

Written Comments Received Regarding the DeLaSalle Athletic Facilities EAW

Federal Agencies:

1. US Department of the Interior,
National Park Service

State and Metropolitan Agencies:

2. Metropolitan Council
3. Minnesota Department of Natural
Resources
4. Minnesota Historical Society
5. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
6. Minnesota Department of
Transportation

34. Martin, Judith
35. Nelson, Clareyse
36. Richardson, Judith
37. Roscoe, Robert (11/15/05)
38. Roscoe, Robert (7/25/05)
39. Rose, Thomas
40. Sheran, Linda
41. Steller, Chris
42. Viken, Christine (11/17/05)
43. Viken, Christine (11/23/05)
44. Willcutt, Peter Johann

Organizations and Corporations:

7. BNSF Railway
8. Clean Water Action
9. Friends of the Mississippi River
10. MacDonald & Mack Architects
11. Nicollet Island-East Bank
Neighborhood Association
12. Preservation Alliance of Minnesota
13. Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota
14. Sierra Club

Individuals:

15. Bartl, Judy
16. Belfiore, Betty
17. Berg, Sid and Lola
18. Bulthaus, Mary
19. Cagle, Sally
20. Carlson, Nan
21. Chaffee, John
22. Christenson, Steven
23. Daly, Sandy
24. Dreon, Mathew
25. Durkacs, Suzanne
26. Fried, Arlene
27. Fournier, Katie
28. Grilley, Margie
29. Hively, Jan
30. Hondros, Lisa C.
31. Johnson, Gary
32. Kahn, Phyllis
33. Larsen, Christine



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
111 E. Kellogg Blvd., Ste. 105
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1256

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L8017(MISS)-3

November 23, 2005

J. Michael Orange
Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning and Economic Development
City Hall, Room 210
350 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

Dear Mr. Orange:

This letter contains comments from the National Park Service (NPS) on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the proposed DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility Project. As indicated in the EAW, the entire project area, including all of Nicollet Island, the Mississippi River, and adjacent upland areas in the vicinity of the proposed project, is located within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA), a unit of the national park system. The MNRRA was established by Congress in 1988 to protect, preserve, and enhance the significant values of the Mississippi River corridor through the Twin Cities metropolitan area. As also identified in the EAW, a Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the MNRRA was approved in 1995. The CMP provides a policy framework for the coordinated efforts of federal, state, and local authorities, as well as the general public, to protect and interpret the nationally significant resources of the corridor and for analyzing plans and individual actions in the area. In our review of the EAW, we find the project inconsistent with several key MNRRA CMP policies and guidelines:

1) The proposed athletic complex is not in keeping with the CMP's general criteria for compatible riverfront uses. The CMP gives special emphasis to protection of areas along the riverfront due to the high concentration of significant natural, cultural, and economic resources, its potential for outdoor recreation, and a greater probability for serious adverse effects if not properly managed. It is our belief that the proposal does not demonstrate a clear need for a riverfront location; that is to say, the proposed facility is not reliant upon the river, a riverfront location, or a connection to the river for its operational needs or economic benefit. There also seems to be significant potential for conflict with established uses—particularly those of a more quiet and passive nature—on Nicollet Island and other areas within the Saint Anthony Falls Historic District, as well as potential inconsistencies with the character of nearby residential neighborhoods and components of the adjacent regional park system on, and adjacent to, the

island. Further, we expect the proposed project would result in some loss of visual open space, and would interfere with some river views.

2) The proposal is not consistent with CMP goals that stress the preservation of public open space. Open space is a critical resource in the river corridor and its protection and enhancement is stressed in the CMP. The proposal calls for the elimination of existing public open space on land owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board for the sole benefit of a narrow group of potential users. Such loss of open space is not supported in the plan.

3) The proposal is inconsistent with the historic preservation goals of the CMP. One of the principal purposes for which Congress established the MNRRA was to preserve, enhance and interpret its archeological, ethnographic, and historic resources. Of all the places that convinced Congress to establish MNRRA, the St. Anthony Falls Historic District is one of the most important.

No place anchors the metro Mississippi River's historical significance like St. Anthony Falls. Geologically, it is unique; St. Anthony Falls is the only major waterfall on the Mississippi River. According to Dakota tradition, the falls are home to Oanktehi, the spirit of waters and underworld. For the Dakota, Nicollet Island was once an important place for harvesting maple syrup. Historically, visitors to the falls comprise a who's who of European and American exploration: French explorer Father Louis Hennepin, English colonist Jonathan Carver, and Zebulon Pike, the first American explorer to portage around the falls 200 years ago. Its painters include George Catlin, Henry Lewis, Alexis Fournier, and Albert Bierstadt.

Economically, the falls created a city with no peer west of Chicago to the Rocky Mountains and south to St. Louis. It gave birth to the saw milling and flour milling industries that became the leading producers of their commodities in the United States and, at times, the world. For some 50 years Minneapolis was the nation's flour capital. Technologically, the falls produced the first commercial hydroelectric central plant in the United States. The St. Anthony Falls area boasts two National Historic Landmarks: the Pillsbury A Mill and the Washburn A Mill. They bookend James J. Hill's remarkable stone arch bridge, which is a National Engineering Landmark.

For all the above reasons, the greater St. Anthony Falls area is a National Register of Historic Places District. Resting at the tip of the St. Anthony Falls horseshoe dam, Nicollet Island lies near the heart of all of this history. What happens here affects all that surrounds it.

The proposed DeLaSalle Stadium development would adversely affect the St. Anthony Falls Historic District in a number of ways. Grove Street is one of the physical anchors that define the historic setting of Nicollet Island. Its presence on the island since the late 1860s grounds us in how historic events developed along and around it. Grove Street is one of the few through streets on the island, running from one side of the island to the other. As such, it is a defining feature of the island's landscape which helps to interpret important aspects of the island's history. It does not require buildings lining the eastern end to serve this purpose.

As designed, the project would have additional adverse effects beyond destroying a large section of Grove Street. The design calls for bleachers to be built across the road alignment. This would

present a serious visual obstruction to what was once a clear line of sight down the road, destroying the visual role the road played as one of the through streets on the island.

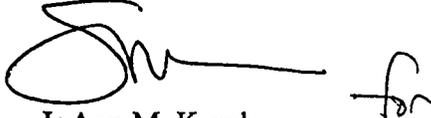
The proposed high mast lighting would also adversely affect the historic district, particularly since the island has 360 degree visibility. The structures and stadium lights would be out of character with the historic district and would be visible from all directions.

Finally, the archeological report completed by Dr. Michelle Terrell demonstrates that a high potential for archeological sites exists in some areas of the proposed project. If National Register eligible sites exist in the project area, they could be adversely affected by the project. Given the benefits of the stadium project stated in the EAW, we believe those benefits simply do not justify the adverse effects on the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The District is significant at the local, state, and national levels and the project would only benefit a relatively small, local group of users.

In conclusion, though we recognize that the proposed facility would be a convenience for the operation of the DeLaSalle High School athletics program and could help the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in meeting some of its program needs, the proposal nonetheless is inconsistent with riverfront location guidelines, open space protection goals, and historic preservation purposes identified in the MNRRA CMP. In accordance with the CMP, new activities that do not need a river location, that do not contribute to the riverfront environment, or that would cause some environmental degradation or have some other detrimental effects on corridor resources, should be located outside the riverfront area. We recommend that other alternatives be more seriously evaluated to meet the proposers' needs, including an alternate location for a new stadium complex in a less sensitive area, or use of existing facilities. If the project is approved where proposed and the proposers elect to proceed, we strongly recommend that an unlighted stadium design be implemented. We also recommend that an archeological survey and evaluation be completed before a final decision on the stadium project is made.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the proposed DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility Project. If you have any questions concerning our comments please contact me or Jim Von Haden at 651-290-3030, ext. 235.

Sincerely,



JoAnn M. Kyral
Superintendent

cc:

Brother Michael Collins, DeLaSalle High School
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Dennis Gimmestad, Minnesota Historical Society
Greg Mathis, Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission

November 15, 2005

Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis CPED - Planning
210 City Hall,
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

RE: Minneapolis-- Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) – DeLaSalle Athletic Facility
Metropolitan Council District 7 (Annette Meeks, 612-341-8168)
Metropolitan Council Review File No. 19599-1

Dear Mr. Orange:

The project proposes the construction of the De La Salle High School Athletic Facility on Nicollet Island in Minneapolis. The Metropolitan Council staff review finds that the EAW is complete and accurate with respect to regional concerns and raises no major issues of consistency with Council policies. An EIS is not necessary for regional purposes. However, staff offers the following comments for your consideration.

Item 6 – Project Description

The document states on page 4 that parking lot improvements proposed by DeLaSalle to an existing off-street parking area (Parcel C) consist of replacing the impervious gravel surface with porous pavers. However, it would appear from language in the document's Attachment F that the same "auxiliary parking lot" is to be reconstructed with a bituminous surface. The final Response to Comments document needs to clarify this apparent inconsistency.

Item 17 – Water Quality – Surface Water Runoff

As proposed, the project would most likely result in an increase in surface water runoff to the Mississippi River. While some impervious surface will be eliminated, an extensive drain tile system is proposed to be installed beneath the playing field. All site irrigation and rainfall would be expected to infiltrate into the tile system and be routed to the City's existing storm water system. The Council recommends the incorporation of Low Impact Development (LID) techniques like rainwater gardens and infiltration trenches through which this flow could first be routed, to help reduce surface water runoff volumes and rates (to the Mississippi River) to the degree possible. The Metropolitan Council's *Urban Small Sites BMP Manual* includes detailed information on 40 best management practices that make sense in an urban small-site, cold-climate setting. The manual is available at: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/environment/Watershed/BMP/manual.htm>.

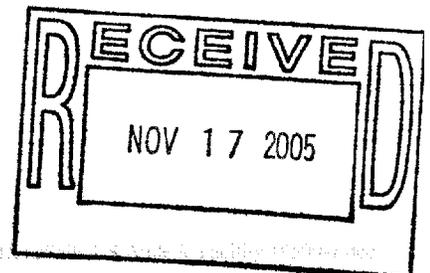
If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Jim Uttley, AICP, principal reviewer at 651 602-1361.

Sincerely,



Phyllis Hanson, Manager
Local Planning Assistance

cc: Michael O'Keefe, Vice President for Planning, DeLaSalle High School
Tod Sherman, Development Reviews Coordinator, MnDOT - Metro Division
Annette Meeks, Metropolitan Council District 7
Keith Buttleman, Environmental Services
Denise Engen, Sector Representative
Jim Uttley, Principal Reviewer
Cheryl Olsen, Reviews Coordinator





Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

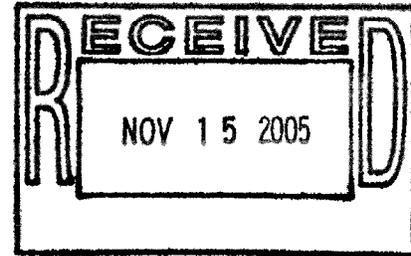
Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, Box 25
500 Lafayette Road

St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-40

Phone: (651) 259-5107 Fax: (651) 296-1811 E-mail: sarah.hoffmann@dnr.state.mn.us

November 9, 2005

Mr. Michael Orange
City of Minneapolis Planning & Economic Development
Room 210 City Hall
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385



Re: Request for Natural Heritage information for vicinity of proposed DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility,
T29N R24W Section 23, Hennepin County
NHNR Contact #: ERDB 20060324-0002

Dear Mr. Orange,

The Minnesota Natural Heritage database has been reviewed to determine if any rare plant or animal species or other significant natural features are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the area indicated on the map enclosed with your information request. Based on this review, there are 7 known occurrences of rare species in the area searched (for details, see enclosed database printout and explanation of selected fields). However, based on the nature and location of the proposed project I do not believe it will affect any known occurrences of rare features.

The Natural Heritage database is maintained by the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, a unit within the Division of Ecological Services, Department of Natural Resources. It is continually updated as new information becomes available, and is the most complete source of data on Minnesota's rare or otherwise significant species, native plant communities, and other natural features. Its purpose is to foster better understanding and protection of these features.

Because our information is not based on a comprehensive inventory, there may be rare or otherwise significant natural features in the state that are not represented in the database. A county-by-county survey of rare natural features is now underway, and has been completed for Hennepin County. Our information about native plant communities is, therefore, quite thorough for that county. However, because survey work for rare plants and animals is less exhaustive, and because there has not been an on-site survey of all areas of the county, ecologically significant features for which we have no records may exist on the project area.

The enclosed results of the database search are provided in two formats: index and full record. To control the release of locational information, which might result in the damage or destruction of a rare element, both printout formats are copyrighted.

The index provides rare feature locations only to the nearest section, and may be reprinted, unaltered, in an Environmental Assessment Worksheet, municipal natural resource plan, or report compiled by your company for the project listed above. If you wish to reproduce the index for any other purpose, please contact me to request written permission. **The full-record printout includes more detailed locational information, and is for your personal use only. If you wish to reprint the full-record printouts for any purpose, please contact me to request written permission.**

Please be aware that review by the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program focuses only on *rare natural features*. It does not constitute review or approval by the Department of Natural Resources as a whole. If you require further information on the environmental review process for other natural resource-related issues, you may contact your Regional Environmental Assessment Ecologist, Wayne Barstad, at (651)

DNR Information: 651-296-6157 • 1-888-646-6367 • TTY: 651-296-5484 • 1-800-657-3929

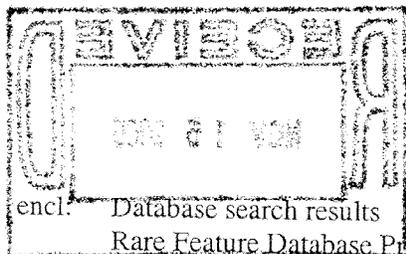


772-7940. Thank you for consulting us on this matter, and for your interest in preserving Minnesota's rare natural resources.

Sincerely,



Sarah D. Hoffmann
Endangered Species Environmental Review Coordinator



encl. Database search results

Rare Feature Database Print-Outs: An Explanation of Fields

DELAISALLE ATHLETIC FACILITY

Minnesota Natural Heritage Database
 Element Occurrence Records
 129N R24W SECTION 23, HENNEPIN COUNTY
 MaDNR, Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program
 19:27 Saturday, NOVEMBER 05, 2005
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 1

T029N R24W SWSE22 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN

Element: FALCO PEREGRINUS (PEREGRINE FALCON) #43
 State Status: THREATENED
 EO Rank: Current Status: Intended Status:
 Site: MINNEAPOLIS 22
 Ownership: Private
 Managed Area(s): not managed or no record
 Source: REDIG, P., TORDOFF, H. AND DNR NONGAME WILDLIFE PROGRAM
 NESTING AREA. MULTIFOODS TOWER.

Last Observed Date: 2002
 DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 610
 Forestry District: 613
 Quad Map: MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH (S16A)
 Latitude: 44 58' 40" Long: 93 16' 21"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed
 Voucher: Verification: verified

T029N R24W NWSE23 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN

Element: BAT CONCENTRATION #40
 EO Rank: A Current Status: Intended Status:
 Site: CHUTE'S CAVE
 Ownership: Owner unknown
 Managed Area(s): not managed or no record
 Source: NORDQUIST, G.E. (CO BIOL SURVEY 2000):
 HIBERNACULUM: CHUTE'S CAVE. THIS LIMESTONE AND SANDSTONE CAVE AND ASSOCIATED MAN-MADE TUNNELS SUPPORT THE LARGEST NUMBER OF HIBERNATING PIPISTRELLUS
 SUBFLAVUS IN THE STATE (69 INDIVIDUALS WERE COUNTED IN ACCESSIBLE PORTIONS OF THE CAVE AND THE ESTIMATED TOTAL IS LIKELY NEAR 75). THIS CAVE/TUNNEL IS THE
 MOST IMPORTANT HIBERNACULUM FOR THIS SPECIES IN MINNESOTA.

Last Observed Date: 20 February 2000
 DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 610
 Forestry District: 613
 Quad Map: MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH (S16A)
 Latitude: 44 58' 59" Long: 93 15' 10"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed

Voucher: Verification: photo rec.

T029N R24W SWSE23 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN

Element: FALCO PEREGRINUS (PEREGRINE FALCON) #67
 State Status: THREATENED
 EO Rank: Current Status: Intended Status:
 Site: MINNEAPOLIS 23
 Ownership: Owner unknown
 Managed Area(s): not managed or no record
 Source: TORDOFF, B.
 NESTING AREA. CITY HALL.

Last Observed Date: 2002
 DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 610
 Forestry District: 613
 Quad Map: MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH (S16A)
 Latitude: 44 58' 38" Long: 93 15' 55"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed
 Voucher: Verification: verified

T029N R24W NWSE23 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN

Element: PIPISTRELLUS SUBFLAVUS (EASTERN PIPISTRELLUS) #28
 State Status: SPECIAL CONCERN
 EO Rank: Current Status: Intended Status:
 Site: CHUTE'S CAVE
 Ownership: Owner unknown
 Managed Area(s): not managed or no record
 Source: NORDQUIST, G.E. (CO BIOL SURVEY 2000):
 SIXTY-NINE INDIVIDUALS WERE RECORDED HIBERNATING IN CHUTE'S CAVE. THIS IS THE LARGEST NUMBER OF THIS SPECIES FOUND IN ANY HIBERNACULA IN MINNESOTA. NO OTHER
 BAT SPECIES WERE OBSERVED REFER TO THE BAT CONCENTRATION REPORT FOR CHUTE'S CAVE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Last Observed Date: 20 February 2000
 DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 610
 Forestry District: 613
 Quad Map: MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH (S16A)
 Latitude: 44 58' 59" Long: 93 15' 10"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed
 Voucher: Verification: photo rec.

DELASALLE ATHLETIC FACILITY

T29N R24W SECTION 23, HENNEPIN COUNTY
 MNDNR, Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program
 19:27 Saturday, NOVEMBER 05, 2005
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Minnesota Natural Heritage Database
 Element Occurrence Records

T029N R24W SENW25 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN
 Element: BAT CONCENTRATION #29

EO Size: EO Rank: Current Status: Intended Status: Last Observed Date: 1988
 Site: HEINRICH BREWERY CAVE
 Ownership: Owner unknown
 Managed Area(s): MISSISSIPPI NATL RIVER & RECREATION AREA
 Source: HENDERSON, C. (DNR)
 HEINRICH BREWERY CAVE. DOWNSTREAM FROM WASHINGTON AVE. BRIDGE, ON WEST SIDE OF RIVER AT FOOT OF 4TH ST. SOUTH. AN EXTENSIVE SYSTEM OF CAVES AS COOLING CHILLARS FOR BEER WAS EXCAVATED AROUND 1890 BY THE HEINRICH BREWERY (ALSO KNOWN AS MINNEAPOLIS BREWERY). 1988 VISIT FOUND EASTERN PIPISTRELLE BATS UTILIZING THE CAVE. A BAT GATE IS SCHEDULED TO BE INSTALLED AT ENTRANCE IN 1999.

DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 610
 Forestry District: 613

Quad Map: ST. PAUL WEST (S17B)
 Latitude: 44 58' 14" Long: 93 14' 24"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed

Voucher: Verification: verified

T029N R24W SESE25 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN
 Element: FALCO PHEGRINUS (PEREGRINE FALCON) #65

State Status: THREATENED
 EO Size: EO Rank: Current Status: Intended Status: Last Observed Date: 2002
 Site: MINNEAPOLIS 25
 Ownership: Owner unknown
 Managed Area(s): MISSISSIPPI NATL RIVER & RECREATION AREA
 Source: MARTELL, M. (1997 PEREGRINE REPORT)
 NESTING AREA. I-94/RIVERSIDE PLAZA.

DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 610
 Forestry District: 613

Quad Map: ST. PAUL WEST (S17B)
 Latitude: 44 57' 55" Long: 93 13' 38"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed

Voucher: Verification: verified

T029N R24W SENW25 HENNEPIN COUNTY, MN
 Element: PIPISTRELLUS SUBFLAVUS (EASTERN PIPISTRELLE) #19

State Status: SPECIAL CONCERN
 EO Size: EO Rank: Current Status: Intended Status: Last Observed Date: 1988
 Site: HEINRICH BREWERY CAVE
 Ownership: City Park
 Managed Area(s): MISSISSIPPI GORGE REGIONAL PARK MISSISSIPPI NATL RIVER & RECREATION AREA
 Source: NORDQUIST, G.
 8-10 EASTERN PIPISTRELLES FOUND UTILIZING THE HEINRICH BREWERY CAVE AS A HIBERNACULUM AND POSSIBLY A DWELLING.

DNR Region: 6
 Wildlife Area: 510
 Forestry District: 613

Quad Map: ST. PAUL WEST (S17B)
 Latitude: 44 58' 14" Long: 93 14' 24"
 Precision: within 0.25 mile, confirmed

Voucher: Verification: verified

Mississippi Natural Heritage Database
Occurrence Records

DEASALLE ATHLETIC FACILITY
T29N R24W SECTION 23, HENNEPIN COUNTY
MnDNR, Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program

19:27 Saturday, NOVEMBER 01
Copyright 2005 State of Mississippi

RNG	PRIMARY SECTION	FED STATUS	MN STATUS	S RANK	ELEMENT and OCCURRENCE NUMBER	MANAGED AREA
R24W 22			THR		FALCO PEREGRINUS (PEREGRINE FALCON) #43	
R24W 23			THR		BAT CONCENTRATION #40	
R24W 23			THR		FALCO PEREGRINUS (PEREGRINE FALCON) #67	
R24W 23			SEC		PIPISTRELLUS SUBFLAVUS (EASTERN PIPITRELLA) #28	
R24W 25			THR		BAT CONCENTRATION #29	MISSISSIPPI NATL RIVER &
R24W 25			THR		FALCO PEREGRINUS (PEREGRINE FALCON) #65	MISSISSIPPI NATL RIVER &
R24W 25			SEC		PIPISTRELLUS SUBFLAVUS (EASTERN PIPITRELLA) #19	MISSISSIPPI GORGE REGION

Rare Features Database Print-outs: An Explanation of Fields

The Rare Features database is part of the Natural Heritage Information System, and is maintained by the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program, a unit within the Division of Ecological Services, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Please note that the print-outs are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without permission

Field Name: [Full (non-abbreviated) field name, if different]. Further explanation of field.

-C-

CBS Site: [County Biological Survey site number]. In each county, the numbering system begins with 1.

CLASS: A code which classifies features by broad taxonomic group: NC = natural community; SA = special animal; SP = special plant; GP = geologic process; GT = geologic time; OT = other (e.g. colonial waterbird colonies, bat hibernacula).

Cty: [County]. Minnesota counties (ordered alphabetically) are numbered from 1 (Aitkin) to 87 (Yellow Medicine).

CURRENT STATUS: Present protection status, from 0 (owner is not aware of record) to 9 (dedicated as a Scientific and Natural Area).

-D-

DNR Region: 1=NW, 2=NE, 3=E Central, 4=SW, 5=SE, 6= Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro.

DNR Quad: [DNR Quadrangle code]. DNR-assigned code of the U.S. Geologic Survey topographic map on which the rare feature occurs.

-E-

ELEMENT or **Element:** See AElement Name (Common Name)@

Element Name (Common Name): The name of the rare feature. For plant and animal species records, this field holds the scientific name, followed by the common name in parentheses; for all other elements (such as plant communities, which have no scientific name) it is solely the element name.

EO RANK: [Element Occurrence Rank]. An evaluation of the quality and condition of natural communities from A (highest) to D (lowest).

EO Size: [Element Occurrence Size]. The size in acres (often estimated) of natural communities.

-F-

FED STATUS: [Federal Status]. Status of species under the Federal Endangered Species Law: LE=endangered, LT=threatened, C=species which have been proposed for federal listing.

Federal Status: See AFED STATUS@

Forestry District: The Minnesota DNR's Division of Forestry district number.

-G-

GLOBAL RANK: The abundance of an element globally, from G1 (critically imperiled due to extreme rarity on a world-wide basis) to G5 (demonstrably secure, though perhaps rare in parts of its range). Global ranks are determined by the Conservation Science Division of The Nature Conservancy.

-I-

INTENDED STATUS: Desired protection status. See also ACURRENT STATUS@. If a complete list of protection status codes is needed, please contact the Natural Heritage Program.

-L-

LAST OBSERVED or **Last Observed Date** or **Last Observation:** Date of the most recent record of the element at the location.

Latitude: The location at which the occurrence is mapped on Natural Heritage Program maps. NOTE: There are various levels of precision in the original information, but this is not reflected in the latitude/longitude data. For some of the data, particularly historical records, it was not possible to determine exactly where the original observation was made (e.g. "Fort Snelling", or "the south shore of Lake Owasso"). Thus the latitude/longitude reflect the mapped location, and not necessarily the observation location.

Legal: Township, range and section numbers.

Long: [Longitude]. See NOTE under ALatitude@

M-

MANAGED AREA or **Managed Area(s):** Name of the federally, state, locally, or privately managed park, forest, preserve, etc., containing the occurrence, if any. If this field is blank, the element probably occurs on private land. If "(STATUTORY BOUNDARY)" occurs after the name of a managed area, the location may be a private inholding within the statutory boundary of a state forest or park.

Map Sym: [Map Symbol].

MINN STATUS: [Minnesota Status]. Legal status of plant and animal species under the Minnesota endangered species law:

END=endangered, THR=threatened, SPC=special concern, NON=no legal status, but tracked. This field is blank for natural communities and colonial waterbird nesting sites, which have no legal status in Minnesota, but are tracked by the database.

-N-

NC Rank: [Natural Community Rank].

-O-

Occ #: [Occurrence Number]. The occurrence number, in combination with the element name, uniquely identifies each record.

OCCURRENCE NUMBER: See AOcc #@

OF OCCURS: The number of records existent in the database for each element within the area searched.

Ownership: Indicates whether the site is publicly or privately owned; for publicly owned land, the agency with management responsibility is listed.

-P-

Precision: Precision of locational information of occurrence: C (confirmed) = known within 1/4 mile radius, U (unconfirmed) = known within 1/2 mile, N (non-specific) = known within 1 mile, G (general) = occurs within the general region, X (unmappable)=location is unmappable on USGS topographic quadrangles (often known only to the nearest county), O (obscure/gone)=element no longer exists at the location.

PS: [Primary Section]. The section containing all or the greatest part of the occurrence.

-Q-

Quad Map: See ADNR Quad@

-R-

Rec #: [Record number].

RNG or Rng: [Range number].

-S-

SECTION or Section: [Section number(s)]. Some records are given only to the nearest section (s), but most are given to the nearest quarter-section or quarter-quarter-section (e.g., SWNW32 denotes the SW1/4 of the NW1/4 of section 32). A "0" is used as a place holder when a half-section is specified (e.g., 0N03 refers to the north 1/2 of section 3). When an occurrence crosses section boundaries, both sections are listed, without punctuation (e.g., the NE1/4 of section 19 and NW1/4 of section 20 is displayed as ANE19NW20").

Site: A name which refers to the geographic area within which the occurrence lies. If no name for the area exists (a locally used name, for example), one is assigned by the County Biological Survey or the Natural Heritage Program.

Source: The collector or observer of the rare feature occurrence.

S RANK: [State Rank]. A rank assigned to the natural community type which reflects the known extent and condition of that community in Minnesota. Ranks range from 1 (in greatest need of conservation action in the state) to 5 (secure under present conditions). A "?" following a rank indicates little information is available to rank the community. Communities for which information is especially scarce are given a "U", for Arank undetermined@. The ranks do not represent a legal status. They are used by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to set priorities for research, inventory and conservation planning. The state ranks are updated as inventory information becomes available.

State Status: See AMN STATUS@

-T-

TWP or Twp: [Township number].

-V-

Verification: A reflection of the reliability of the information on which the record is based. The highest level of reliability is "verified," which usually indicates a collection was made or, in the case of bird records, nesting was observed. Plant records based on collections made before 1970 are unverified.

Voucher: The museum or herbarium where specimens are maintained, and the accession number assigned by the repository. In the case of bald eagles, this is the breeding area number.

-W-

Wildlife Area: The Minnesota DNR=s Division of Wildlife administrative number.

Data Security

Locations of some rare features must be treated as sensitive information because widespread knowledge of these locations could result in harm to the rare features. For example, wildflowers such as orchids and economically valuable plants such as ginseng are vulnerable to exploitation by collectors; other species, such as bald eagles, are sensitive to disturbance by observers. For this reason, we prefer that publications not identify the precise locations of vulnerable species. We suggest describing the location only to the nearest section. If this is not acceptable for your purposes, please call and discuss this issue with the Environmental Review Specialist for the Natural Heritage and Nongame Research Program at 651/296-7863.



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
State Historic Preservation Office

November 23, 2005

Mr. Michael Orange
Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
210 City Hall
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: EAW – DeLaSalle Athletic Facility
Minneapolis, Hennepin County
SHPO Number: 2006-0280

Dear Mr. Orange:

Thank you for providing this office with a copy of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the above-referenced project. It has been reviewed pursuant to responsibilities given to the Minnesota Historical Society by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act and through the process outlined in Minnesota Rules 4410.1600.

Please note that the following comments are addressed to the city as the Responsible Governmental Unit for this project. We hope that they are useful to the city in dealing with historic preservation issues as part of the local permitting and decision-making process. Based on the information in the EAW, the project does not appear to have any involvement by federal or state agencies, and, therefore, it does not appear that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has an independent continuing review of the proposal. Some portions of the EAW (and supporting documents) are not clear on this point and imply a continuing SHPO review. It is important that the city understand that this is indeed **not** the case, and that the city needs to comprehensively address historic preservation issues as part of local review and approval processes.

All of Nicollet Island is located within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been designated under the Minnesota Historic Districts Act. In addition, Nicollet Island itself has been designated under the Minnesota Historic Sites Act.

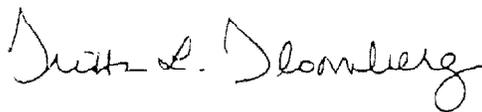
In the mid 20th century, the central area of Nicollet Island underwent a drastic change. The rows of commercial and residential buildings along Hennepin Avenue were removed, and the bridges across the river channels were replaced. Despite these changes, however, the historic character of the northern half of the island has survived, and two historic buildings, archaeological sites, and considerable open space remain on the southern end. Overall, the island maintains strong associations and patterns important to early riverfront history in Minneapolis. These attributes are detailed in the Historic Resources Survey report prepared by Landscape Research (October 2005).

We conclude that the proposed stadium would have a significant adverse effect on the historical character of the island and on the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Grove Street currently establishes a strong visual and functional demarcation for the northern portion of the island. Here, the original 1860s street patterns are intact, as is the overall character of a residential neighborhood bordered by riverbanks. By removing half of the length of the original 1866 Grove Street, paving over portions of the riverbank area, and introducing a new structure of a scale and configuration not in keeping with the area's historic patterns, the feeling and character of the island would be substantially diminished. In this regard, we disagree with several of the conclusions presented in the response to question 25a of the EAW – namely that that the project will not have an adverse impact on the Grove Street Flats, the Nicollet Island Residential Area, or the St. Paul and Northern Pacific Railroad. On the contrary, we think that the feeling and setting of these areas and the island would be adversely impacted. Among the factors contributing to this impact are potential changes in volumes and patterns of traffic, increased lighting, and general intensification of land use.

Further, we concur with the recommendations of the Two Pines Resource Group regarding archaeological resources. As indicated in the EAW, their October 2005 report concludes that there is good potential for significant pre-contact and contact period archaeological sites in the project area, including the area proposed for parking along the riverbank. Additional archaeological work is needed before undertaking any terrain alteration of this area.

If we can be of assistance to the city as the historic properties issues of this proposal are addressed, please contact us at 651-296-5462.

Sincerely,



Britta L. Bloomberg
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

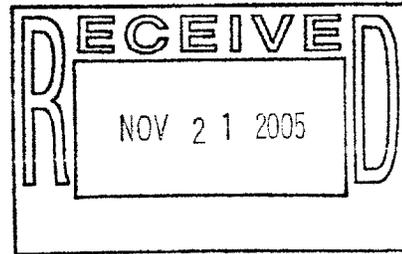
cc: Greg Mathis, Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission
John Crippen, St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board
Jon Gurban, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Michelle Terrell, Two Pines Resource Group
Carole Zellie, Landscape Research
Roger Randall, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

November 16, 2005

Mr. Michael Orange
Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
210 City Hall
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415



RE: DeLasalle Athletic Facility Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW)

Dear Mr. Orange:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the DeLasalle Athletic Facility EAW, in the city of Minneapolis. This comment letter addresses matters of concern to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) staff reviewing the EAW and is submitted for consideration by the city of Minneapolis, the Responsible Governmental Unit, in deciding whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be prepared on the project.

It does not constitute approval by the MPCA of any or all elements of the project for the purpose of pending or future permit action(s) by the MPCA. We have attempted to identify and consult with interested program staff to identify the MPCA permits that may be required. Additional comments or requests for information may be submitted in the future to address specific issues related to the development of such permit(s). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the project proposer to secure any required permits and to comply with any requisite permit conditions.

Based on the information contained in the EAW, the MPCA staff believes that significant effects related to MPCA issues are not likely to occur as a result of the project. However, please review and consider the following comments:

Item #8. Permits and approvals required

As stated in this section, an SDS Sanitary Sewer Extension Permit will be required. The permit should be obtained prior to commencement of any construction activity.

Item # 16, Erosion and sedimentation and Item #17, Water quality: Surface water runoff

The project lies within 2,000 feet of the Mississippi River, an impaired water, with a currently inactive TMDL for mercury and PCBs. At this time, no TMDL-based stormwater Best Management Practices are required.

Please note that a signed permit application, a site map and the \$400 permit fee must be submitted to the MPCA at least 7 days prior to the construction start date. After the 7 day MPCA review period, unless notified to the contrary, permit coverage begins and construction may be started.

Item #18.a. Water Quality: Wastewaters

The EAW states there is adequate capacity, but does not provide an estimated design flow based on maximum capacity of 750+ seats.

Mr. Richard Lehtinen
Page 2

We look forward to receiving the required responses to our comments, as
needed for an EIS. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this review,
please call (651) 297-8236.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise Leezer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Denise Leezer
Project Manager
Environmental Review and Operations Section
Regional Division

DL:jgo

Cc: David K. Johnson, MPCA St Paul
David Sahli, MPCA St. Paul



Minnesota Department of Transportation

Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations

Mail Stop 420
1110 Centre Pointe Curve
Mendota Heights, MN 55120-4152

Tel: 651/405-6060
Fax: 651/405-6082

November 23, 2005

Michael Orange, Principal Planner, City of Minneapolis

Re: Nicollet Island DeLaSalle Proposed Athletic Complex

Gentlemen:

Our office has reviewed the proposal for the DeLaSalle Athletic complex on Nicollet Island and offer the following comments:

1. The island has two (2) highway rail grade crossings and one (1) overpass. We recommend serious consideration be given to closing the East Island Avenue crossing. All traffic to the residential community north of the crossing would then be accessed via either the West Island Avenue crossing or the overpass at Nicollet Street.
2. At a minimum, we recommend that the two existing at-grade crossings be equipped with gates and flashing lights. In addition to gates and flashing lights, we recommend that pedestrian crossings be installed at both crossings. Our recommendations are based on poor sight lines at the crossing.
3. We recommend the athletic field be fenced along the railroad tracks to prevent pedestrians and athletes from straying onto railroad property. We would also recommend fencing be installed on the northern portion of the tracks to keep pedestrians using the island trails from entering the track area.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan H. Aylesworth'.

Susan H. Aylesworth, P.E.
Office of Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations
Minnesota Department of Transportation

Via email/hard copy to follow in the mail



Spencer D. Arndt
Assistant Director Public Projects

BNSF Railway Company
80 - 44TH Avenue N.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55421
Email: spencer.arndt@bnsf.com
Telephone: 763-782-3478
Fax: 763-782-3061
Cell: 612-802-9415

November 21, 2005

Michael Orange - Principal Planner City of Minneapolis

RE: Nicollet Island DeLaSalle Proposed Athletic Complex.

Gentlemen:

I have reviewed the proposal for the DeLaSalle Athletic complex on Nicollet Island and offer the following comments:

- BNSF train traffic is 50+ trains per day thru this area.
- The Nicollet Street overpass provides the only way over the tracks on that end of the island and closing the east half of Grove Street would cut off direct access to the overpass from the East Island Avenue. A driver going North on East Island and encountering a train on the crossing would most likely make a U-turn and go to the south end of the Island and back to Grove Street to reach Nicollet. What is happening is driver behavior might force drivers to try to beat the train.
- Pedestrians walking along the proposed trail need to be forced to stay on the trail by fencing the entire r/w along our tracks.
- Restrictions need to be put in place to prevent vehicles from parking too close to the track areas.
- The existing at-grade rail crossings are two track crossings with no gates and recommend they be upgraded with gates for the drivers and pedestrian flashers due to the increased traffic flows that will occur during the events taking place at the new complex.
- Overall site plan adds additional traffic (drivers and pedestrians) to the site and our concern is drivers and pedestrians having many other things on their mind as they approach the at-grade railroad crossings. Public safety does not appear to have been addressed for drivers and pedestrians at the railroad crossings.
- Overall review of the project should also be made by Susan Aylesworth, Mndot Office of Railroads. Susan may be reached on 651-406-4798.
- Direct all future correspondence regarding this matter to Lynn Leibfried, Manager Public Projects at lynn.leibfried@bnsf.com. Lynn may be reached on 763-782-3492.

Spencer D. Arndt

From: Erin Jordahl-Redlin [ejredlin@cleanwater.org]

Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 10:04 AM

To: Orange, Michael

Cc: 'Patience Caso'; scagle@bitstream.net

Subject: EAW for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis
November 23, 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning and Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: Environmental Assessment Worksheet for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange:

Clean Water Action Alliance (CWAA) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet prepared for the DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility proposed for Nicollet Island. CWAA has several questions and concerns about the proposed project's potential impact on water quality.

Item # 6 Project description

The description states that the football/soccer field is proposed to be natural grass, but pervious artificial turf may be considered.

What is the expected difference in permeability between natural grass and artificial turf, as this could actually increase the amount of impervious surface currently on site?

What is the maintenance plan for natural grass?

What pesticides and fertilizer will be used and what is the application schedule?

What is the plan to mitigate the effects of chemical runoff from the field?

What is the maintenance plan for artificial turf?

What is the plan to mitigate the effects of runoff from the field?

Item # 11 Fish, wildlife and ecologically sensitive resources

Was a wildlife use survey completed for the site?

Just because no "ecologically sensitive areas or natural areas" remain on or near the site does not mean

that wildlife are not inhabiting the area.

Item #13 Water use

What is the potential impact of an irrigation system on the site?

What is the plan to mitigate the effects of runoff from the field created by an irrigation system?

Item #17 Water quality: Surface water runoff

If the proposed project does use artificial turf rather than natural grass for the football/soccer field, what is the difference in permeability?

How does a potential increase in impervious surface affect the cumulative impact of the proposed project?

How will the installation of a drain tile system affect the geology and hydrology of the site?

What is the cumulative impact of increased stormwater pollution into the Mississippi River from the proposed project, including oil, gas, pesticides, and fertilizer?

Item #20 Solid wastes, hazardous wastes, storage tanks

What is the plan to collect trash not deposited in trash receptacles?

Will "clean up days" be scheduled before expected weather events (rainstorms, spring thaw, etc)?

Where and how will the chemicals for the natural grass field be stored?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed project.

Erin Jordahl-Redlin
Energy Campaign Coordinator
Clean Water Action Alliance of Minnesota
308 East Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612-623-3666
612-623-3354 FAX
ejredlin@cleanwater.org



Friends of the Mississippi River

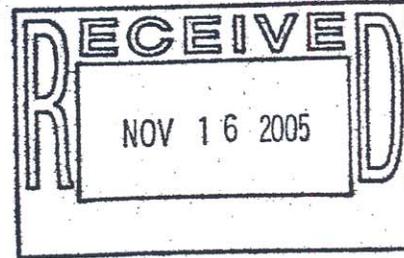
46 East Fourth Street, Suite 606 • Saint Paul, MN 55101 • 651/222-2193 • fax 651/222-6005 • www.fmr.org

Working to protect the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities area



November 14, 2005

Michael Orange
City of Minneapolis
210 City Hall
Minneapolis, MN 55415



Dear Mr. Orange,

Please accept the following comments from Friends of the Mississippi River regarding the Environmental Assessment Worksheet for the proposed DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility.

Item #11. Fish and Wildlife and Ecologically Sensitive Resources. The project is located in the middle of a regional park on the Mississippi River, which is the largest river ecosystem on the continent. Although development has occurred at the site in the past, it is still surrounded by important ecological resources. Nicollet Island provides much needed refugia along the migration route of over 60% of all North American bird species and over 40% of all North American waterfowl. The EAW should acknowledge and mitigate any potential damage to migratory bird species or other wildlife species that would be disturbed by new development, fences, retaining walls and bright lights. The fact that the island is surrounded by dense development and tall buildings makes the habitat on Nicollet Island that much more critical to the birds and wildlife that depend upon it.

Item #14. Water Related Land Use Management Districts. The proposed project is within the State Critical Area and the Mississippi National River Recreation Area (MNNRA). The Shoreland Overlay District of the Minneapolis Zoning Code does not properly address all the requirements of Minnesota State Law regarding the Mississippi River Critical Area. Critical Area also includes standards that apply to impacts to scenic, cultural and historic resources. More specifically, a fenced athletic field is NOT a river-oriented recreational use, nor does it enhance the environment. Taking statements out of context that are not true does not reflect the intent of Executive Order 79-19. The project has the potential to harm the scenic and environmental resources of Nicollet Island, and the EAW should offer solid suggestions for how to mitigate these impacts.

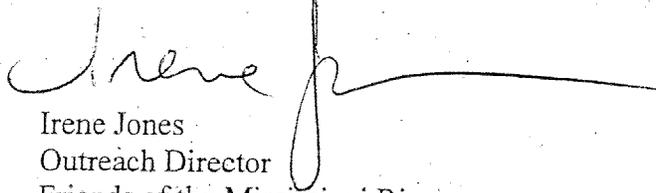
Item #26. Visual Impacts. The project as proposed will have visual impacts on the adjacent park and the river corridor, especially scenic views from the east channel and bank. Specifically, the historic bucolic character of the island will be impacted by an athletic field that is out of character and scale with the rest of the park. "Sense of Place" is a hard thing to measure, but impacts to sense of place will be the most significant ones this project has to the surrounding

environment. The City needs to carefully address how this project may impact a visual jewel that benefits the river corridor and adjacent residential development.

Item #27. Compatibility with Plans and Land Use Regulations. See Item #14 above.

In closing, Friends of the Mississippi River would like to encourage the proposer to look at alternative sites for this project, such as the B.F. Nelson site across the river. This area is much more well-suited to an athletic field of this size and would offer more opportunities to mitigate impacts to scenic and natural resources, as well as those from traffic and noise.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Irene Jones", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Irene Jones
Outreach Director
Friends of the Mississippi River
651/222-2193 ext. 11

November 16, 2005

City of Minneapolis
Attn: Michael Orange, Principal Planner
210 City Hall
350 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Reference: EAW for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility

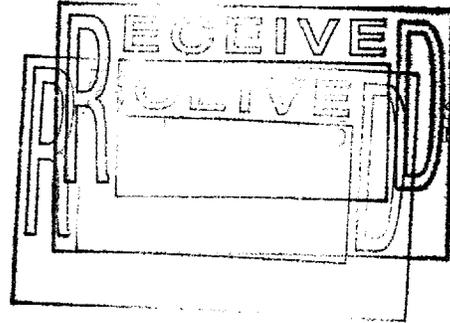
Dear Mr. Orange:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this EAW. The proposed facility will be a major undertaking affecting a broad range of constituencies, so full consideration of its impact is essential.

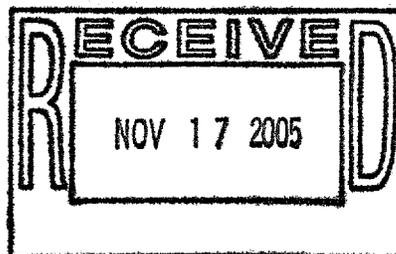
First, let me introduce myself. My name is Robert Mack and I am a principal with the firm of MacDonald & Mack Architects, Ltd., a 29-year-old firm specializing in the preservation and rehabilitation of existing properties, many of them with historic designation. Early in my professional career I assisted in preparing the documents which are now known as *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and the accompanying *Guidelines*. In addition to my architectural practice I am an Adjunct Professor in the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University of Minnesota where I teach a year-long series of graduate-level classes on historic preservation. In 1979 my firm, along with Miller-Dunwiddie Architects, prepared a comprehensive preservation and planning study for the area within the boundaries of the Riverfront Development Coordination Board jurisdiction, which is essentially the same as the boundaries of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

The focus of my comments, therefore, will be the impact of the proposed study on the historic resources of Nicollet Island and of the larger St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

Item 8: Permits and approvals required. I am not an attorney, but it is my understanding that this project would require review by the State Historic Preservation Office since it is a public agency which is having an effect on the historic resource.



Stuart MacDonald, AIA
Robert C. Mack, FAIA



Suite 712
Grain Exchange Building
400 South Fourth Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota
55415

Tel 612 341 4051
Fax 612 337 5843
E-mail info@mmarchtd.com

Item 25: Nearby resources. This item describes the impact of the project on archeological and historic resources; the historic portion is based on a report prepared by Carole Zellie in September 2005. While Ms. Zellie's report is generally well researched and well documented, it is not without errors. The left-hand image in Figure 7, for example, is not the Grove Street Flats

Ms. Zellie comes to the conclusion that the proposed facility will have an adverse effect on the landscape features of the district. She continues by stating that the athletic field will not adversely effect any of the buildings, themselves. While it may be true that the field and stadium will not physically damage the building, Ms. Zellie's report fails to incorporate the professional accepted concept of "viewshed." In this concept, the manner in which a project effects views to and from historic resources is evaluated for its impact. Clearly the proposed stadium will effect these views and thus must be considered an adverse effect on the Grove Street Flats, in particular, and to views throughout the district as a whole.

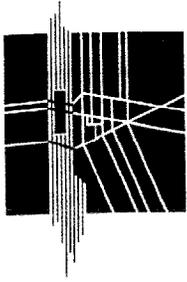
I use Nicollet Island as a wonderful example of an unplanned "architectural museum." The Island has excellent examples of Italianate, Gothic revival, French Second Empire, Greek revival, Egyptian revival, and other design styles, and my students welcome seeing so many examples in one place. Furthermore, I know many people besides myself who take visitors to Nicollet Island to look at the buildings and to relish this urban oasis. Preserving the views is important to maintaining the integrity of the district.

The proposed project is in clear violation of *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects*; these nationally recognized standards apply to landscapes and to new construction in historic districts, as well as to work on designated historic buildings. Historic resources, districts in particular, are fragile resources which are too easily "chipped away at" by projects such as this. The St. Anthony Falls Historic District has already had one "redefinition" since its initial listing, caused by inappropriate changes. I believe, therefore, that the EAW should be amended to more fully evaluate the damage done to the Nicollet Island portion of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District by the proposed project.

Sincerely yours,



Robert C. Mack, FAIA
Principal



**Nicollet Island - East Bank
Neighborhood Association (NIEBNA)
132 Bank St SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414**

November 23, 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
CPED-Planning Division
350 South 5th Street Rm. 210
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Mr. Orange,

NIEBNA is the official neighborhood association representing residents of both Nicollet Island and the rapidly expanding East Bank neighborhoods.

Our comments on the EAW submitted by De La Salle High School for their Athletic Facility Project on Nicollet Island are attached. These comments were unanimously approved and adopted by the NIEBNA Board at its meeting on November 21st, 2005.

Please contact me with any questions.

For the *Nicollet Island East - Bank Neighborhood Association*:

P. Victor Grambsch
President

Voice: 612-702-7211

Email: pvictor@eudaemonics.com

cc NIEBNA Board of Directors

Attachment: Comments

Comments of the NIEBNA Board of Directors
On the EAW for Proposed Athletic Facility on Nicollet Island

1. **Section 6b:** The physical description of the project is lacking in several significant areas.
 - a. The description refers to "Attachment D Project Elevations". Attachment D provides artistic renderings not elevation drawings. Elevations have a specific architectural meaning and are critical to the understanding of the impact of any development. The EAW should contain correct elevation drawings of the complete project in context of the surrounding environment with views from East Island Dr., Grove Street and the Park just north of the railroad tracks.
 - b. The project should state specifically what the field will be – either grass or artificial turf. If the developer does not have sufficient information to determine this most basic and critical design element, then they likely do have sufficient information for the project as a whole.
 - c. The developer states, "On the north, east and south edges of the site, a four-foot-tall decorative fence will be installed on top of the retaining walls..." This trivializes one of the major components of the Facility, namely the 400 foot long retaining wall that will run from De La Salle's existing field all the way to the railroad tracks. This wall is expected to be about 10' high with a 4' fence on top. In addition to a better description of this component and its visual impact on the open space parkland, we feel the developer should include perspective images of the retaining wall as seen from East Island Dr.

2. **Section 11a:** It is indeed true that no "natural areas remain" on the site.
 - a. This trivializes the efforts in over the past 30 years to finally turn Nicollet Island into public park – a dream that has been with the City of Minneapolis for over 150 years.
 - b. The industrial land on the site has undergone intensive rehabilitation including planting of native prairie species to reclaim the soil as well as the planting of over 150 trees. Unlike development, natural rehabilitation can take a generation or two to reach fulfillment.

3. **Section 11b:** There are indeed state-listed species on or near the site.
 - a. Bald Eagles which frequent Nicollet Island are listed as special concern species by the MN DNR. 70' tall lighting towers and 76 decibel loud speakers are certain to have an impact on their habitat.
 - b. In addition to eagles, Nicollet Island is host to many species of hawk, beaver, fox and even deer.
 - c. The developer should conduct an independent study of the wildlife on Nicollet Island to determine if there are any other state-listed species on the site.

Comments of the NIEBNA Board of Directors
On the EAW for Proposed Athletic Facility on Nicollet Island

4. **Section 21:** The traffic assessment appears to be seriously flawed and should be redone.
- a. The traffic study only assesses the impact of the 750 seat Facility ignoring the fact that many of the peak parking events will overlap with weddings and functions at the Nicollet Island Pavilion. Total estimated trips to Nicollet Island may be twice as great as presented in the EAW.
 - b. The Build and No-Build traffic forecasts come to the unbelievable conclusion that if the Athletic Facility is constructed, there will be *fewer trips* to Nicollet Island. From the traffic map on page 17 of the EAW, the total number of trips to Nicollet Island if the Facility is not built is 3100. If the Facility is built (numbers in boxes) this number decreases to 2800 trips. This alone calls into question the entire traffic study.
 - c. The final paragraph discusses emergency response to the residences on Nicollet Island. This section needs further development. The closest Fire Department would approach Nicollet Island from 1st Avenue. In this case, their closest path to West Island Drive is directly in front of De La Salle – a road that is currently private. Will this road become a fire lane? The EAW should include exact routes and estimated response times submitted by both the Fire and Police Departments. These times should be compared to recommended maximum response times.
5. **Section 25:** The impact on the rail transportation corridor just north of the proposed facility is underdeveloped.
- a. The Nicollet Street Bridge, replaced in 1996, has a hidden opening to accommodate an additional light rail line. Every new bridge over these tracks including the new Main Street bridge to be completed in 2006 has a similar second opening for the future light rail. The extra costs of these second openings were of course paid for through public taxes. The Athletic Facility will be built over the proposed path of the light rail, crippling any effort to install light rail along this line. Light rail has proven very popular in Minneapolis and there is reason to believe that this planned line will move up in priority over the next 10 years.
 - b. In the discussion of the 1983 Contract for Acquisition and Transfer of Lands for Redevelopment by Public Bodies, the developer neglects two key points. First of all, the proposed "Athletic Facility" already exists on the site. De La Salle was permitted encroachment onto the right-of-way (sidewalk) of Grove Street and parking lanes of both Grove Street and East Island Drive to construct a "(regulation) size football field" and there are three tennis courts across Grove Street from the football field. These two comprise the "Athletic Facility" described in the 1983 agreement. The second point neglected by the developer is that the current proposal is in violation of the 1983 agreement as it no longer provides tennis courts "adjacent to the De La Salle Property."

Comments of the NIEBNA Board of Directors
On the EAW for Proposed Athletic Facility on Nicollet Island

6. **Section 26:** Proper lighting levels are clearly not understood by the developer.
 - a. The developer proposes to "...attain a standard of no more than 1 foot-candle outside Project limits." The Illumination Engineering Society (IES) recommends an average roadway lighting level of only 0.28 foot-candles for residential neighborhoods. For commercial roadway areas such as Hennepin Avenue in downtown the recommended lighting level is 0.56 foot-candles. The developer is proposing to flood the open space park land and nearby residences with almost twice the recommended lighting of a downtown commercial district.
 - b. When lighting was first installed in Nicollet Island the intermediate illumination level (0.46 foot-candles) was chosen. Because of unanimous public outcry, the streetlights were dropped from 100W to 50W in order to achieve residential illumination levels. The Minneapolis Park Board agreed that as lights on Nicollet Island needed replacement, they would all be fitted with the lower wattage versions.

7. **Section 27:** There is no mention of the site's status as a Regional Park
 - a. Regional Park land is subject to a restrictive covenant because of the funds used to purchase them. According to Peter Bell, the Chair of the Metropolitan Council, "Regional open space money cannot be used to acquire land which would be used for athletic facilities or to construct athletic facilities." The proposed development would require the repayment of \$1,065,000 used to purchase the land



Preservation Alliance of Minnesota

"...to preserve, protect and promote Minnesota's historic resources"

Executive Director
Bonnie C. McDonald

Board of Directors

Chair

Roger Randall –
Plymouth

Vice Chair

Linda Donaldson –
Minneapolis

Secretary

Laura Faucher, AIA –
Minneapolis

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Saint Paul

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Minneapolis

Michael Logan –
Minneapolis

Ann Meyer –
Farmington

Charles W. Nelson –
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Will Stark –
Saint Paul

Claire Stokes –
Saint Paul

Patricia A. Trocki –
Eagan

Lyssa T. Washington
Minneapolis

Mary L. Wingerd, Ph.D. -
Saint Paul

**MN Advisors to the
National Trust for
Historic Preservation**

Roger Brooks, Ph.D. –
Saint Paul

Carolyn Sundquist –
Duluth

Honorary Director

Richard T. Murphy, Sr. –
Saint Paul

Magazine Editor

Bob Glancy –
Minneapolis

Office Volunteer

Marvel Anderson –
Rush City

November 22, 2005

(Hard copy to follow by mail)

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
City of Minneapolis
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

Dear Mr. Orange:

On behalf of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, I am writing to comment on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility. The Alliance is Minnesota's only statewide, membership-based nonprofit preservation organization in Minnesota and it is our mission is to preserve, protect, and promote Minnesota's historic resources.

DeLaSalle's proposed athletic facility is located within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District, recognized in the National Register of Historic Places and as a local historic district. The EAW indicates that only the closure of Grove Street would have an adverse impact on the historic district. We ask that the City of Minneapolis prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to reconsider how the athletic facility's scale, structures, and lighting fixtures will relate to, and impact, the historic feeling and setting of its adjacent small-scale residential properties.

Furthermore, the EAW indicated that the athletic facility has the potential to contain archaeological resources that may also be significant. Although the EAW states that DeLaSalle would consult with appropriate agencies regarding a program for archaeological investigation, it does not propose ways to avoid and mitigate the adverse impact. Nor does the EAW address measures to avoid and mitigate the impact by the closure of Grove Street. Appropriate measures of avoidance or mitigation should be clearly specified in the EAW or Environmental Impact Statement.

(cont.)

Finally, the Alliance requests that the City reassess the impact of the project within the whole of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The EAW indicates that no additional cumulative impacts are known at this time. The Alliance suggests that the proposed project should be considered in relation to other current and proposed projects within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. These projects, of which the DeLaSalle Athletic Field is one, may be considered to have a cumulative adverse impact to the historical integrity of the entirety of the historic district. Such considerations should be addressed in an Environmental Impact Statement.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EAW for the DeLaSalle Athletic Facility. The Alliance recognizes the significant contribution that DeLaSalle has made to Minneapolis' history and the school's need to provide for athletic facilities. However, we encourage school leaders and those reviewing this project to consider alternate sites that will not adversely impact our invaluable historic resources.

Sincerely,

Roger D. Randall
Chair

cc: Steve Christenson, PAM Member
Greg Mathis, City of Minneapolis HPC
Dennis Gimmestad, Minnesota SHPO

From: Margie Grilley [mgrilley@mninter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 12:50 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Cc: Dorian Grilley
Subject: DeLSalle High School Athletic Facility EAW

November 23, 2005

J. Michael Orange
Principle Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning and Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

Dear Mr. Orange,

I am writing to express the concerns of the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota about the compatibility of the proposed DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility with the objectives stated in the 1996 Nicollet Island Master Plan. We do not feel that the proposed facility is compatible with the objectives of the regional park, especially Objective 5, Preserve and enhance the island's natural landscape character.

Should the project proceed we feel that the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board should be required to comply with the Metropolitan Council's requirements for removing the property from the regional park and replacing the land with a similar park resource of equal or greater value. This land should be within the same park or in the Mississippi River's Critical Area.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this EAW. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Dorian Grilley
Executive Director
Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota
275 E. 4th Street #642

St. Paul, MN 55101
651-726-2457



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— VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL —

Mr. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
210 City Hall
350 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

November 23, 2005

Re: The Environmental Assessment Worksheet prepared by the City of Minneapolis for the DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility proposed for One DeLaSalle Drive on Nicollet Island in the City of Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet for the DeLaSalle Athletic Facility proposal (Proposal). For the reasons stated below, due to the inadequate consideration of alternatives to the Proposal, and because implementation of the Proposal would likely lead to significant environmental and social impacts, the Sierra Club believes that an environmental impact study for this project is both warranted and prudent.

All of the land on Nicollet Island except the DeLaSalle property, three multi-family residential structures, and the existing rights-of-way, was acquired to create a regional park for the benefit of all the people of Minneapolis and surrounding communities. Further, the park is surrounded by a segment of the Mississippi River that has been designated as “wild and scenic.” If the publicly owned open space on Nicollet Island were restored to parkland habitat, it would provide a conservation and recreational ‘jewel’ amidst a densely populated and highly developed urban and historical area. In contrast, the Proposal would destroy a meadow that contains 21 trees that were planted to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the University of Minnesota.

Additionally, the new facility would introduce a new activity with seating for 750 spectators, lights, and loudspeakers – all of which do not currently exist on this island. The field lighting would be mounted on 70 foot poles, and the applicant acknowledges that the lighting would be visible off site and would intrude on the view of the downtown skyline in the vicinity of the project. Not only will the noise and lighting be problematic for neighboring property owners and visitors, they would likely impact and disrupt migratory and nesting birds on Nicollet Island. It is noteworthy that Nicollet Island is located along the migration route of over 60% of all North American bird species and over 40% of all North American waterfowl.

Further, it is remarkable that the Environmental Assessment Worksheet is totally void of any discussion regarding alternative citing options for the proposed athletic facility. The Sierra Club is greatly concerned that alternative building sites, both on and off Nicollet Island, were not discussed that would generate fewer environmental and social impacts. Overall, the scale of the proposed athletic facility is too large for the available land, as was noted by two landscape architects that served on the Citizen's Advisory Committee. The visual impacts are not compatible or consistent with the historic designation of the district or with the view shed from the river.

Finally, the Proposal would ultimately strip the right to use public land from the citizens of Minneapolis. The Critical Area Plan states that "Nicollet Island should be maintained in a manner which will promote public use and enjoyment for all segments of the population." A Reciprocal Use Agreement that is contemplated between the City of Minneapolis and DeLaSalle High School is not in the best interest of Minneapolis citizens and would limit access to the recreation area. As was discussed in our July 15, 2005 letter to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Sierra Club acknowledges DeLaSalle's outstanding reputation in the community and its devotion to educating a wide range of teenagers from all income levels. Nevertheless, this is a debate over a valuable piece of property available now to all citizens of the state, and that would change under the proposed Reciprocal Use Agreement. There is a much greater need for the preservation of open and recreational space on Nicollet Island, which would be open at all times to use by all Minneapolis citizens.

The Sierra Club wishes to express its appreciation for your consideration in reviewing these comments. We look forward to working with you as this project progresses.

Sincerely,

/s Frank Jossi

/s Sharell Benson

Frank Jossi, Co-Chair
Land Use and Transportation Committee
Sierra Club North Star Chapter

Sharell Benson, Co-Chair
Land Use and Transportation Committee
Sierra Club North Star Chapter

From: judy bartl [judyb2@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2005 7:52 PM
To: ourbeautifulriver@mac.com
Cc: Orange, Michael
Subject: DeLaSalle stadium noise

A comment regarding the recent letter sent to me as Dear Neighbor:

I hardly think that the loudspeakers at DeLaSalle High School's stadium could be any more intrusive into my waking and (often interrupted) sleeping hours as the trains that constantly rumble, roar and squeek by my home.

Why not focus your energy on trying to do something about regulating that schedule to reasonable hours?

Thank you,
Judy Bartl
Village Lofts resident

From: Betty Belfiore [esb@umn.edu]
Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2005 10:38 AM
To: Orange, Michael
Cc: Peter Belfiore
Subject: De La Salle

Dear Mr. Orange,

We are writing to you concerning the proposed De La Salle athletic field on Nicollet Island. We are strongly opposed to this project, for many reasons:

--This construction on public property will primarily benefit a private school.

--It will have a negative impact not only on the residents of Nicollet Island, but also on all of us who live and work in Minneapolis, or who visit the city from out of town, and who enjoy the peace and quiet of this unique historic space

--It will radically change the historic atmosphere of Nicollet Island --It will create traffic, trash, noise, light pollution and congestion --It will delay and interfere with emergency responses --The proposed public use of these athletic facilities is minimal, and will not compensate for the destruction to the existing park land --It will set an unfortunate precedent of giving public property to private entities

--The students at De La Salle will suffer only minor inconvenience if they are unable to hold some athletic events at their school.

This is not a question of "elite," wealthy residents opposing a project that benefits disadvantaged children (as spokespeople for De La Salle have sometimes suggested). It is instead a question of public property that is now enjoyed by everyone--rich and poor, residents and visitors, young and old--being given away for the mere convenience of a few students in a private school, who do not need a home field in order to succeed in academic or even athletic activities.

Please work to preserve the outstanding public park system that helps to make Minneapolis a great place to live, work and visit. This is one of the city's most important assets, and we owe it not only to ourselves, but also to future generations, to preserve and improve it.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth and Peter Belfiore
9 4th Ave North, #102
Minneapolis 55401
612-359-6934

From: Sid and Lola Berg [sberg2@mn.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 5:44 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: MPRB-DeLa Salle EAW Comments

The following are comments concerning the EAW Report

Item 6B---The EAW document states that the sand-based football/soccer field (390'X200') is proposed to be natural grass but mat may be artificial material. If natural grass, the EAW makes no mention of fertilizer and/or herebicides to be used and the consequent run-off pollutants to the environment and the Mississippi River.

Item 16--EAW is to provide the acreage to be excavated or graded and cubic yards of soil to be moved:
acres and cubic yards. Neither are included in the document. One estimate is 30,000 cubic yards to be moved. At 9 cubic yards per truck load, it will take weeks just to move and fill in the needed soil.

Item 17--Surface water run-off
The document does not indicate how much MORE fertilizer and herbicides than is currently used and, therefore, the increased run-off pollution. It also makes no mention of the increased cost of fertilizer and herbicides over current costs.

Item 21--Traffic---Executive summary of TDM Plan
Bullet Ppoint 2

"Closing Grove Street will increase traffic on North end of Nicollet Island from 300 to 400 cars per day--significantly less than the 1000 cars per day maximum." This is true but it must be remebered that both East and West Island Avenues were deliberately narrowed yo make them multi-use roadways (hikers, bikers, runners, strollers, etc.) to slow traffic, one of the residents earlier concerns when theroadways were rebuilt.

Much talk has been made about use of the athletic complex for city-wide youth. The EAW contains no comment about how the city-wide youth will have access to the complex. Is De LaSalle going to send buses to the various neighborhoods to pick up young people and bring them to tha

complex? Will De LaSalle establish hours of use such that they will impinge on the accessibility of the complex? Some comment must be made by De LaSalle and the MPRB

concerning the

issue of accessibilty.

November 22, 2005

J. Michael Orange
Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning and Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415-1385



Written comments regarding the proposed De La Salle athletic facility have been solicited. As a parent of a current and former De La Salle student and a sibling of former De La Salle students, I would like to express some views.

The Planning Commission is in a somewhat difficult position of having to make a decision on this potential redevelopment that will not be able to satisfy the wants or needs of all interested parties. The responsibility of land use is a serious one and as I have seen often an emotional one.

The EAW document is the first step in detailing what potential environmental impacts might be seen should the proposal move forward. If nothing is done to move the project forward, that will have an environmental impact. This may be deemed valuable by some, but not by all. If the project becomes a reality, a different environmental impact will be made. Neither may be inherently bad or good, just different. Minneapolis Park and Recreation seems to have determined that this particular land use would satisfy some common good charges they have. Currently, the city proper has a lack of adequate recreational space for events that would or could be held at this facility and this would fill some of that void. I am in support of the proposed use of the land provided that the further exploration of the environmental impact does not disclose any truly negative reasons to abandon the use.

I am also a biological sciences professional and have not seen any evidence thus far that would deter the project on adverse biological impacts to sensitive life forms or habitats.

In the EAW document for the proposed athletic field, Section 11a and 11b discuss the potential impact to wildlife in ecologically sensitive areas. At the public hearing conducted at De La Salle November 15, 2005, several speakers described views at odds with the environmental "No Adverse Impact" statement. I am in agreement with the interpretation that the environmental impact will be minimal. As is stated in the EAW, the island is part of the Minneapolis city proper that has been developed and re-developed since the early days of the city. The environment that many of those opposed to the project are trying to protect is neither "what once was" nor endangered by this field. Many of the speakers talked about insect and flower varieties as well as mammals viewed as unique to the island. I would disagree—rabbits, fox, deer, groundhogs, and even eagles are adapted (or adapting) to urban settings as their original habitat disappears and all of these are actually somewhat common in many parts of the metro area. The wildflowers

protected—they are the same ones seen along many highways and in uncultivated fields or city lots. The gentleman who referred to the eco-system on the island does apparently not understand that eco-systems take many more years than the time since the park district has been responsible for the island to develop and that the “meadow” referred to by another gentleman is not a meadow in the true sense of the word. It is a grassy cover over rock and limestone (which has been disturbed more than once over the last century and a half). Insects mentioned to be in abundance are routine varieties and extremely adaptable.

Section 21. Traffic. The observations about usage and traffic flow seem reasonable. I would like to see a little more elaboration on the movement of emergency vehicles with full parking in the lot(s) and around the school. It would be important to know how easily an ambulance or fire truck could reach and leave the field (if an athlete or spectator required service) and how easily one or more residents homes could be served if all lot spaces were in use and some street parking was also in use. It appears that the comments from the fire department do not specifically detail if the service will be the same for the field and or the residents if parking is heavy.

Section 24. Noise. There will obviously be additional noise on the island should the project move forward. Many of the speakers opposed to the project indicated the increased noise would not fit the guidelines of the area outlined for the Scenic Wild River and the protection offered that area under those guidelines. Were these same objectors speaking for the noise level over the river when the new Minneapolis-St. Paul International runway was proposed? Certainly, that noise would be louder, more frequent and equally over the river. In addition, the residents do not currently approve of the noise level of students (and visitors) to the island. In the spring, track students practice and condition by running the island. This was purported to be an acceptable use of the island space—recreational walking and running. However, they are continually met by at least one or more residents and told they are too loud when they are running. Specifically, their shoes are too loud on the pavement and they should take their practice elsewhere. If this is the level of noise abatement to be met, it is an impossible task as long as the school remains on the island.

Equal in distance to the field are the large tower condominium units directly north of Nicollet Island. At the public hearing, no speakers from these facilities identified themselves as objecting to the project, and thus the objections appeared to come from only one neighborhood to be impacted

It appears that most of the potential impacts have been identified and that the project as proposed should go for further review.



Mary Bulthaus
3309 Edward Street N.E
St. Anthony, MN 55418

From: Orange, Michael
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2005 3:06 PM
To: 'Cronin, Michael'; 'Galatz, Eric'; Farrar, Rebecca D.
Subject: FW: DeLaSalle EAW comments

Michael Orange, Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development
350 S. 5th St, Room 210 City Hall
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385
Phone: 612-673-2347
Fax: 612-673-2728
TTY: 612-673-2157
Email: michael.orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

-----Original Message-----

From: Sally Cagle [mailto:scagle@bitstream.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 4:01 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Cc: Sally Cagle
Subject: DeLaSalle EAW comments

November 23, 2005

Michael Orange, Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
210 City Hall
350 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

Re: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EAW for the proposed DeLaSalle High School Athletic Facility Project (Project).

6. Project description

The project is described as being on Nicollet Island and within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. A complete description of the location would include being in Nicollet Island Park, the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park, and the Mississippi National River and Recreation

Area. Having this information at the beginning of the EAW (such as in Project description, b) would be very helpful to the reader.

(page 4, b, paragraph 1)

The EAW states that the field will be shared by DeLaSalle and the MPRB under the terms of the Reciprocal Use Agreement. According to the EAW "...The improvements proposed by DeLaSalle to this lot [Parcel C] consist of replacing the impervious gravel surface with porous pavers and allowing more efficient use of the parking area by organizing and delineating the parking spaces on the site..." while the Reciprocal Use Agreement states that a bituminous surface will be constructed for the "auxiliary parking lot." This area is a rocky, unimproved field that is partially covered by grasses and other plants and that could be restored with native vegetation. No detailed information is given in the EAW on stormwater runoff. Additional research is needed to assess the environmental impacts of the alternative surfaces.

Section 9. Land use

This section does not cover the proposed parking lot on Parcel C, which is needed for the Project's parking. There is an encroachment for the power lines over Parcel C. Do the power lines present any potential environmental hazards, restrictions, or other environmental concerns? The presence or absence of impact should be documented to give a complete picture of the Project.

The information on some residences is out-of-date such the following passages and needs to be updated.

(page 8, paragraph 3)

(page 7)

Paragraphs 1 and 3 differ. Paragraph 1 says "a multi-family residential structure known as Grove Street Flats" while paragraph 3 says "three multi-family residences." Which properties were privately owned in 1983?

The EAW states "Grove Street provides access to two multi-family residential properties, the administrative offices of DeLaSalle High School, and Nicollet Street Bridge." Is the DeLaSalle Christian brothers' residence still on the upper floors of the DeLaSalle administration building? At this time, one or more refugees are also living there. Is this residence used in the light and noise studies the same as the other residences?

(pages 7 and 8)

When did 20 Grove Street change from being a rental property to a "housing cooperative"?

(page 8, paragraph 5)

"Off the Island to the east bank are the new, 6-to-8 floor apartment developments upriver from 1st Avenue, Riverplace downriver, and townhouses and Boom Island Park upriver from the railroad crossing." The "6-to-8 floor apartment developments" are condominium developments, and there are also luxury row houses upriver from 1st Avenue.

Section 11. Fish, wildlife and ecologically sensitive resources

Section 11 omits the impact that developing the proposed athletic fields and associated parking lot, Parcel C, would have on the Mississippi Flyway. The National Park Service reports that “Sixty percent of all North American birds (326 species) use the Mississippi River Basin as their migratory flyway.” Flocks of migrating Palm Warblers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Chipping Sparrows have been observed feeding on the proposed site and wintering bald eagles, an endangered species, are seen resting in the riverbank trees. Additional information is needed on the birds and wildlife that use the site to access how the loss of this open space would impact them and the flyway. The cumulative impact of the loss of a few acres of open space here and there can be very significant and should be considered.

(page 9, a)

In response to the request to identify fish and wildlife resources, the EAW states that the site has been developed for urban uses and that “No ecologically sensitive areas or natural areas remain on or near the site.” The attached drawing was prepared in conjunction with the 1996 Nicollet Island Master Plan, and shows wildlife was one of the subjects considered by the planners and the CAC. Both resident and migrant wildlife have and continue to use the area. Additional research is needed to access how the fish and wildlife are affected by the project.

Section 13. Water use

(page 10, second to the last paragraph)

Is there an irrigation system that serves the MPRB parcel? When the trees on that site were planted, the MPRB staff watered them from a tank truck.

Section 20. Solid wastes, hazardous wastes, storage tanks

(page 14, a)

Where do the concessions come from? Will there be a concession stand/building on the site? In the present plan or on an outlot?

Section 21. Traffic

(page 19, Parking)

The EAW states that there is a small lot on the north side of the high school that could be used for athletic field events. Is this lot the area on east side of the DeLaSalle administration building, or is it the semi-circle lot off West Island Avenue? If it is the area beside the administration building, what plans are being made for the buses and cars that normally use it? Is a parking area set aside for the Christian Brothers’ residence? If it is the semi-circle lot, are there plans for additional parking for general park visitors?

Section 30. Other potential environmental impacts

During the construction of the new storm sewers and the resurfacing of the streets on Nicollet

Island, the digging/drilling in the limestone caused the Grove Street Flats building to shake. The City investigated, and steps were taken to eliminate the shaking. Is there any danger that the construction grading or drilling of the proposed project will cause similar shaking of that historic building?

Sally Cagle
12A Grove Street
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-379-4166

NICOLLET ISLAND AREA

MINNEAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MARTIN & PITZ ASSOCIATES, INC.
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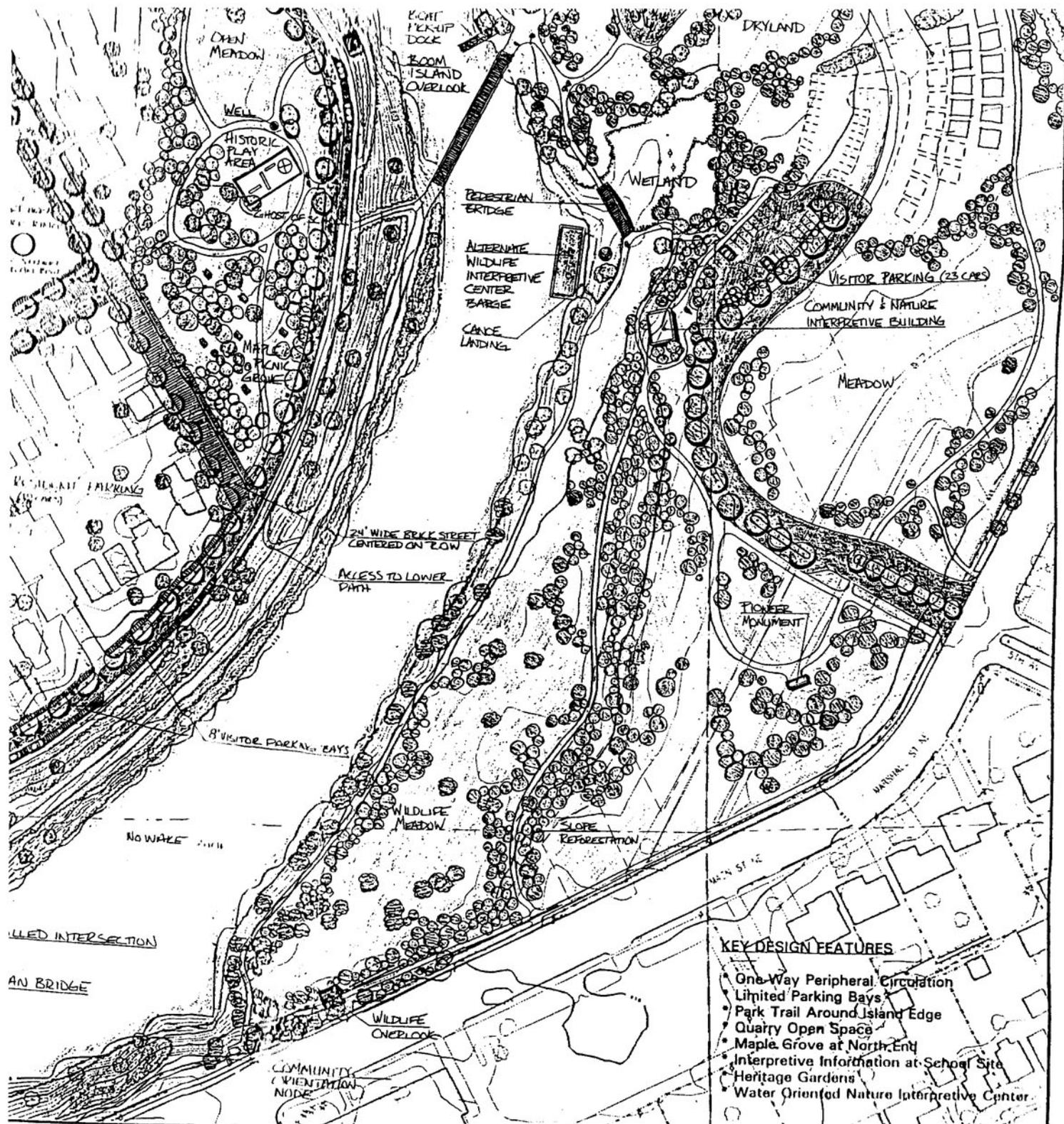
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KEY

BRICK STREETS	
BRICK SIDEWALKS	
IMPROVED STREETS	
PARKING BAY	
UNIMPAVED DRIVEWAY	
FRONT YARD	
FIVE-FEET PATH & PARK WALK BITUMINOUS WITH REAL COAT	
MEADOW	
SHRUBS	
EMERGING TREES	
FULLY DEVELOPED TREES	
WATER	

KEY DESIGN FEATURES

- One-Way Peripheral Circulation
- Limited Parking Bays
- Park Trail Around Island Edge
- Quarry Open Space
- Maple Grove at North End
- Interpretive Information at School Site
- Heritage Gardens
- Water Oriented Nature Interpretive Center



23 November 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Community Planning and Economic Development
350 South 5th Street, Room 210
Minneapolis MN 55415-1385

Dear Mr. Orange:

Thank you for your time and consideration. I will list my concerns in the order they appear in the EAW. My concerns are not limited to these items; I attempt to address a few issues which did not receive much prior attention.

4. Reason for EAW preparation:

“The City of Minneapolis received a petition requesting the City prepare an EAW for the Project and De LaSalle High School offered to prepare a voluntary EAW on behalf of the City.”

Is this an impartial and objective study? Would the EAW draw different conclusions if it was prepared by consultants not hired by De LaSalle?

5. Project Description:

Section b: ““The new facility will allow De LaSalle to host home football games and practice for those games on its site for the first time in the school’s 106 year history.”

I use Section b as an example. Again, I am concerned with the inherent bias built into the document in entirety. The language is subtle but partial to De LaSalle in tone and in fact. (De LaSalle regularly practices on its existing fields on its site.)

20. Solid wastes, hazardous wastes, storage tanks

“Events at the facility will generate solid wastes associated with concessions; food wrappers, paper cups, napkins and plastic and aluminum soft drink containers. De LaSalle will maintain trash receptacles around the Project site and collect, sort and dispose of trash from the facility . . . “

I observe that despite the availability of trash cans, the drive, sidewalk and grassy areas directly in front of the main entrance to De LaSalle are regularly littered with the kinds of debris described above. Will De LaSalle be compelled to enforce a higher standard of waste removal for the athletic facility than it does for its own main entrance?

What about the accumulation of litter on Grove Street and the nearby neighborhood streets and properties?

21. Traffic

The EAW discusses parking spaces in parking lots but does not address the impact of the athletic field on street parking. Currently, the impact of De LaSalle events using street parking is significant.

- *Cars are frequently parked in the No Parking zones along West Island Avenue. This is usually on an “extended temporary” basis at the end of the school day or evening event, but many of those cars are unoccupied.*
- *School visitors use restricted street parking along Grove Street for hours at a time with the result of no available parking for residential use. Although residents may have garages or contracts for off street parking, resident guests or service vehicles do not. I do not argue De LaSalle’s right to share the available street parking; my point is that there is not enough available parking. Increased need will overwhelm any possibilities for the residents to use street parking.*

I have lived 4 years on Nicollet Island. A business trip to Chicago’s Old Town neighborhood inspired us to find something similar – although on a much smaller scale - in Minneapolis. Our historic buildings and neighborhoods haven’t enjoyed the protection and preservation enhancing historic districts in many other American cities. Perhaps there is another suitable space for an athletic field and Nicollet Island might be left untouched.

Thanks again for your consideration.

Nan Carlson
6B Grove Street
Minneapolis MN 55401
612.331.2841

163 Nicollet St.
Minneapolis MN 55401
November 23, 2005

Michael Orange, Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
210 City Hall
Minneapolis MN 55415

RE: EAW for DeLaSalle Athletic Field

Dear Mr. Orange,

I would like to submit the following comments on the above EAW.

Under Item 6a, the project description, the EAW fails to mention that the project is located in the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park. This is significant because of the large number of people who use the Park, reportedly 750,000 annually. The EAW does not address the impact of the project on the needs and preferences of Riverfront Regional Park visitors. An extensive study would be required to do so. It is unlikely that many Park visitors have a need or desire for an athletic field. The Metropolitan Council's 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan states that "...athletic field complexes are inappropriate for development on regional park lands".

Under Item 7, the area of the proposed parking lot ("Parcel C") is incorrectly given as 0.71 acres. This site is actually three separate tax parcels with a total area of 1.43 acres, according to Hennepin County's website.

Under Item 9, the EAW incorrectly states that, pursuant to the 1983 Agreement, "...certain parcels acquired for the Park were reserved for private use of these public lands". Mention of the 1983 Agreement is of doubtful relevance. In addition, this statement grossly misrepresents the contents of the Agreement and related actions by the public bodies involved, as follows:

- The residential parcels mentioned were not acquired for park use, and were never intended for that purpose. Fee title to these lands was conveyed to the Park Board, without charge, by the MCDA. The MCDA had acquired them from private owners. The Park Board immediately leased them back to the MCDA for redevelopment, pursuant to a 1973 MCDA redevelopment plan which called for restoring the historic buildings on the parcels. The purpose of the lease arrangement was to enable the Park Board to monitor the restoration and use of the historic buildings. As recited in the lease document, the Park Board and MCDA agreed that the historic buildings would be an asset to the adjacent park, which they have proven to be. The Park Board only wanted to make sure that the restoration would be done properly, and that the buildings would be maintained.

- The Nicollet Island Pavilion was originally restored by the Park Board for use as a public building, and was used as such for approximately 20 years. The present lease to a concessionaire dates from 2002. No such concession arrangement was mentioned in the 1983 Agreement, nor contemplated at that time.
- The Park Board lease of the Nicollet Island Inn to a private operator predated the 1983 Agreement, and the Agreement says nothing about it.

A subsequent statement under Item 9 refers to athletic fields' being permitted as a conditional use in residential districts. This again ignores the location of the project in the Regional Park. The Conditional Use process is not an adequate means of addressing the impact of the project on the Regional Park. The appropriate means of doing so would be an EIS.

Under Item 16, the earthwork quantities called for are not given. The answer to this question is thus inadequate and non-responsive. The quantity of earth to be moved for the athletic field would be readily available from DeLaSalle's engineering consultants. Their CAD program would calculate the volume in cubic yards with a few keystrokes.

It is also asserted that porous pavers and subsurface infiltration will provide adequate stormwater management for the proposed parking lot. During the CAC process for the project, the presentations included grading and drainage plans for the athletic field, prepared by engineers, but there were no such plans for the parking lot. I would therefore ask whether this statement is based on actual engineering work or is mere supposition. Among other things, bedrock is very close to the surface in most places on the Island—2 to 3 feet on the present athletic field, according to DeLaSalle's consultants. Would porous pavers and infiltration work under such conditions? Have soil conditions or the depth of the bedrock been investigated on the parking lot site, or any other engineering work done with respect to that site? In the absence of engineering work and actual plans, it is not possible to evaluate the impact of the proposed parking lot.

Under Item 17, the EAW does not address the net increase in fertilizer and herbicide use that would be associated with the athletic complex, as opposed to the present natural meadow state of the Park land.

Under "Designated Parks and Trails", the response includes a good deal of irrelevant information, but fails to mention that the 1996 Master Plan shows a trail connection on the site of the proposed parking lot, part of a system linking Boom Island and Main Street. The area in fact functions as a pedestrian and bicycle trail at present, although not fully developed as laid out in the Master Plan.

The athletic field and parking lot would have significant visual and physical impacts on the present trail use. The visual impact would be that of a suburban-style athletic complex, including a 6- to 10-foot high retaining wall system topped by a railing, and a paved and striped parking lot with necessary guard rails, lights, and signage. Physically, the parking lot development would prevent completion of the trail as shown in the Master Plan. These impacts are not mentioned in the response.

DeLaSalle had representatives on the CAC for the 1996 Master Plan, but they said nothing about a future athletic field. They asked for tennis courts, which were incorporated in the plan. At that time they had a full-sized football field, created by occupying a part of the public right-of-way of Grove Street. Evidently they felt they had received what was contemplated in the 1983 Agreement.

Under “Scenic Views and Vistas”, the response mentions views of the downtown skyline but does not mention views to the east. Although smaller in scale, the eastern view is similar to the western one—a tree-lined river gorge with buildings beyond. The project would have a dramatic impact on the eastern view. The attached image shows an outline of the proposed grandstand superimposed on the view of the eastern river gorge, as seen from a point near the easterly driveway of the residential Nicollet Island Building. As shown, from this location the grandstand would entirely block the view of the river gorge, the trees, and the buildings. DeLaSalle’s consultants have said that the grandstand would be higher than the Nicollet Street bridge.

The grandstand would also be conspicuously visible from the westerly end of Grove Street. It would thus have an impact on the historic Grove Street Flats, becoming part of the setting of that 1875 building. People on historic tours, which occur quite frequently, would not be able to stand and look at the Flats without seeing the grandstand. It would be a jarring incongruity.

Under Item 21, the methodology of the traffic study is inappropriate. Traffic standards for residential neighborhoods should not be used. Nicollet Island is quite different from an ordinary residential neighborhood, in that it is shared with hundreds of thousands of Regional Park visitors. More importantly, the roadways are shared by motor vehicles, horse-drawn carriages, pedestrians, bicyclists, Segway riders, and persons in wheelchairs. This arrangement is not accidental. It was the subject of intense discussion during the 1996 Master Plan process.

Island residents advocated for the shared roadways, and also for the use of paving blocks, both for aesthetic reasons and for their traffic-calming effect. Through NIEBNA (the Nicollet Island – East Bank Neighborhood Association), \$60,000 in NRP money was contributed toward the cost of the pavers. Not everyone believed the shared roadways would work, but in fact they have worked very well. They are an important part of the nineteenth-century atmosphere that draws so many visitors to the Island.

It is possible to get a general idea of the project’s impact by comparing roadways north of Grove Street with the section of East Island Avenue between Grove Street and DeLaSalle Drive. In this area there are no pavers. This block also serves for traffic circulation around DeLaSalle, and is heavily used for parking. As a result, it can be dangerous to walk in the roadway in this block, and sidewalks are badly needed. The project would create similar hazards elsewhere on the Island.

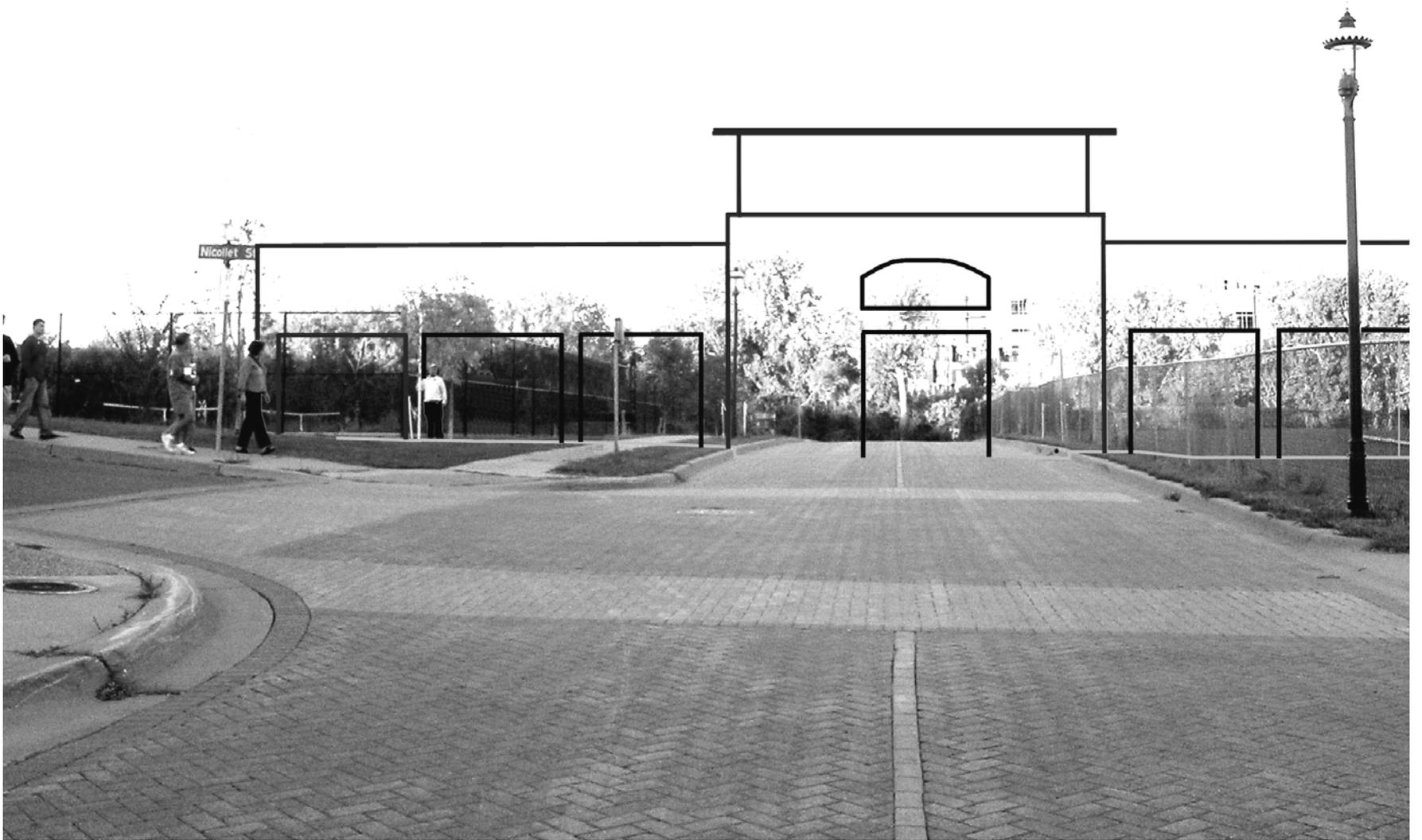
There are probably relatively few examples in the U. S. of shared roadways like those on the Island. Such roadways are fairly common in Europe. Granville Island, in Vancouver BC, has shared roadways. To properly evaluate the impact of the project, traffic standards for shared roadways in similar settings should be obtained and applied.

DeLaSalle has engaged competent architects and engineers, who have made considerable efforts to reduce the visual presence of the project. But its area, bulk, and intended use, in this location, will inevitably lead to impacts that cannot be mitigated. To properly inform officials and the public of the extent of such impacts, it is appropriate that an EIS be prepared.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments, and your work on this process.

Yours,

John Chaffee



Steven M. Christenson
171 E. Island Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401-1503
H: 612-379-4524
W: 651-293-2697

November 14, 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning & Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

Re: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange:

Introduction

This letter provides comments on the draft EAW for the proposed athletic facility development project on Nicollet Island within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District in Minneapolis. The EAW appropriately concludes that the proposed closure and demolition of East Grove Street will have an adverse impact on the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The EAW, however, generally minimizes or dismisses adverse effects of the development project that warrant further investigation. Moreover, the EAW contains incomplete information about aspects of development project that warrant further investigation. These items are addressed below following the sequence of the EAW.

Section 6 – Project Description

The Project Description section appears incomplete. For example, the proposed Reciprocal Use Agreement attached to the EAW as Attachment F states that the development project will include the following elements:

* * *

- Construct a bituminous surface for the “auxiliary parking lot” located adjacent to East Island Avenue and between the First Avenue Bridge and the Burlington Northern Railroad Tracks.
- Landscape the area adjacent to the “auxiliary parking lot.”

* * *

- Relocate and construct at least three (3) tennis court facilities on property selected and owned by MPRB

Tennis Courts. The Project Description in the EAW, however, says nothing about relocation and construction of the three tennis courts. Because this tennis court construction will either be included in the development project or will be a later stage or later component of the development project, the EAW should address this hidden element of the development project. By leaving out the tennis court element of the development project, the EAW inappropriately understates the development project's size and understates stormwater runoff issues and other environmental impacts.

Will the tennis courts be relocated at the south end or north end of Nicollet Island? Along the Mississippi riverbank east of Island Avenue? At the BF Nelson site? On Boom Island? The EAW should be modified to include additional factual information and further investigation regarding environmental impacts of the tennis court element of the development project.

Parking Lot. The EAW indicates that auxiliary parking will be developed on Parcel C. Recognizing that the parking actually "counts" as part of the project is an important step forward, as several presentations before the Park Board and the Park Board's Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) downplayed or excluded any recognition of the auxiliary parking proposed on Parcel C on the Mississippi riverbank. Given the location of this parking area directly next to the Mississippi riverbank, however, there is a significant potential for environmental impacts associated with the parking area.

The EAW downplays these environmental impacts by describing the parking lot development as proposed with "porous pavers" that would minimize stormwater runoff. Contradicting these statements is the proposed Reciprocal Use Agreement attached to the EAW as Attachment F. The proposed Agreement describes DeLaSalle's plan for a bituminous parking lot. Again, the EAW should be modified to include additional factual information and further investigation regarding environmental impacts from the parking lot element of the development project.

Concession Stand. The EAW makes no mention of the proposed concession stand to accompany the proposed football stadium. At the Park Board's CAC hearings, a small building for a concession stand was discussed as an integral part of the project. Again, the EAW should be modified to include additional factual information and further investigation regarding environmental impacts from the commercial concession stand element of the development project. While this element may or may not pose potential significant environmental impacts, leaving out this element of the project suggests that the EAW has understated the project's scope in this and possibly other respects.

Section 6.d – Future Stages

If the tennis court relocation and construction described in the proposed Reciprocal Use Agreement (EAW Attachment F) is deferred for a later stage, this future development project stage should be disclosed and evaluated.

Section 7 – Project Magnitude Data

In addition to the tennis court area excluded from the EAW, there is a question about the size of MPRB Parcel B. The EAW describes this parcel as 1.25 acres in size. By contrast, the enclosed survey of this parcel by Rehder & Associates describes it as ~1.7 acres in size, although the survey appears to include East Grove Street. Does the project extend northward onto the Burlington Northern railroad right-of-way? See enclosed 1892 Foot Atlas.

These basic questions about the project size should be addressed to enable a more reasoned analysis of the project's environmental impacts. Also, the size of the proposed commercial concession stand should be added to the commercial square footage indicated in the EAW.

Section 8 – Current Land Use

On page 8, the EAW notes that the open space parkland within the MPRB Parcel B was recently planted with 1 in. caliper ash and maple trees. The EAW should note that these currently small trees were planted to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the University of Minnesota. A brass plaque and granite monument dedicated by then-University President Mark Yudoff memorialize the tree planting immediately northwest of Parcel B. In other words, the value of these trees is greater than the mere timber or lumber value of the trees due to the special significance surrounding their planting.

Section 12 – Physical Impacts on Water Resources

The EAW states there will be no such impacts. Without further information regarding the parking lot proposed along the Mississippi riverbank, it seems speculative to conclude that there will be no impact on the Mississippi River or associated riverbank wetlands. Also, the open space parkland on MPRB Parcel B contains a small area of hydrotropic soils and sedge grasses. This area may or may not be considered subject to the DNR Protect Waters Inventory, but the EAW should investigate and evaluate these potential wetlands or water resources impact.

Section 16 – Erosion & Sedimentation

On page 12, the draft EAW states that a retaining wall “along the railroad right-of-way will be replaced.” This statement may be an error. The stone retaining wall along the Burlington Northern Railroad line is a substantial structure, which has been in place for more than a century and was not discussed for replacement in any Park Board or Park Board CAC hearings. If this very large stone wall structure is to be replaced, the EAW should provide further investigation and analysis of potential environmental and historic resource impacts.

Section 19 – Geologic Hazards

Section 19 does not identify any potential geologic site hazards. The EAW, however, describes plans for at least 4 lighting poles that will be 70 feet tall. These lighting poles will require drilling into the limestone and potentially into the soft St. Peter sandstone under Nicollet Island. Given the particular geological history of Nicollet Island, this proposed drilling warrants further investigation and analysis.

In general, the limestone and soft sandstone in the vicinity of St. Anthony Falls has caused many construction problems and environmental impacts over the years. In 1869, excavation of a tunnel approximately 2,000 feet long under Nicollet Island resulted in a famous incident when the Mississippi River broke through the limestone sheath. This drilling nearly resulted in collapse of the St. Anthony Falls. See L. Kane, *The Falls of St. Anthony: The Waterfall that Built Minneapolis*, pp. 62-80 (1987). More recently, sandstone erosion under the St. Anthony Falls near power plant along the east riverbank required emergency installation of new reinforcing caissons just two years ago. At minimum, the potential environmental impacts from the proposed construction and drilling should be evaluated in the EAW if not preceded by an engineering study.

Section 21 – Traffic

On page 17, the EAW provides traffic data analysis indicating that about 500 vehicles per day utilize East Grove Street and only 300 vehicles per day utilize West Grove Street. In other words, 200 more vehicles per day are using East Grove Street than West Grove Street. These vehicles are going somewhere – most likely the north tip of Nicollet Island via Nicollet Street or to the back of DeLaSalle high school. Yet, the EAW's traffic data states that traffic levels will decrease on West Grove Street (and Nicollet Street) after East Grove Street closes. Instead, it seems more likely that traffic levels will increase on West Grove Street (and Nicollet Street) after East Grove Street closes because West Grove Street will become the only passable route to the north tip of Nicollet Island when trains are present (a common occurrence).

Put another way, the EAW describes the traffic impacts of closing East Grove Street as limited to the traffic associated with DeLaSalle football games. The EAW ignores traffic patterns associated with the 750,000 other annual visitors to Nicollet Island. By focusing just on the football game traffic issues, the EAW understates and fails to properly evaluate the environmental impacts associated with closing East Grove Street.

Section 25 – Nearby Resources

In section 25, the EAW states that the proposed new construction does not appear to have an impact on the Grove Street Flats or the Nicollet Island Residential Area. While it is correct that the proposed construction does not involve demolition of the Grove Street Flats or historic homes in the Nicollet Island Residential Area, the broad statements of “no impact” are incorrect. As noted above, closing East Grove Street will have a significant impact on traffic flow patterns by increasing traffic on West Grove Street in

front of the Grove Street Flats and by eliminating the standard method of approaching the north tip of Nicollet Island when trains are present.

Grove Street is one of two principal east-west streets laid out on the original plat of Nicollet Island surveyed in 1865. Installing a large-scale athletic facility in the small space of Nicollet Island will significantly alter the look and feel of this historic district. The existing collection of houses in the district represents both the spatial arrangement and style of the 19th century. The original street layout, including the brick street layout of East Grove Street, is a significant element of the historic district. See enclosed 1885 Hopkins plate and 1892 Foote Atlas plate #3. I am enclosing comments of a prominent local historic preservationist and architect, Robert Roscoe, further describing the impacts of the proposed development project. Because the street layout is part and parcel of the Grove Street Flats and Nicollet Island Residential Area, it is incorrect to conclude that closing East Grove Street has no impact on these historic resources.

Section 29 – Cumulative Impacts

If reconstruction of the tennis court area is deferred to a later phase, the impacts of that project phase should be evaluated.

Conclusion

The draft EAW concludes that closing East Grove Street will have an adverse impact on the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Given this conclusion, the City of Minneapolis Zoning and Planning Committee should require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider alternatives to the proposed project and to consider methods of reducing adverse historic resource and environmental effects.

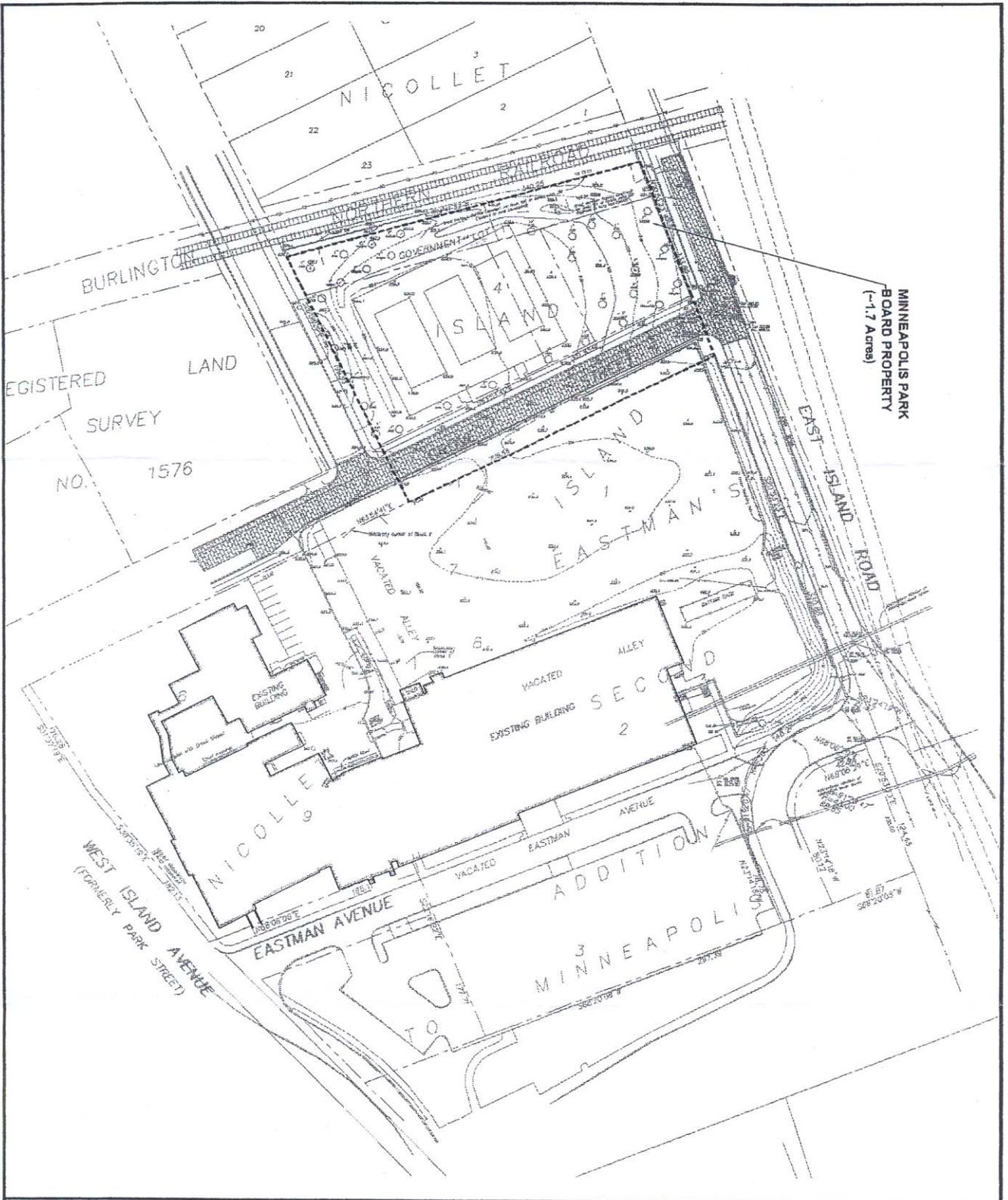
Before proceeding to an EIS, I respectfully request that the City address the incomplete information in the EAW noted above. In particular, the proposed Reciprocal Use Agreement describes reconstruction of 3 tennis courts as part of the development project, but the EAW does not include the tennis court area in the analysis. The EAW states the century-old stone retaining wall along the railroad right-of-way will be replaced, which seems incorrect. Potential geologic impacts associated with field lighting poles and other construction are not adequately addressed. Accordingly, the EAW should be revised to address this incomplete analysis and re-published for comment. To address the entire project in an orderly way, this EAW revision should be completed before proceeding to an EIS. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steven M. Christenson

Enclosures:

1. Survey by Rehder & Associates (2005)
2. 1885 Hopkins Plate & 1892 Foote Atlas plate 3
3. Robert P. Roscoe correspondence to Park Board (July 25, 2005)



MINNEAPOLIS PARK
BOARD PROPERTY
(-1.7 Acres)



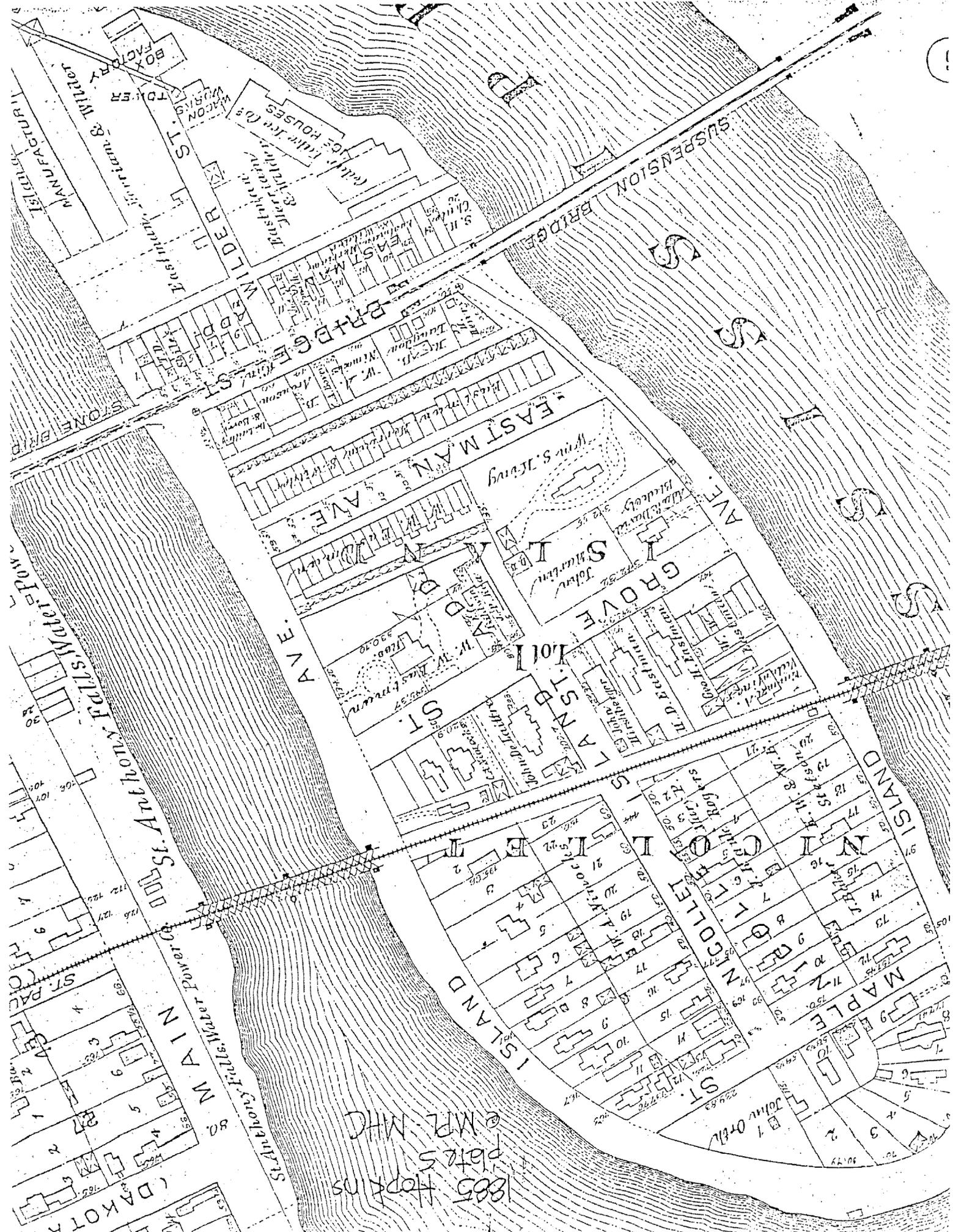
DeLaSalle High School
One DeLaSalle Drive
Minneapolis, MN
55401-1597

-- EXHIBIT A --

TOPOGRAPHIC
AND BOUNDARY
SURVEY



SURVEY COMPLETED BY:
REHDER & ASSOCIATES, INC.



885 Hopkins
 plates
 @ MRL MHC

B 1 Orville
 JOHN ORVILLE

MAIN ST
 S. S. Anthonys Falls Water Tower

DAKOTA ST

ST. PAUL
 S. S. Anthonys Falls Water Tower

ST. ANTHONY'S FALLS
 S. S. Anthonys Falls Water Tower

WILDER ST
 EAST MAN AVE
 GROVE ST
 STANLEY ST
 NICKOLET ST
 MAPLE ST
 MAIN ST
 DAKOTA ST

SUSPENSION BRIDGE

EAST MAN AVE
 GROVE ST
 STANLEY ST
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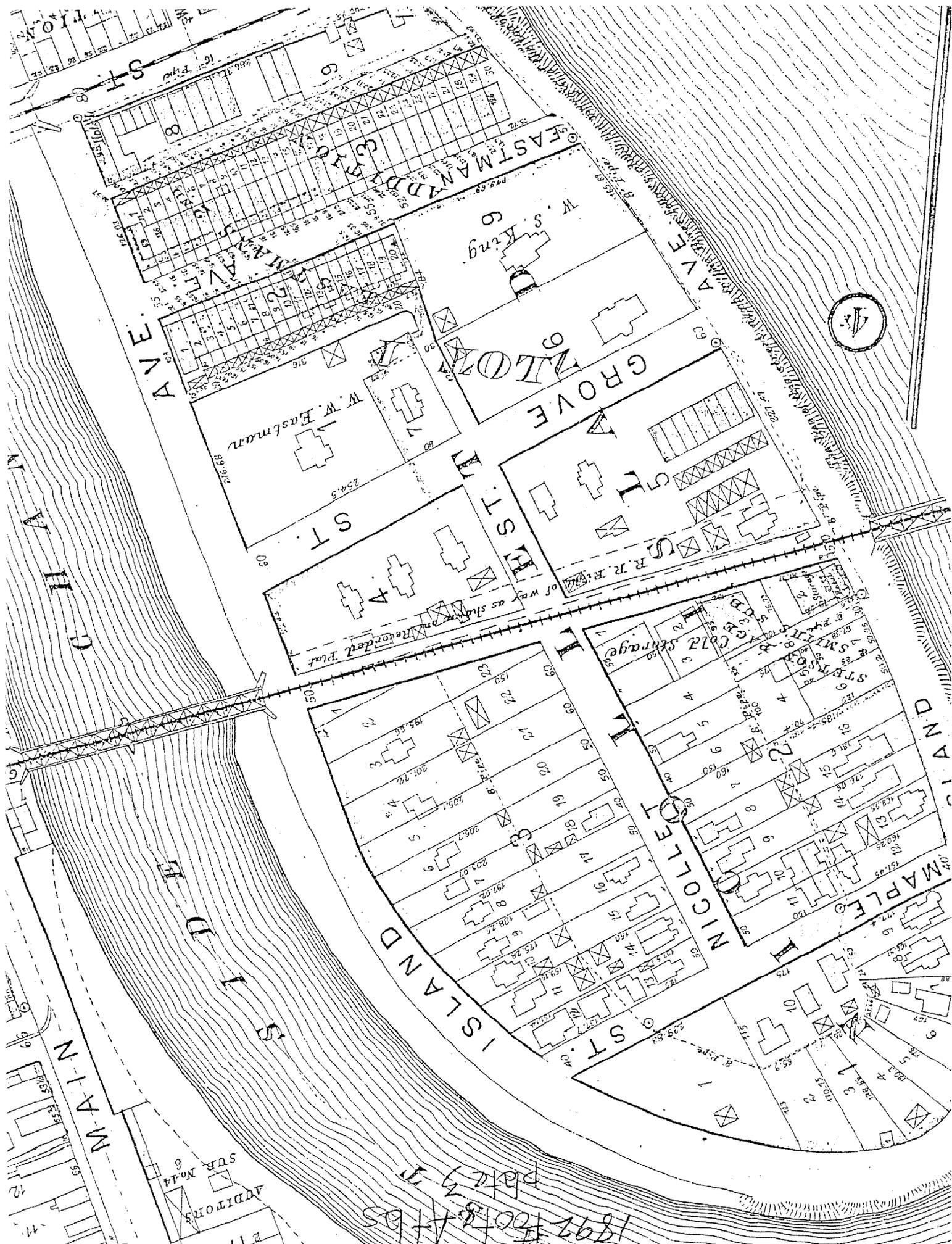
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1899 Foot & A.S.
part 3 of

ADDITORS
SUB No. 4
6

EASTMAN AVENUE
ADDITORS

W. King
GROVE ST.

W. W. Eastman
HILL ST.

COLD STORAGE
NICOLLE ST.

MAPLE

MAIN

ISLAND

AND

From: sandy daly [sanda33@earthlink.net]
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 10:49 AM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: EAW on Nicollet Island

Dear Mr. Orange,

Please accept my comments relating to the proposed EAW for the DeLaSalle Project on Nicollet Island. I have lived on the Island since 1990 and am very concerned about parking and pedestrian safety.

Parking for a sports event tends to be oriented toward the entrance to the event. According to the EAW, there are "occasionally" 1150 fans attending DeLaSalle basketball games. (Response to EAW Question 21, subheading Intersection Capacity Analysis at page 19.) Those fans are oriented toward entering the school building by the main doors facing Hennepin, and park accordingly, in the school's lot, or the E. Island lot, or occasionally spilling over into places like under the Hennepin Ave. bridge. In fact I personally have observed instances of illegal parking under bridges during DeLaSalle events.

The proposed stadium grandstand faces Grove and Nicollet, and therefore attending fans would more likely be oriented toward an approach from either of those streets. If so, that would mean more cars parking at the upper and residential end of Nicollet Island. By assuming that the parking for the proposed facility would mimic patterns observed with basketball, the EAW fails to give adequate consideration of possible, even likely, differences in parking patterns. (Response to EAW Question 21, subheading Parking at page 19.)

The same unsubstantiated assumption underlies the conclusion that there is "ample capacity to disburse the traffic once it leaves the parking lots." (Response to EAW Question 21, subheading Intersection Capacity Analysis at page 19.) The EAW needs to address the likely possibility that fans will park on the streets of the upper island and consider the impact that will have on traffic patterns and public safety. This potential impact on the residential neighborhood is ignored in the EAW response to Question 25 (Nearby Resources), subheading Nicollet Island Residential Area at page 25. Because this potential impact coupled with the proposed street closure in the St. Anthony Falls National Historic District presents a potentially significant environmental impact, please require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the alternatives to this project location that would pose less impact.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Very truly yours,

Sandy Daly

167 E. Island Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612.331.4527
sand33@earthlink.net

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From: Mr. Matthew P. Dreon [matthew.p.dreon@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, November 19, 2005 9:51 AM

To: ourbeautifulriver@mac.com

Cc: Orange, Michael

Subject: Friends of the Riverfront

Friends of the Riverfront,

I writing to tell you that I think opposing the DeLaSalle stadium is ridiculous and arrogant and that I'll have no part in it. That school has been in the neighborhood for decades. I have lived here exactly 13 months. If anything, they should be opposing my presence.

The kids there deserve a stadium on campus. The sounds of the game and the fans, the traffic, etc. are simply part of living in an urban area, and in my mind will add to the unique fabric of the neighborhood . To expect that island to be a silent oasis is unrealistic. If you want silence and river views, you need to move about 100 miles north.

Matthew Dreon

150 2nd St. NE #111

Minneapolis, Mn 55413

From: Suzanne Durkacs [sdurkacs@umn.edu]

Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2005 6:48 PM

To: Orange, Michael

Subject: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Re: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange:

This letter relates to the draft EAW for the proposed athletic facility development project on Nicollet Island within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District in Minneapolis. My comments relate to three concerns:

- Preservation of open space and public parkland
- Preservation of historic and cultural resources
- Evaluation of the entire project, rather than just a portion of the development project

The proposed development would turn over public parkland and open space to the Diocese of St. Paul for use as a private athletic facility. This use is inconsistent with the Master Plan adopted for Nicollet Island by the Minneapolis Park Board in 1996, which contemplated public open space and passive park use of this area on Nicollet Island. With Metropolitan Council funding, the City bought the relevant parkland for more than \$1 million and designated this parkland along the Mississippi River as "open space." The public interest in preserving this particular natural resource was recorded in a restrictive covenant. Because the proposed development would violate both the restrictive covenant and the 1996 Master Plan, the EAW should conclude that these actions require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate alternatives.

Nicollet Island is a unique cultural resource, where visitors can still feel the experience of living in Minneapolis a century ago by walking on brick streets, viewing 1870s vintage homes, and seeing the street layout from 1865. The proposed development would change the character and feel of Nicollet Island into an athletic complex theme park. Because the proposed development would violate Minnesota's and Minneapolis historic preservation guidelines, the EAW should conclude that these actions require an EIS to evaluate alternatives.

The EAW contains incomplete information about aspects of development project that warrant further investigation. For instance, the EAW fails to address the location or impacts of the three tennis courts described in the Reciprocal Use Agreement attached to the EAW. The EAW also fails to adequately address the proposed bituminous auxiliary parking lot east of East Island Avenue and adjacent landscaping, which would be directly next to the Mississippi Riverbank. Environmental impacts of potential future project phases should be addressed now in the EAW process, before the project is approved.

On a final note, it is important to remember that the EAW is intended to capture and evaluate all of the potential environmental impacts before the project proceeds, so that impacts can be minimized at the

design stages. The draft EAW comments that historic preservation and other plan conformance issues must be addressed later by other governmental bodies. This is wrong. In *Trout Unlimited, Inc. v. Minn. Dep't of Agri.*, 528 N.W.2d 903 (Minn. App. 1995), the Minnesota Court of Appeals ruled that future regulatory controls to mitigate impacts cannot be relied on to conclude that an EIS is unnecessary. Instead, environmental impacts of future project phases (such as the tennis courts, historic preservation impacts, etc.) need to be addressed in the EAW to get the facts on the table for a proper review

Please require preparation of an EIS to consider alternatives to the proposed project and to consider methods of reducing adverse environmental effects. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne J. Durkacs

2632 Buchanan Street NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
612.788.0389

I have also sent a hard copy to your address.

From: Katharine Fournier [kfournier1@mn.rr.com]

Sent: Tuesday, November 22, 2005 3:09 PM

To: Orange, Michael

Subject: DeLaSalle EAW comments

Dear Mr. Orange,

Although we do not live on Nicollet Island we often walk there and we feel connected to Nicollet Island and its central position in the history of Minneapolis, as do many residents of Southeast Minneapolis, location of Minneapolis' earlier twin, the former town of St. Anthony (whose heart was Nicollet Island).

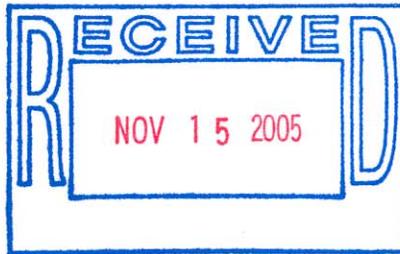
While DeLaSalle may be entitled to some sort of playing fields on the island by the 1983 agreement, the current plans seem excessively large and out of character with the history and the historic presence of Nicollet Island. In fact DeLaSalle has already built a playing field for football in accordance with the 1983 agreement. The current field seems much more in character with other development on the island, than the 25-foot high stadium which is now proposed.

The construction of this visual and traffic impediment seems a drastic solution for DeLaSalle's sentimental desire to hold four or five home games each year. It is quite common for city schools to play on borrowed fields or joint fields (such as Parade Stadium). We do not see that it is a great hardship for DeLaSalle to continue to do this.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EAW.

Sincerely,

Katie and Rick Fournier
912 18th Avenue SE
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414
612/331-5615
kfournier1@mn.rr.com



The DeLaSalle Stadium Project

As a citywide stakeholder, I have attended all four CAC meetings. It is apparent to me that DeLaSalle, like many other institutions and private schools, has reached a point in its existence where its needs are outgrowing its site.

The DeLaSalle Stadium Project is a shoehorn project. That is, it is forcing itself onto a site that has multiple limitations, restrictions and problems. It is my observation that the DeLaSalle Stadium Project is not an appropriate project for Nicollet Island.

DeLaSalle should be exploring other alternatives to accommodate its growth.

Arlene Fried
1109 Xerxes Avenue S.
Bryn Mawr Neighborhood
11/15/05

Jan Hively
(Janet M. Hively, Ph.D.)
93 Nicollet Street, Nicollet Island
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-379-4124
HIVEL001@umn.edu

November 19, 2005

To: **Michael Orange, CPED**

Re: **EAW for DeLaSalle Football and Soccer Stadium**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet. As I stated at the review session last Tuesday night, I have five concerns:

- **Park Board use.** The analyses focus on the impacts of DeLaSalle's use of the stadium. My understanding is that the Park Board will be able to use the stadium when DeLaSalle is not using it. It's important to report on the impacts of the Park Board's use. This will be an attractive site where a lot of football and soccer teams would like to play. The Park Board has dramatically expanded its rentals of recreation space. It's logical to expect that the Park Board will maximize its rentals of the DeLaSalle stadium. The EAW should take the impacts of Park Board use into account.
- **Tennis Courts.** My sense is that the conditions of the 1983 DeLaSalle & Park Board agreement have long ago been met because DeLaSalle now has a football field and tennis courts. Now, the plan for a football stadium would wipe out the tennis courts that were constructed in the late '90s. The EAW doesn't say anything about how the 1983 agreement's guarantee of tennis courts will be met. There apparently is no plan for relocating the courts???. If I were a DeLaSalle parent of a student who doesn't play on a soccer or football team, I would be concerned about wiping out the possibility of teaching a lifetime sport.
- **Grandstand.** The drawing shows a 25 foot high grandstand with its entrance at the end of the remaining half of Grove Street. This is a street that is often crowded now with school buses and Christian Brothers visitors and residents of the Kerwin Flats and Grove Street Flats. The EAW should talk further about the visual impact of the grandstand from the west end of Grove Street, and about the traffic associated with the opening to the grandstand.
- **Retaining Wall.** I believe that the cut stone retaining wall adjacent to the RR track dates back to the first RR crossing of the Mississippi River and is thus an important element of this historic site.
- **Pedestrian Use of East Island Avenue.** By far the heaviest recreational use of Nicollet Island involves pedestrians walking, biking, pushing strollers, riding segways, riding in horse-drawn carriages, and running between Boom Island and

the Main Street Bridge along the river edge trail and East Island Avenue. I wrote a couple of letters to DeLaSalle and the Park Board during the '90s complaining about the fact that there are no sidewalks on either side of East Island Avenue from the RR tracks to the Hennepin Avenue Bridge access road. The roadway is always a dangerous route for pedestrians – particularly when there is a special event at the Pavilion or DeLaSalle and cars line East Island Avenue and fill the parking lot between East Island Avenue and the river. Often, three kinds of pedestrians move abreast along the roadway between the cars. This is dangerous and will be increasingly dangerous if the stadium development plan goes through. By the way, a representative from DeLaSalle told me at a meeting that they had not responded to my letters because they did not want to accept liability. The representative said that the Park Board had promised to build a sidewalk on the DeLaSalle side of the roadway but hadn't done so. The EAW should focus on pedestrian access and risk along East Island Avenue.

Your patience at the meeting was admirable, Michael. I felt proud to be a resident of Nicollet Island and the City of Minneapolis by your competent receptivity and by the astute and articulate comments from my neighbors.

We'll look forward to seeing the revised worksheet.

Best regards,

Jan Hively

Lisa C. Hondros
171 E. Island Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401-1503
612-379-4524

November 22, 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning & Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

**Re: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility
Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis**

Dear Mr. Orange:

This letter provides comments on the draft EAW for the proposed DeLaSalle athletic facility on Nicollet Island within the St. Anthony Falls National Historic District in Minneapolis. The EAW rightly concludes that the proposed closure and demolition of East Grove Street will have an adverse impact on the St. Anthony Falls National Historic District. The EAW, however, fails to consider the significance of this closure in the context of the 1996 Master Plan governing development of Nicollet Island.

In 1996, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board approved a Master Plan to govern development of Nicollet Island and the B. F. Nelson site. Years of work led to the creation of this Master Plan prepared by Martin & Pitz Associates, Landscape Research and Schoell & Madison Engineers, including the contributions of a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) which met multiple times over a three and one half year period. The CAC included members representing recreational and historical concerns, as well as representatives from abutting neighborhoods, DeLaSalle High School and nearby businesses.

The EAW refers to the 1996 Master Plan in answer to Question 25 under the heading "Designated parks, recreation areas or trails." The EAW accurately sets forth the seven objectives of the Plan, but then ignores their implications for the proposed athletic facility. Instead the EAW focuses on a clause from a 1983 agreement that was arguably fulfilled after the City granted the Diocese of St. Paul (DeLaSalle High School) an encroachment of Grove Street in 1984 to allow for construction of a regulation size football field, and later the Park Board built three tennis courts on adjacent parkland. The 1996 Master Plan is the most current document governing development of Nicollet Island, and the EAW fails to address adequately key elements of the Plan relating directly to the proposed project.

For example, the proposed demolition of Grove Street is in direct opposition to Objective Number 7: "Provide for conservation and appropriate rehabilitation of significant historic sites, structures, and buildings." The importance of preserving the original street plan is emphasized in the Master Plan.

The streets of E. and W. Island Avenue, Maple Street, Nicollet Street, Grove and Eastman Avenues are part of the Nicollet Island Addition surveyed in 1865 by Franklin Cook. The original intentions of the land developers and the surveyor are visible and the multi-lot grid plan attests to the intended urban character of the area. The railroad tracks which were built across the the [sic] island in the 1880s determined the character of some nearby parcels but did not deter W.W. Eastman and others from building large and costly houses. (page 5) [Please

note that in Figure 12 on page 15 of the Historic Resources Survey submitted with the EAW, you will find a photo of such homes built on the part of Grove Street that would be replaced with the proposed athletic facility.]

The Master Plan states that design of new development should “[r]ecognize the historical pattern of land use” on Nicollet Island (page 11). In keeping with this guiding principle, the Master Plan calls for “[p]reserv[ing] the integrity of the original (1866) street plan of the island.” (page 11) The proposed project would destroy the historic street plan.

The EAW also fails to consider the full implications of Master Plan Objective Number 5: “[p]reserve and enhance the island’s natural landscape character.” The Plan describes the existing landscape of the open space that would be taken for the proposed facility:

Several open areas, the site of former industries, now exist at the center of the island. The rough topography and emergent vegetation allows for potential development of interesting park areas. (page 8)

Further, the Master Plan directs that public improvement should be at a “scale appropriate to the structures and spaces of the island.” (page 11). Destroying a 150-year-old street pattern and natural landscapes for construction of a suburban style athletic facility is again contrary to principles clearly stated in the Master Plan. In fact, nothing in the 1996 Master Plan contemplates development of the type proposed here. To the contrary, Design Principle 6 underscores the core value of preservation by limiting active recreation space to “where it complements the historic pattern of land use.” (page 11)

The EAW fails to address significant adverse impacts the proposed project would have on the historic district as expressly defined in the governing Master Plan and is therefore incomplete. I urge you to request preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider alternatives to the proposed project and to consider methods of reducing the significant adverse impact on the historic street plan and landscaping envisioned by the Master Plan. I attach a copy of the Master Plan to this letter for your information.

Thank you for your work on this matter.

Very truly yours,

Lisa C. Hondros
Enclosure: Nicollet Island Master Plan (1996)

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All historic photographs are from the collections of the Minnesota Historical Society.
Cover: 1885 Map of Minneapolis.

The Nicollet Island Master Plan

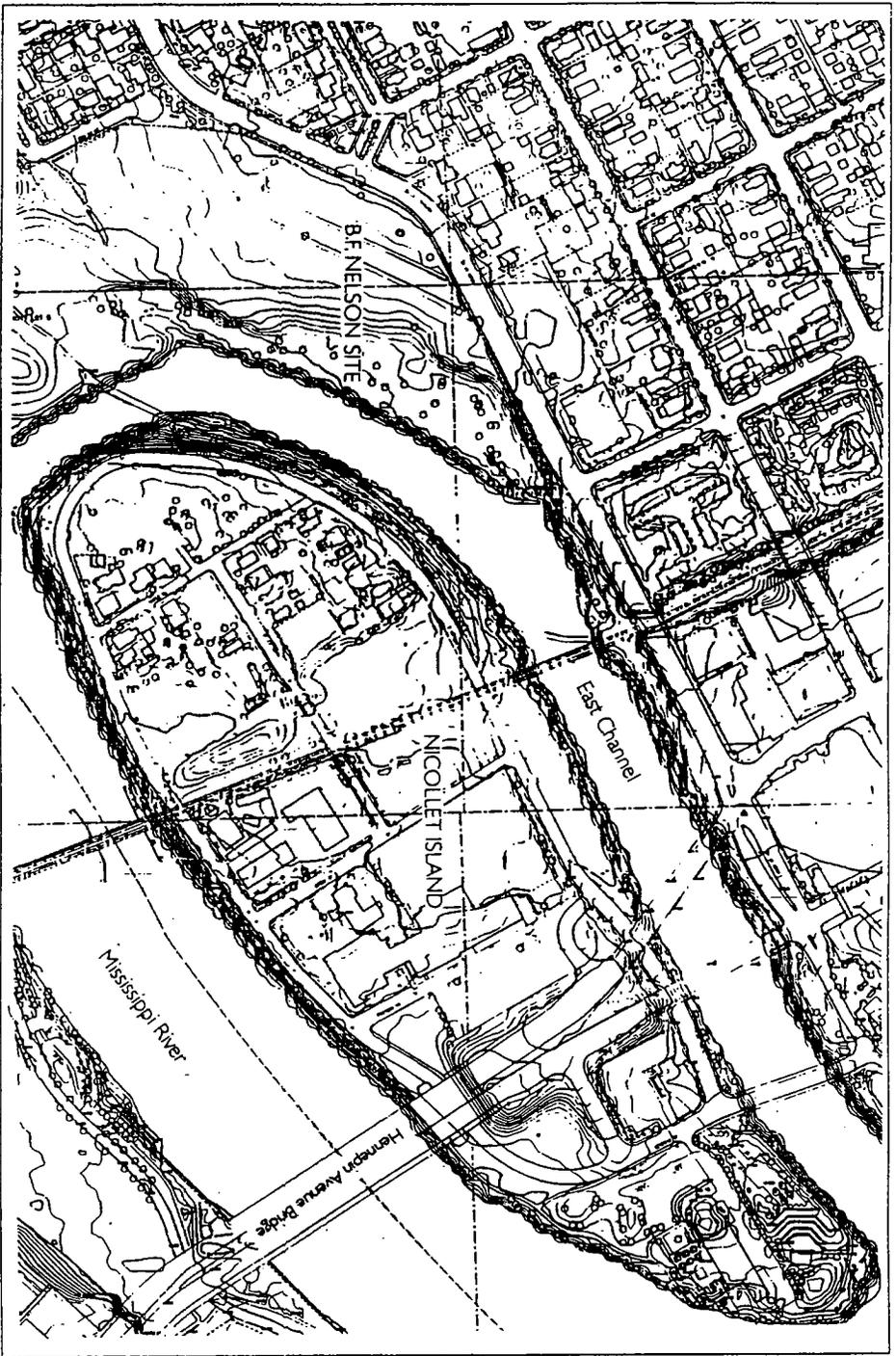
prepared by

**Martin & Pitz Associates
Landscape Research
Schoell & Madson Engineers**

for the

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

1996



A topographical map of Nicollet Island and the adjacent B.F. Nelson site.



There is no other place like Nicollet Island in the Twin Cities, and few places like it anywhere else. Resting mid-point in the Mississippi River at the heart of Minneapolis, its southern tip lies only a few hundred feet from St. Anthony Falls.

The largest of the three remaining Minneapolis islands, Nicollet was one of at least six islands present at the time of earliest Euro-American settlement near the falls. From here, Native Americans and early European explorers had a great vantage point for viewing the often thundering precipice downriver. The island is named for Joseph N. Nicollet (1783-1843), a French geographer who explored the Upper Mississippi in 1838 and 1839.

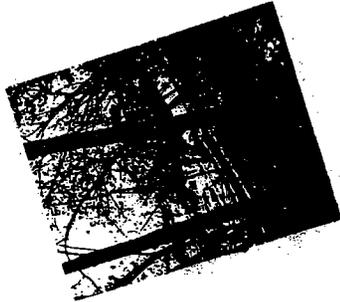
Since the late 1860s, Nicollet Island has supported a variety of industrial uses related to milling and water power generation. For over a decade longer it has been a residential community. The coexistence of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses is a distinctive feature of its past, and the present development of recreational facilities meshes well with the history and spirit of the island.

This tradition of diverse land uses provides a foundation for the premises of this master plan. The plan provides for strengthening the residential community at the northern (upper) end of the island while providing opportunities for visitors to explore the perimeter of the island and to experience the river from a mid-stream vantage point.

This master plan for Nicollet Island and the B.F. Nelson site immediately to the northeast was developed by Martin & Pitz Associates, Landscape Research, and Schoell & Madson Engineers with the assistance of local residents and the Technical Advisory Committee appointed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. During the fall and



John Maxwell House
93 Nicollet Street, 1874



winter of 1992 and 1993, the design team and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board staff met with island residents to review project analysis, planning principles, and concept alternatives for circulation, land use, and the design character of improvements to the island. In early March 1993, the final master plan was approved by residents and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board began securing funds to implement Phase I development.



Objectives of the Plan

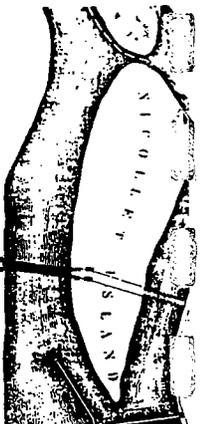
1. Identify and understand the authentic components of the island's character: natural, environmental, historical, and cultural;
2. Provide visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and physical abilities with a variety of recreational and educational opportunities;
3. Reinforce the residential character of the upper island with improvements sensitive to the historic character of the area as well as the daily lives of residents;
4. Improve the image, legibility, and accessibility of the island as a key feature of the river and urban landscape;
5. Preserve and enhance the island's natural landscape character;
6. Recognize and interpret Nicollet Island's important role in the prehistory, settlement, and development of Minneapolis and the region;
7. Provide for the conservation and appropriate rehabilitation of significant historic sites, structures, and buildings.

The 40-acre landform rises approximately 15 feet at its center. In 1853, one observer noted that its slope was "rounded as if by the hand of art which seems to be waiting for a handsome man-sion." The island was then covered with elm and sugar maple, but much of the stand was cut down in the first years of permanent settlement.

The northern tip of the island terminates in a rocky bluff, while the southern tip makes a more gradual descent to the water. Unlike other nearby islands which were reshaped (or completely removed) as waterpower was developed around St. Anthony Falls, the perimeter of the island has remained relatively intact. The natural character of the island is especially evident at the northern tip, where there has been little filling or excavation. The natural caves formed in the underlying limestone and sandstone were used by nineteenth-century brewers for cold storage and later by mushroom growers.

In the early settlement period, the southern half of the island was devoted to agricultural and industrial use, beginning with the establishment of a limestone quarry in the early 1850s. A plant nursery was operated by Rufus P. Upton here in the 1850s. After a series of waterpower and transportation improvements—including the wooden suspension bridge crossing to the west side of the river in 1854 and the construction of the Island Power Building in 1879—the island attracted a variety of industries. Two grist mills, a furniture factory, a stair and box manufacturer, and a boiler works became part of the busy saw and flour mill district gathered near the falls. A fire on August 13, 1893 destroyed a number of industrial buildings on the southern portion of the island and skipped north as far as Boom Island.

The construction of houses on the tract north of Grove Street began in the 1850s. Elegant, expensive residences as well as modest dwellings were built during the next fifty years. The residential



Nicollet Island as shown on the 1856 Map of Minneapolis.

limestone rowhouses and large single-family residences were built below the tracks in the 1870s, while a collection of middle-class and worker's houses were located above the quarries. The National Register of Historic Places nomination for the area notes that between 1867 and 1890, occupations of island residents included a fresco and portrait painter, a confectionery owner, a jeweler, a coachman, and several real estate speculators. John Delaitte, W. W. Eastman, and W.S. King, who built houses between 1873 and 1878, were among the island's most prominent residents.

An early commercial district gathered along Bridge Street (Hennepin Avenue) began with a variety of frame stores and hotels. By the turn of the century, most buildings were replaced by larger ones housing stores and small factories. The entire street was cleared in the 1970s.

Despite the natural river setting, early Nicollet Island residents were surrounded by a noisy industrial scene. Logs and lumber were piled near the sawmills, and the whine of the saws competed with the roar of the falls. By the early 1880s there were 23 mills and other industries along the west side power canal. However, between 1920 and 1940, many west side mills burned or were razed. The last sawmill closed in 1921, and by 1930 the lead in the flour milling industry was taken by Buffalo, N. Y. As industry declined, the river banks again became tree-lined and brush-covered. Under the vegetation remained tailraces, canals, building foundations, and other evidence of the activity of the previous century.

Nicollet Island in 1857, with some of its remaining cover of elm and sugar maple. Swedish visitor Fredrika Bremer wrote in 1853 of her visit to the island: "we drank tea on a considerable island... at a beautiful home, where I saw comforts and civilization, where I heard music, saw books and pictures such like in court, as might be met with on the banks of the Hudson."



Nicollet Island in 1873. From the Panoramic View of Minneapolis. Bridge Street, later E. Hennepin Avenue, supported several generations of stores and shops despite a fire in 1872. Clearance of the avenue began in the 1960s.



The vast lumber regions of Northern Minnesota are directly penetrated by the Mississippi and its numerous tributaries and through these natural and convenient channels millions of the finest pine logs are yearly floated to the falls. Here they are easily and safely returned by the means of booms and the advantages furnished by the somewhat remarkable and certainly very convenient location of Nicollet Island, just above the catwalk.

Daniel Hudson, Summary Statement of the General Interest of Manufacture and Trade Connected with the Upper Mississippi (1862).

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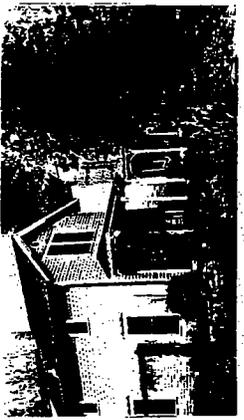
1878 Nicollet Island and the 1878 stone-towered bridge.



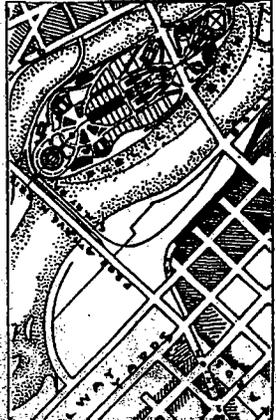
1900: The Colonel William S. King House, on the site of the present DeLaSalle High School.



1900: The island as developed at the turn of the twentieth century.



1996: Nicollet Street one view today.



The Nicollet Island portion of Minneapolis City Beautiful Proposed and Devoted to its Citizens by Jager, Edwards, Straus, Hadden, Architects and Engineers, 1906.

Hennepin Avenue bridge did not call for preservation of remnants of the commercial district remaining on the Island along E. Hennepin Avenue. The area was considered blighted and became the subject of new studies such as one by Barton Ashman Associates in 1964. Their report, "St. Anthony Falls and Nicollet Island: Landmarks at the Continent's Heart," called attention to the historic aspects of the island. Over the next decade, more planning efforts resulted in the dedication of a Bicentennial Park at the southern end of Nicollet Island. The island's housing was also studied in plans such as "Barriada: Rehabilitating the Mississippi River Bank" (1977) which examined the needs of Island residents.

Nicollet Island has attracted the attention of planners for over a century. Since 1905, when the Jager Plan showed an elaborate park scheme, and 1917, when the Plan of Minneapolis by Edward Bennett declared that "the manifest destiny of Nicollet Island is to be a park," the future of public space on the island has been scrutinized many times. However, it has also discussed the potential of the island as a central portion of the Minneapolis downtown area. Large enough to be a neighborhood, it is also large enough to be a park.

The city's 1970s renewal project in Nicollet Island was a response to the persistence of a blighted area. The goal of the project was to restore the island to its original character and to provide a high quality public space for the island's residents.

In 1979, the Park Board received ownership of the Bicentennial Park from the City of Minneapolis. In the following decade, planning and development of the island focused on mixed land uses with an emphasis on recreation and historical interpretation.

The restoration of the twenty-one houses standing at the northern tip of the island, the redevelopment of the former William Bros Boiler Works (1893), and the integration of the river has brought dramatic and positive changes. Daily, many new visitors, residents, and workers enjoy Nicollet Island.

Island. This increased demand placed on public park lands has highlighted the need for a comprehensive master plan. Existing streets on the island are in need of repair. Street furniture and lighting to provide safe and comfortable streets is currently lacking. A system of interpretive signs describing the island's natural and human history as well as overlooks situated at prime viewing points at the river's edge is also desired. Finally, it is important to define the limits of public and private space at the northern tip of the island to allow the public to enjoy the island while ensuring the privacy and security of residents.

A NICOLLET ISLAND TIMELINE

Nicollet Island has been among the most studied features of the Minneapolis riverfront. Fires, urban renewal, and changing land use and demographics have contributed to the fragmented pattern evident on the island today. However, this land use fragmentation and diversity has been a standard feature of the island landscape since its earliest development.

Of the islands which could once be counted between the Falls of Saint Anthony and Boom Island, Nicollet Island retains the greatest degree of landscape integrity. As noted previously, its perimeter outline is quite intact, and the elevation of the land, particularly at the north, is relatively undisturbed. In 1862, an early observer, David Headon, reported that the island then had "... a commanding elevation above the high water mark" and that it was formed "of rock or massive layers of stone ... all being covered to the depth of 3 or 4 feet with a rich and luxuriant soil. A magnificent grove of native trees surmounts all, giving the whole island an appearance of unsurpassed beauty."

Reports of forest cover of sugar maple and elm are substantiated by early photographs. An 1850s photo suggests that a perimeter planning might have been attempted by white settlers, but the pattern of trees could also have been the result of selective cutting.

The streets of E. and W. Island Avenue, Maple Street, Nicollet Street, Grove and Eastman Avenues are part of the Nicollet Island Addition surveyed in 1865 by Franklin Cook. The original intentions of the land developers and the surveyor are visible and the multi-lot grid plan attests to the intended urban character of the area. The railroad tracks which were built across the island in the 1890s determined the character of some nearby parcels but did not deter W. W. Eastman and others from building large and costly houses.

September, 1805
Explorer Zebulon M. Pike spends one night camping on the island.

1821
A sawmill is constructed on the west bank of the river near the Falls to provide lumber for the construction of Fort Snelling.

1837
Treaty with the Dakota cedes east side of the river to the United States.

1838-39
Joseph N. Nicollet explores and maps the area.

1838
Franklin Steele claims 322 acres along the east bank of the Mississippi, including all of Nicollet Island.

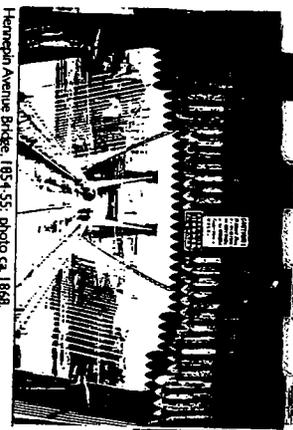
1847
Ferry service is established at the site of the Hennepin Avenue Bridge.

1848
Steele builds a dam across the east channel below Nicollet Island.

1849
John and Ann North move into Franklin Steele's unfinished log house on Nicollet Island. Land speculators file plats of St. Anthony City and the Town of Saint Anthony.

1850
The Norths move to a house on the east bank of the river. They found and relocate to Northfield, Minnesota in 1856.)

Visit of Swedish novelist Frederika Bremer.



Hennepin Avenue bridge. 1854-55; photo ca. 1868.

1854-55
First permanent bridge across the Mississippi is erected between Nicollet Island and the west bank of the river. Construction of the Winslow House on the east bank.

1858
Nicollet Island fourth of July celebration; later described by Frank G. O'Brien in *Minnesota Pioneer Sketches* (1904).

1861
Hercules Dousman acquires Nicollet Island in mortgage foreclosure.

1865
Dousman sells land to William F. Eastman, a lumberman and miller, and John Merriam, a St. Paul broker. Land surveyed for lots by Franklin Cook.

1865-1875
Residential subdivisions on the northern end of the island by Eastman initially attract tradesmen and shopkeepers. First phase of residential development includes modest Greek Revival and Italianate style houses.

1866
Nicollet Island rejected by the City of Minneapolis for proposed use as a park.

Lawsuit between Eastman and Merriam and the St. Anthony Falls Water Power Company to secure water-power rights. Suit settled in 1868 with agreement that Eastman and Merriam could draw enough water from the river to generate 200 horsepower. Permission to

excavate a tunnel between Nicollet and Hennepin Islands also granted.

1869
Eastman begins unsuccessful attempt to dig a lattice tunnel beneath the falls, linking the southern tip of Nicollet Island with Hennepin Island.

1869-1880
Collapse of the tunnel and covering of the falls.

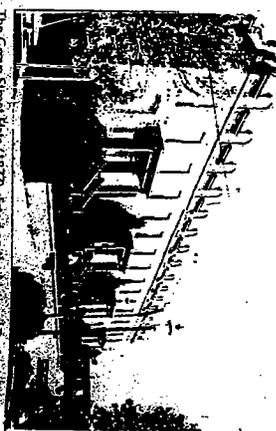
1872
St. Anthony and Minneapolis incorporate as the City of Minneapolis.

1874-78
Horscar service initiated across the Hennepin Avenue bridge and along Hennepin Avenue. Construction of a few large and costly houses on the northern end of the island.

1877
Eastman constructs the first of a series of four-story rowhouses along Eastman Avenue and Grove Street.

1878
Stone towered suspension bridge replaces 1854 bridge.

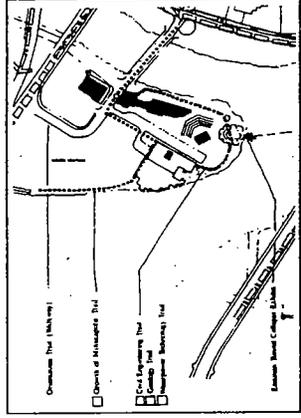
1879
Eastman constructs the Island Power Building on the east channel on Merriam Street. The William Bros Boiler Works, Cedar Lake Ice, and other industrial firms are attracted to the southern tip of the island.



The Grove Street Plaza (1877), listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has a distinctive slate-covered mansard roof.

Only a few years since the beautiful island which divides the Falls of St. Anthony could have been secured by the city of Minneapolis, which overlooks it, for a trifling sum, and would have made a park of a perfectly unique and rarely attractive character, but the opportunity was lost and is now never alluded to but with regret.

H.W.S. Cleveland, Landscape Architecture and Applied to the Wants of the West, 1873

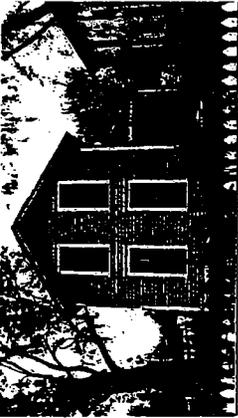


The Saint Anthony Falls Interpretive Plan, 1990.

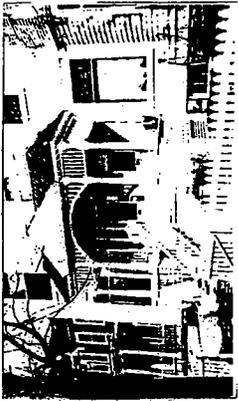
- 1880s Shift to rental housing on the island. Developer Franklin C. Griswold constructs houses on Maple Place and at 107-9 West Island Avenue. First multiple-unit rental dwelling built in 1881 by William Burneth at 111-113 W. Island Avenue. Minneapolis Cold Storage Warehouse constructs buildings along the railroad tracks in 1886.
- 1889-1890 Franklin C. Griswold completes first of two large duplexes on the island at 15-17 Maple Place and 107-109 W. Island Avenue.
- 1890s Last decade of residential development at the island's northern end; Woodward Flats at 187-190 E. Island Avenue among last residential units constructed (1898). Influx of natives of Denmark, Ireland, and Slavic countries, particularly near E. Hennepin Avenue.
- 1891 New steel arch bridgeplaces 1878 stone-bowered Hennepin Avenue suspension bridge.
- 1893 Major fire at Cedar Lake Ice spreads to other factories at the southern tip. Despite rebuilding, industrial development on the island never recovers. William Bros Boiler Works rebuilt shortly after the fire. Island Sash and Door, now the Nicollet Island Inn, was under construction at the time of the fire and was not significantly damaged. Fire also devastates surrounding portions of old St. Anthony.
- 1898 Construction of 4-classroom Nicollet School at 137 W. Island Avenue. Closed in 1918, subsequently used by light industry. Gradual decline of the area as a residential area; outmigration of most "old" families complete.
- 1906 Jaget Straus, Edwin and Halden Plan for redevelopment published in the *Minneapolis Journal*. This first comprehensive plan for island redevelopment shows parks, pavilions, and public baths.
- 1907 Roban Alexander store fixture building (195 E. Island Avenue) constructed.
- 1917 Edward Bennett Plan of Minneapolis declared "the manifest destiny of Nicollet Island is to be a park." The Bennett plan included proposals for an Olympic-sized stadium and a landing field.
- 1920s Expansion of DeLaSalle High School.
- 1930s Demolition of Eastman Avenue rowhouses and other residential structures underway; Grove Street Flats (1877) only surviving example of rowhouses. Island Power Building razed in 1937.
- 1940s and 1950s Conversion of island housing into rental and rooming houses.
- 1957 Chicago consultant Frederick T. Aschman recommends clearance of buildings on the island and future use as a park: "DeLaSalle High School could be left where it is, but the rest of the island could be cleared... a private concessionaire, forbidden to introduce honky-tonk attractions, could make it into a delightful amusement park, unique in America, and equal to the wonderful places in Europe such as Tivoli park in Copenhagen".
- 1959 DeLaSalle expands to prepare for enrollment of 1,500; most of the remaining Eastman Flats are demolished. Nicollet Island steering committee created to plan a national monument at the first bridge crossing of the Mississippi.
- 1961 Hertz constructs a truck storage garage at Nicollet and Grove Streets. Barton Aschman's report for the Downtown Council and the Citizen's Committee for Nicollet Island is called *St. Anthony Falls-Landmarks at the Continent's Heart*. The report focuses on the development of an historic area at the southern tip of the island.
- 1963 Boom Island sold by Chicago Great Western Railroad to Carl Bolander; use changes from railyard to construction material stockpile.
- 1964 Proposed routing of Interstate 335 moves from north of Boom Island to the north tip of Nicollet Island; project later abandoned.
- 1968 Urban Renewal Plan prepared by the Minneapolis Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The Plan calls for removal of blight, and does not discuss the preservation of historic structures except for the Grove Street Flats.
- 1970-71 Demolition of various residential and commercial structures on the island conducted by urban renewal programs. Grove Street Flats designated a National Landmark. Architectural survey of the area completed by the Minnesota Historical Society. Nicollet Island listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1971) as part of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.
- 1972 Clearance of commercial buildings on E. Hennepin Avenue begins.
- Minneapolis Housing and Redevelopment Authority's Nicollet Island East Bank PAC publishes plan recommending restoration of housing on the island.
- 1974 Minneapolis Park Board acquires most of the island.
- 1976 The Riverfront Development Coordination Board is formed as a forum for discussing future development of the riverbanks and the island.
- 1980s *Saint Anthony Falls Rediscovered* (1980), published by the Riverfront Development Coordination Board, catalogues many aspects of the area's past development.
- Development of Riverplace and St. Anthony Main retail complexes; Boom Island redeveloped.
- MCDA and Park Board negotiate a plan for lease agreement; MCDA holds a 99-year lease on 22 parcels and 17 structures on the island.
- Nicollet Island Park at the southern tip of the island is developed using the William Bros Boiler Works as a picnic shelter (1983).
- Nicollet Island Residents, Inc. and Twin Cities Housing Development Corporation formed to restore residences; creation of the Saint Anthony Falls Heritage Board.
- 1985-90 Publication of Scott Anfinson's "Archaeology of the Central Minneapolis Riverfront" in the *Minnesota Archaeologist*.
- 1990 Completion of new Hennepin Avenue Bridge, the fourth bridge at this crossing point. *Saint Anthony Falls Interpretive Plan* prepared by Ellerbe Becket, including recommendations for Nicollet Island.
- 1991 St. Anthony Falls Heritage Trail Master Plan prepared by Martin & Pitz Associates and other consultants.
- 1992-96 Development of master plan proposals for Nicollet Island and the B.F. Nelson site by Martin & Pitz Associates et al. Street improvements begin in 1996.

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The Nicollet Island Residential Area of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District includes twenty-one residential properties at the northern end, five of which have been moved in from other areas in Minneapolis. Archaeological remains of previous residences as well as early industries remain scattered throughout this area. The present houses are irregularly spaced along East and West Island Avenues, Maple, and Nicollet Streets, and are interspersed with unbuilt lots. Historic maps indicate that the area has long been dotted with this open space. An early resident, Mrs. Ella May Griswold Guildford, wrote of a fenced croquet ground on one open lot at the corner of Maple and Nicollet Streets.



George W. Brookins House, 163 Nicollet Street, 1873. This gable-roofed, wood frame house shows the influence of the Greek Revival style on a simple vernacular design. It stands on its original limestone foundation.



The second Franklin Griswold House, 107-109 West Island Avenue. This Queen Anne Style duplex was built in 1890 by a noted builder of multiple-family houses on the island. 15-17 Maple Place and 27 Maple Place are among other properties also built by Griswold.

The Nicollet Island Residential Area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is also locally designated by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission as a historic district. The National Register nomination noted that "the houses present a variety of 19th-century stylistic trends and comprise an unusually coherent collection of domestic housing from the period 1864-1989." Design review for proposed alterations to the properties, including additions, is conducted by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission.



Brick pavers from the turn-of-the-century still line some streets. Ornamental ironwork adds to the character of the area.



A variety of wooden picket fences enhance island residents' distinctive landscape designs.

(For more information about the district, see the St. Anthony Falls Historic District Nicollet Island Residential Area Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1991, on file in the State Historic Preservation Office, Minnesota History Center.)

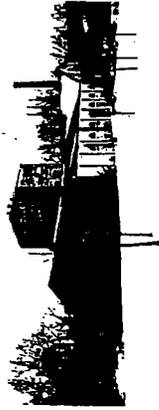
RECREATION & LEISURE

1. Organize recreational experiences to be complementary to the region's landscape and history.
2. Balance recreational facilities with the island's recreational capabilities, and coordinate them with facilities within the larger river regional park.
3. Provide a variety of pedestrian bicycle routes including:
 - Paths around the island edge.
 - Connections to adjacent off-island areas.
 - Separated pedestrian and bicycle paths where possible.
4. Provide boat docking facilities for several types of craft:
 - Tour boats
 - Rowboats and canoes
5. Provide opportunities for unique activities such as croquet, carriage and sleigh rides, picnicking, lawn tennis, and an historic theme playground.
6. Provide opportunities for socialization at gathering points suitably located around the island.
7. Provide a major celebration and gathering point near the existing pavilion.
8. Integrate interpretive sites with recreational facilities:
 - Yearly sugarcrush events.
9. Design recreation facilities which will not conflict with the residential character of the island.
- Minimize impacts on private residences.



DESIGN

1. Recognize the historic pattern of land use in planning new development in the three "zones" (characterized as "upper," "middle," and "lower").
2. Preserve the integrity of the original (1866) street plan of the island.
 - Minimize the introduction of curvilinear elements for public street design.
 - Mark the original street pattern through subtle but distinctive means.
3. Design streets and other public improvements at a scale appropriate to the structures and spaces of the island.
 - Lighting, paving, and curbs should utilize limestone, brick, and other historic materials.
4. Place street trees in appropriate historical alignment and density.
 - Minimize disturbance of the upper island.
 - Protect grades.
 - Leave unbuilt lots open.
6. Provide active recreation space where it complements the historic pattern of land use.
7. Protect, rehabilitate and maintain historic sites and structures according to the Secretary of the Interior's and Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission guidelines.
8. Develop design guidelines for future structures including those adjacent to existing units: garages, studios, etc.



ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY: INTERPRETATION

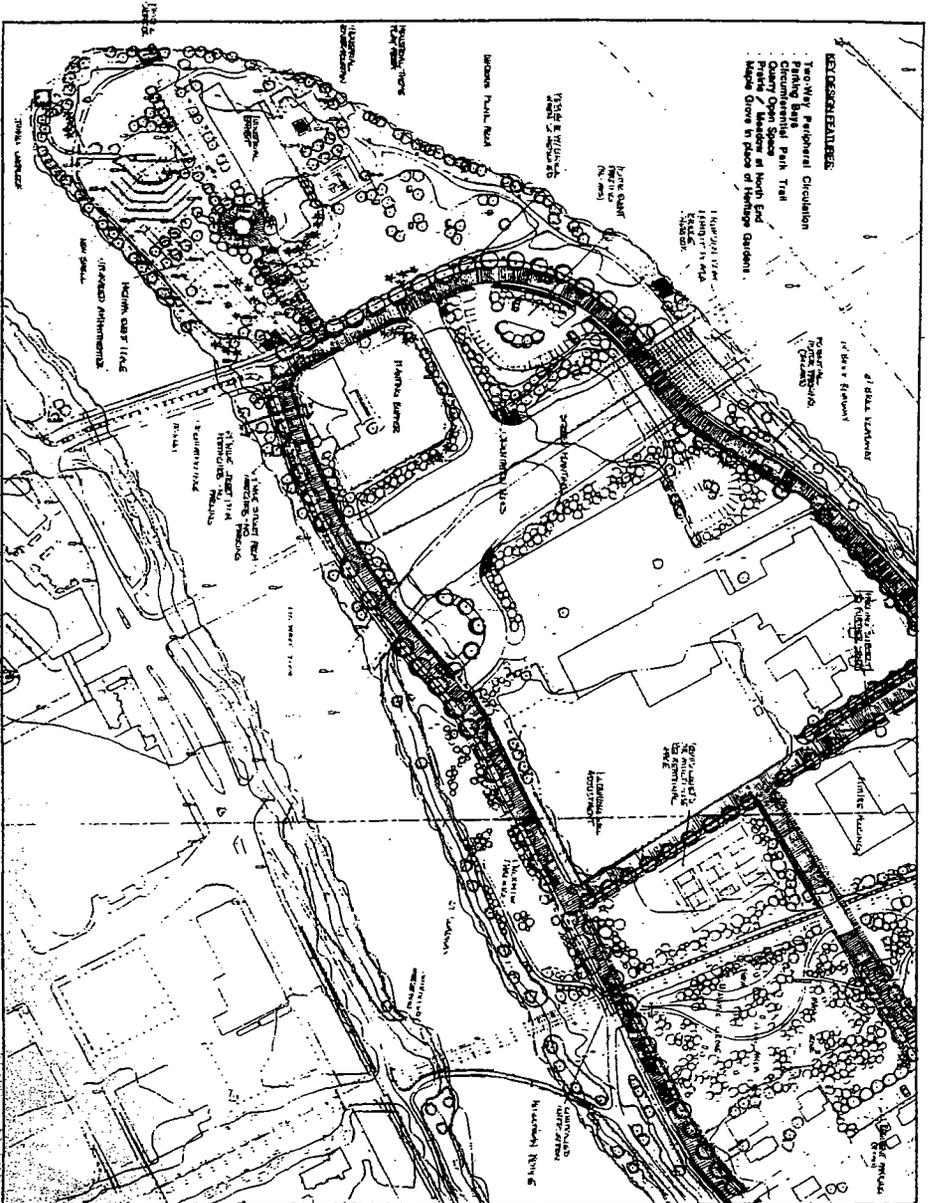
1. Develop a plan for archaeological investigation.
2. Interpret the results of this investigation through exhibits and other media.
3. Develop a plan for interpretation of historic themes including:
 - The role of native peoples in the exploration and settlement of the island.
 - Early agriculture.
 - Early industries including brewing and quarries.
 - Manufacturing on the lower island.
 - Early transportation.
 - The former commercial district along Hennepin Avenue.
 - The relationship of the island to the falls and early waterpower politics.
 - The role of the 1893 fire.
 - The residential community: architecture, institutions, and social life from 1850 to the present (including 4th of July celebrations).
 - Planner's visions for Nicollet Island, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present.



Most of the key features of the south island are already in place but will be refined in the implementation of the master plan. The existing street between the renovated rectory and amphitheatre will become a pedestrian street for most of its length and will be terminated by a dramatic overlook to allow a magnificent view of St. Anthony Falls. Arrival at these facilities will be accommodated with a generous turn-around with parking provided along the access way. Cars displaced by these changes will be accommodated at new landscaped parking areas located both north and south of the Hennepin Avenue bridge along the island parkway.

It is envisioned that the modular paving utilized on the northern end of the island will ultimately be used to pave the roadways on the south end of the island to strengthen continuity. Additional overflow parking will be accommodated in the space immediately east of the De La Salle grounds for use when special island events are planned.

The Grand Rounds Parkway at the river's edge would connect to paths reaching to the northern island and provide access to excursion boats and sites on the west side of the island.



MASTER PLAN
SOUTH ISLAND
 2ND REVISION
 MARCH 1993

NICOLLET ISLAND AREA
 MINNEAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

MARTIN & PRITZ ASSOCIATES, INC.
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
 1000 W. WASHINGTON ST., SUITE 200
 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

SCHOELL & MADSON, INC.
 505 17TH ST. S., SUITE 200
 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH, INC.
 1100 W. WASHINGTON ST.
 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

KEY

- SPACED STREETS
- SPACED DRIVEWAYS
- SPACED SIDEWALKS
- SPACED STREETS
- PARKING LOT
- LANDSCAPED STREETS
- SPACED
- MINNEAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
- EXISTING
- PROPOSED
- EXISTING TREES
- PROPOSED TREES
- PROPOSED
- EXISTING

Three new park areas are among the highlights of the plan for the north island. The open space at the tip will be left predominantly open and planted with meadow grass species to recall the climax forest present within the old prairie edges.

The island's nineteenth-century quarries will be recalled in open space at the west, with blocks of limestone providing informal seating and gathering areas. The third park area, a maple grove, will recall the climax forest present on the island when permanent settlement began.

The grove will provide openings for picnic gatherings. Tennis courts or multi-use recreational space will be located immediately south of the area to accommodate more active uses such as softball games.

A bituminous path system will link these open spaces and tie them into the Grand Rounds path which continues all around the island. This key path unites the island and provides opportunities for views to the river and Boom Island.

Maple street trees and historic lighting will flank the renovated streets. The streets will be composed of modular pavement to recall the brick pavers used on the island in the past.

MASTER PLAN
NORTH ISLAND
2ND REVISION
MARCH 1983

NICOLLET ISLAND AREA

MINNEAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

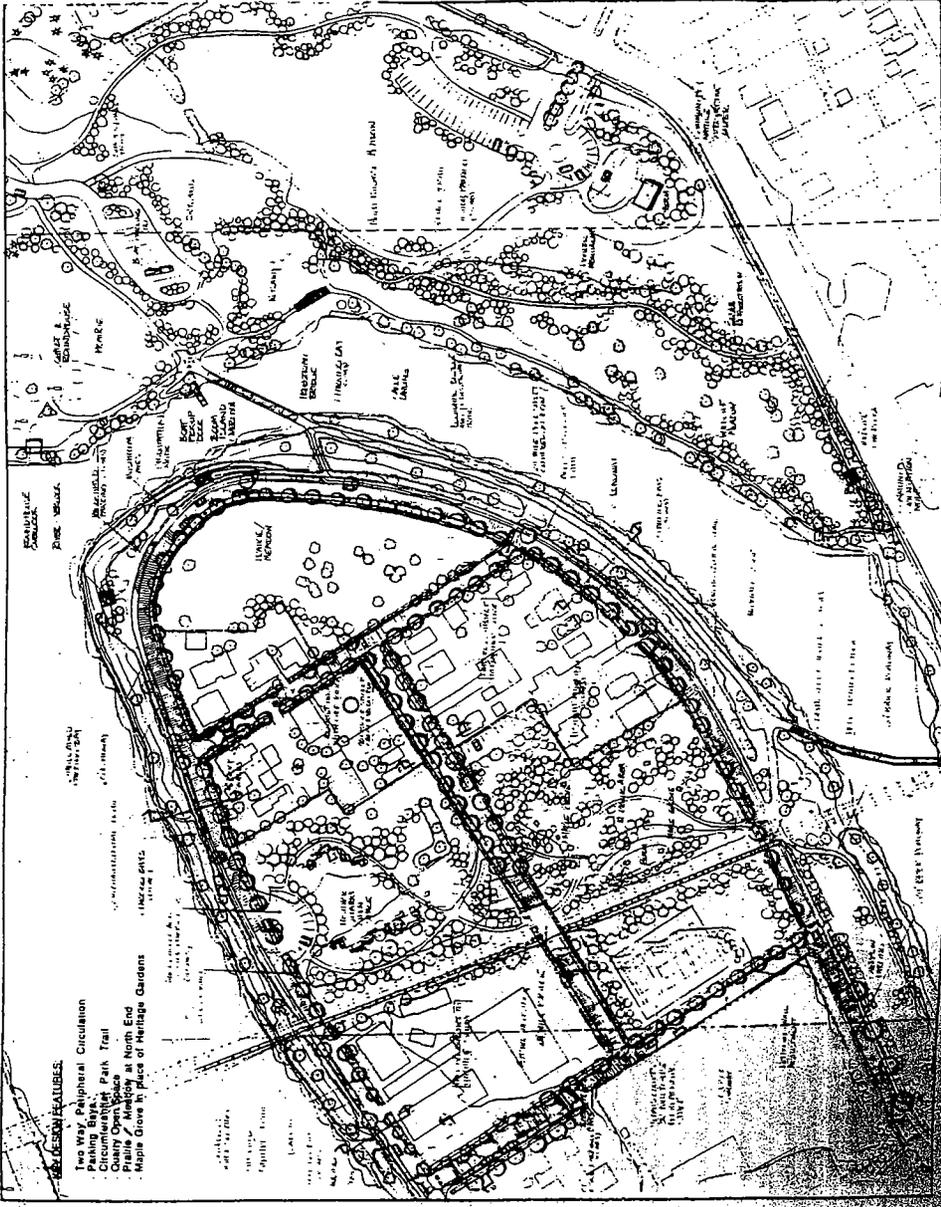
MARTIN & PITZ ASSOCIATES, INC.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, L.P.A. 200 W. WASHINGTON ST. SUITE 1000
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

SCHOELL & MADSON, INC.
ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, PLANNERS
200 W. WASHINGTON ST. SUITE 1000
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH, INC.
111 W. WASHINGTON ST. SUITE 1000
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402

KEY

- BRICK STREETS
- BRICK SIDEWALKS
- IMPROVED STREETS
- PAVED BAY
- UNIMPROVED STREETS
- PROPOSED SIDEWALKS WITH REAL COAT BITUMINOUS WITH REAL COAT
- EXISTING TREES
- PROPOSED TREES
- OPENINGS



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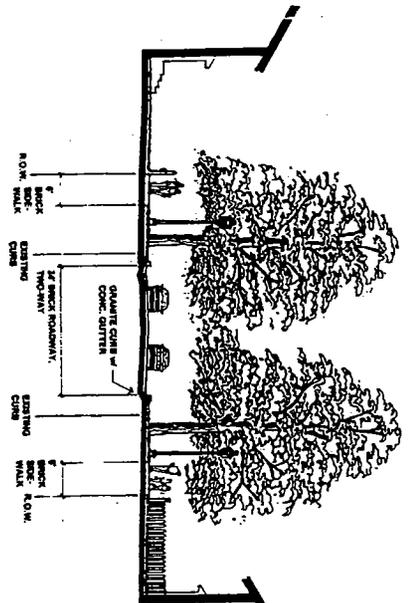
INC 1983

INC 1983

KEY

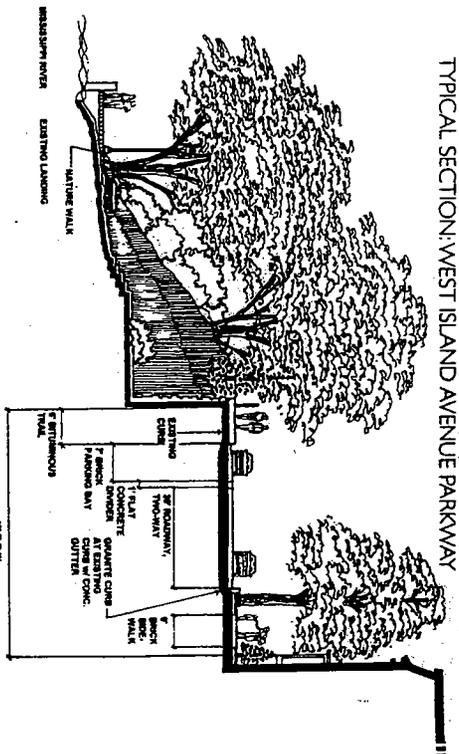
- BRICK STREETS
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- PROPOSED SIDEWALKS WITH REAL COAT BITUMINOUS WITH REAL COAT
- EXISTING TREES
- PROPOSED TREES
- OPENINGS

TYPICAL SECTION: NICOLLET STREET

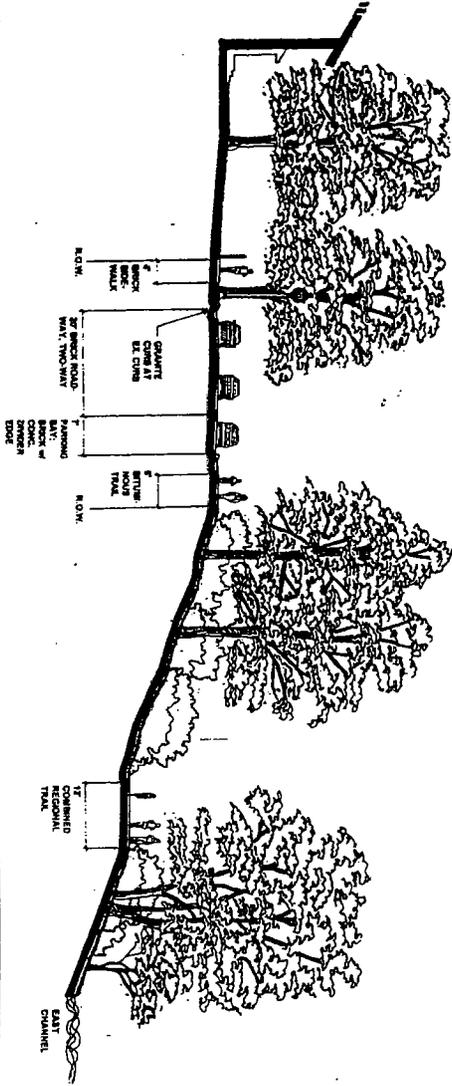


The Nicollet Street section shows the neighborhood scale of the maple-lined streets improved with modular paving and historic lighting.

TYPICAL SECTION: WEST ISLAND AVENUE PARKWAY



TYPICAL SECTION: EAST ISLAND AVENUE PARKWAY

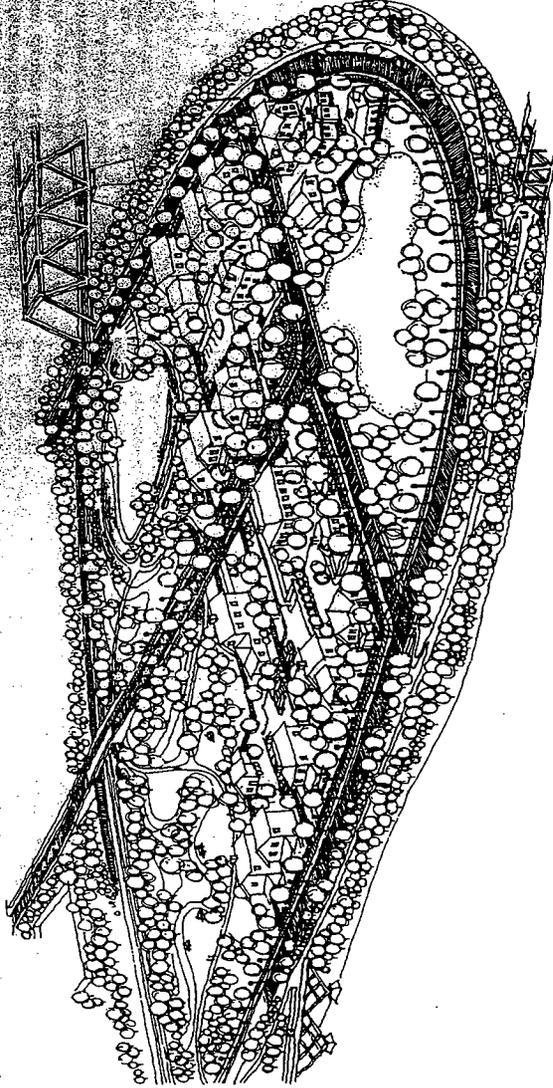
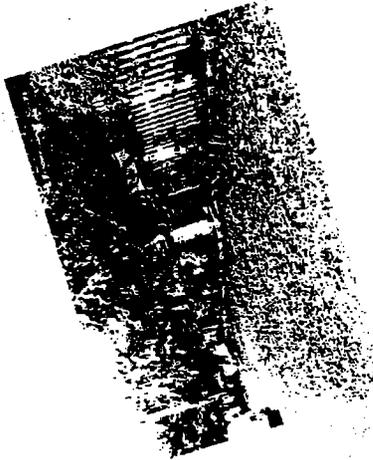


The East Island Avenue Parkway section (left) illustrates the up-graded peripheral 20-foot parkway with 7-foot parking bays and the 6-foot bituminous circumferential trail. In this area available space is most limited. The section also illustrates the 12-foot wide combined bicycle and regional trail on the old rail bed. It links the island to Boom Island and Main Street.

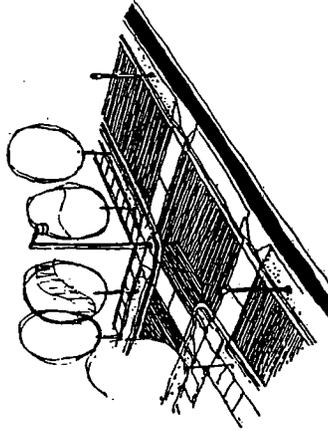
The West Island Avenue Parkway section (above) illustrates the up-graded peripheral 20-foot parkway with a 7-foot parking bay and 6-foot circumferential trail. This is located in an area of the north island on the west side where space is most limited. The existing landing near the Grove Street flats is to be maintained and a maple-lined boulevard is maintained as well.

THE NORTH ISLAND

The Nicollet Island Master Plan links the historic residential area at the northern end with the recreational area at the southern end. The primary connection is a "Grand Rounds" parkway with pedestrian and bicycle paths.



RECOMMENDED STREET TREATMENT



Street: Modular
Residential Walk: Concrete,
Circumferential Path: Bituminous
Crosswalks: Concrete

16. / THE B. F. NELSON SITE / Design and Planning Principles

A succession of nineteenth-century paper and saw mills once operated in the area most recently known as the B. F. Nelson site. Now cleared of its former industrial uses, this site will be an important element of the Central Riverfront Park. The public park will take advantage of a unique lower wildlife area adjacent to the east river channel, and provide a variety of walkways and viewing areas adjacent to the river. The upper plateau will provide multi-purpose activity spaces as well as parking for special events.

Planning Goals and Objectives

1. Identify and understand the authentic components of the site's character: natural, environmental, historic, and cultural;
2. Provide visitors of all ages, backgrounds, and physical abilities with a variety of recreational and educational opportunities;
3. In new design, maximize all aspects of the natural river setting;
4. In new design, reinforce the physical and historic relationship of the site to the river corridor, particularly Nicollet and Boom Islands;
5. Provide recreational opportunities as well as appropriate visual and acoustical buffering where necessary.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & URBAN SETTING

1. Preserve and enhance significant vistas of the site to and from Nicollet Island, the East Channel, and other points.
2. Reinforce the character of the upper plateau and the lower zone of the site.
3. Develop uses for the upper plateau which will minimize impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods to the north and east.
4. Provide buffer areas to separate the public park from the residential area.
5. Allow visitors to explore the water's edge where possible under safe conditions.
6. Minimize human impact on undeveloped river edges.
 - Use natural materials to stop shoreline erosion.
7. Provide for interpretation of geological and natural history.
8. Provide opportunities to experience wildlife and the natural character of the river's east channel from the lower zone.

RECREATION & LEISURE

1. Provide multiple-use recreation areas on the upper plateau.
2. Provide canoe and rowboat access areas to the east channel of the river.
3. Provide appropriately designed paths along the river's edge with overlooks.
4. Provide opportunities for:
 - Bird watching
 - Bank fishing
 - Wildlife observation
 - Photography and sketching
5. Provide opportunities for river viewing at suitably located gathering points.

CIRCULATION & ACCESS

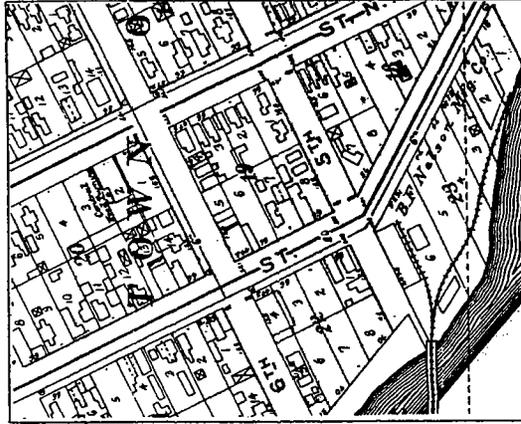
1. Provide parking on the upper plateau.
2. Provide appropriate signage to direct visitors around the site, to Nicollet Island, and to other points in the area.
3. Provide access connections to adjacent neighborhoods and other related regional park areas.

DESIGN

1. Introduce features which are appropriate to the natural and historic character of the area.
2. Provide active recreation space which complements the natural character of the site.
 - Protect grades
3. Develop design guidelines for future recreation structures including rest facilities.

ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY: INTERPRETATION

1. Interpret the history of the adjacent neighborhood and early industry of the site, including:
 - The old Saint Anthony community
 - Paper mills and saw mills
 - The B.F. Nelson Company
2. Protect significant archaeological features from harm from new construction.



The B. F. Nelson site in 1914.



A winter view of the lower portion of the B.F. Nelson site from the east channel of the river.

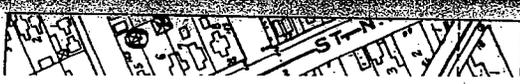
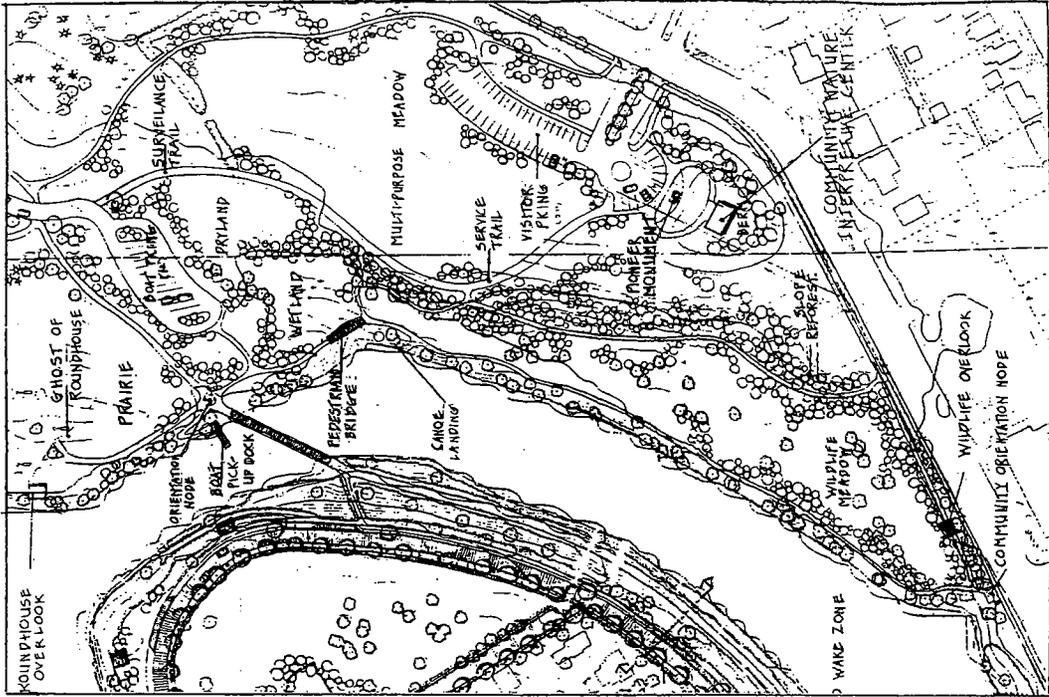


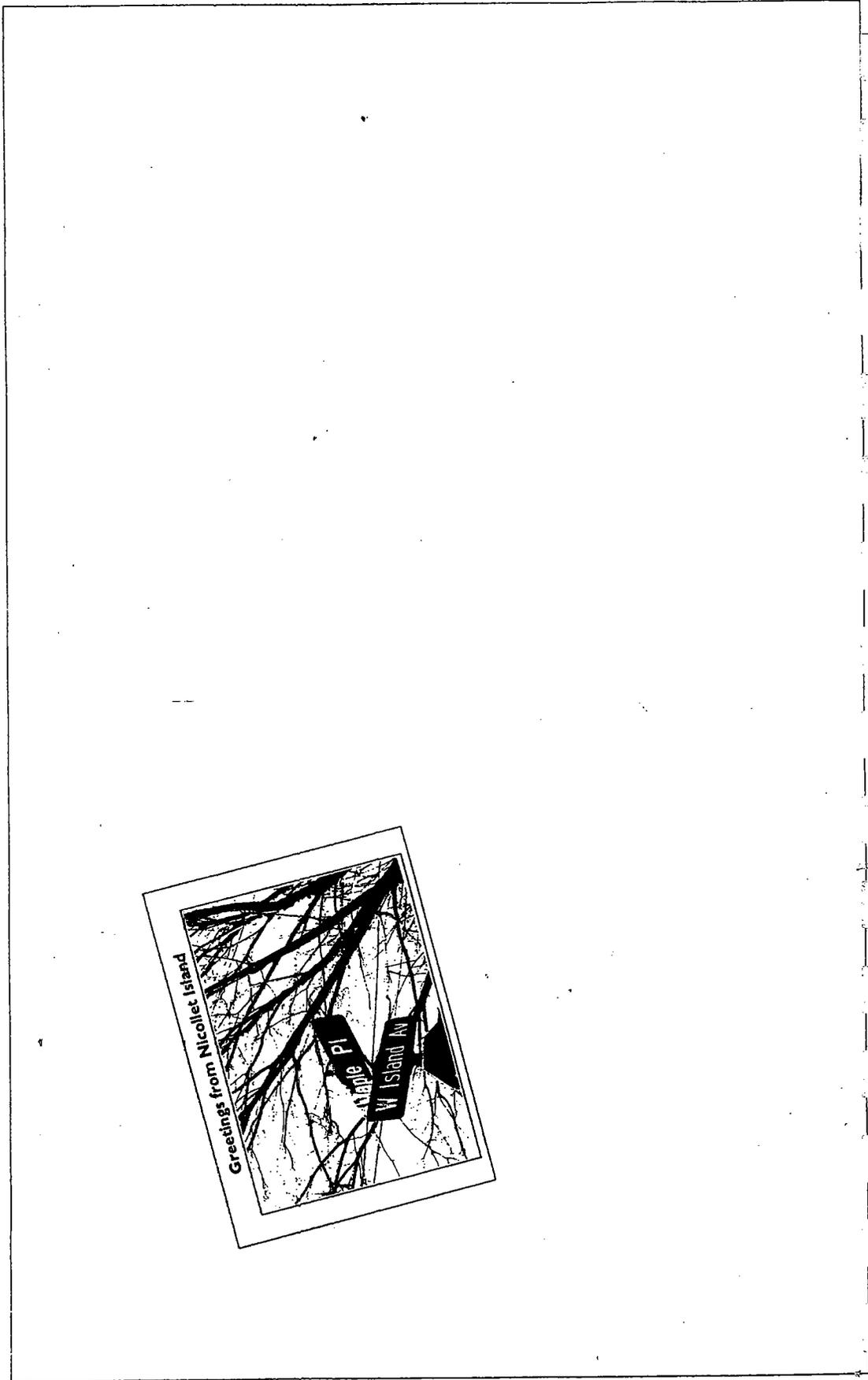
Due to the dramatic topographic features of this site, the area is developed in two zones. The lower zone, with water level access, provides a unique opportunity to experience the river close up with a feeling of 'wildness' in the midst of the city. This area is developed with native plantings to encourage wildlife. Peripheral paths encourage visitor's exploration of the wildlife meadow and the river's edge. In an area which was the original eastern edge of Boom Island, these paths converge at a small bridge. From the bridge there are views of natural areas which developed as a reconstituted marsh wetland and intermittent dry wetland.

The upper area is developed for multi-use active recreation with large open turf areas. A community nature center for interpreting the wildlife within the area is also shown. Several parking areas are provided. These facilities are located within the old Marshall Avenue corridor to minimize disturbance of the site.



The bridge connection between Nicollet Island and the B.F. Nelson site.





From: Orange, Michael
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2005 3:08 PM
To: 'Cronin, Michael'; 'Galatz, Eric'; Farrar, Rebecca D.
Subject: FW: Nicollet Island EAW

Michael Orange, Principal Planner
City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development
350 S. 5th St, Room 210 City Hall
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385
Phone: 612-673-2347
Fax: 612-673-2728
TTY: 612-673-2157
Email: michael.orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Johann Willcütt [mailto:pjwillcutt@mn.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 4:16 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: FW: Nicollet Island EAW

I am forwarding for Mr Gary Johnson, of the U of MN -----Original Message-----

From: Gary R. Johnson [mailto:grjonson@umn.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, 23 November, 2005 11:25
To: peat@pipapeat.com
Subject: Nicollet Island

Dear Peter,

You asked for my opinion regarding our brownfield tree performance study on Nicollet Island, especially as it relates to the potential loss of trees due to the high school's proposed expansion.

When we set this up, it was a 3 year contract/agreement with MPRB. That officially ended in 2003. The two years since then have been frosting on the cake and we realized that although we had no right to request an extension of the contract, we certainly would take advantage of it.

We have gained a lot of information on tree performance via this study and would love to see it continue, but we also know that things end for various reasons. If the trees are removed or relocated according to the high school's expansion plan, the research value of the area will effectively end. Such is life.

Our contract and very limited funding for this study ended in 2003. Since then, I've funded the continued work from my own research lab. So, if the research ends now it won't mean that I will have lost any funds. I'll only have lost expenses and good data.

Regards,

Gary

From: Phyllis Kahn [rep.phyllis.kahn@house.mn]
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2005 10:21 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: EAW for DeLaSalle Football and Soccer Stadiums, Nicollet Island,
Minneapolis

November 21, 2005

TO: Michael Orange, Principal Planner, Minneapolis

FR: Phyllis Kahn, State Representative 59B, 115 W. Island Ave.
Minneapolis, 55401

RE: EAW for DeLaSalle Football and Soccer Stadiums, Nicollet Island,
Minneapolis

Please accept the following comments to the draft EAW. Part will be general comments on the project, followed by specific references to items in the draft EAW.

Most critically, I believe it is necessary to proceed to an EIS. The most important difference between an EAW and an EIS is the requirement to examine alternatives in an EIS. In all of the testimony before the MPRB and the CAC, DeLaSalle representatives have clearly indicated that they will not consider alternatives until this plan is rejected.

Performing an EIS would be an appropriate compromise rather than the extreme confrontation that starting with total rejection would entail.

The proposed stadium is incompatible with both the needs of the children of the city of Minneapolis and with the recreation needs of the census tract it is located in and surrounding census tracts. Two maps are attached, one showing the percentage 17 and under and one showing the population of those 17 and under. The maps are shaded according to each there population and percentage of population.

In addition, if appropriate usage is to be considered in an EAW, the young adults moving into the neighborhoods on both sides of the river are likely to be high users of the tennis courts once they find out about them. (Note: Is their existence as public courts noted in any MPRB publication or website?)

It is also inconsistent with metropolitan regional park principles that preclude sites for active recreation. It should be noted that the construction of the tennis courts, which were a dubious proposal under these standards, were never presented for Metropolitan Council or Metropolitan Parks and Open Space approval.

It is also inconsistent with historic preservation principles.

It has been noted by some project proponents that the houses are an inappropriate use of a metropolitan regional park. This issue was thoroughly vetted at the time of the designation and purchase of the parkland. History has proved that the houses add to the safety, attraction and ambience of the area. This can be attested to by the horse drawn carriage, pedestrian tours and Segway operators that take routes emphasizing the streets with houses.

Specific comments on the EAW.

It is particularly inappropriate to further institutionalize parking in such a small piece of green space in the center of the city. The EAW consistently calls Parcel C a gravel-surfaced parking lot (p. 4, 5, 16, 19). The area in question is not covered with gravel; it is only an unimproved surface with some soil, grass and even asphalt remnants. The proper treatment should be to restore it to an appropriately vegetated site, even if it may be necessary to rarely have it available for overflow parking.

Page 5d and Page 26. The statement saying there are no future stages of this development is inaccurate. The 1983 agreement (p. 7) allegedly promised DeLaSalle a football field and tennis courts. This proposal removes the tennis courts, leaving their future location subject to future demands.

Page 9-11. Agreeing that there are not likely to be endangered species present, doesn't excuse not cataloguing the wildlife on the hill, scheduled to become a field. Small spaces for wildlife and bird refuge are more significant in the center of a city.

Page 16. The comparison of the traffic changes to the capacity of a two lane resident street is inappropriate. Few two lane residential streets have the numbers of walkers, bicyclists, horse drawn carriages, and Segway tours that complicate traffic in this area.

Page 19. Vacation of Grove Street. Rather than conjecture that the movement of traffic circulating through the high school parking lot or along West Island Avenue will be more convenient than going north into the neighborhood on Nicollet Island, a trial closure and measurement should be done.

From the map on page 17, rather than circulating through the parking lot, the "unvacation" of Eastman Street should be considered. (Is there a record of the process and thoughts behind the vacation of Eastman Street?)

Page 22. The tables on pages 21 and 22 seem inconsistent with the comments on the lack of a noise problem and the contours in Attachment E. In addition, the statement on page 22 that the "MPCA position on crowd noise from sporting events is that it is unregulated. Therefore crowd noise is not likely to exceed any currently established limits on sound level." is the equivalent of an oxymoron. It specifically does not say that the noise will not affect the ambience of a passive recreation site.

Page 25. The lack of impact on Grove Street flats is clearly misrepresented. The obvious consequences of closing East Grove Street is to double the traffic on West Grove Street to the Nicollet Ave Bridge and accessing the school facilities on Grove Street.

Page 26. Impact on the railroad. Obviously there is no change in the historic route, but the person in charge of rail safety issues at MNDOT has not been contacted (for the draft EAW). Those comments would be essential for the final EAW and the EIS.

Page 27. The 1996 Master plan is referenced. It should be understood that DeLaSalle participated fully in that process, never saying that it needed another football field, didn't need tennis courts and would ask to vacate a newly paved street.

Page 28. Comprehensive Management Plan for MNRRA (MS 116G.15 and MS 116G.151) Describing the six purposes of the recreation area we read in part:

2. Enhance opportunities for public outdoor recreation, education and scenic enjoyment.

MN Statute 86A.03 subd 3 defines outdoor recreation, excluding team athletic activities, as follows:

Subd. 3. Outdoor recreation. "Outdoor recreation" means any voluntary activity, including hunting, fishing, trapping, boating, hiking, camping, and engaging in winter sports, which is conducted primarily for the purposes of pleasure, rest, or relaxation and is dependent upon or derives its principal benefit from natural surroundings; "outdoor recreation" shall also mean any demonstration, structure, exhibit, or activity which is primarily intended to preserve, demonstrate, or explain a significant aspect of the natural and cultural history, and archaeology of Minnesota.

Specifically, an athletic field does not fit into a concept of outdoor river related recreation.

Page 29. Policy 9:15 of the Minneapolis comprehensive plan requires "appropriate physical transition" separation and buffering between residential and non-residential areas.

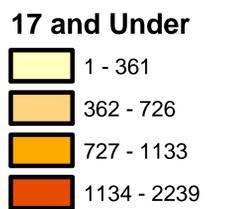
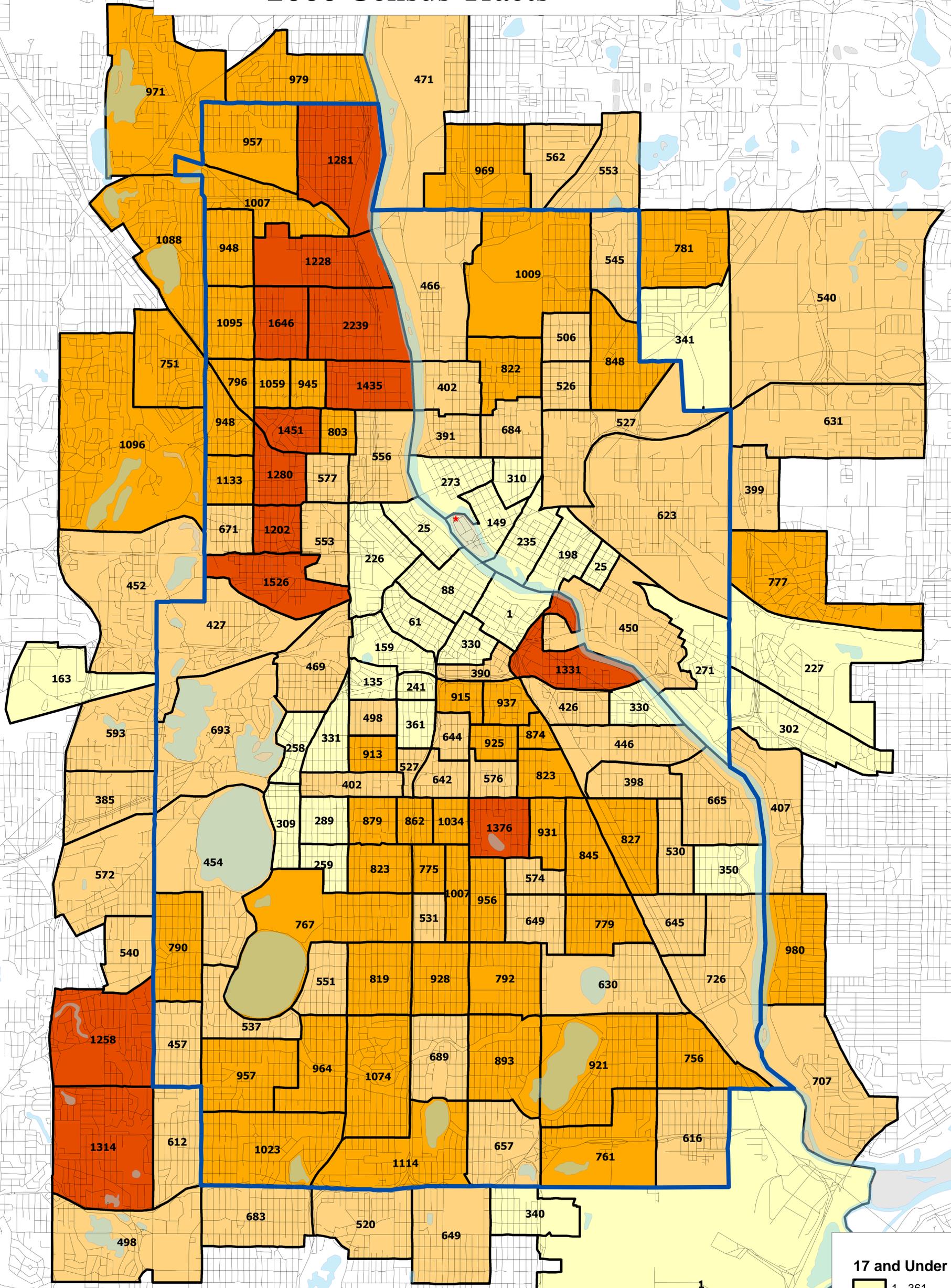
Grove Street is the appropriate transition and buffer and this proposal by crossing Grove Street violates that. (See page 31 also.)

Page 30. Clear violation of policy 9.21.

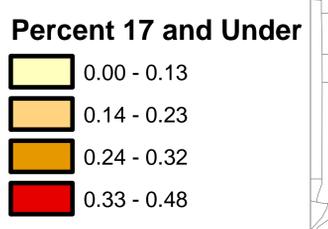
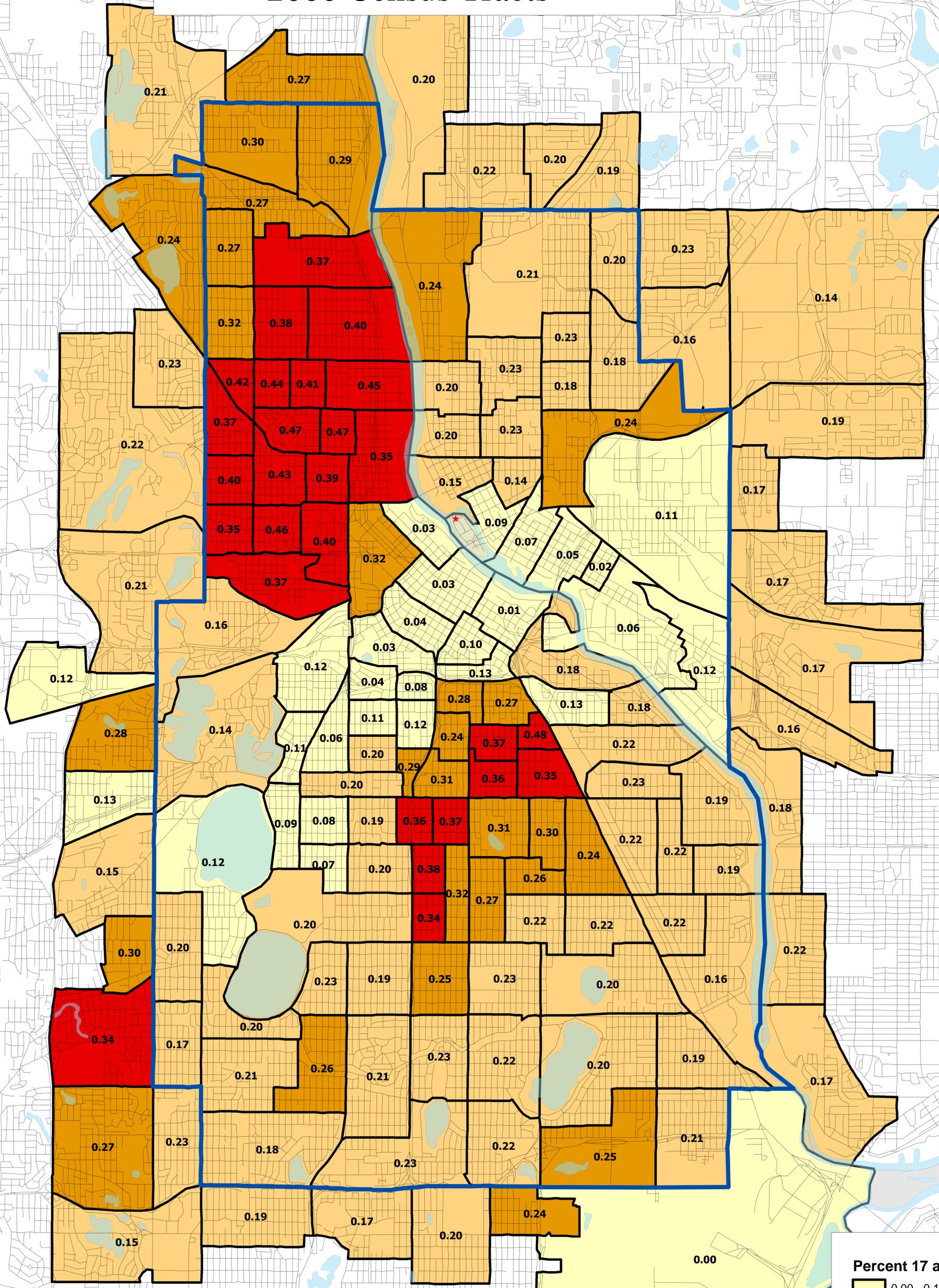
Page 33. #29. Cumulative impacts have not been appropriately considered. Isolating the noise from an event is not an appropriate use of the word. Impacts must not be isolated but considered on top of other impacts. I have already listed the non-consideration of the tennis court relocation as another neglected cumulative impact.

Thank you in advance for addressing these issues.

2000 Census Tracts



2000 Census Tracts



November 15, 2005

From: Christine Larsen
2823 West 40th Street
Minneapolis Minnesota 55410

To: J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning & Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385

Re: Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange:

This letter relates to the draft EAW for the proposed athletic facility development project on Nicollet Island within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District in Minneapolis.

As a Minneapolis resident and taxpayer, I am strongly urge you to support an Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate alternatives for use of the Nicollet Island land and alternative locations for the athletic facility.

Many of us are dedicated to preserving Nicollet Island in its present state due to its ecological and historical significance. The existence of Nicollet Island is one of the reasons we choose to live in the city of Minneapolis. Surely there are other areas that can accommodate an athletic complex without the degradation of one of the city's treasured areas.

Best regards,

Christine Larsen

From: Judith Martin [jmartin@umn.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 2:50 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: DeLaSalle EAW
Hi Michael,

I thought it might be useful to formally submit the questions I posed at COW a few weeks ago. Sorry that I could not make the island meeting.

I've seen the comments submitted by Jan Hively and Phyllis Kahn, and substantially agree with the issues raised in those.

My specifics:

Regarding the negative response to item "e" (p.5): this project is a subsequent stage of an earlier project - the 1984 easement of Grove Street and expansion of the field to a regulation size.

Regarding the table on p.9 that notes an increase in landscaping --that can only result from closing Grove Street -- DLS isn't adding anything to the landscaping.

Regarding the depth to bedrock (p.13) -- everywhere else on Grove Street it's 12-18 inches.

Regarding the traffic section:

1) all of the discussion of peak hour traffic only takes into account the DLS traffic. Given that football is on Friday nights when there is almost always an even at the Pavilion, the peak hour traffic analysis needs to consider wedding and event parking needs which often fill up the available space in the unimproved lot on East Island -- and the Nic Is Inn also uses that space for valet parking.

2) it's disingenuous to describe Grove Street or any other street on the island as a normal two lane residential street. None of the streets have bike paths (this is a regional park) and some lack sidewalks on one or both sides (Grove Street is an example of this). In all of the planning that went on in the 1980s and 1990s, it was explicitly stated that island streets were to be considered both street and bike lanes, so the vehicles estimation need to consider more than just car capacity. And because there are no bike lanes and few sidewalks, the movement pattern is anything but regular -- people walk in the streets, along with bikes and cars and Segways -- not a regular residential street arrangement at all.

3) The parking analysis says that striping the lot will get DLS to 253 off-street parking spaces -- a mere 22 beyond what currently exists. On regular basketball nights at DLS, people park all over, including in illegal spaces. It's impossible to imagine that an additional 22 spots are going to alleviate this problem (which by the way gets no enforcement at all by Pk Bd police).

A final observation: I remember when the vacation of Eastman Ave came before the CPC -- approving this gave DLS something of a "campus". Since they are now expecting half of Grove Street to become theirs as well, it seems reasonable to me to reverse the vacation of Eastman. There are only 3 streets which cross the island -- it's not good public policy to give 1.5 of these to DLS. If they're going to get Grove Street and inconvenience all of the residents and the public, Eastman should return to public use.

I could write much more, but my neighbors have been diligent, and there's no reason to be repetitive.

Thank you,

Judith

--

Judith A. Martin
Morse-Alumni Professor & Director 348 Social Sciences,
Urban Studies University of Minnesota
jmartin@umn.edu Minneapolis, MN. 55455
Phone: 612-626-1626
Fax: 612-624-1044

From: clareyse nelson [nelso318@umn.edu]

Sent: Monday, November 21, 2005 1:15 PM

To: Orange, Michael

Subject: [Fwd: nicollet island]

----- Original Message -----

Subject: nicollet island

Date: Mon, 21 Nov 2005 13:00:55 -0600

From: clareyse nelson <nelso318@umn.edu>

To: Michael.Orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

I support the comments by Jan Hively and will add my own as well. I am opposed to the proposed siting of a sports stadium on Nicollet Island for the following additional reasons.

I am an avid birdwatcher and, as such, not only appreciate birding on the island both during migration and during the year but also know that the Mississippi River is an important migration corridor as well as habitat for many of our songbirds and resident species such as woodpeckers, cardinals etc. The added noise, lights, people movement and structures will endanger this priceless inner city nature resource.

Also, as a bicyclist, I know many fellow bicyclists find the island a relatively safe and beautiful place to bicycle with few cars and access to all sides of the island. Restricting the road and pathway will lessen this value for many more people than will use the DeLasalle facility.

Please take these concerns into consideration when making decisions for our neighborhood, our city and the future when natural areas will be fewer and fewer so near to this densely populated area.

Thank you. Clareyse Nelson. 601 Adams St. NE Minneapolis, Mn 55413. 612-623-3009.

Public Comment on DeLaSalle Football Field EAW

November 17, 2005

Judith Richardson

163 Nicollet Street

Minneapolis MN 55401

612-379-3384

e-mail: jbrjvc@aol.com

TO: Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division

My comments relate to parking and emergency access on the Island.

Parking problems on the island have not been thoroughly studied. No study of the traffic generated during a basketball game at DeLaSalle has been done. (1100 fans and their cars and buses). The RGU should do an onsite count on the evening of a basketball game, document where vehicles park, count how many vehicles are illegally parked, how many intersections are clogged with vehicles, complicating emergency vehicle access to the mid and North sections of the Island. This information should be used to determine the effect of closing half of Grove Street. Using the estimated number of cars expected for a football game, it can be determined if there will still be problems accommodating the number of cars on the Island during a football game. The Island, surrounded by water, cannot absorb an unlimited number of cars legally. Cars cannot spread out into nearby neighborhoods when the legal parking available on the Island is "full". We have photographs documenting illegal parking on the Island during a large event at DeLaSalle. We have pictures of cars parked in intersections, on both sides of the street, and on both sides of DeLaSalle's fire lane in front of the school. Nothing in the EAW considers these real-life situations.

Nothing has been said about the Park Board Police policy which requires closing off access to the Island to all vehicles at both East and West Island Avenues on the South end during large events in the area, such as fireworks displays or the Stone Arch Art Festival. Past experience has shown the danger of allowing unlimited public parking on the Island in these situations, which is why the Park Board Police go to the trouble of banning parking on the Island altogether for large events. It is a fact that emergency access is compromised, and vehicles park illegally on park land during these events. We know that the Park Board Police do enforce closing the Island to all vehicles for large events. Residents must show a driver's license to obtain access to their homes.

Does a DeLaSalle football game, basketball game, or parents' night qualify as a "large event" requiring Park Police to close East and West Island Avenue access? What is the policy for closing off access? Are the number of spaces for parking on the Island really adequate for the needs of these athletic events? If the athletic field is built will there then be an outcry for more parking, requiring more open space to be paved over for parking? Will users of the Central Riverfront Regional Park be constantly trying to defend this small Island from the forces of development and privatization? Once the land for the

athletic fields, the riverbank parking area, and the vacated street are turned over to a private school, what is to stop DeLaSalle from using this as a precedent to ask for ever more land for their campus and their use? What will be the tipping point that will turn the Island into just another sports venue, with its attendant parking, heavy traffic, pole lighting, press box and public address system, and not the rural respite from city life that is expected in a Regional Park in the center of a Metropolitan area?

To the problem of limited parking, you can add the possibility of a slow, mile and a half long coal train crossing the Island, blocking the crossings at East and West Island Avenues for anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes if the train keeps moving, up to an hour or more if it has stopped for some reason. With half of the access to the rail overpass on Nicollet Street closed, you have a situation guaranteed to produce more than a few irate and frustrated motorists. There are up to 50 trains per 24 hour period crossing this mainline railroad track. There will be more traffic, at higher speed, when the North Star line is up and running on the same tracks. This has not been considered in the EAW. It should be.

Proposed Riverbank Parking Lot across from the field: This lot has variously been described as asphalt or porous pavers accommodating 82 cars. Park Board President John Olson, during a visit to the Island, told neighbors that the current sand and gravel lot should not be used as parking because anything leaking from the cars and buses goes directly into the river. This is not legal. It seems to me that a parking lot of any kind directly on the Mississippi River bank should certainly be illegal, especially in the Central Riverfront Regional Park. Would a porous surface similarly have the problem of directing any leaks from cars into the river? And how would a paved lot handle run off into the river?

The 1996 Nicollet Island Master Plan called for a bike and pedestrian trail from Boom Island, along the East River Bank to the pavilion and the Main Street trail. With an 82 space parking lot on this piece of property, a trail would be impossible. All visitors, whether pedestrian, wheelchair, bike, truck, school bus, city bus, or car, are now pushed together into the street because there is no trail and no sidewalk on either side of the street in the section between Grove Street and DeLaSalle Drive.

Fire and Police Access to the North Tip of Nicollet Island:

When Island residents were first informed of the proposed closing of half of Grove Street in early December of 2004, we contacted the Minneapolis Fire Department for information about fire access. According to Fire Chief Bonnie Bleskachek, DeLaSalle had already discussed the proposed vacation of Grove Street with her and she told them she had “no problem” with it. She told me that “the paper work hasn’t come through yet” (the vacation request), but that a fire inspector had looked at the situation and that response times would not be affected by the closing of East Grove Street. I talked to the Inspector Doug Hordyk later and was told that he had never looked at Grove Street, and

that nothing would be done officially until a request for the vacation had come through. Residents who are directly affected by this closing have never been contacted by the fire department. And there has been no official study concerning this vacation and the effect on emergency access to the North tip. There are many thousands of visitors to the Island, enjoying the views of the river, the open fields of wildflowers and grasses, and the historic houses. They come on foot, bicycles, Segway, horse carriage, wheelchairs, strollers and cars. They deserve the most expeditious help available for medical and life safety emergencies.

According to Chief Bleskachec, all fire vehicles are now directed to access the Island from West Island Avenue only and never to go down East Island Avenue because of the possibility that the East Island crossing may be blocked by a train. Without access to the Nicollet Street overpass by way of East Grove Street, it would be impossible for a fire truck to turn around. But, now, with East Grove Street open, the most direct and quickest access to the North tip is from East Island Avenue, whether there is a train or not. To NOW require fire trucks to use only West Island Avenue makes no sense and wastes precious time if there is a medical or fire emergency.

How can we trust that the safety of Nicollet Island visitors, residents and the historic houses are being taken into account when the fire chief has already made her decision based only on a request from the proposer and no input from the residents or the state fire marshal? To make this decision based on politics and not an actual study, using the state fire code, is unreasonable. Have police and ambulance services been notified of the possibility of closing East Grove Street, and their input sought?

I would like to request that this project proceed to an EIS to do the further study that this project clearly requires.

Thank you,

Judith Richardson

Robert Roscoe / Design for Preservation

1401 East River Parkway, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414 612.317.0989 broscoc@earthlink.net

July 25, 2005

Marie Hauser
Minneapolis Park Board Commissioner
Minneapolis Park Board
2117 West River Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Dear Marie:

I am writing this letter to request that the DeLaSalle athletic field expansion on Nicollet Island not be constructed. As you know, Nicollet Island is a historic property as part of the Saint Anthony Falls Historic District. In general, the athletic field as proposed is incompatible with the landscape and structures on the island, especially the athletic fields' size, its required closing of Grove Street, the large obtrusive retaining wall, the distorted rise of topography, and the highly visible lighting fixtures that will greatly disturb the quiet character of the river environment.

Grove Street was platted in 1866, in the earliest beginnings of island settlement by western expansion of the United States. The ability of people walking about the island to comprehend the built and natural environment at eye level has always been a special quality of the island and forms an inherent aspect of the Nicollet Island's historical character.

The Minneapolis Park Board has always been a wise and careful steward of its properties that form an integral part of the city's heritage, but this proposal would be an unfortunate departure from the Park Board's long-standing service to maintain its cultural resources. Please re-consider your support for this enlargement that would be so out of scale and out of character with the special place Nicollet Island has been to the people of Minneapolis, the region and our state.

Sincerely,



Robert Roscoe

front of the Grove Street Flats and by eliminating the standard method of approaching the north tip of Nicollet Island when trains are present.

Grove Street is one of two principal east-west streets laid out on the original plat of Nicollet Island surveyed in 1865. Installing a large-scale athletic facility in the small space of Nicollet Island will significantly alter the look and feel of this historic district. The existing collection of houses in the district represents both the spatial arrangement and style of the 19th century. The original street layout, including the brick street layout of East Grove Street, is a significant element of the historic district. See enclosed 1885 Hopkins plate and 1892 Foote Atlas plate #3. I am enclosing comments of a prominent local historic preservationist and architect, Robert Roscoe, further describing the impacts of the proposed development project. Because the street layout is part and parcel of the Grove Street Flats and Nicollet Island Residential Area, it is incorrect to conclude that closing East Grove Street has no impact on these historic resources.

Section 29 – Cumulative Impacts

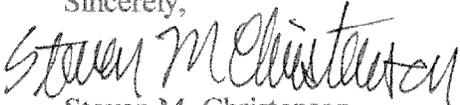
If reconstruction of the tennis court area is deferred to a later phase, the impacts of that project phase should be evaluated.

Conclusion

The draft EAW concludes that closing East Grove Street will have an adverse impact on the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Given this conclusion, the City of Minneapolis Zoning and Planning Committee should require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider alternatives to the proposed project and to consider methods of reducing adverse historic resource and environmental effects.

Before proceeding to an EIS, I respectfully request that the City address the incomplete information in the EAW noted above. In particular, the proposed Reciprocal Use Agreement describes reconstruction of 3 tennis courts as part of the development project, but the EAW does not include the tennis court area in the analysis. The EAW states the century-old stone retaining wall along the railroad right-of-way will be replaced, which seems incorrect. Potential geologic impacts associated with field lighting poles and other construction are not adequately addressed. Accordingly, the EAW should be revised to address this incomplete analysis and re-published for comment. To address the entire project in an orderly way, this EAW revision should be completed before proceeding to an EIS. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Steven M. Christenson

Enclosures:

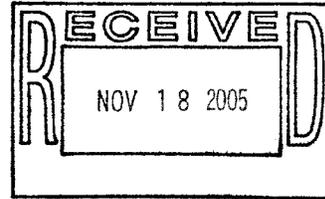
1. Survey by Rehder & Associates (2005)
2. 1885 Hopkins Plate & 1892 Foote Atlas plate 3
3. Robert P. Roscoe correspondence to Park Board (August 2005)

Robert Roscoe / Design for Preservation

1401 East River Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55414 612.317.0989 bob@designforpreservation.com

November 15, 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner
Minneapolis Planning Division
Community Planning & Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385



R e : Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for DeLaSalle Athletic Facility Development Project, Nicollet Island, Minneapolis

Dear Mr. Orange:

This letter relates to the draft EAW for the proposed athletic facility development project on Nicollet Island within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District in Minneapolis. As background, I served on the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) for 21 years and worked extensively on many historic preservation aspects of Nicollet Island during those years. Also, my professional work on Nicollet Island included design for renovation of 6 houses, one new infill structure, and one addition.

One aspect of the EAW immediately jumps out at me - the EAW either deliberately or inadvertently understates the issue by setting up components of Nicollet Island to be analyzed as discrete parts, not in the totality in which its historic importance lies. For instance, the EAW text implies that closing East Grove Street has no impact on the physicality of the houses or the historic district. The real issue is how its removal affects the historic integrity of the whole island. The EAW should consider the historical impacts of the proposed development within an embrace of the larger picture, which the developer avoids doing for its own purpose.

A key attribute of a designated historic property is its uniqueness. This attribute has been used over and over to describe Nicollet Island. Nicollet Island is the only inhabited part of Minneapolis completely surrounded by water. Sitting astride the Mississippi River at the head of Saint Anthony Falls, the island is a witness to the entire span of the city's history. The island itself functioned as a sort of fulcrum to leverage city growth from Saint Anthony across the river to land that became an upper Midwest prairie metropolis. Perhaps Nicollet Island's most unique characteristic is its enduring strength in a seeming self-preservation of its natural features amidst the dramatic alteration of the built environment on the island itself and the riverfront around it.

That strength has been guided by the hand of civic interest and dedication, which the City should apply today. In this case, the proposed athletic field is incompatible with the landscape and structures on the island, especially the closing of East Grove Street, the large obtrusive retaining wall, the distorted rise of topography, and the highly visible lighting fixtures that will greatly disturb the quiet character of the river environment. The proposed development is simply too big for this small island location. To evaluate

From: thomas [rosex001@umn.edu]
Sent: Friday, November 18, 2005 8:47 AM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: Nic il.

Michael,

Thank you for herding the cats through the process the other evening.

I would like to stress that we as a group of residents--those on the Island and those in the near neighborhoods-- support the school and its various activities. We do , however, question the wisdom of placing activities with conflicting needs and agendas in a very small place. We agree the sports can be a positive force in youth development, but question the exclusive focus on these as single activities.

To the issue of traffic, parking and safety, to which I spoke--the concern of many is the problem of the trains as they block the crossings and the potential for concentrated activity to hinder the safe operation of fire and emergency vehicles. The traffic patters and figures give are, as I mentioned provided for standard daytime use, which is limited due to the Islands isolation. However, at such time when a game--football or soccer, plus the various other activities as happen during the warm months, can create parking on the narrow access to Grove St. and the Nicollet St. Bridge. I believe this needs further consideration.

Other aspects of the proposed project allow for a radical transformation of the site at the expense of the greater good of the public.

During each of the meetings the defenders of the project speak to the history and value of the school, no one denies that fact nor do we wish the school any ill. No one is against the needs of children or the positive effects of diversity. The concern is for the retention of what small green/open space remains in the Mississippi channel and the downtown area, a truly unique resource which could be used to great advantage by the school if it were interested in the history of place and its connection to the place of it own storied history.

I am not in a position to address the priorities of the school but the planning department to which you are connected can advise them of the problems inherent to particular sites, the problems of scale, the

availability of other resources, as well as the problem of committing to a course of action that will preclude more meaningful development in the future.

Thank you again for your evaluation of this issue.

Thomas Rose
91 Nicollet St
Mpls

From: Sheran, Linda [LS126480@ncr.com]
Sent: Friday, November 25, 2005 1:02 AM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: DeLaSalle High School Stadium

Dear Mr. Orange.

We have just purchased a home overlooking Nicollet Island and strongly oppose the plan by the city to provide park land to a private school to build a football stadium in a residential area. The noise levels would be unacceptable. Enjoyment of our home as well as our investment would be impaired. You are proposing to build a football stadium practically in our front yard. The EAW study estimates dBA noise level for homes in our condominium would be 76 which exceeds the noise standard of 65. Although we will be able to hear the loudspeaker in our homes, the EAW study indicates that no significant adverse noise impacts are expected. In other words, there is no problem if, while sitting in your home on a Friday evening you are forced to listen to play-by-play football calls on a loud speaker, bands playing, crowds cheering and shouting. Don't you agree this is unacceptable?

I understand this property was acquired by the city to provide a park for the community. I cannot understand how the Minneapolis Planning Commission can possibly think this plan benefits the community of people who live and work in the area. If this is to be a community park, you must consider the people who LIVE in the community. We are paying a significant property tax to be here. Our tax dollars are going to support this park. Please let us enjoy it.

Finally, I think of DeLaSalle as a fine school and a good neighbor. However, those charged with making Park Board's decision should have no connection with DeLaSalle.

Thank you.
Linda Sheran
150 2nd St. NE #611
Minneapolis, MN 55413
612-379-3002

95 W. Island Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Nov. 23, 2005

J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner,
Minneapolis Planning Division,
Community Planning and Economic Development Department
City Hall Room 210
350 S. 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385
michael.orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Dear Mr. Orange:

Here are comments on the draft Environmental Assessment Worksheet for the DeLaSalle athletic facility project, which I believe needs an EIS due to significant adverse effects on Nicollet Island.

1. (EAW 2, p. 1) The naming of DeLaSalle High School as sole Proposer raises questions about the appropriate status of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in the EAW. The EAW describes the project as a joint project of DeLaSalle and the MPRB, and DeLaSalle and the MPRB appear as co-signers to the draft Reciprocal Use Agreement (EAW Attachment F). MPRB property constitutes half the acreage for the overall project. The MPRB is and would remain sole owner of the parkland to be developed as a parking lot to serve the stadium as part of the project as described in the EAW. The EAW names the MPRB as co-owner and co-user of the project. Is it complete and accurate for DeLaSalle High School to be named as the sole Proposer? In the interest of completeness, should the MPRB also bear the Proposer's responsibility for supplying reasonably accessible data for the EAW? How might the draft EAW information be more complete or accurate if the MPRB were also to supply data as a Proposer?
2. (EAW 5, p. 2) The complete project site is comprised of several properties now owned by DeLaSalle, the MPRB and the City of Minneapolis. Is the high school's address alone (One DeLaSalle Drive) the most accurate and complete project address for the EAW? Or would it be more complete and accurate to also include the addresses of the parcels owned by the MPRB: 100, 201, 220 and 224 East Island Avenue?
3. (EAW 6a and 6b, pp. 2-3) Is it accurate to describe the project as an "addition of a regulation size football field"? Since a regulation size football field already exists at the given project site address, would it be more accurate to describe the project as a reconstruction or replacement of a regulation size football field"?
4. (EAW 6a, p. 2) The project summary describes the new athletic field as being available for soccer "when not used for football." While the hierarchy of control of the facility is clearly stated elsewhere in the EAW as favoring DeLaSalle's use over public access, this appears to be the only statement of football having a priority over other uses of the field. What implications does football's primacy have for the project's fulfillment of MPRB, regional and federal recreational goals

and purposes of the park?

5. (EAW 6a, pp. 2Ð3) The project summary, meant to be of limited length, twice states the same information: that the use of the field will be shared by DeLaSalle High School and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The summary also describes the project only as an athletic field, with no mention of the stadium seating/press box structure or the parking lot, which the EAW defines elsewhere as parts of the project. Would a more complete and accurate project summary dispense with the repeated information in favor of including mention of each of the project's major elements?

6. (EAW 6b, p. 3) If the proposed facility would "allow DeLaSalle to host half of its season games and any potential post season games as home football games," is it accurate and complete to state that "During 2005, this would have been a total of 4 home football games"? According to information on the school's website, the varsity football team played eight regular season games and three postseason games in 2005, while the junior varsity football team played six games and the 9th grade football team played nine games, for a total of 26 football games. Even discounting postseason games, that leaves 23 football games, meaning that half of the season's football games would equal 11 or 12 games, not four. What implications does this discrepancy between four home games and 11 or 12 home games have for other areas of the EAW?

7. (EAW 6b, p. 3) The statement that "The new athletic facility will allow DeLaSalle to É practice for those games, on the DeLaSalle campus" implies that the school's existing facility does not now allow football teams to practice for its games on the campus. Again, in EAW 6c (p. 5), it is stated that "the new facility will allow DeLaSalle to host home football games and practice for those games on its site for the first time in the school's 106 history." Is that accurate? Or does the existing regulation size football field (built in 1984, partly on Grove Street right-of-way) in fact allow DeLaSalle football teams to practice on campus? Would it be more accurate to eliminate mention of on-campus football practices as a new benefit of the proposed stadium?

8. (EAW 6b, p. 3) Is it accurate to call the two parcels of land mentioned in the first sentence of the second paragraph "adjacent"? Or would it be more accurate to say "two parcels of land and that portion of the existing Grove Street right-of-way É which divides them"?

9. (EAW 6b, pp. 3-4) What implications does the open question of field surface material (natural grass or artificial turf) have for the water quality issues raised in EAW 17, or for other parts of the EAW? Is the choice of playing field material still an open question as stated here, or is it "decided" in favor of natural grass as was asserted at the Nov. 15 public comment meeting, and as is implied later in EAW 6b ("The performance grass used for the football field," page 4)? What implications would the choice of natural grass have for the maintenance and use of the field for both soccer and football? For example, would the tendency for grass to become heavily worn in the soccer goal areas of natural grass fields have implications for the use of the new field for both soccer and football? How might MPRB and DeLaSalle soccer use be limited because of the primacy of football as stated in EAW 6a? Would it be more complete for the EAW to provide more

information, here or elsewhere, on the implications and criteria for the various field materials under consideration?

10. (EAW 6b, p. 4) The EAW states that "Goal posts will be placed on the site (refer to Attachment C, Site Plan)." However, neither Attachment C nor Attachment D (project elevations) shows goal posts. Would it be more accurate and complete for the attachments to show goal posts, particularly the drawing of the view looking toward the downtown skyline in Attachment D? Are goalposts a permanent feature, and if so, would goal posts be more accurate to include in the drawing than the smaller and potentially moveable soccer goals shown in Attachment D?

11. - (EAW 6b, p. 4) The EAW states that the "sole building construction will be the structure for the 750-seat bleachers, an enclosed press box, and storage facilities located under the seating." Would it be more complete to also include the two restrooms and maintenance room mentioned in EAW 13 and EAW 18? Would the stadium structure also house concession facilities, and if not, where would they be housed and would they require a structure or temporary structure?

12. (EAW 6b, p. 4) Are all the 166 parking spaces identified as being "in the present school parking lots" in fact on DeLaSalle property? Or are some of the spaces on MPRB property (such as at 6 Eastman Avenue), and if so, under what arrangement? How much of the "DeLaSalle parking" that the school would make available to the MPRB under Item 3.1 of EAW Attachment F ("Reciprocal Use Agreement") is already on park board property, or already covered by existing MPRB/DeLaSalle parking arrangements?

13. (EAW 6b, p. 4 and EAW 10, p. 9) The paragraph in EAW 6b about the proposed East Island Avenue parking lot and the table in EAW 10 do not appear to include a sidewalk or bike path on Parcel C. Would either be provided? Does the proposed parking lot allow the MPRB to fulfill its 1996 Master Plan design for that property?

14. (EAW 6b, p. 4) The EAW states that the "existing parking area between East Island Avenue and the River (Parcel C) is generally open to the public and provides over-flow capacity for public and private events at the Amphitheater," and "It is expected the MPRB will continue to keep the parking area open to the public." Would it be more accurate and complete to state that MPRB has posted signs at the entrances prohibiting public parking at the East Island Avenue lot, similar to the signs at the MPRB's other two parking lots on the island's south tip? And is it accurate to imply that public events continue to take place at MPRB's Nicollet Island Amphitheater, or in fact have all public events at the amphitheater (which as recently as 2001 attracted 10,000 people) been discontinued, following MPRB's granting a private firm exclusive rights to MPRB's pavilion building and adjacent parking lots?

15. (EAW 6b, p. 4) The statement that the project will be "ready for use in the fall of 2007" conflicts with the statement in EAW 21 (page 17) that "The athletic field is assumed to be fully operational by the 2006 football season." Which is accurate? What implications would an inaccurate "build year" have for the traffic study?

16. (EAW 6c, p. 5) The EAW asks the Proposer to "explain the need for the project and identify its beneficiaries." The Proposer's answer identifies MPRB as

benefiting from improved facility access for its recreation program and improvements to its parking lot, but offers no explanation or evidence of a public need. To be complete, the EAW should explain the public need for the project.

17. (EAW 6d, p. 5, and EAW 29, p. 33) Would a more complete and accurate response to EAW 6d and 29 examine the implications of the school's desire for other athletic facilities not included in the current project? What does DeLaSalle's record of land use decisions say about possible future stages of athletic facility development? The project proposed in this EAW would eliminate tennis courts the MPRB built for DeLaSalle just six years ago; yet tennis courts are included in the 1983 Agreement which the school's attorney states "DeLaSalle expects the Park Board to follow." Also, the project does not now include a softball field, yet such a field was part of the project design earlier this year (as a replacement for the softball diamond lost when the school built a new gym on top of what had been softball's left field). Last, the project does not include a running track described by landscape architects on the MPRB's recent DeLaSalle Citizens Advisory Committee as typical at the kind of suburban athletic facilities that DeLaSalle representatives have stated are the standard against which the school is seeking comparable facilities. DeLaSalle design drawings from the 1980s show campus athletic facilities on what is now MPRB property across the railroad tracks. What are DeLaSalle's intentions regarding expanding to include tennis courts, a softball field, a running track or other athletic facilities? If DeLaSalle says it has no designs on other nearby properties, can that response be relied upon to hold true for longer than the six years since the MPRB built tennis courts for DeLaSalle on the MPRB property where DeLaSalle now wishes to build a football stadium?

18. (EAW 6c, p. 5) What is the relationship between the proposed regulation size football field to be built over vacated Grove Street and the regulation size football field the school built over partially vacated Grove Street in 1984? How is the current project to place a DeLaSalle athletic facility on MPRB "Parcel B" related to athletic facility (tennis courts) that the MPRB built for DeLaSalle on Parcel B? A more complete response to EAW 6c would explore how the current project evolved from previous similar projects.

19. (EAW 7, p. 5) A more complete response would note how much of the 2.02 acres of DeLaSalle Parcel A was originally part of the Grove Street right-of-way, over which DeLaSalle constructed its current regulation size football field in 1984,

20. (EAW 7, p. 5) Would a more accurate response indicate use of the 25-foot-tall building? The 2,494-square feet of the building's footprint will by the nature of its ownership be of institutional use, and if concession space is included, commercial use.

21. (EAW 7, p. 6) How does a 25-foot-tall building compare in height to an average two-story building? Would a more complete answer offer the requested height comparisons to nearby buildings?

22. (EAW 8, p. 6) A more complete response would include two divisions of the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service: the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (whose management plan is cited in EAW 27, p. 28) and the National Register of Historic Places, which includes properties in National

Historic Districts, such as the St. Anthony Falls National Historic District, in which the DeLaSalle project is situated. In Minnesota, the State Historic Preservation Office reviews projects such as DeLaSalle's in National Historic Districts.

23. (EAW 8, p. 6 and EAW 27, p. 28) Does the Metropolitan Council's restrictive land covenant on MPRB's "Parcel B" property, which contains a prohibition against athletic fields, constitute a land use regulation? If so, a discussion of the restrictive covenant should be included in EAW 27.

24. (EAW 8, p. 6) Not included in this list is the MPRB's "no net loss" policy, which would require the MPRB to replace parkland put under long-term private control with equivalent parkland elsewhere. Could compliance with that policy constitute a form of financial assistance for this project?

25. (EAW 8, p. 6) Will the project also require approval of the Minneapolis Fire and Police departments, because closing Grove Street decreases access routes to the island's park and residential areas?

26. (EAW 9, p. 6D7) A complete response in the first paragraph would include other properties not acquired for, and not now included in, the regional park: the West Island condominium building at 31D53 West Island Avenue; the Nicollet Island Building apartments at 20 Grove Street; and the Grain Belt Beer sign property at 4 West Island Avenue. A more complete response would name the "existing rights-of-way" as belonging to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad, Hennepin County's Regional Railroad Authority (RRA), and the City of Minneapolis. The second response paragraph is accurate in its reference to three multi-family residential structures, but again fails to mention the Grain Belt sign property, which remains in the possession of descendants of William Eastman (who in 1866 platted the island and laid out the streets in the pattern that remains intact north of Eastman Avenue, and built a mansion in the residential district that once covered the properties where DeLaSalle would build its stadium). The third paragraph of the response is more accurate in explicitly listing "railroad right-of-way" as among the properties not owned by MPRB (though again, naming BNSF and RRA would be more complete), but does not mention the city street right-of-ways, such as Grove Street, and again, the Eastman's Grain Belt sign property.

27. (EAW 9, p. 7) The statement that "Certain parcels acquired for the Park" in the early 1980s--including the Nicollet Island Pavilion--"were reserved for private commercial use" implies inaccurately that the pavilion building was private from the outset of MPRB ownership. The pavilion was in fact owned and operated by the MPRB as a public park facility (including public restroom facilities, drinking fountains and picnic tables inside and out) which the MPRB also made available for public and private functions. Only in 2001, 20 years after it was granted funds to buy the former boiler factory building, did the MPRB grant a private company exclusive rights to operate the pavilion.

28. (EAW 9, p. 8) It is inaccurate to say "The existing DeLaSalle High School campus has been on Nicollet Island since 1898" because the existing DeLaSalle campus did not exist in 1898. When the school now called DeLaSalle began, it occupied a single building in the midst of a dense residential neighborhood. Over the years, the mansions and most of the townhouses in that part of the

neighborhood were demolished as DeLaSalle's campus expanded to take their place.

29. (EAW 9, p. 8) For accuracy, the second response paragraph on page 8 should clarify that "The MPRB land" refers only to Parcel B, not the MPRB's land along East Island Avenue which the project would develop as a parking lot ("Parcel C").

30. (EAW 9, p. 8) For completeness, the second paragraph on page 8 should explain that the trees on Parcel B were planted as part of a University of Minnesota/Tree Trust long-term forestry experiment in 2000. Volunteers from the university, the neighborhood, and DeLaSalle planted the trees, each of which carries a tag with its species and ID number for the research experiment. A plaque placed on a boulder explains that the trees celebrate "Beautiful 'U' Day" and mark the 150th anniversary of the university's founding at a nearby site.

31. (EAW 9, p. 8 and EAW 25, p. 26) To be complete, the EAW should explain that the land immediately north of "Parcel B" is in fact two railroad right-of-ways. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe's right-of-way contains two sets of tracks used by freight trains and soon to be used by Northstar Commuter Rail trains. Lying between the BNSF right of way and Parcel B is another right of way owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (RRA), which has since the early 1990s had plans to build a Northeast Corridor light rail transit line there. (The overpass bridges up and down the rail line, including Nicollet Street, have been designed and rebuilt with an extra span enclosed in removable walls to allow for the third set of rails for the Northeast Corridor LRT.) The statement in EAW 25 that "the proposed new construction does not appear to have an impact on the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad" doesn't mean much, since that railroad company has long since ceased to exist. Has the Proposer consulted with the current railroad right-of-way owners, BNSF and the RRA, about the project? What do those railroads say about the project and its implications? Is the project as proposed bounded by the northern edge of MPRB land or does it extend onto the Regional Railroad Authority right of way?

32. (EAW 9, p. 8) For completeness, the paragraph about housing off the island should include the new townhouses along Main Street NE, between First Avenue NE and the railroad tracks. They would face the DeLaSalle field and stadium bleacher/press box building directly across the East Channel of the river.

33. (EAW 9, p. 8) For completeness, the statement "This new activity has the potential for conflict with residential uses" should be amended to include Nicollet Island Park visitor uses, with which the stadium activity and physical presence also will conflict.

34. (EAW 10, p. 9) The table seems to suggest that no sidewalk or bike trail will be constructed along E. Island Avenue as part of the project. Is that accurate? How much of Parcel B is indeed gravel? Would it be more accurate for the table to include information on the project as defined in EAW 6b--including the parking area and the various possible field surface types still under consideration? Without those, the Total line cannot give an accurate summary of the project's cover types.

35. (EAW 11a, p. 9) It is not accurate to say that the project site "was the area of earliest urban development in Minneapolis"--the towns of St. Anthony and

Minneapolis were established on opposite banks of the river years earlier--but the island does represent the most intact example of early urban development in the city. That is a main reason it has been developed and preserved as a park and a historic district. Also, initial urban development of the site dates back about a decade less than the 150 years cited. Grove Street, for example, was laid out about 140 years ago as part of the island's historic urban street pattern which has remained intact north of Eastman Avenue.

36. (EAW 11a, p. 9) It is inaccurate to say "No ecologically sensitive areas or natural areas remain on or near the site." The riverbank along the parking lot site is susceptible to erosion. The meadow and trees on Parcel B constitute a natural area, as does the slope along the East Island Avenue edge of DeLaSalle's current regulation size football field.

37. (EAW 11b, p. 9) Bald eagles are regular visitors to the area of the project site, and are classified as threatened in Minnesota. The EAW should investigate whether other endangered, threatened or special concern species are present in the project area, and complete the rest of EAW 11b.

38. (EAW 14, p. 11) For clarity, it would be helpful if the EAW could describe which "half of the site is within the Shoreland Area of the Mississippi River." Also, for completeness, it would be helpful if the EAW would describe in greater detail how specific policies of the City's 2003 Draft Mississippi River Critical Area Plan bear on the project area, since this Plan is also referenced in the response to EAW 27, where the reader is directed back to EAW 14. How does the project fit or not fit the passage quoted from page 65 of the plan? If "many of the policies of the É Plan address performance standards for activities in the Corridor rather than specific recommendations," is it also true that many do not? Are there specific recommendations that might apply to the project area other than the passage quoted?

39. (EAW 16, p. 12) Are there exceptions to the statement that "There are no naturally occurring steep slopes on this site"? Would the riverbank, the embankment along the Nicollet Street Bridge, or the short slope from the existing DeLaSalle regulation size football field count as steep slopes? (Note that EAW 16 asks for "steep slopes," not "naturally occurring steep slopes." As it happens, the original natural rise in the middle of the island was noted by early settlers, and later by children who rode sleds down the hill in the area of the project site.)

40. (EAW 18a, p. 13) What will be the public access to the restrooms and drinking fountain (in view of the loss of public access to MPRB restrooms when the Nicollet Island Park Pavilion was privatized in 2001)?

41. (EAW 21, p. 15) Does the traffic study consider soccer traffic or potential conflicts with simultaneous events at DeLaSalle, the stadium, the Nicollet Island Inn and the Park Pavilion? How do we know that varsity football games will generate the heaviest traffic? Might all-day soccer tournaments on the three youth fields also generate heavy traffic? Might a non-sports event attract more?

42. (EAW 21, p. 16) What is the bicycle and pedestrian traffic on Nicollet Island? What will happen to bicycle and pedestrian traffic on East Island Avenue? Will a bicycle trail be constructed or does the East Island parking lot preclude that feature of the 1996 MPRB Master Plan? At which fields did the Sept. 9 football

games that were measured take place? Are any of them on an island? What special traffic considerations does the island location demand?

43. (EAW 24, p. 22) No violations of noise standards have been attributed to crowd noise, but what about loudspeaker sound? What might the experience of stadiums such as Benilde-St. Margaret's in St. Louis Park say about the likelihood of noise pollution from loudspeakers on Nicollet Island?

44. (EAW 25, p. 23 and EAW 30, p. 33) The response ("No") to EAW 25's question, "Other unique resources?" is inaccurate and incomplete. Nicollet Island itself constitutes a unique resource that would suffer significant adverse impacts if the project is built. It is unique both as an inhabited urban island in the Twin Cities, and as a place that is unlike any other, offering a combination of urban and semi-rural environments that visitors find special and sublime. Evidence of the island's uniqueness is abundant. Taking three random examples: In "100 Places Plus 1," a book published by AIA Minnesota, Nicollet Island is said to feel "like it's from another time and place." In a recent WCCO television news broadcast called "Finding Minnesota: Nicollet Island" (online at: http://wcco.com/local/local_story_308094107.html), the reporter says of Nicollet Island that "By the 1840s, some residents of what was then the Village of St. Anthony made their claim to this unique real estate." In a song titled "Nicollet Island" (online at www.susstones.com/mp3/nicollet_island.mp3). local recording artist Christian Erickson describes "sitting watching the river go by/no place in the world I'd rather be/just you and me and the cool Nicollet Island breeze É if you ask me, I wanna know, is it gonna be the same tomorrow?" The answer to the song's question could be "Yes", if the City of Minneapolis recognizes that the DeLaSalle project would have significant adverse effects on Nicollet Island Park and the St. Anthony Falls National Historic District. I urge the City to ask for an Environmental Impact Study to consider alternatives and thoroughly study the project's effects on this unique resource.

Chris Steller

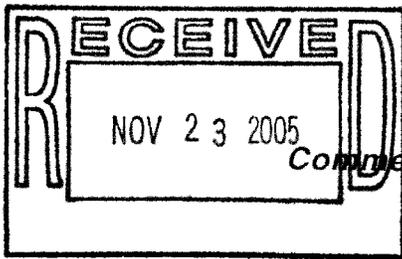
From: Christine Viken [c1900@sihope.com]
Sent: Thursday, November 17, 2005 12:50 PM
To: Orange, Michael
Subject: Fw: Is permit needed?

----- Original Message -----

From: "Yanta, Joseph J MVP" <joseph.j.yanta@mvp02.usace.army.mil>
To: "Christine Viken" <c1900@sihope.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2005 12:26 PM
Subject: RE: Is permit needed?

> >From the Corps of Engineers, Section 404 (Clean Water Act) permits
> >would
> >be
> needed for any fill, grading, or other discharges of fill or dredged
> material
> in wetlands or other waters of the U.S., and Section 10 (Rivers and
> Harbors
> Act of 1899) permits would be required for any structure, dredging, fill,
> utility line, or other work in, under, or above a navigable water (such as
> the Mississippi). (Section 10 permits are generally limited to work below
> the ordinary high water mark on the bank, although structures or lines
> that
> go over the water are regulated. Section 10 permits for bridges are
> handled
> by the Coast Guard rather than the Corps.)
>
> Minnesota DNR permits may be required (DNR Division of Waters - Metro:
> 651-772-7910; Molly Shodeen handles most DNR river permits in the
> Twin Cities).
>
> Local permits and approvals (including floodplain zoning, setback
> requirements, etc.) may also be necessary. Check with your city
> and/or county.
>
> Other agencies might be involved in permit review (including but not
> limited
> to the National Park Service - Mississippi National River and Recreation
> Area, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the Fish and Wildlife
> Service). We would coordinate with them, if necessary. Some permits may

> require archaeological or mussel surveys.
>
> Joint Federal-State-Local application/notification forms are available
> from
> the State Board of Water and Soil Resources website:
>
> www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/wcaforms/index.html
>
> There are several variants of the form, depending on whether the work
> just involves a waterbody (e.g., dock construction or dredging) or
> whether it also involves some wetland fill. I can mail you copies of
> the forms, too, if you
> wish.
>
> Our website has a link to the forms, also, and provides other
> information:
>
> www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory
>
>
> Anyone can apply for a permit, although you need to have some sort of
> real estate interest (ownership, easement, etc.) to do the work
> legally. Do you own the island? If the island is in public
> ownership, you need the approval
> of the government agency that manages it. Some islands in private
> ownership
> are subject to flowage easements or dredged material disposal easements.
>
> If you have any questions, I will try to answer them soon. The next
> few days, however, I will be in the field much of the time.
>
>
>
> Joe Yanta
> 651-290-5362
> 651-290-5330 (fax)
>
>
> _____
>
> From: Christine Viken [mailto:c1900@sihope.com]
> Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2005 11:44 AM
> To: Yanta, Joseph J MVP



*Comments on Environmental Assessment Worksheet
for the De LaSalle Athletic Facility*

The Worksheet contains a number of inclusions and omissions. In some cases, the intent seems to be promotion of De LaSalle's stadium concept.

While the proposer is entitled to present necessary information, the worksheet is represented as a product of Planning Staff. Following are details of inclusions and omissions that staff should review as to whether such inclusions are appropriate and whether omissions could be rectified within the context of an EAW.

6 b. Asks for a complete description of the proposed project emphasizing construction, significant demolition, etc. However, after the first sentence, the first paragraph contains details of the proposal for the Park Board and De LaSalle to share the field. This paragraph has nothing to do with the construction.

It belongs under 6 c. (Explain the project purpose; if carried out by a governmental unit, explain the need and identify its beneficiaries.)

The description of Parcel C omits the fact that the "sloped grassy area" has been planted with number trees as part of a test by the University of Minnesota.

Paragraph 4 states "field is proposed to be natural grass, but pervious artificial turf may be considered..." Either the project has to be evaluated with both options, or the proposer must state what is actually being proposed.

The "sole building construction" is only described as a "structure for 750-seat bleachers, etc. with a referral to Attachment C, Site Plan. Missing are any dimensions to enable assessment of width, height -- anything to give an idea of size of the structure. Those facts are not presented ANYWHERE in the worksheet.

Paragraph 1, page 4 also leads off with a 3-sentence explanation of the project that belongs under 6 c. - project purpose. The remainder of the paragraph describes proposed improvements to the MPRB parking lot to include porous pavers. The description of the current gravel surface of the lot as impervious seems to be in error. Also, since the attached reciprocal agreement calls for a bituminous parking surface, the question of who would be responsible for the cost of the upgrade would need to be answered.

7.1 Project magnitude data Only the footprint and height of the structure for bleacher seating is listed with NO OTHER dimensions. This missing information needs to be provided in order for the project to be evaluated.

If over 2 stories, compare to heights of nearby buildings.

The information to compare the 25 ft. structure to nearby building heights is missing.

8. Permits and approvals required List all known local, state and federal permits, approvals, modifications of existing permits, governmental review, etc.

The following are missing but would seem to be indicated for review and/or permits and approvals due to the location of the project within their jurisdiction:

-- Planning Department previously received an email from the U. S. Corps of Engineers indicating the need for assessment.

Nicollet Island is within:

-- Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

-- Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area

-- St. Anthony Falls Historic District

-- The Riverfront Development Coordination Board (RDCB) oversees coordination of Interagency Activities

Point 9 seems to have been repeated in error, and the first paragraph response is repeated in more detail following the second listing. This appears to need an edit to remove the duplication.

9. Describe current and recent past land use and development on the site and on adjacent lands. Discuss project compatibility with adjacent and nearby land uses. Identify potential hazards due to past site uses.

The paragraph description of land ownership needs clarification. As it stands, the statement doesn't make clear that about 1/3 of the Island population lives on land that is privately owned -- not owned in any way by the Minneapolis Park Board. And the fact that all the rights-of-way (streets) are owned by the City of Minneapolis, and not the Minneapolis Park Board, also needs clarifying.

There is NO information to explain the past and present uses of those parcels owned by the MPRB (Nicollet Island Inn, The Pavilion, residences, Amphitheater) even though there are significant ground leases that govern the use of all of these properties. The terms of these leases should be identified as part of this worksheet.

Also, there is no explanation of acquisition of the land purchased by the Metropolitan Council for a Regional Park, and no identification of the restrictions that govern the use of regional parks (i.e. not to be used for athletic fields.) This constitutes a special type of hazard in that this proposed use may necessitate reimbursing the Met Council for the land in question.

If the worksheet includes information on the 1983 agreement that laid out some of the terms of the regional parks development, the worksheet would be incomplete if it did not also present information of the broader picture presented by the 1983 agreement.

And, subsequently and most significantly, the worksheet includes NO discussion of the project COMPATIBILITY WITH ADJACENT AND NEARBY LAND USES. This is a crucial aspect of the worksheet and must be addressed.

Nicollet Island is a small regional park entirely in a local, state and national historic district, which lies within the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area. Its past, present and future use must be compatible with those designations, as well as the other adjacent land uses.

The current burgeoning development of the River Corridor for residential use also has a bearing on the compatibility of the proposal with surrounding land use. The 6-to-8 floor condominium (not apartment) buildings, plus the newly occupied townhouses that front on the east bank have not been specifically evaluated as to impact of this project.

All of these newly constructed buildings were not built with the impact of the noise and light from this project projected onto the specifications. Yet, due to the effect of sound moving across water, they will have more sound impact than virtually any Island residence.

Athletic fields are allowed as conditional uses in residential zoning:

According to the zoning code specific standards, the athletic field shall be at least fifty feet from the nearest property line of a residential use. Is the distance to the property line at 20 Grove Street?

Identify potential environmental hazards due to past site uses:

Though past uses of the land in question contained homestead (see Archeology report), which could indicate the presence on abandoned wells and/or fuel tanks or gas lines, that possible hazard is not identified. This land is owned by the Proposer and to date has not been identified as being part of an environmental investigation, unlike the MPRB land.

10. Cover types: If the pavers which currently surface Grove Street constitute an pervious surface, that correction needs to be included.

As previously noted, the pervious/impervious nature of the surfacing has not been specified, so the impact of development of parking at this location cannot be determined. The project would have to supply the information for an Environmental Assessment.

If the parking lot is declared to have begun to produce an area of stormwater runoff that is eligible for an assessed fee, the information is not presented as to would be responsible for payment of that fee.

11. Fish, wildlife and ecologically sensitive resources:

The response ignores the fact that there are restored natural areas on and near the proposed site. The project would destroy a University of Minnesota tree planting experiment located directly adjacent to the tennis courts.

14. Water-related land use management district -- discuss project compatibility with district land use restrictions.

The worksheet states that the project will comply with the special conditions in section 55.490 of the Shoreland Overlay District dealing with conditional uses, but it contains no explanation of how it will comply.

The Island is located within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Bulletin 15 1995 of the National Register of Historic Places states that a district "possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development . . . a district derives its importance from being a unified entity, even though it is often composed of a wide variety of resources."

Protecting such historical assets is part of the goals within the Critical Areas of which Nicollet Island is a part. However,

-- the worksheet does NOT address how the plan is compatible with the City's Critical Area guidelines for Urban diversified district that state: **B. 2. b** "The lands and waters within this district shall be used and developed . . . to protect historical sites and areas, natural scenic and environmental resources; and to expand public access to and enjoyment of the river."

-- the worksheet does NOT address how the plan is compatible with Executive Order 79-19 of the Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor which states under A. Purpose and responsibility, 1. c. To preserve and enhance its natural, aesthetic, cultural, and historical value for the public use, and 1. e. To protect and preserve the biological and ecological functions of the corridor.

Paragraph 3 refers to the City's Critical Area Plan regarding Nicollet Island: the plan "would encourage development of a variety of recreational facilities and opportunities that are river-oriented and that enhance the environment," but does not address how the proposal is compatible with that plan.

17. Water quality: Surface water runoff

Does not address the runoff created from the parking lot.

19. Geologic hazards and soil conditions

The issue of limestone formations or karst conditions has not been addressed. In light of the history of this area, with caves, tunnels, mill races and the historical record of collapses of same, this issue needs serious study and documentation before the project proceeds.

20. Solid wastes, hazardous wastes, storage tanks

c. There is nothing addressing the storage of fuel on site during construction is one of the river's most vulnerable areas.

21. Traffic

The proposer is unable to meet zoning requirements for minimum parking for its private use as a stadium to seat 750 without the incorporation of public land. The worksheet does not address how is this dedication of public resources benefits the public.

The draft Travel Demand Management (TDM) Plan's use of 1,000 vehicles per day Met Council suggestion for capacity of a two land residential street does not address
1 - the peculiar "captive" nature of traffic flow on Nicollet Island;
2 - the fact that the area is a park; and 3 - the concentration of the traffic flow within very narrow time periods.

Considering that the Park Board already closes Nicollet Island to all traffic except that of occupants during peak events such as Fourth of July and others, there are indications that the TDM study is of crucial importance to Island users. The information and assessments in the worksheet do not sufficiently address the concerns that could be addressed in an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The worksheet points out that De LaSalle will benefit from the development of the Park Board owned gravel lot at East Island Avenue because it will use the parking for "other events the school holds year round," but it does not address the public benefit of the dedication of public land to serve the needs of a private user, or how the public is to be compensated.

The TDM does not assess the impact of current development in progress that will affect the same intersections, i.e., Hennepin & 1st Street N, Hennepin & Main, etc. Traffic studies for those projects show projected service levels of D and E without adding the traffic from the athletic field.

The projects to be factored in include: Phoenix (Diageo Development), Pillsbury A Mill Development, Southeast Minneapolis Industrial (SEMI)/Bridal Veil Redevelopment, Mississippi Whitewater Park and the downtown Eclipse Project located just three blocks from Nicollet Island.

Information from the projects must also be considered under **29. Cumulative impacts: Minnesota Rule part 4410.1700, subpart 7, item B requires that the RGU consider the “cumulative potential effects of related or anticipated future project” when determining the need for an environmental impact statement.**

Vacation of Grove Street: The closing of Grove Street removes the east/west trail connection for pedestrians and bicyclists. The proposer states that De LaSalle is planning to provide a trail connection through the site to replace this connection and also states, “It is anticipated the trail will always be open to the public.”

The worksheet lacks specificity as to how this can be accomplished during school and all other events. And, considering that access to De LaSalle’s current athletic field is fenced and locked, the worksheet lacks sufficient assurances that such a statement can and will provide the public with the necessary guarantees of access.

24. Noise

The worksheet states that De LaSalle does not currently have a marching band. It does not address the fact that currently De LaSalle students use highly amplified music at games, not the impact of that noise level.

The worksheet chart of Estimated Maximum Crowd Noise Levels illustrates the fact that the noise impact will be greatest at the east bank condos (76 dBA), reflecting the effect of sound traveling over water.

However, the worksheet’s attachment E on sound levels contours does not show the effect on east bank residences, despite this increasing impact off the Island.

An Environmental Impact Assessment is needed to consider how this will affect the liveability issues of those new neighborhoods consisting of construction not built to consider the noise and visual impact of a close-by athletic stadium.

25. Nearby resources

Historical resources: The worksheet notes that “An Area of Potential Effect (APE) has not been determined.

Attached is a letter from Dennis Gimmestad of the Minnesota Historical Society that indicates that the entire area of Nicollet Island is part of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District and under the review authority of the State Historic Preservation Office

(Attachment A)

(SHPO).

A review by SHPO would be part of the needed Environmental Impact Assessment.

Within a historic district, construction of inappropriate in-fill buildings can have an adverse effect of the district's feeling and character, and SHPO, although charged with protecting the state's historic resources, is not even listed as entity to be consulted with regards to the proposal.

The Historic Resources Survey is insufficient in the scope of its research (numerous studies of the Historic Resources are missing, most significantly 1 - the 1974 study by Foster W. Dunwiddie, FAIA, as part of the Nicollet Island & East Bank Urban Renewal Project for the Minneapolis Housing and Redevelopment Authority and 2 - the previous 1961 report by Barton-Aschman Associates, Inc, St Anthony Falls - Nicollet Island, commissioned by the Downtown Council of Minneapolis.

These reports delineate the depth and breath of the historic resources that Nicollet Island represents. The omission of these and other relevant sources call into question the recommendations of the Zellie Historic Resources Survey.

Thus the worksheet reduces the Nicollet Island Residential Area, a unique resource widely studied and respected, to one paragraph and reports that, according to Zellie's assessment, "the proposed new construction does not appear to have an impact on the Nicollet Island Residential Area.

The worksheet and Zellie's report fail to present any criteria for that evaluation.

In contrast, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation defines adverse effects as including 1 - change in the character of the property's use or setting, and 2 - introduction of incompatible visual, atmospheric, or audible elements.

An Environmental Impact Assessment could provide the competent survey of the historic resources represented by Nicollet Island. This information is needed for an assessment of this proposal and is sorely lacking in this worksheet.

Foster W. Dunwiddie, in an August 15, 2005 submission to the MPRB, pointed out that failure to subject a project within this National Register Historic District could result in the City of Minneapolis having to reimburse the Federal Government for expenditures to date. (Attachment B)

Substantial federal, state and local funds have been spent to preserve Nicollet Island's historic resources, as well as within the entire Historic District. Actions that could threaten decerfication of a district would have tremendous area impact.

An Environment Impact Assessment is needed to evaluate this potential impact that is not even mentioned in the worksheet.

Vik...

Designated parks, recreation areas or trails:

Nicollet Island falls under the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the Mississippi National River and Recreational Area (MNRRA). The proposed rerouting of pedestrian and bicycle routes should be reviewed under that plan, but this is not included in the worksheet.

The worksheet includes the wording of a 1983 agreement that is contested by principles in this issue without stipulating that there is a view that the agreement may be void or may have been fulfilled.

If this information is to be included in the worksheet, information as to the restrictions on use of regional park land (athletic fields are not permitted) and the information should also be included that the proposal may necessitate the reimbursement of the Metropolitan Council for the amount of purchase of the park land or its replacement.

The worksheet should be inclusive and not be allowed to be a promotional piece for the project by presenting only a portion of the information.

27. Compatibility with plans and land use regulations

The area affected by the proposal is also within the Minneapolis Riverfront Study -- CPED.

The compatibility and explanation of how conflicts will be resolved has NOT been addressed in the worksheet, despite the incompatibility with the protection of historical resources that the various plans represent.

The worksheet develops Policy 6.3, 6.4 and 9.8 of the Minneapolis Plan dealing with recreation, parks and residential areas while leaving out 6.1 and 6.2 which support protecting and developing environmental resources "so that they contribute to resident's experience of nature".

Selective presentation in the worksheet is not appropriate when it demonstrates a bias for a particular outcome.

In contrast, the Nicollet Island Master Plan is referred to, but no attempt is made to address the incompatibility between the proposal and the Master Plan and how conflicts would be addressed.

The St. Anthony Falls Historic District and the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission are referenced, but absolutely NO attempt is made to address issues of incompatibility with the proposal and how conflicts would be addressed.

Land use regulations:

The proposal does not seem to meet Chapter 537.110 standards for separation from nearest residential property line (50 feet) and required parking (225 stalls).

31. Summary of issues

That the worksheet conclusions as to historic impacts for one of the most fragile and most historic areas of the city are summed up in two short statements highlights the need for an Environment Impact Assessment.

Thank you for the opportunity for comment on the deficiencies with the worksheet.

Christine Viken
1900 La Salle Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-874-1900
c1900@sibone.com


4/23/05



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

October 27, 1993

Mr. Robert K. Volk, Jr.
Department of Energy
Institutional Conservation Programs Division
Washington, D. C. 20585

Dear Mr. Volk:

Re: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; Minnesota
De LaSalle High School, Minneapolis (SHPO #93-4280)
Immaculate Conception Grade School, Faribault (SHPO #93-4281)
Storden Elementary School, Storden (SHPO #93-4282)
Parkers Prairie Highway School, Parkers Prairie (SHPO #93-4283)
Ames Elementary School, St. Paul (SHPO #93-4284)
Humboldt Junior/Senior High School, West St. Paul (SHPO #93-4285)
Webster Magnet Elementary School, St. Paul (SHPO #93-4286)
Ben Mays Elementary, St. Paul (SHPO #93-4287)
St. Francis Xavier Grade School, Buffalo (SHPO #93-4288)
SHPO Number: 93-4280-4288

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above projects. They have been reviewed pursuant to the responsibilities given the State Historic Preservation Officer by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36CFR800).

Based on the information provided, we conclude that the Storden-Jeffers Public School building does not meet National Register criteria.

The De La Salle High School is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. Therefore, we need to review the plans for the proposed project in order to determine whether they conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

In order to complete our evaluations of eligibility for Immaculate Conception Grade School, Parkers Prairie High School, Webster Magnet Elementary School, Ames Elementary School, Humboldt Junior Senior High School, St. Francis Xavier Grade School, and Ben Mays Elementary School, the following information is needed for each property:

1. A brief history of the school.
2. Current photographs of the entire school building, including additions.
3. A sketch plan of the school, showing the construction dates for the various sections.

Viktor 10/31

October 27, 1993
Robert Volk
SHPO Number: 93-4280-4288
Page two

If any of these properties are determined to meet National Register criteria, we will then need to review the proposed project plans.

If you have any questions regarding our review, please contact our Review and Compliance Section at 612-296-5462.

Sincerely,



Dennis A. Gimmestad
Government Programs and Compliance Officer

DAG:dmb

cc: Pat Gustafson, Faribault Heritage Preservation Commission
Beth Bartz, St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Martha Frey, Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission
Homer Hrubv, Minnesota Historical Society

Attachment E

August 15, 2005

Statement by Foster W. Dunwiddie, FAIA:

In 1974, restoration architect Foster Dunwiddie FAIA completed a pivotal study of Nicollet Island's historical resources. It served as the basis for the subsequent preservation efforts on Nicollet Island. It was also a foundation for the 1996 Nicollet Island Master Plan prepared by Martin and Pitz & Associates.

Prior to the 1974 study, all of the Island's historic properties were scheduled to be acquired and demolished. The Island as we know it today came about only after years of a cooperative effort at the federal, state and local levels.

Unfortunately, neither DeLaSalle High School nor the Park Board has addressed the impact of the proposed football field facility on the historic character of the Island. A crucial issue is the encroachment and impact on its existing historic resources. Further, no consideration has been given to archeological elements that may be present on the site, including remnants of the William W. Eastman mansion, and the John DeLaittre residence. These and other historic residences at one time fronted on those portions of Grove Street that are scheduled to be abandoned in order to accommodate the proposed football field facility. Surviving artifacts from an earlier period in the history of Nicollet Island may also be present on the site.

Alternative uses are often proposed within National Register Historic Districts. Nicollet Island as a part of the larger St. Anthony Falls National Historic District is no exception. In each case, these proposed uses have been carefully evaluated for compatibility and appropriateness by the federal, state and local agencies having jurisdiction. The nearby Grove Street Flats is just one of a number of these properties. Since Federal funding has been used in the completed restoration of a number of existing historic properties on the Island, the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office in St. Paul is one of the agencies having jurisdiction. There also are others. To date all of these and other historic properties within the Historic District have been subjected to this review. The proposed football field facility is no exception and should also be the subject of their review and comment. Failure to do so could result in the City of Minneapolis having to reimburse the Federal Government for expenditures to date.

Upon further consideration, I am confident that an acceptable alternative solution can be found that will respect the historic integrity of Nicollet Island and the St. Anthony Falls National Historic District while meeting the future needs of DeLaSalle High School and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Clearly, the existing plan does not

> Subject: Is permit needed?

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> I need to know if a permit must be requested for some work on an

> Island in the Mississippi, and, if so, who can file?

>

> Christine Viken

> 612-874-1900

>

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From: Peter Johann Willcütt [peat@pipapeat.com]

Sent: Wednesday, November 23, 2005 4:25 PM

To: Orange, Michael

Dear Mr Orange,

As a resident of Minneapolis, and of Nicollet Island's North End, I hear from visitors and tourists more than anything how green our beautiful city is. They comment on the trees and lakes and abundant wildlife. I feel that the city should reflect upon this strong aspect of Minneapolis' charecter in their planning process. It would be a shame to have a visiting friend stroll past the proposed site of development and say, "Hey, Didn't there used to be a meadow here?" The charecter of Nicollet Island in my opinion is not that of chainlink fences and high powered light and sound systems, but that movement of river winds blowing through trees, the sound of barges on the river and the soft crow of the rooster and the sight old roofs covered in a blanket of fresh snow in the winter.

My best regards and many thanks,

Peter Willcutt