



August 23, 2011

Council President Kathy Lantry
Councilmember Dave Thune
City of Saint Paul
320-C City Hall
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

SUBJECT: PORT AUTHORITY SOUTHPORT SITE PLAN APPROVAL
MODIFICATION, WETLANDS RESTORATION, AND DONATION OF
CERTAIN LANDS TO THE CITY

Dear Council President Lantry and Councilmember Thune:

Thank you for meeting with us to discuss the Southport Site Plan Approval Modification that includes parkland exchange. This was brought before City Council on August 17, 2011, and several questions came up during the public hearing. We would like to respond to those questions and some concerns that were raised regarding the wetland restoration and the Port Authority's commitment toward conditions set in the 2008 resolution.

The Port Authority remains committed to all conditions set forth in the 2008 resolution except for the requested parkland exchange and provides the following:

1. The Port Authority will transfer all land to the City for parkland within 90 days from the date of City Council Resolution 11-1017. This includes the original 11 acres plus the new 16 acres for a total of 27 acres of new parkland.
2. The Port Authority remains committed to complete all wetland restoration work that was committed in the 2008 resolution. There is significant effort that goes into identifying and creating wetlands. The process takes several years or more to complete a work plan that includes design, approval, excavation, site preparation, planting and maintenance. To date 1.7 acres of wetland restoration is complete. An additional 1.1 acres will be complete by the end of 2012. These 2.8 acres represents the wetland work that was agreed to with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Port Authority will work with City departments, principally Parks and Recreation, Planning and Economic Development (PED) and Public Works, to identify priority areas for the remaining wetland restoration. The Port Authority will also prepare annual updates, January 15 of each year, on the status of the wetland work.

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3. The Port Authority and the City will meet with Ramsey County regarding the Warner Road reconstruction. We recognize that the new bridge includes bike access, and the Port will work with Parks and Ramsey County on how pedestrian connections will work safely around Barge Terminal #1. In addition, we will continue to work with Parks to implement the Great River Passage Plan on the east side of the Mississippi River.
4. The Port Authority remains committed to assist City and community representatives' efforts to provide trail access to the River's edge at Southport. This was a condition of the 2008 resolution and remains a commitment. As a part of the new resolution, the Port Authority is donating land at the River's edge at Southport. In addition, we will continue to work with all parties, including Parks, Ramsey County, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Metropolitan Airport Commission (MAC) on trail connections.
5. As a part of this process, the Port Authority became aware of certain small infill parcels of land adjacent to parkland, and agrees to work with Parks to transfer parcels as they make sense to provide continuity of land ownership.

We believe our commitment to undertake these actions is consistent with the commitments made in Resolution 08-1033 in 2008, the recommended amended resolution, and the priorities of the many individuals and organizations that informed our recommendations over the past year.

We look forward to working with all interested partners in carrying out the vision noted above.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Louis F. Jambois
President

cc: Councilmember Carter
Councilmember Bostrom
Councilmember Harris
Councilmember Helgen
Councilmember Stark
Michael Hahm, Director, Parks and Recreation
Anne Hunt, Environmental Policy Director, Mayor's Office
Lorrie Louder, Port Authority
Kelly Jameson, Port Authority