

Attending: Keith Schulenburg, Rick Kaiser, Betsy Abert, Jan Marsh, Don Lawson, Jody Johnson, Lynn Crawford, Jan Schumacher, Rob Vajagich, Rita Wiskowski; Milwaukee County Chief of Operations, Guy D. Smith; South Milwaukee Alderman Erik Brooks, Jackie Benka, Debby Pizur

We started our meeting with pizza eating. While we were munching, Erik Brooks addressed us regarding his desire to connect with community groups such as ours in order to identify ways to promote South Milwaukee as a vibrant city, and he shared his desire to run for its mayor in April 2014. He asked for our vision of the downtown area and how we can promote South Milwaukee (and Grant Park) as an attraction.

Our main discussion focused on what our course of action should be regarding the Cudahy Gun Club's continued pollution of the lakefront. One of our members went on a field trip, hiking the beach below the gun club, and took photographs of the accumulated trash that covered the hillside below the shooting range. Chunks of orange clay targets, many still completely whole, cover the bluff below the shooting range and of course, shotgun wadding is everywhere. The beach is protected by sections of plastic fencing, presumably to prevent this trash from being washed out into the lake during rain storms. Unfortunately, the thicket of trees and weeds on an uneven landscape along the beach make the fencing useless, as the bottom edge of the fencing is suspended above the ground in places, and in some places, no fencing was used at all. Mudslides on the hill have taken out some portions as well. Milwaukee County Park's director of operations, Guy Smith, brought along a copy of the lease agreement with the club. The contract specifies in a couple different places that the club must restore the leased area to approximately its original condition and pay for any intentional or unintentional environmental contamination both to the leased premises and the adjacent areas. They also will be required to post a bond to pay for this, although a quick reading of the lease made it unclear whether the bond covered the clean up of adjacent areas as well as the leased property. Guy will take the photographs and our concerns to the next meeting with parks director John Dargle and get back to us with their reaction.

Lowe's has donated materials and plants for a garden to be installed by the area #2 parking lot. They will provide topsoil, mulch and plants. Signage will mention Lowe's gift and thank the Friends of Grant Park for maintaining it (we agree to regular weeding). We can ask for volunteers to assist with this from a number of groups: school groups, honor society, local parish, Conservation Corps leaders, etc. We have to organize the troops.

Lastly, we discussed our annual fundraising event, Pullin' O' the Green Irish party which will be held on March 15th, 2014. We think the Garlic Mustard Pickers band will be available on that day. A member suggested we hunt for/solicit donations from JCPenney, Kohl's and Walmart to offset supplies and food necessary to stage this event.

Our next meeting is on January 9th.

Submitted by
Jody Johnson, member
Friends of Grant Park