



Park Notes

Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County
1621 Beechwood Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55116
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Farewell!



Twenty-eight years ago I was a member of a small group of people who organized to prevent a luxury high rise from being built in the middle of Crosby Lake/Hidden Falls Regional Park. When the Saint Paul City Council voted to prohibit the development, our little group of park advocates met one more time and said, 'We can't keep doing this alone. We need an organization to support and protect the parks every day, not just in emergencies.' And so the Friends of the Parks and Trails of Saint Paul and Ramsey County was born.

I often said that the reason I became the first executive director was because I was the only one in our group who was not employed full time. But it was more than that. The Friends was my dream job. I got to advocate for parks, trails and open space in my own back yard, and I got paid to do it. I worked out of my home office, which soon became a mass of file cabinets and file boxes. I hosted most small meetings in my kitchen, serving tea from the microwave. Life was good, very good!

Now, twenty-eight years later, it is time to let someone else do this wonderful job and it is time for me to join the Board of Directors of the Friends. I will have more time to ride my bike on the trails and walk along Mississippi River Boulevard. I will cherish the memories and remember with pride all we have accomplished together as I peddle happily into retirement.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve you all these years. It has been great.

Ret. Executive Director Peggy Lynch

Some of Peggy's Accomplishments:

Formation of the Pig's Eye Coalition, Preventing Pig's Eye from becoming an industrial zone

Founding of Friends of the Parks and Trails

Establishment of St. Paul Parks and Ramsey County Parks Commissions

Adoption of the No Net Loss of Parkland Provision

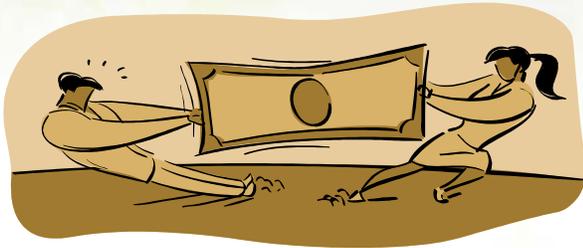
Initiation of the Parkland Dedication

Enabled Discussion among Government Entities

Development of Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails

A Consistent Citizen's Voice for Outdoor Resources

LEGACY FUNDS



Nothing causes more controversy than having money to spend. Deciding how to spend it means everyone lines up to make a compelling case for their project. Quickly follow arguments about fairness, efficiency, and effectiveness. To no one's surprise, conflict over how to allocate the Legacy funds boiled over into a very public fight ending in name calling, acrimony and a governor's veto. At least in round one, the metro parks system ended up on the losing end.

Voters across the state, and particularly in the metro area, turned out in strong support of the 2008 Legacy Amendment that increased the sales tax and dedicated the money to Outdoor Heritage (33%); Clean Water (33%) Parks and Trails (14.25%); Arts and Cultural Heritage (19.75%). The Lessard-Sams Council is tasked with making recommendations on how to spend about \$90 million per year from the Outdoor Heritage fund. This year metro area legislators and environmental advocates cried foul when the Council allocated 90% (about \$81 million) of the money to northern Minnesota and denied the Metro Regional Parks request for \$6.3 million.

The Metro Parks request was to enhance and restore nearly 1,000 acres of fly-way area along the Mississippi River. The area provides wetlands, prairies, forest and wildlife habitat.

To protect the flyway outside the metro area and neglect it as it passes through the most densely populated part of the state fails in the mission to protect the habitat of all Minnesota. It is an approach that fails the people, birds and wildlife that the Amendment was intended to protect and it is certainly a violation of the commitment to the tax payers who voted to support the increase in their tax.

The legislature kept all of the recommendations for the Lessard-Sams Council AND funded the Metro request. The governor received enormous pressure from the 'hooks and bullets' supporters to veto the metro request and he ultimately did. While this was a popular veto for some including the sports writers for the Star Tribune, it did not pass the smell test for most metro legislators and environmentalists.

While this particular funding dispute is over, the underlying conflict is not. The Council appears to believe that they have the final decision-making authority over the Outdoor Heritage fund, while constitutionally, the Legislature has that authority. Many battles are ahead and many issues will be debated in years to come including how funding decisions are made and how resources are allocated.

Jeanne Weigum



2013 Public Service Award

St. Paul Councilman Russ Stark is the recipient of the Public Service Award for 2013. Russ serves as councilman for Ward 4.

Ward 4 includes many of Saint Paul's best-known locations, including "Minnesota's Main Street," Snelling Avenue and a large portion of Como Park. The proposed Central Corridor light-rail line runs through Ward 4 along the diverse and busy University Avenue business district. Ward 4 includes all or part of five neighborhoods -- Hamline-Midway, Merriam Park, Saint Anthony Park, and parts of Mac-Groveland and Como.

Since Russ has been Councilman he has continued to work on the implementation of a park on the land donated by the Dickerman family in 1909. This was a continuation of his work prior to his election to the city council. Dickerman Park is a public park which does not look like one, but rather, looks like the property of the buildings it fronts. It is located on University Avenue between Fairview and Aldine.

Russ initiated the Green Line Parks and Commons Initiative, which is now being led by the Trust for Public Land and the Mayor's office. This is an effort examining the possibility of a parks corridor between the two downtowns, bordering the Central Corridor line, or Green Line.

He worked with neighbors to help develop a dog park at Meeker Island Park to get more people using it for recreation and to discourage illicit activities.



**Board Member Richard Arey and
Councilman Russ Stark**

Russ also initiated the creation of the Como Regional Park Advisory Committee to ensure that Parks and Rec Department and neighborhood stakeholders are in good communication about Como Park.

Russ led the passage of a resolution supporting Complete Streets in the City. This makes sure planning for street projects considers all users – pedestrians, vehicles, bikes, buses, trucks. A Complete Streets Design Manual is now being written with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

He also initiated the creation of a Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission to better integrate transportation, including bike trails, into City planning decisions.

Many thanks, Russ, for the considerable work you do for our parks and trails, and livability of our City.

Park Volunteer Awards - 2013
Awards presented at Annual Meeting on June
20, 2013 at Keller Regional Park
Del and Marge Case and Doug Olson



Del Case and Family

Del was Friends of Mears Park Coordinator from 2005 to 2012, assisted by his wife Marge. Del listened to the concerns of the gardeners, encouraged new gardeners and reviewed gardener applications.

Del managed over 80 volunteers. He bought and distributed their volunteer t-shirts, keys, repaired and replaced tools, communicated with gardeners and city officials concerning beautification and maintenance of Mears Park. He kept records of all volunteers and their contact information, and tracked volunteer hours. He also shared FoMP by-laws with all FoMP volunteer members.

Del and Marge took advantage of flower donations through MN Green. They had their truck ready to pick flowers up for the gardens on any given date.

Del coordinated the dates for Friends of Mears Park to meet with the City every spring and fall. He also scheduled a FoMP volunteer meeting before our annual meetings with the City. This meeting was a social hour because it was important to Del and Marge that the gardeners had time to share gardening tips and enjoy each other.

Del and Marge loved sharing their gardening skills with the gardeners and assisting in any way they could. As anyone who has spent time in Mears Park, their love of Lowertown and this beautiful city park with babbling brook shows.

Marge became ill over two years ago and even through all of her cancer treatments, she was always by Del, helping out any way she could, always with a smile. Marge passed away this past March, and she is sadly missed by everyone in FoMP.

Thank you, Del, for all of your and Marge's extraordinary contributions to Mears Park!



Doug Olson and President Andy Holewa

Doug is currently the Parks and Gardens chair for the Ramsey Hill Association whose area encompasses six public parks. Doug is responsible for purchasing plants and recruiting volunteers for all of the parks.

Under his supervision the volunteers plant and tend the gardens throughout the season. He also researched and planted a rain garden in the renovated Holly Tot Lot, one of the six parks.

From 2000 to 2010 Doug was head of the Public Parks Committee for the Garden Club of Ramsey County. In addition, Doug maintains the garden at the Sunray public library.

We cannot thank the volunteers enough for all they do for the parks. Volunteers are the lifeblood of the parks.

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WELCOME!



Susan Solterman Audette

We'd like to introduce Susan Solterman Audette as our new Executive Director! Susan comes to us with a long and diverse background of legislative and grassroots policy advocacy.

A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Susan's professional career began in the Wisconsin State Assembly where she worked as a legislative aide for legislative leadership, researching issues such as Ojibwe treaty rights and commercial fishing in Lake Superior.

Six years later she moved to another capitol city -- Austin, Texas --where she worked as Legislative Director for the chair of the House Public Health Committee. Susan went on to become a policy analyst for the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission, a bi-partisan legislative board, overseeing state agency reviews. In this capacity, she led and participated in teams of analysts that

conducted program evaluations of each state agency once every 12 years and made legislative recommendations for reform.

Eventually, all paths lead home. After six years in Austin, she moved to St. Paul in 2002, where she spent the next seven years as the Policy Director for Audubon Minnesota, lobbying to protect bird and other wildlife habitat.

For the past five years, Susan has contracted with SCS Global Services to evaluate and audit businesses that purchase timber from forests certified as sustainably managed by the Forest Stewardship Council. She is currently finishing her masters in natural science and environmental education from Hamline University and remains active with Audubon as a volunteer.

Susan currently lives in St. Paul with her husband and children.

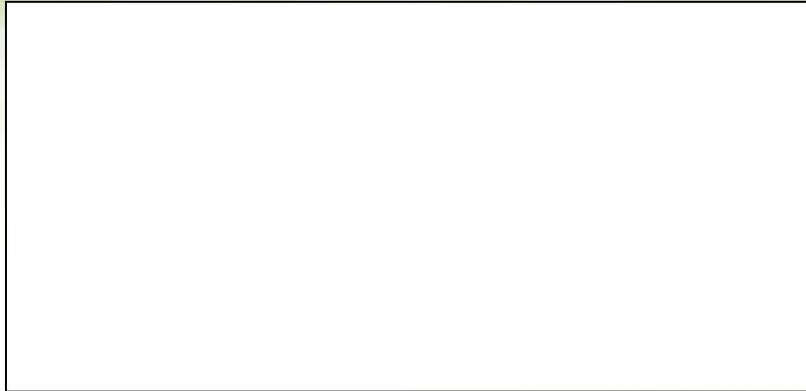
Accomplishments

Successfully lobbied the Legislative Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources for a \$100,000 state grant to develop statewide bird trail guides

Gubernatorial Appointment to the Minnesota Forest Resources Council

Vice-President of the Women's Environmental Network

CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED



Landmark Trees of Saint Paul



Newell Park Oak Grove

Do you have a favorite tree in your yard, your neighbor's yard or a park? The urban forest in St. Paul contains over 500,000 trees, including some trees that have endured since the city's inception.

These trees continue to provide multiple environmental, physical, social and economic benefits that have been instrumental in shaping our community.

St. Paul's Landmark Tree program was created to locate, document, and compile a record of remarkable trees within the City of St. Paul.

The Landmark Tree program encourages any person, organization, or agency to nominate a special tree on public or private property with the city. The Parks and Rec Department accepts nominations for the Landmark Tree Program through August 1st each year.

To see all the trees inducted into St. Paul landmark tree program explore Google Maps landmark tree tour. For a nomination form, go to Landmark Trees of Saint Paul on the city website:

<http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=4205>



**Kentucky Coffeetree Grove
Crosby Farm Regional Park**