

MEMORANDUM

To: Minnehaha Creek Board of Managers

From: Michael Hayman

CC: Jeff Spartz, James Wisker

Date: 10/9/2014

Re: Minnehaha Creek Reach 20 Restoration Meadowbrook Road Entry Overlook

Overview:

Construction of the trail system at the Reach 20 Restoration resumed approximately two weeks ago with the initiation of clearing and grubbing, and rough grading of the bituminous trail alignment beginning at Meadowbrook Road. Recently, staff has had an opportunity to walk construction progress with the design team – contractor and landscape architect. The Meadowbrook Road Entry Overlook remains an area of concern. The team concluded that at this time, current land use conditions, coupled with the present viewshed from the overlook, and the lack of trail access and connectivity to the west, will likely result in a trail amenity that is not conducive to a memorable experience at this particular location.

The conclusion that the project team has arrived at is that a short section of bituminous trail can be constructed in place of the overlook, allowing for installation of the overlook to occur in the future if land use, visual context, or other circumstances result in a more favorable condition. The screening of the electric transformer would remain at this location to shield the utility structure from trail user view. The contractor has indicated that the future addition of the overlook element can be completed with minimal impact to the site.

It is important to note that the dynamic and flexible nature of the project design – modifying the design of the trail and user experience to best fit the restoration – was catalyst to the projects unique appeal and success. By remaining flexible the District will allow for the bituminous trail and vegetative screening to occur, and determine at a later time if this project element truly fits the area.

Timing of construction sequencing required that this element be brought before the Board prior to the next meeting on October 23, 2014.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff is recommending that the Meadowbrook Road Entry Overlook be deleted from the work in favor of completing the trail system and responding to site conditions and user experience as deemed appropriate.

A draft resolution has been provided for Board consideration on October 9, 2014. Staff will provide a brief presentation to better inform the Board of this recommendation. Removal of this overlook element will result in a reduction to contract price. The contractor is finalizing cost reductions, which will be presented to the Board on Thursday.

Board Members wanting to tour the site, or any additional questions, comments, or ideas related to the Reach 20 Restoration Project can be directed to Michael Hayman at mhayman@minnehahacreek.org or 952.471.8226.

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14-083

TITLE: **Concurring in Deletion of Meadowbrook Road Entry Overlook Area from Minnehaha Creek Reach 20 Community Trails Project**

- WHEREAS on August 23, 2012, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) Board of Managers (“Board”) approved a final design for the Reach 20 Community Trails project, encompassing creek remeandering, a regional stormwater basin, and a trail design;
- WHEREAS on November 8, 2012, the Board awarded a contract to Blackstone Contractors in the amount of \$1,859,370.38, including a bid alternate for trails of approximately \$1,035,907, and authorized the administrator to issue a notice to proceed for the base bid only;
- WHEREAS on November 14, 2013, the Board authorized the Administrator to issue a notice to proceed for the trail bid alternate in accordance with the Board’s approved design, which design includes a creek overlook area near the site entry from Meadowbrook Road;
- WHEREAS District staff and the District’s design consultant now recommend that this overlook area be deleted from the work on the grounds that the present viewshed does not support an overlook at this location, trail access and connections do not currently exist to the west, and that the design focus here should be to move pedestrians to and from the boardwalk element that remains the focal point of the trail system;
- WHEREAS the Board concurs in this recommendation and finds that an overlook area may be added at this location in the future, for limited additional cost, if a change in the visual context or other relevant circumstances should improve the public value of the overlook; and
- WHEREAS deletion of the overlook area would reduce the contract price;
- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board concurs in deletion of the Meadowbrook Road entry overlook area from the work and affirms the authority of the District administrator to execute this deletion in accordance with the contract.

Resolution Number 14-083 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____.
Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: _____.

Secretary Date: _____