

**Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee**

**Tuesday March 29, 2011**

**12:30-2 PM**

**Birge Hall, rm. 447**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

**Present**

Bill Barker, Rachael Bower, Gary Brown, Katrina Forest, Rhonda James, Melissa Jeddelloh, Anne Readel, Sissel Schroeder, Laura Shere, Phil Townsend

**Also present**

Cathie Bruner (Preserve), Ann Burgess (Friends), Kennedy Gilchrist (Friends), Chris Kucharik (Agronomy and Nelson Institute), John Magnuson (Friends), Bryn Scriver (Preserve), Mark Sieffert (Eagle Heights Gardens), Will Waller (Friends and Eagle Heights Gardens),

**Public comment**

Gilchrist said he was concerned about the “smelly alluvial fan” where Willow Creek empties into Lake Mendota. He was informed by Brown that the University is starting discussions with City of Madison engineers, although others will need to be involved because the lake is under the jurisdiction of Dane County.

The Friends Annual Meeting is scheduled for Tues. April 5 at 7pm at the Arboretum Visitor Center. Dave Mickelson will talk about the Geology of the Preserve.

Barker will lead a geology field trip in the Preserve on April 10 from 2-3:30pm meeting at North Hall.

**“Water walk” expectations**

Chris Kucharik (Agronomy and the Nelson Institute) presented an overview of a recently awarded NSF Water Sustainability and Climate Program grant which includes a “water walk” in the Preserve as part of the grant’s outreach and education component. Co-principle investigators are: Steve Carpenter (Limnology), Corina Gries (Limnology), Steve Loheide (Engineering), Adena Rissman (CALs), and Monica Turner (Zoology). The project will study the links between the Yahara watershed and factors such as land use, climate change, human activities, development and ecosystems.

The initial idea of the “water walk” was to put up signs along the Lakeshore Path that visitors could read and follow. After more thought and feedback indicating that less, rather than more, signs are desired in the Preserve, Kucharik said they are considering some other ideas including: a virtual water walk with one central kiosk near Memorial Union, a podcast, and links to the web. Users would be able to provide feedback on some sort of web interface after listening to the podcast.

Discussion and suggestions from the Committee:

Gilchrist suggested that Kucharik work with the GreenHouse Residential Learning Community. Jack Kloppenburg, the Faculty advisor, has already contacted Kucharik.

Barker said he likes the idea of using social media to engage visitors in the Preserve because it's dynamic and requires minimal/small signage. The Preserve's Guide by Cell audio tour is just opening the door to technology use in the Preserve.

Magnuson said that just the opposite of a "water walk" would be a natural history or nature walk. Someone else suggested that the same walk could have different themes (e.g. a water walk, a carbon walk, a natural history tour) and each theme could have several versions, each aimed at a different age group (e.g. grade school, high school, college.) Different experts would contribute to the different themes.

Another suggestion was that the walk should start behind the Memorial Union and cross urban to semi-urban to semi-natural areas.

Ideas for labeling the walk included: little red arrows (or blue water droplets), but the general agreement was that there should be minimal signage.

Brown said that he has met with John Martin from DoIT about using **ARIS - Augmented Reality and Interactive Storytelling** to create a campus "Alumni Park". The program would provide apps to what alumni have done on campus and information would pop up on your GPS enabled smart phone to tell you when you've reached the next stop on the tour.

Bower and Forest cautioned that not everyone has access to this technology. The result would be that only a small or select number of people would be able to use the water walk while many will not be able to. Forest sees the walk as a kids field trip destination and suggested that a teacher could get around the technology by going to the web ahead of time to print off a docent guide.

Readel suggested having an interactive kiosk in the Memorial Union as a starting point since the walk will need to be advertised somewhere. Here you could download an app on your smart phone or take a paper map or print a map and tour guide on-demand so people without a smart phone would have the information to take with them.

Magnuson suggested an alternative to the "water walk"—a "land steam" where a boat takes people out on the water for an interpretive tour. The boat could leave on the hour on weekends or selected dates. Examples of such tours are the former Betty Lou lake cruises and the Madison School and Community Recreation (MSCR) themed pontoon rides for the public.

Barker suggested that a short film competition with a small cash prize could tap community creativity to get the message out.

Magnuson asked if the Arts would be involved in the water walk.

Gilchrist also suggested tapping into the UW Alumni Association's Grandparents University.

### **Communications Subcommittee Report**

Bower asked for volunteers to join the communication subcommittee to help develop a digital library/repository for the Preserve. She has already talked with a peer at the Department of Public Instruction. She requested that anyone interested in sitting on the subcommittee contact her by email.

### **Minutes**

The minutes from the Feb. 22, 2011 meeting were approved as presented.

The minutes from the March 21 Public Listening Session on Bikes in Picnic Point were approved as presented.

### **Bikes on Picnic Point**

Barker thought the public listening session was well-noticed despite the small attendance by the public (5 people). He received 10 emails on the subject including 2 since the listening session. He does not see a need for a special meeting on the subject on May 3.

Bower questioned how a bike ban will be enforced if there's no physical barrier to prevent bikes and if the UW police say they cannot enforce a ban. Barker pointed out that the UW-Madison Arboretum has a bike ban that is largely self-enforced, although the Arboretum does have volunteer stewards and paid rangers who walk the trails to remind people of the rules. He thinks that an ethic will develop.

Forest thought two great suggestions were made at the listening session: 1) the need for better bike racks and 2) installing an extremely wide barrier that one can get a wheelchair through but that would require bikers to dismount. She also wondered if there was such a thing as a keyed rack system for bikes like the lockers at the UW Bookstore for bags. Brown said he didn't think there was much out there in terms of a keyed bike rack. Someone pointed out that most people carry a bike lock with them when they bike. On a side note, Brown said there's been some talk about the Trek program, B-Cycle, installing a rental station at the Picnic Point entrance. Revenue from that program goes back into B-Cycle and could not go to the Preserve.

Barker said he does not think the bike ban is a contentious issue due to the weak public response. Readel thought maybe people were too distracted by other political matters right now to notice. Townsend said it's been some years since the last time the bike ban was discussed and maybe people have so many other biking options that its not a big issue. Burgess commented on how surprised she was that most emails said something like, I'm an avid biker but I don't think bikes should be allowed on Picnic Point.

Brown said that any change at the entrance to the Picnic Point trail would be gradual since they need to look at the whole entry sequence including parking. For now we can install signs and more bike racks.

Barker said a vote will be taken at the next meeting on April 26.

### **Eagle Heights Gardens Buffer Zone Use**

James presented a project for the 65'x120' area between the CALS research plots and the Eagle Heights Community Gardens that was planted to act as a buffer between the two areas, one which uses chemicals and one which does not. This area is dedicated to CALS and they have been minimally maintaining it. The plantings suffered damage from rodents and water (the area receives water flow along the south edge of the CALS plots). Prof. Sara Patterson has a small planting demo in an adjacent portion of the CALS plots; she would like to use a small portion of the buffer area as a shade planting demo plot. Another group wants to plant a food forest = permaculture. Permaculture mimics the architecture and beneficial relationships of the forest for food production. It would include trees, shrubs, and herbs and berms to slow the water moving through the area. Eagle Heights Community Gardens would dedicate workers to getting the plants installed and maintaining it over time. Eagle Heights Gardens has money to donate to the plantings. The buffer project would improve bird habitat and be proactive about the water runoff situation. The Planning and Implementation Subcommittee is in favor of the project. Forest made a motion to approve the buffer area master plan. Schroeder seconded it. There was no discussion and the motion was approved.

### **Picnic Point Improvements update and overview of each capital project listed in 2011 budget (Rhonda James)**

The construction plans are 100% complete. Brown said the donors have signed off on the construction documents and the check will be in the bank by the end of April. Construction should begin in early to mid June. Barker congratulated Brown and Fish on their work with the donors. Brown said they are still working with the donors on the plaque info. The plaque will be 8.5 x 11".

### **Other Capital projects**

A 6'x10' pad will be installed at the base of East Bill's Woods behind the stone wall as a place to pull a wheel chair off the path and view wildlife. The area will include a bird bath with water and a seat log for a companion.

The south section of the Class of 1918 Marsh trail will be raised to its original level using limestone screenings by the Grounds Department. The trail will be 5' wide.

A low prairie planting will be installed at the Frautschi Point parking lot. A large mount type sign will be integrated with 2 white oaks, rock benches and space for a kiosk.

Picnic Point fire circle #2 is an eroding archeological site. The fire circle will be moved back away from the lake edge. The circle will be made slightly larger to accommodate a medium sized group. A bench will be installed next to existing boulders at the shoreline. An archeologist will be on site during the construction work. James thought that limestone screenings would protect the archeological site from the current compaction and erosion. Schroeder said a filter fabric should be put down before limestone screening materials are laid to prevent limestone from mixing with artifacts.

The path behind the entrance gate to Picnic Point will be curved to better allow emergency vehicles to have access to the main path and plantings will be put in to deal with the perennially wet area there. The path will not be raised and the culvert will be fixed.

**Status report on First Year Interest Group initiative (Faculty appointees)**

Nothing to report at this time.

**Adjournment**

Submitted by Bryn Scriver