

4-3-13

Attn: St. Paul City Council President and Members

Re: Proposed Great River Passage Master Plan (GRPMP)

Attached are ten copies of my comments regarding the currently proposed plan. The GRPMP is a very important effort to reconnect the city with it's roots at the river. I think it has evolved and improved significantly over the last two years. I appreciated the opportunity to participate in that process and to add comment at this point which I offer in the spirit that it can be better. Changes are much preferred before adoption than after.

Thank you, Kent Petterson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Petterson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

GRP Advisory Committee and W. 7th Enhancement Coalition member
503 St. Clair Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55102

enclosures

3-24 Comments on Great River Passage Master Plan (GRPMP) @ City Council

1 – The current iteration as well as past have been difficult to follow. Changes made have included pages removed or relocated, pages added, and significant text revisions. I would caution anyone that might assume the plan has been well vetted in the current form proposed for approval. In this current form we see several pages that are blank when viewed on our computer. We are left to wonder do we have a computer glitch, are pages left blank and not marked as such or are we looking at an error in the posted content. Some pages that are blank have page numbers but no indication that a blank page is deliberate. Plan access is difficult for anyone but those that have the fastest computers.

2 – The plan showing bluff protection in the valley does not show protection at Victoria Park or the proposed development at Otto and going east. Given coming proposed activities, bluff protection here would be needed.

3 – The GRPMP has correctly focused on walkers, runners and bikers in its effort to provide access to the river. Even though the plan seems to say all the right things about access for the less able, it is hard to point to improvements of access to the river for those people. In the case of the less able, the very young and elderly, this plan seems to be leave those folks, figuratively, at the bluff.

Since the less able are often dependent on vehicles or rolling chairs, two ideas seem appropriate to consider. First a comprehensive study of parking in the valley and on the bluff and secondly a plan to replace the lost stairs in the city that historically provided access to the river edge, with modern day incline type funicular access.

4 – The Environmental Learning Center continues in the plan and the Comprehensive plan pages despite unresolved opposition at the Highland District Council and contradiction with SITES sustainable guidelines that would seem to advise against significant investment in a building on a flood plain. Oh yes, the building can be elevated, but how much of the year will it be unusable because you can't get there. With many nearby services available to the city, this is a duplication of service in contradiction to the advice of the Comprehensive plan.

5 - The implementation strategy in Chapter 7 has strong incentives away from supporting neighborhood parks through the suggested fund raising structure and the powerful advocacy proposed by the GRP Action Committee that does not exist in the same form for neighborhood parks.