Cedar Lake Trail—A Collaborative Success

Cooperation and collaboration was the theme of the day, February 17, as supporters gathered for a ceremonial groundbreaking on the Cedar Lake Trail, one of the first trail systems to link the suburbs and downtown for bike and skate commuters. The trail is the result of a remarkable partnership between citizens, government, and the business community, a process that was groundbreaking in its own right and a model of collaboration.

The group gathered at the Linden Yard building, constructed by Cellular One to mirror the outline of a long-gone passenger station once located on the Minneapolis and St. Louis railroad line, on the east side of Cedar Lake.

A newly-painted flatbed trailer owned by the City, decorated with dried wild plants and fresh greens, provided a platform for the emcees, representing the partnership: Dan Dailey of CLPA, Harvey Feldman of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, and Mike Monahan of Minneapolis Public Works. Speakers included Brian Willet, Cedar Lake Park Association; Patty Baker, George Puzak and Dean Zimmerman, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board Commissioners; Pat Scott, Minneapolis City Council; Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Commissioner and Regional Rail Authority Chair; Mark Andrew, Hennepin County Commission Chair; Jim Dustrude, MnDOT State Bicycle Coordinator; Dee Long.

Trail breakers dig in to inaugurate the Cedar Lake Trail on February 17. From left to right: Peter McLaughlin, George Puzak, John Herman, Pat Scott and Patty Baker.

100-Year Vision Unveiled at Annual Meeting

The Cedar Lake Park Association held its fourth annual meeting on January 25, 1995, in a room filled with maps, landscape sketches, and about 80 people at Lurie, Besikof, Lapidus & Co. The meeting recapped CLPA’s 1994 achievements and unveiled its future plans, especially the 100-Year Vision and first stage of trail construction.

Laurie Lundy, project coordinator, cited the CLP partnership’s collaboration with Cellular One resulting in the Linden Yard Railroad Memorial among 1994 highlights. The building, near the Bryn Mawr Meadows ball fields, contains equipment for the adjacent cellular phone tower as well as providing space for a history kiosk, styled as a train station. The memorial will preserve the early experiences, stories and wisdom of rail workers at Cedar Lake Yards through photographs and storyboards. It will also serve as an entrance to the nature park.

David Dayton, CLPA’s treasurer, reported on fundraising and financial matters. In 1994, fundraising took a back seat to trail efforts and planning for the 100-Year Vision. Dayton cautioned against neglecting fundraising if the organization is to survive, but was optimistic about 1995. He suggested that CLPA’s 1995 fundraising can be more successful as progress on trail construction becomes visible, the newsletter becomes more professional, more phonathons are undertaken, and the 100-Year Vision nears completion.

Dan Dailey, CLPA’s president, presented the 100-Year Vision for the park, using an extensive slide show. Dailey summed up by saying “CLPA’s basic principle is building a community with nature, not dominating it.”
The Journey Continues

After a rather lengthy hiatus, the Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC) has reconvened in order to complete the Concept Masterplan document for Cedar Lake Park. Whether or not you have been an active participant in the CAC, I encourage you to join in the completion of the Park’s vision.

The first meeting, on April 1, featured a review by Steve Durant of Jones & Jones (Seattle, WA) of their planning work for Cedar Lake Park. Our objective for this meeting was to understand the thinking process that went into their live-20-year plans for the park. Working in small groups, the CAC made recommendations and priorities from the Jones & Jones work.

The second meeting, on April 10, featured a review by Diana Balcom of Balcom Associates (New Haven, CT) of the park vision materials she developed in collaboration with the Cedar Lake Park Association. These materials were included in the preview slide presentation of the 100-Year Vision, which we shared at the Association’s annual meeting in January. Again, small groups developed recommendations and priorities.

The third meeting will take place on May 22. At this time the CAC will review draft materials and format, and proposed changes will be discussed. On June 21, the Summer Solstice, the completed document will be presented to the CAC for approval.

The concept master plan document that will result will likely be somewhat different from the master plans one usually sees in park planning. Typical plans have a time horizon of 3 to 5 years and can be readily transformed into blueprints and engineering specifications. Being a 100-year vision, ours realistically must defy such specificity. Who could claim to see so far into the future?

As our friend Brian Willette has recently said, we can, however, devise a rudder to help us successfully navigate our journey—and that is our goal. Our purpose is to learn to live in community with nature and one another. By describing the vision and timeless principles that have inspired our efforts, and by defining a palette of parkmaking opportunities that our community may wish to pursue over the next 20 years and beyond, the master plan document can and will become a rudder for community-building.

Please join us and shape the future.

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Volunteers Make It Possible

BY LAURIE LUNDY

The vision for Cedar Lake Park and Trail will become a reality through volunteer efforts. Many thanks to the following volunteers:

Annual Meeting
Gary Cretzer, Dan Dailey, David Dayton, Ruth Jones, David Klopp, Dick Lundy, Erik Roth, Rhonda Rae, Al Singer, Brian Willette, Neil Trembley, Kathryn Grossing, Kathy Mommers

Special thanks to Dorene Scriven and the Bluebird Recovery Program for providing refreshments. Also, thank you to Max Thompson, Cellular One, and to Terry Warnstard and the partners of Lurie, Besikof, Lapidus & Co.

Groundbreaking Ceremony
Sue Botte, Mary Furan, Joe Collings, Rhonda Rae, Sandy Morris, Mitzi Patterson, Kathryn Grossing, Don Beimborn, Mary McGee, and many City employees.

Winter Newsletter
Writers: Craig Bowron, Dan Dailey, David Dayton, Nona Hill, Peggy Leppik, Wally Max, Al Singer, Revina Celfand, Neil G. C. Trembley

Mailers: Ginny Averill, Lorenz Falk, Lisa Genis, Matt Goldman, Jan Lubov, Pat Seibl, D’Ann Topola, Nicholas Valenty, David Cross, Anne Westling, Gaynal Cross, JoAnn Frekot Meyer

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Buckthorn Workshop
To help eradicate buckthorn and replace it with appropriate plantings, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the Cedar Lake Park Association are planning a workshop in keeping with ecosystem concerns. This joint effort responds to citizens interested in removing buckthorn, but who are also concerned about the removal of nesting places, replanting, disposing of the shrubbery and treating the root in a safe manner. Look for more information on the workshop, which we hope to hold in early Autumn.

—Martin Fowler

Waterfowl Nesting Alert
Mallards and Canada Geese have arrived and Wood Ducks are on their way to Cedar Lake. Ground-nesting waterfowl like mallards choose sites adjacent to the lakeshore. From March to August, these nests are vulnerable to predators such as raccoon, foxes, and dogs of all breeds, but especially those water loving retrievers. Disturbing nesting birds is unlawful. When you encounter violaters you can explain the nestling habits of waterfowl and the need to protect them. You can also give warning that there is a $50 fine and or call and report the violation to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Please leave your pets during nesting season.

—Mary McGee

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Volunteers Sandra Hunter, Neil Trembley and Mary McGee with Dee Austin of Cellular One (second from left).


**Ground Breaking continued from page 1**

Minnesota House of Representatives, Ted Mondale and Allan Spear, Minnesota State Senate. We were happy to see other instrumental funders in the audience: Ed Gale and Barbara Johnson from the Metro Parks and Open Space Commission and Bob Naegle from Rollerblade, Inc.

There was no need to repeat in detail the story of the work, struggle, and success of a handful of neighborhood volunteers in reaching their goal, as nearly everyone in attendance knew the story and had a part in it. Representatives from all levels of government were present, as they, too, had worked to turn a few acres of urban open space into a nature park with trails connecting the neighborhood to trails elsewhere in the metro region.

After words from all and ample applause, each dignitary turned over a ceremonial shovelful of earth, then others joined in, turning over a bit of dirt to mark the passage from the phase of dreaming and planning to reality. In an act of spontaneous and unplanned inspiration, shovels were auctioned off as souvenirs.

The contractor, Ron Hall of Hardrives, Inc., supplied refreshments. Every person at the groundbreaking deserved recognition, but special recognition was given to Laurie Lundby, who spearheaded the effort to keep a constant presence of volunteers at the State Capitol during those critical days when support from the legislature was needed. Also noted were the efforts of the first few citizens who banded together to support and form the group then called Save Cedar Lake Park, including: Brian Willette, Doris Peterson, and Dan Dailey. The Hedberg family was thanked for a generous trail donation, John Richter for fundraising, and John Herman for legal services. Watch for an official ribbon-cutting ceremony in July to mark the opening of the trail system. See you there!
You Can Be a Phenologist!

BY AL SINGER

The raucous flocks of crows had left their winter roosts to begin reestablishing their nesting territories. Soon, individual crows could be seen carrying sticks in their beaks for nest construction. This was the sign that the Ojibwa had been waiting for. The winter camp was disassembled for the annual move to the sugarbush. Soon the sap would be flowing and the new camp would be filled with people collecting and boiling sap to make maple syrup and sugar—staples in the Ojibwa diet.

Stick carrying by the crows and maple sap flow are but two of an infinite number of naturally-occurring events which happen all around us. The return of the bluebird and hopefully the osprey, the first blossoms of the bloodroot and wild plum, the trill of breeding toads, hatching monarchs, cottonwoods shedding their fluffy seeds, the fall hawk migration and lake freeze-up are elements of the natural cycle of Cedar Lake Park.

This natural rhythm was closely followed by indigenous North Americans. Nature was their calendar and their lives revolved around the need to know when the salmon spawned or the wild rice ripened. Events were predicted after lifetimes of observation that were recorded in group memory and oral tradition. These seemingly random events actually occur in a fairly predictable way. Oh, there's always some variation due to large and small scale weather changes, such as a series of cold fronts or the shifting jet stream, but by and large the pattern can be anticipated. We at Cedar Lake Park are hoping that a large number of people will lay the foundations for us to build a group memory. In this case a written record of natural events in our neighborhood. Put nature back into your calendar by becoming a phenologist!

Prior to the establishment of the discipline now known as Ecology, scientists and amateurs studied the relationships between climate and biological phenomenon. Originally known as "Phenomenology" and later contracted to form the word Phenology, the science never did gain widespread prominence. Nevertheless, the basic principles of simply observing natural events and recording these observations can not only be enjoyable but help you/us gain a greater understanding of Cedar Lake Park. Whether it's the first "freebee" of the chickadee in late winter, courting wood ducks, flowering elderberries, scarlet leaves on the sumac or gray fox tracks in the snow, your observations are important.

So, take a walk in the park and let your senses wander. Keep a journal and record the time, date and location of each sighting. You will be able to drop off your "phenological contribution" at the soon-to-be-installed informational signage at 21st and Lipton, just west of the Cedar Lake Parkway bridge or near the Cellular One Depot at 1-394. Or, you can simply call the Association and share your experience that way. Perhaps in a few years, we'll be able to mark our view of the changing seasons by the sight of a stick carrying crow, and know that the natural cycle around Cedar Lake is beginning anew.

From the Hill

BY REPRESENTATIVE DEE LONG

Blazing New Trails

As I sat on the podium for the Cedar Lake Trail Ribbon cutting ceremony, I was struck by the beauty of the moment. Bright sunshine hinted the promise of spring, while neighbors gathered beneath the city's skyline to celebrate years of collaboration to blaze a new trail. The moment was an important one, portending the future of our city, our state and our nation. The Trail adds to the livability of our community, but no one neighborhood owns it, and the Trail allows everyone to enjoy the slopes of nature, but without a government mandate. Individuals, mostly volunteers, made the dream of Cedar Lake Trail a reality—and that is what makes it so special.

This trail should serve as a model for how to make urban communities more livable. It softens the harshness of city living and it represents a collaboration of neighbors, bureaucrats and politicians to build from common ground a valuable community asset. It links one neighborhood to another, making us interdependent and healthier at the same time. This is what our communities need to flourish in a time of limited financial resources. If we have learned that we cannot spend our way out of problems, then we must work together to find new ways of addressing the many needs of our communities. Perhaps Cedar Lake Park Trail is a model for really reinventing government.

The volunteers who blazed this trail have shown us that there are many things that can be done to improve our communities when we join forces and resources. They practiced inclusion in achieving their goal, and they embraced a common vision in creating an innovative partnership to fulfill it. The result is a trail that will bring enjoyment throughout the seasons for generations to come.

These principles are an important part of the "Metropolitan Livable Communities Act" that I recently introduced with Senator Ted Mondale. The Livable Communities Act is an attempt to bring about new partnerships and new ways of doing things in hopes of improving the economy of the metropolitan region. In the tradition of the Cedar Lake Trail project, neighborhoods, government, and private interests have reason to work together to add value to a community. The Livable Communities Act brings the state to the table with a modest investment that will be used to leverage other public funds and private resources.

Innovations like Cedar Lake Trail and the Livable Communities Act will help us to improve our communities even as financial resources are stretched to the limit. Recent debate in Washington and St. Paul surely means that we will be challenged to blaze new trails By looking to each other, then looking over the fence and extending a friendly hand to our neighbors, we will be better able to leave our city a pleasant place for our children and grandchildren to live, work, and play.
Special Gifts

Cedar Lake Park Association gratefully acknowledges recent contributions for memorials, tributes and gifts to loved ones. Since the last Update, the following memorials and gifts were received:

Cedar Trees
In memory of David Eiger, Hal Gansler, Joye and Sig Harris.
In memory of Nathaniel C. Jones from his parents Philip & Susan Jones.
Tree fund organized by Wally Marx in memory of his friend, Nate Jones: Isles Market & Deli, Mark & Jennifer Johnson and Paul & Emily.

In memory of Jean Lebundguth from her daughter Barbara Lebundguth. Barbara wrote, "I would like a cedar tree in honor of my mother, who died in 1980. She lived nature, so this is very fitting. Plus, it is a way to replace the trees for the cedar fence I recently installed."

Other Gifts
Christmas presents from Sally Anson: Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Cleveland, Ms. Richard Vaughn, Miss. J. Wurtel.
From Elaine & Ron Burton in honor of Richard & Bette Ann Bloom's new home.
A birthday gift from Joye and Sig Harris to honor Dory Rose.

Other Memorials
In memory of Joseph Goleski from Virginia & Nick Puzak.
In memory of Mina Peterson from Hilde & Stephen Gasiorowicz.
In memory of Holly Ramsey from Rob, Anne & Elizabeth Brown.
Wildflowers in memory of Bob Toner from Dick and Laurie Lundy.

Myrtle Matteison
With this donation, Leo and I are starting a wildflower fund in memory of Myrtle Matteison. Myrtle lived next door on Cedar View Drive for the past 17 years. She outlived her three sisters who resided in the same house for over 25 years.
For those living nearby, the octogenarian was an inspiration. No good deed went unrecognized, and neighbor children frequently received rewards. Myrtle never lost her love of flowers. She prided her backyard flowers as did her many visitors. Although failing health prevented her from caring for her flowers, neighbors cultivated them for the past eight years, and she still enjoyed them through her back windows. Myrtle passed away peacefully from heart failure on March 9.

Donations to the fund for wildflowers to be planted in her memory would be gratefully appreciated. Please send to CLPA, 1101 Cedar View Drive, Minneapolis, MN 55404.

Sue Verrett

Wildflower Gift in Memory of Charlotte Amy Gordon
Ruth Jones made a generous gift to Cedar Lake Park Association to plant wildflowers in memory of her niece, Charlotte Amy Gordon. Charlotte and her fiancé John Ambrose Stack were killed in an auto accident in Calgary, Canada, on December 27, 1994.
Charlotte was eccentric, outrageous, and loved to shock people, but always saw the sacred in society’s castoffs, especially abandoned youth. Ruth wishes her gift to be a reflection of Charlotte’s life and work, so flowers for Charlotte will be planted in a spot where no one expects beauty; people will see blossoms instead of litter, as Charlotte saw the sacred in those others saw as littering the sidewalk.

Wildflower Fund for Cedar Lake Trail Update

BY DON AND MARY L. BEIMBORN
One of the first trail systems in the nation to allow bicycle and skate commuting from the suburbs to the center of a large metropolitan area will open this summer in Cedar Lake Park. The first phase of bituminous and soft surface trails will provide a bicycle and skate commuting link between the west end of Cedar Lake Park at Highway 100 in St. Louis Park and Royalston Avenue North, near 7th Street, in downtown Minneapolis. The second phase of the trail project, scheduled for summer 1996, will continue east to the Mississippi River. Official access points will be at the eastern and western terminus, at Ewing Avenue, near I-394 to Kenwood Avenue, and at several specialized access points on the way downtown.
Although designed for commuting, the trail will weave between islands of prairie plants and rise and fall with gentle contours of the land, providing a pleasant ride or stroll through natural surroundings for the walker and recreational cyclist or skater.

For most of the 3.1 miles there will be two separate directional trails, each 10 feet wide, for non-motorized wheels. Near the wheel trails will be nine foot wide walking paths with two surfaces, six feet of bituminous and three feet of gravel. Wherever feasible, the foot trails are separated from the wheel trails by a substantial distance. Where space is restricted, there will be one path with room for all traffic in both directions on a 14 foot wide surface. The trail will also be separated from the active railroad tracks in the area by a six-foot high chain link fence when space is limited.
The 1.8 million dollar trail is funded by a combination of federal funds for non-motorized commuting, state lottery money, City of Minneapolis money and private donations. The trail is an important link in a much larger trail system. The extension to the Mississippi River next year will make the Grand Round of the Minneapolis parkway system a virtual figure eight. In the works is a planned trail from St. Louis Park to downtown Hopkins, connecting Cedar Lake trail to the west.

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4th Annual Clean-Up
Celebrate Earth Day, April 22
This year, CLPA joins the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) to help clean parts of Bassett Creek and the Chain of Lakes Watersheds. The cleanup is designed to inspire people to clean and care for watersheds near their homes. A watershed is land that drains into a lake, stream or river. If the watershed is polluted, the water will also be polluted.
The clean up will take place in designated areas from 9 to 11 a.m. Prizes will be awarded for a Trash Treasure Hunt and other competitions at a celebration from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for location and more information, contact the following people: Bassett Creek, Laura at 374-1142. Browne and Cedar Lakes, Laurie at 377-9522. Remaining Chain of Lakes, Mississippi River and Shingle Creek, Deb at 823-0043.
The Chain of Lakes CWP Project is a cooperative effort of the Cities of Minneapolis and St. Louis Park, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and Hennepin County and Minnesota Pollution Control agencies. The project is focusing its efforts on wetland restoration, storm sewer construction, and public education.
Help us keep breaking new ground.

We share a vision. We saved the land. Now the excitement continues.

Nurture Nature was our aim when we began six years ago, and still is. Your support ensures Cedar Lake Park's fulfillment.

As we move forward through the years, our continuing quest is learning to live in community with nature. In order for our mission to succeed, WE NEED YOUR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

Your financial contribution will help advance:
• environmental learning • restoration of plant and animal communities • trail connections and improvements

Send your tax deductible gift of $25, $75 or whatever you can give to:
Cedar Lake Park Association, 1101 Cedar View Drive, Minneapolis, MN 55405