

**LAKE BLUFF PARK DISTRICT
SUNRISE PARK AND BEACH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
COMMUNITY FORUM MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 15, 2012 (NORTH SHELTER)
10:30 AM**

Chairman Geoff Surkamer opened the meeting, discussed the origin of Committee, purposes of the meeting.

Chair Surkamer introduced the other Committee members.

Chair Surkamer said that he and the Committee don't want this to be Lake Forest in terms of lights, concrete, etc. and seek private donations to fund proposed initiatives, not seeking tax funding. He mentioned the purpose of the Committee is to discuss, review, introduce and propose improvements at the beach, bluff and Sunrise Park to Park District Board of Commissioners.

Chair Surkamer stated one reason for formation of Committee was NSSD proposed to install two million gallon tank under boat yard.

He provided background on NSSD Building such as:

- past violations of EPA rules
- overflow run off goes into lake
- they proposed building a tank
- road access to dig and pour cement for tank will cause large problems
- barge instead, don't kill the road. NSSD would be responsible for repairs to roads.

Chair Surkamer discussed Committee Proposals that contained short-term, mid-term, long-term ideas.

He mentioned background survey information such as:

- took survey and developed action items off of survey
- developed on line survey to assess needs, desires.
- incredible response to survey, surveys completed on line.
- proposals developed after debate and discussion of results of survey, action items by Committee

He mentioned the Yacht club would be impacted by the proposed NSSD tank.

Chair Surkamer mentioned the Friends of Lake Bluff Park District Foundation was available today and available to help fund Park District improvements. He mentioned information re: survey, proposals, Foundation can be found on-line at Park District's website.

Chair Surkamer discussed certain elements of the proposal such as the following:

- road expansion
- fence around dog beach - don't underestimate passion for pooches
- concrete pads
- boardwalk

Chair Surkamer mentioned the Committee decided to hold this Forum, follow up, and issue specific forums which are meant to bring these ideas to community attention and discussion.

Chair Surkamer opened the meeting up to comments and questions from the forum attendees.

Linda Smaliso, 665 Moffett

- Hard pack sand path instead of boardwalk, for strollers

Roger Hechter, 332 Mawman

- Yacht club member. What is going to happen to yacht club if NSSD tank is installed?

Bill Hermann, 516 E. Center, Committee member thanked Chair Surkamer for his hard work and asked the community to come together in a positive manner to move forward. He talked about NSSD, history, judicial order to build NSSD plant, no current EPA order to install tank, but EPA wants redundancy, back ups for storm run-offs. He mentioned NSSD has been in compliance since they installed the back-up generator. He mentioned stimulus money seemed available as NSSD said they had \$8 million. He thought that we could get some of those funds for beach improvements. He mentioned that the Park District and Committee has not heard from NSSD recently and not much seems to be progressing on tank plan.

Larry McCotter, 121 Rockland Rd.

- discussed NSSD issues-second generator? Is it possible to fix problems?

Chair Surkamer responded and discussed ugly building. He mentioned that it would be nice to make it look better, smaller but do not want to disrupt the beach, the bluff, the Yacht Club, the community.

Bill Nordeen, 1047 Glendale Ave

- Where is proposed guardhouse/restroom? If they tear up yacht club, can we put one in connection with NSSD building renovations?

Chair Surkamer responded to incorporate into NSSD building or could fix up north shelter.

George Norton, 29759 Bayshore Drive

- Shade structures; do not want new ones, cabanas, too much concrete?

Chair Surkamer responded the shelters are often taken, not available, shelters dirty, Costco pop-up tents would be better than cement pad cabanas

Gary Doyle, 528 Ravine

- What is the next step with the proposals? What is the process, who decides?

Chair Surkamer responded the Advisory Committee's is planning to conduct a couple more forums, gather more feedback. He stated the Foundation may hold a forum. He mentioned that he wished the Advisory Committee was further along, working for acceptance by community. The Committee will make recommendations to the Park District Board, the governing body. They will need to approve any actual formal plans before anything moves forward. Park District Board will have ultimate authority as to proposals.

Ralph Bishop, 764 Evanston

- Stairway redesign, reconstruction, big project, price tag.

Chair Surkamer responded the current stairway dangerous, too steep, needs to be fixed, re-do all the way from the top? Want it to be ADA complaint. He mentioned the survey responses favored new stairs such as a loop stairway like Lake Forest would be tough, take up a lot of room. He mentioned the need to assess bluff impact, big ticket item.

Larry McCotter, 121 Rockland

- stairway and ADA mutually exclusive, too steep for ADA compliance
- Lake Forest has no steps, ramp, need 1/4 mile to do an ADA ramp, we do not have enough space. Need to be careful with the bluff. Our bluff is unique. We have something special per Cliff Miller report.

Ed Holstein, 713 Ravine Ave

- PD Foundation - questions? How does it work? Same as old PD Foundation? Has it raised any money?

Chair Surkamer introduced:

Peter Arnstein, President of Friends of Lake Bluff Park Foundation, 341 Washington

- discussed foundation organization, formed 501c3 not for profit corporation in 2005
- may take tax deductible contributions
- What they have been doing, developed a full strategic plan for the Foundation
- provide free choice of discretionary monies
- want to be efficient, transparent
- want to be fiduciary, steward of contributions
- work with Park District staff in an integrated approach
- Marketing website with park district. Raised \$[30,000] in treasury. Purchased chess table on bluff.

Was foundation established to support pool? President Arnstein stated, “No - it was started to address how you raise money outside the tax base and user fees.”

President Arnstein mentioned the Park District formed a long term Capital Asset Task Force. He outlined the following:

- Who are the voting members of Foundation
- Park District Board Member, Susan Erhard, is on Foundation board
- website - strategic plan, building separate website
- express free choice
- support assets and programs of Park District
- how much raised, how much spent?

Roger Hechter, 332 Mawman

- Please discuss priority list

Chair Surkamer responded all items are a “wish list”, tallied from survey results, and to put all monies raised towards projects.

David Barkhausen, 714 Prospect

- Projects only from donations or some money coming from PD budget?
- Bluff restoration?
- Shouldn't PD fund this from their budget?
- Fiscal budget has maintenance. Maintenance is Park District responsibility - can we ask for Park District funds to restore bluff?

Chair Surkamer responded Park District has maintenance budget and would be good to get more budgeted Park District funds to beach issues.

Ralph Bishop

- Is the list of proposals in order of survey response frequency?

Chair Surkamer responded, “Yes.”

Ann Wick, Newman Court

- If we build tank, nice to use barges instead of road. Can we avoid trucking?

Chair Surkamer responded if we want to barge, NSSD has told us barges are too expensive, but what road repairs will cost. He stated there is a need to keep pushing this alternative if they come back again with tank plan.

Larry McCotter

- Lighting proposals - in response to survey? I and Lake Bluff Open Lands Association (“LBOLA”) do not want more lights
- Security lighting does not provide security. We pay for manned security.
- Concerned with lighting. Is it a must? We all agree with LED lighting if lighting is needed -nice, natural low level solar powered?
- The current yellow lights are awful - more not necessary, fix those first.

Chair Surkamer responded safety issues are valid, survey responses affirm it, and agree yellow lights are ugly.

Carol Didier, 552 Sunrise

- Will lighting be seen up top?

Chair Surkamer responded not the intent to be seen more then they are currently.

Roger Hechter

- What is process, you need more feedback

Chair Surkamer responded yes, agree, that was the point of having survey and will be opportunity for more feedback forums.

Frank Chupitch, 420 Sunrise

- Aesthetic consultant needs to be on board
- Less benches, not more, they need to fit in. Chess table – is that appropriate?

Bill Hermann thanked the Forum attendees for contributing thoughts, ideas, feedback. He stated there is no referendum, no formal legal process for utilizing voluntary contributions and determining what projects are pursued. He stated the Advisory Committee needs to have affirmation from the community before we proceed, no pet projects funded by specific contributions that are not vetted by the community. He stated ultimately the Park District Board will need to approve all projects. He stated we need to be certain that we respect our asset, the Bluff and the Beach.

Larry McCotter

- Received permission from Chair Surkamer to have LBOLA’s written comments on the proposals submitted into the minutes of the meeting, attached as Exhibit A.

Chair Surkamer closed the forum.

EXHIBIT A

LAKE BLUFF OPEN LANDS' COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED PLAN BY THE SUNRISE PARK AND BEACH CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

There will be an informational session held Saturday, September 15th at 10:30 AM at the LB beach North Shelter for the purposes of introducing a new report generated by the Sunrise Park and Beach Citizen Advisory Committee plan.

The Committee seeks public input regarding their plan and the Board of Directors of Lake Bluff Open Lands Association (LBOLA) believes that it is important for the public to be aware of the contents of the plan in advance of the meeting.

LBOLA's Mission is the preservation and restoration of natural areas in Lake Bluff. That commitment includes the lake, the bluff and the beach - including two prairies planted by LBOLA in 1985 and maintained by us since that time.

We love the fact that our beach, throughout 115 years of Lake Bluff's existence, has remained an open, unobstructed and natural area where we can go to enjoy water, sand and sun during the day - and *darkness at night*.

Survey results show that Lake Bluff residents support improving the beach and the Advisory Committee has put together a list of possible improvements.

The following are observations and comments on the proposed plan from LBOLA's Board of Directors.

SHORT TERM GOALS

#1 Improve Existing Restrooms - \$16,000

We fully support this item.

#2 Signage at Entry Points - \$7 - \$10,000

We support adequate, economical, tasteful signage.

#3 Shower at Dog Beach Including 5' x 5' Concrete Pad - \$6,000.00

While questioning the need for a concrete pad, we expect this to be popular among dog owners.

#4 Dog Beach Enclosure - 30' aluminum picket fence. \$2,500

The photo caption says "Match existing split rail fence," which makes sense. On the other hand, the bullet points call for a six-foot-tall aluminum picket fence which, to us,

seems out of character for the Lake Bluff beach. One of the wonderful aspects of going to the beach is being able to look north, east and south and enjoy the unimpeded views of the entire lake. Visually, a six-foot-tall fence would unnecessarily block open views to the north. The expensive aluminum materials would likely not survive the movement of winter ice.

#5 Recycle bins anchored to concrete pad - \$4,500

We strongly support the use of high quality recycling bins at the beach, but question the need for more concrete here.

#6 Lighting - \$24,000 The plan's photo is of a 4' bollard. The text describes a 12' lighting pole.

LBOLA's board is in favor of maintaining the beach in as natural a state as possible. It is our opinion that existing yellow, high-pressure sodium (HPS) lighting is unattractive, out of character with the Lake Bluff beach and unacceptable. The use of four-foot bollards is at least on an appropriate scale and "warm color temperature" LED lighting would be an improvement on the existing yellow HPS lamps. We feel that nighttime visits to the beach should include the experience of being able to see stars above and the lake stretching to the moonrise on the horizon. We concede that lighting the road and path up and down enhances safety. Bringing lighting down to and onto the beach, however, is a violation of the spirit of what the Lake Bluff beach is supposed to be about and we further support the removal of lighting from the NSSD structure as well.

#7 Enclosed Grill, Stone Pedestals & Counters -10' x 8' Concrete Pad - \$7,500.00

Someday it will be appropriate to replace existing grills, though they're "grate" as is. Proposed 10' x 8' concrete pad is excessive and unnecessary. The beach is for sand! We wonder how the expensive ornamental stone will look after several winters in the elements.

#8 Redesign and Reconstruct Stairs to North Shelter. 76' grade change. \$225,000 - 275,000

We support an improvement over the existing stairs that run from the top of the bluff to the access road. Current standards call for a maximum seven-inch rise between steps. The rise in the existing stairs ranges between seven and eleven inches and some steps appear to be excessively steep and dangerous. We note that there already is a wooden staircase from the access road to the North Shelter and question if that really needs to be completely redone. Further, we note that "Trex" materials have developed a terrible reputation for mold problems and would prefer to see a more natural wooden structure. If the lower stairs do not really need to be redone, perhaps costs would be significantly reduced.

#9 John Deere XUV 550S4 \$20,000.

This proposed vehicle would appear to be the solution to many accessibility issues. We note that this vehicle retails for \$9,400 at johndeere.com.

#10 Beach Accessibility - “Trex” Boardwalk to North Shelter - \$100,000

We agree there should be an accessible beach shelter. There is a major concern with the proposed amount of beach permanently committed to concrete or decking. If a boardwalk were extended to the south shelter rather than the north shelter, that would reduce permanently covered sand from 3,100 SF to 1000 SF and reduce costs proportionately. Additionally, we note that the John Deere vehicle will also create accessibility for disabled visitors in a safer, more reliable manner. Boardwalk lighting, again, runs afoul of the Park District’s historic vision for the beach. “Trex” decking has developed a terrible reputation for mold problems. Winter ice and “Noreaster” storm wave-action should always be considered with proposed “permanent” beach structures.

#11 - Showers - Two for People - \$20,000.

We support additional showers at the beach.

#12 Bluff Restoration Plan - Per Plan by P. Clifford Miller, Inc.

We enthusiastically support the restoration of the bluff as soon as possible according to P. Clifford Miller’s plan. LBOLA has a long history working with Mr. Miller - as does the Lake Bluff Park District. His report’s contention that the removal of invasive species from the bluff should be considered the highest priority is something that we endorse and practice in all LBOLA-managed properties. We strongly encourage the Committee to recognize the bluff as a botanical treasure that must be cared for and protected! (see #8 above and Widen Entry Road below)

MID TERM PRIORITIES

Shade Structures - Framed Cabanas - On a Concrete Pad. \$20,000 Each.

We believe that Shade Structures are called trees and that Lake Bluff residents go to the beach for sand and water - not concrete. View obstructions will be a major issue as will who has the “right” to use each structure. This unspecified quantity of Shade Structures will surely encounter storm and ice problems as well. Perhaps the Park District could provide several portable beach umbrellas instead.

Viewing Area From Bluff - 15’ x 15’ With Modest Landscape Improvements. \$22,000.

Our position is that Sunrise Park above the bluff IS a viewing area from the bluff and would not be enhanced by translucent railings. Further, any well intentioned “landscape improvements” will inevitably destroy fragile and threatened native vegetation.

Replace Entry Road Guard Rail - \$70,000

We support this recommendation.

Drinking fountains, New and Renewed 5' x 5' concrete pads. \$7,000.00

We support this recommendation. It's a good idea and fills a need. Does not require concrete.

LONG TERM PRIORITIES -

Guard House/Office/Restrooms, \$320,000

Residents have a longstanding desire for restroom improvements on the North Beach and restroom additions at the South. Might upcoming work at the North Shore Sanitary District facility incorporate this structure at the S. beach?

Boat Storage Improvements - Concrete Paving - \$60,000

If the NSSD builds their proposed million-gallon underground storage tank beneath the existing Yacht Club, we expect the Club will benefit from that work. Does the yacht club prefer a concrete to sand? Given the level of private security patrolling the beach, we feel security lighting is unnecessary and inappropriate at beach.

Widen Entry Road - \$1,500,000

***LBOLA is completely and inalterably opposed to** widening the road. The result of a five-foot widening would do tremendous harm to the bluff including the disturbance of at least another 10' stretch up the length of the bluff and result in the loss of numerous mature trees and innumerable spring ephemeral wildflowers. Widening would surely result in vehicles traveling at higher speeds and greater risk to pedestrians who share the road with the very limited number of permitted vehicles. Whose interested is served by this?*

Maintenance storage garage within Boat Storage Area. 20' x 20' concrete. \$20,000

If the maintenance facility within the boat storage area is 20' x 20', how big will the entire boat storage facility be? Where is maintenance equipment currently stored?

Brick Screening for NSSD - including landscape improvements Trees / vines? \$29,000

While brick may not be the answer, the appearance of the NSSD building should absolutely be improved in a creative manner.

Plastic Swim platform - 15' x 15' \$10,000

We are mildly in agreement with this item. Sustainability in winter ice, and high waves should be a consideration for such an investment. And plastic? How about wood?

Shelter Renovations - \$15,000

We support improvements and updates to existing shelters.

Benches - 9 Benches On 10' x 5' concrete pads - \$18,000

We support a reasonable number of subtle and sustainable benches at the beach. We also question why a four or five-foot bench would need a ten-foot concrete pad.

Bike Rack - anchored to concrete pads. \$1,500

We support this item.

PROPOSED IMPERMEABLE BEACH COVERAGE

As is clear from the above comments, LBOLA has a concern about the proposed use of concrete in so many locations at the beach. Consider that Lake Michigan has cyclical fluctuations in its water level. It is currently at its low mark, but many remember the last high-water mark in the mid 1990s when waves routinely reached the base of the bluff.

The Lake’s high-water mark is approximately 4.5' higher than the current water level. If we assumed a high-water level just three-feet higher than it is currently and calculated area of the remaining beach on a calm day, we would have approximately 40,200 square feet of beach.

Contrast that area with the proposed permanent coverage in the above plan:

Dog shower 5x5 =	25 SF	
grills 10x8 =	80 SF	
Showers 2 x 5x5	50 SF	
Shade structures (plural, let’s imagine 3 @ 200SF each)	600 SF	
Drinking fountains 3 x 5x5	75 SF	
guard house 300 SF	350 SF	
New restroom 800 SF	850 SF	
Boat storage	2000 SF?	
Widen entry road 700 x 5 (not included in beach area)		3,500 SF
Maintenance storage 20 x 20 (included in boat storage)		400 SF
Benches @ 9 x 50 SF/pad	450 SF	
Bike racks plural? maybe, 10' x 5 x 2?	100 SF	
North boardwalk 515' x 6'	3,090 SF	
Total Proposed Beach Coverage:	7,670 SF	

This represents **19%** of available open beach proposed for conversion to concrete in the Committee's plan.

Chair, Geoff Surkamer

Secretary, Ron Salski

Recorder, Bill Hermann