from the public at this location include new restroom facilities and the

redistribution of recreational uses to alleviate congestion and safety concerns.

As directed by the Extension and Amendment to the Concession Lease Agreement dated March 26, 2012 between MPRB and SNP, MPRB staff conducted a study of the Facility and Grounds at the Refectory paid from funds currently held in the Escrow account. MPRB engaged Cuningham Group Architecture to conduct a thorough building and site assessment, prepare design alternatives consistent with the recommendations in the Calhoun Harriet Master Plan for community review and comment, and create cost estimates and phasing options for a recommended Strategic Direction. The team was selected for their deep experience designing restaurants in highly trafficked public spaces, as well as their understanding of historic significance and creative experience with similar projects. MPRB staff representing operations, maintenance, events, planning, and police were involved in the design process to ensure the recommended design addresses operational issues.

The project team conducted two public intercept surveys held at the site and on-line in August and September 2016. The first survey included a wide variety of imagery, gathered from other locations throughout the world, and asked respondents to prioritize the images that resonated with them most in guiding design direction at this area. Participants were also asked to provide feedback on issues they saw as currently affecting the area. Responses clearly indicated the need to address shade, long lines and wait times at the restaurant, lighting, and bathroom facilities. The majority of respondents preferred to do this through design that used vegetation and natural features over highly structured elements, to include an opportunity to get closer to the lake edge, and to add an element of whimsy or fun in the design.

The second community intercept survey presented the community with two site options and two building options developed from the feedback gathered in the first survey. Responses were reviewed by the project team and adjustments were made to the preferred concept in order to incorporate as much public feedback as possible.

The majority of community responses indicated the desire to refine the existing site layout in lieu of a more comprehensive design change at this site, to expand the existing facility in order to enclose trash and provide additional covered seating, to create a shade and light canopy between the Refectory and the lake, to more clearly define a pedestrian trail along the lake edge as separate from the Refectory seating area, and to create a new restroom facility separate from the Refectory in order to provide accessible, family and care-giver friendly areas, and an increased number of fixtures in the restrooms.

While many community members were excited by the possibility of changes at this site, the project team also heard community concerns including resistance to any park improvements and the objection to funding for park improvements in today's budget climate. In addition, the need to provide additional clean and well lit restroom facilities was a major theme in public comments.

In response to all feedback gathered, the Strategic Direction recommends further exploring of the following Priority Projects:

Priority 1: Create a new, potentially year round, restroom facility separate from the Refectory Building including corresponding site work. The proposed project budget for Priority 1 is as follows:

Design	$85,000 - $100,000
Construction	$850,000- $1,080,000
Contingency	$85,000 - $100,000
Other Soft Costs	$85,000 - $100,000
Total Project Cost	$1,105,000 - $1,380,000

Priority 2: Remodel and expand the existing Refectory Building per the strategic direction including all proposed site improvements north of the existing drop-off area. The proposed project budget for Priority 2 is as follows:

Design	$140,000 - $150,000
Construction*	$1,417,000 - $1,542,000
Contingency	$140,000 - $150,000
Furniture, Fixtures &	$300,000
Other soft costs	$140,000 - $150,000
Total Project Cost	$2,137,000 - $2,292,000

*Note: The construction budget includes $350,000 for additions to the building which could be accomplished in a separate phase. Additions to the structure will require review by the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Sources of funding for implementation of Priority 2 include financial participation by current or future refectory building lessees. Prior to implementation of Priority 2, staff will work with the lessee to create a pro-forma demonstrating increased revenue generated by the refectory improvements and outlining the financial commitments of both MPRB and the lessee. This will all be recorded and tracked as part of a lease agreement for the facility.

Priority 3: Remove the existing drop-off area, complete the balance of site renovations, and relocate recreational equipment rental per the Master Plan. The proposed project budget for Priority 3 is as follows:

Design	$17,000 - $24,000
Construction*	$170,000-$240,000
Contingency	$17,000-$24,000
Other soft costs	$17,000 - $24,000

Total Project Cost	$221,000 - $312,000

The identified budgets represent present day construction costs and estimates of design fees and soft costs. Depending on project initiation timing, project budgets should be reviewed for updated construction pricing.

FUNDING/COST SUMMARY

Sources		$40,000
SNP Enterprises, LLC Concession Lease Escrow	$40,0000	
Uses		$40,000
Cuningham Group Architecture	$38,500	
MPRB In-house management and coordination	$1,500	
Balance		$0.00

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Strategic Direction for the Calhoun Refectory Building and immediately surrounding park areas at Lake Calhoun, which lies within Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park. Board approval will allow staff to pursue the financial resources, including lease negotiations, necessary to determine appropriate timing for final design and implementation of the three implementation priorities.

This action is supported by the MPRB's 2007-2020 Comprehensive Plan Vision Theme 3 as stated below.

Vision Theme 3: Dynamic parks that shape the city character and meet diverse community needs.

Goal: Park facility renewal and development respects history and focuses on sustainability, accessibility, flexibility and beauty.

Goal: Financially independent and sustainable parks prosper.

HISTORY:

11/16/16 **Planning Committee** **ADOPTED**

ATTACHMENTS:

- Calhoun Refectory Facilities Assessment (PDF)
- MPRB Final Presentation (PDF)

Prepared By: Beth Pfeifer,, Design and Project Management
Review:
Cindy Anderson Completed 11/07/2016 9:40 AM
Cliff Swenson Completed 11/07/2016 11:49 AM
Michael Schroeder Completed 11/07/2016 11:50 AM
Jayne Miller Completed 11/07/2016 11:50 AM
Planning Committee Completed 11/16/2016 5:10 PM
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Pending 11/30/2016 5:00 PM