1/23/2020 Riparian Owners Meeting Recap

I wanted to thank everyone for attending the meeting last night. Below is a list of comments and concerns that I wrote down. Please let me know if I missed anything and I will relay them to the project steering committee. Like I said last night, the steering committee meetings are open to the public and they invite comments from the public. The meetings are on the third Monday of every month at 8:00 am and are in the Hall of Fame room in the old City Hall building.

- How does restoration and maintenance work? Short-term and long-term
- Restoration should be easily maintained.
- Improve the shoreline at Veterans Park
- How does the water flow under the bridge work? Is the underpass viable?
- Will the water flow change?
- Ecological impacts on current species in the millpond.
- Vegetative buffer for Uniroyal. Preferably something that is year-round and tall such as evergreen trees.
- What is the impact on property values?

The Michigan DNR has a good document on dam removal, river restoration, and ecological impacts. On page 3 of the document it covers the ecological impacts on the transformation from a reservoir to river system. It uses the Fulton Dam removal on the Yahara River as an example.

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/ecodamrmvl_513770_7.pdf

There were a few questions about economic impact, property values, and new development. The Grand Rapids, MI economic impact report is more encompassing than the one we had done. The economic impact report that we had done only provides information on visitor spending for kayak paddlers. The Grand Rapids report provides information on economic benefits from new development, attraction and retention of businesses, etc. There was a question of these projects being in smaller towns. A good comparable would be the Siloam Springs, AR project. Siloam Springs population is 16,842 and is located in Northwest Arkansas metro which is a little over 500,000 for population. Siloam is targeting the outdoor recreation market with a large mountain bike park. The parks in Iowa are in much smaller communities than Stoughton.

Grand Rapids, MI Report -
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5617ffade4b0f733b489eab8/t/5e2a138c49c51041ac88a580/1579815831751/Grand+Rapids%2C+MI.pdf

Siloam, AR Report -
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5617ffade4b0f733b489eab8/t/5e2a13fb3e08b951a49b196f/1579815932877/Siloam%2C+AR.pdf

1/29/2020 Public Meeting Questions & Comments

Below are comments and questions from attendees of the public meeting that was conducted on 1/29/2020. The text in black is from attendees and the text in red is from the City.

Comments

More "river-like" variation in the bypass channel (eddies, rocks to paddle around, etc) would be nice. It could make the bypass channel great for learning a variety of paddling maneuvers (eddy turns, ferrying, etc).

Darci M

We are very much in support of this project. I would be interested in helping ith fundraising efforts and event planning to move it forward.

Tom & Raechelle B.

Let's start raising funds now!! So good.

Anonymous

Love this. Do it! Happy to help!

Solveig S.

I love this!! Yay! Waterpark!

Anonymous

Parking, traffic – Main St already busy congested with addition of new apartment buildings.

Anonymous

I have concerns about loss of wildlife habitat, view and logistics in construction of project. I hope you decided to keep the dam and millpond.

Katherin F.

If the project is completed, I would bring beginner kayak and canoe paddlers from UW Madison's Hoofer Outing Club to teach moving water techniques. We don't have any devent moving water features this

close to Madison right now. Black Earth Creek is ok, but Stoughton Would be even more convenient. I also live in Stoughton and would be excited to walk down to the river with my whitewater boat!

Caroline R.

Questions

What are plans for use of whitewater park as in:

- Will there be a fee for usage?
- Will paddling clinics be part of the plan?
- How many anticipated days/year will it be runnable?
- What class water?
- How long is the course?

Jan P.

There will be no fee for usage if you have your own equipment.

Paddling clinics would be a programming option in the future. Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation runs a wide range of clinics and camps for children and adults that are successful.

Many whitewater paddlers own dry suits which would make it a year-round season for them. The millpond currently freezes over for about 60 days per year, but it's likely that the river wouldn't freeze with the improvements. The peak paddling season would be mid-May to mid-September which is roughly 120 days per year.

The features would be class I and II which every ability level would be able to use safely.

The course is approximately 850 feet long.

What do you need from citizens to help move this forward?

Solveig S.

Please contact your alderperson if you support this project. A foundation for the Stoughton Parks System will be established and they will accept private donations that will be tax deductible.

Standing wave still in the plan?

Third Culvert as walking path – it looks like foot level/tire level would be below normal flow water line.

How much to build new 4th St bridge in the future with no culverts?

Additional upstream structures could maintain water levels up beyond the railroad trestle.

Ralph E.

1/29/2020 Public Meeting Questions & Comments

A standing wave is still in the plan. It would be located where the current dam is.

A wall separating the river from the path would be created. During high flows the water would go over the wall to prevent flooding and the path would be closed. An alternate trail will be constructed that will go to the north of the powerhouse and connect to 4th Street.

A single spanned bridge for 4th Street would cost approximately $2.7-3.1 million.

Adding any additional structures upstream to hold the water levels may cause a permitting issue with the DNR.

How many tax dollars are required to complete the project (after grant monies)?

Fred H.

This is to be determined. We should know within the next 4-6 weeks.

How will this affect fishing? How will this affect the canoe race in May?

Nichole G.

The removal of the dam and the inclusion of fish passage will allow fish to migrate to natural spawning areas. This may increase the fish population of native species such as smallmouth bass and northern pike. Fishing has improved in Iowa where they have done these projects. The fish congregate near the dam now due to the aeration of the water. Fish will be more spread out with the improvements since more habitat will be created and the water will be more aerated. There will be over 1,000 feet of additional public fishing access created with the project. Water levels around Viking Park will drop less than a half of a foot, so there should be minimal changes to fishing in that area.

Letter to the editor on fishing in Charles City, IA –

https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/opinion/readers/2016/05/12/charles-city-fishing-better-than-ever/84196644/

Woolen Mills Dam Removal Fisheries Study Abstract -

https://afspubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1577/1548-8675(1997)017%3C0387:CITHAF%3E2.3.CO;2

1/29/2020 Public Meeting Questions & Comments

A previous grant application to DNR came back with a comment that the space between the river and underside of bridge was too short (not enough "headroom" to go under safely). How has this been addressed? Awesome project. Thanks!

Peggy V.

Vertical clearance was of concern to the DNR grant specialists when we applied for the grant in 2018. However, the engineer working on the project has the as-built for the bridge and says that we would have the 8 feet of vertical clearance required. The DNR requires more vertical clearance for their grant, so the area under the bridge would not be eligible for the grant.

https://wisconsindot.gov/Documents/projects/multimodal/bike/facility-4.pdf

Why did you only choose drops and not other whitewater?

Tristan M.

The designer wanted to create the best possible park that would get the most use. He has the most experience designing parks in the world and thinks the current design will give us the best possible park.

Why will kayakers stay in Stoughton to buy things if they are on a continuous paddling experience? Why use Stoughton for amenities?

Fred H.

One of the conditions where these types of parks make sense is when they are located near downtown areas with support services that accommodate the activity. Support services include restaurants, gas stations, and parking. Mandt Park and Stoughton meet these requirements with parking, restaurants, gas stations, and lodging.

It's possible that a paddler could start at the Lake Kegonsa dam and end at the Dunkirk dam. However, the majority of paddlers congregate around the features in other parks that are in existence. Also, shuttle systems seem to be popular where the parking is located in the City they are located.