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MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Neenah Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC), Michael Kading, Director, Neenah Parks and Recreation Department

FROM: Andrew Dane, Project Manager/Planner, Ed Freer, Senior Designer, SEH

DATE: December 12, 2016

RE: Arrowhead Draft Conceptual Master Plan Memo
SEH No. 138690 14.00

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide background and introduction for the draft Arrowhead Park Conceptual Master Plan which will be presented to the PRC on December 15 2016.

CONSENSUS DIAGRAM AND SKETCHES

The attached draft Arrowhead Park Conceptual Master Plan represents the preferred design alternative at this stage in the planning process. It is intended to reflect community input gathered to date as well as the following guiding principles used to inform the design:

1. Create a Great, Engaging Destination

- a. A unique draw for locals and visitors
- b. Multiple indoor and outdoor opportunities
- c. Connect with History
- d. Foster interaction and build community

2. Build a High Quality, Enduring Park

3. Embrace the Water

- a. Create multiple opportunities to view, touch, listen, and appreciate the water

4. Provide a place for healthy living

- a. Mindfulness, Relaxation, & Recreation

5. Embrace the Natural Environment

- a. Enhance Fishing/Habitat/Wildlife

6. Leverage the park investment

- a. To support economic development, including downtown, residential, & tourism

7. Make the park accessible to all

- a. Improve linkages and wayfinding to and from downtown, City neighborhoods, and the greater Fox Cities

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Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc., 425 West Water Street, Suite 300, Appleton, WI 54911-6058
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The SEH Project Team was asked to generate 3 distinct alternatives for Arrowhead Park, which were presented at Public Meeting No. 2 on November 9, 2016. The three alternatives were developed to illustrate three different approaches to meeting the programmatic elements and priorities identified by the public. They each illustrated a different arrangement of the major programmatic elements, reflecting a thought process ranging from “do nothing” to “highly develop.”

The team’s challenge was to take all of the input and get diverse viewpoints to buy in on a preferred concept. Fortunately, a preferred alternative did strike a chord with the public at the November 9th meeting. The “Contemporary/Modern” design received significantly more votes than the other two alternatives presented. Key elements of the preferred concept included:

Following the November 9th public meeting the consultant team met with the project leadership group (advisory group) to discuss the outcome of the November 9th meeting. Overall, the advisory group embraced the contemporary/modern design, which was seen as unique and more in-line with the guiding principles established for the park. However, the following key points were also made:

1. Fishing areas should be more strongly addressed
2. The western side of the park should have a more naturalistic feel to it, incorporating additional trails and providing a mix of various sized outdoor rooms
3. The community gathering area on the eastern side of the park should serve a different purpose(s) than Shattuck Park. *One* of those purposes should be for recreational gatherings. For example, community runs/bike rides may stage or finish at this location.
4. The Power of 10¹ idea should continue to inform future park design. The idea behind this concept is that places thrive when users have a range of reasons (10+) to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet.
5. A one way loop road with the character/scale of a carriage way should be incorporated into the draft conceptual master plan. The advisory group felt that given the large size of the park, a desire to provide access to visitors of all abilities, the desire to activate the western edge of the park, a desire to provide good fishing access, and the desire to provide additional bike and pedestrian accommodation, a narrow parkway should be incorporated into the design for consideration.

Based on the results of the Nov. 9th meeting and subsequent feedback from the advisory group, the draft conceptual master plan was developed. The plan does not solve nor is it intended to solve every site constraint or design challenge. The goal at this point in the process is to reach agreement on major program elements & overall direction or framework for moving forward. The leadership group has reviewed and commented on the draft Arrowhead Park Conceptual Master Plan (See Leadership Group Comments on Draft Conceptual Master Plan for Arrowhead Park). A few of the key themes/thoughts that seemed to resonate with the group included:

- Add more ‘touch the water’ areas along shoreline
- Move buildings onto former Minergy development footprint
- Concerned with shoreline disturbances
- Place community building to northeast in line of site with Wisconsin Ave.
- Provide transient boat dockage
- Lengthen sinuous boardwalk near western edge of park

¹ <http://www.pps.org/reference/the-power-of-10/>

Going forward, identifying outstanding issues is an important part of the process. For example, now that a draft plan has been developed the City and consultant team will be seeking input from WDNR regarding the public trust doctrine and other issues on December 19 2016. Based on those discussions (and other discussions with potential private partners as well as regulatory agencies), the draft plan will change and evolve. It is important to note that items such as events and use programming will be an integral part of addressing key aspirations such as leveraging the park to support downtown and creating a regional destination.

As the City moves ahead, the challenge is to seek balance and develop an appropriate solution for the site at this point in time. The draft plan appears to have strong support by the public. It meets the programmatic desires of the community, creates a destination, and offers a unique park experience unlike anything else in Neenah – or the region. The City and the project team need to think comprehensively about the best path forward - from a regulatory, cost/technical, and community priority standpoint.

PROGRAM SUMMARY DRAFT

See Attachment “Zone Descriptions for Draft Arrowhead Park Conceptual Master Plan” for a description of sub-areas or zones within the park including programming ideas generated throughout the planning process. The draft plan provides ample space to accommodate a wide range of uses within the park. As the Arrowhead Park planning and implementation process move forward in phases, specific uses and designs should be further explored and refined.

FUNDING & COST OUTLINE

To be included in final report, including phasing strategies.

OUTLINE OF FINAL REPORT

Section 1: Executive Summary

Purpose

Section 2: Final Plan

- Long-term vision
- Phasing plan
- Accessibility including non- motorized use
- Green infrastructure, sustainable design, and maintenance
- Investment plan

Section 3: Probable Construction Cost Estimates

- Overall and phased
- Operations and maintenance

Section 4: Grant Funding Overview and Recommendations

- Funding summary
- Phase 1 funding strategy

Section 5: Public Private Partnerships and Recommendations

- Potential partners

Appendices

Summary of Prior Planning Efforts

Citizen Comments and Public Input

Program Summary

Conceptual Alternatives (3)

Existing and Future Land Use

Connectivity Diagrams

Opportunities and Challenges Diagram

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AD