

31

Hello, Senator Michel: I trust your meeting this week with Three Rivers helped to educate you on the points I viewed on the resident-generated website. I understand it will be posted on the <http://www.threeriversparkdistrict.org/trails/ninemilecreek.cfm> site very soon.

Are you hearing from an equal or greater amount of residents who are supportive of the route? I hope you find the FAQ helpful and thank you for welcoming my thoughts. It is important that leaders such as you have the benefit of helpful, accurate information.

My thoughts are that as a long-time Edina resident, and someone that favors Safe Routes to Schools and am supportive of the City of Edina Comprehensive Bicycle Transportation plan, this project has many wonderful benefits for the community. I trust Three Rivers Park District's natural environment stewardship to continue its work for protecting our natural assets and improving the quality of life in Edina.

You would be well-informed to be aware of the 2006 needs assessment survey that indicates biking/walking facilities are the number one feature where Edina residents want more attention and improvements. Mr. John Keprios of the City of Edina is an excellent resource if you have questions about previous resident inputs and surveys -- if you haven't had the pleasure of speaking with John, I highly recommend that as part of your fact-finding. I'm copying John for your convenience and I hope that the two of you could talk soon if you haven't already.

Thank you for your message. I look forward to hearing back from you and please consider me a resource for any questions about how this multipurpose trail accommodates many City desires and plans, including the one mentioned above.

On Tue, Mar 3, 2009 at 1:09 PM, Sen.Geoff Michel <Sen.Geoff.Michel@senate.mn> wrote:

Kirk: Thanks for your email and involvement. I am meeting this week at the capitol with Three Rivers and 9 mile staff to get more details and background. While it is not clear if there is any state role here, I have heard from many Edina neighbors and residents who oppose the route and are upset about the process. The website you referenced has been updated to indicate my involvement. I would welcome your thoughts as this discussion moves forward.

Geoff

--

Kirk Logan Johnson
Kirk.johnson@LoganLogic.com
(612) 916-9966 (Cell)

32

March 4, 2009

Charlie and Susan Danielson
6508 Creek Drive
Edina, MN 55439
952.941.5172

We are writing today to voice our opposition to the proposed routing of a bike path behind homes residing on Creek Drive and Valley Lane in Edina. Many of our neighbors have written similar letters and made many valid points. We would like to emphasize several of those points further based on our specific experience.

We are ten year residents at the address listed above and have seen intense flooding multiple times each year. We feel a large addition of traffic in close proximity to Nine Mile creek will lead to a drowning. To demonstrate this point, we invite all city officials to our home to see a gentle creek transform after a moderate to heavy rain into a stormy rushing current consuming the entire area and part of our yard at times. This current carries with it tree limbs and other debris that can easily entice curious children. Putting a path through this area leads our children right into a deceptively deadly current not realizing the debris hiding under the surface of the water or how fast the current is rushing. A bike bath along this creek increases the risk of serious injury or drowning beyond that of neighborhood children.

Further, many of the residents have extensively finished basements that are uninsurable for flood damage per the National Flood Insurance guidelines. In the event a rain puts 6 feet of water in a basement, available insurance will only pay for a furnace, water heater and maybe a water softener. The rest is the owner's loss *unless the water goes to the main floor* and then it will cover everything. We've noted the water comes up into our yard further each year due to increased hard pack (larger driveways, expanding homes) and increasingly violent storms. Additional building in this area will clearly contribute to rising water.

When we have heavy snow melt or after a moderate to heavy rain, please come see for yourself the intensity and volume of water including tree limbs that run through this area and decide if one of the other proposed paths wouldn't be a safer and less expensive choice.

Respectfully,



Charlie and Susan Danielson

Greg and Monica Ansems

6516 CREEK DRIVE EDINA, MN 55439
TEL 952 8291660



ansemsfamily@gmail.com

March 5, 2009

Edina City Council Members: *Mayor James Hovland, Joni Bennett, Mary Brindle, Scott Housh, Ann Swenson*
Edina City Hall
4801 W 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Three Rivers Park District: *Jonathan Vlaming and Kelly Grissman*
3000 Xenium Lane North
Plymouth, MN 55441

RE: Proposed Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail- Edina Segments

Dear Sirs and Madams:

We have been living in Edina on Creek Drive since 2005 and purchased our home primarily because of the beauty & privacy of Nine Mile Creek behind our property. We wanted to live in Edina to raise our four young children in this great community and were lucky enough to find a house that backed up to the creek.

We were unable to attend the first open house but have read through all of the public comments posted on the helpful Three Rivers Regional web site. After reading through the comments, we remain strongly opposed to the path going along the creek for the same compelling reasons that have been articulated by other pro-street path letters/comments. The reasons against the path far outweigh the reasons for, and the public comments really highlight this large imbalance.

In the public comments there were 3 main general reasons in favor of the creek path as set forth below, but upon closer review, these reasons just don't hold water.

(1) Following the creek would provide the most pleasant and scenic route

We recognize the theoretical appeal of biking along water among pleasant scenery. Many of us have biked along Minnehaha creek or around the various lakes in the cities. However, not all creeks are created equal and 9-mile creek simply doesn't lend itself to a paved bike path. First, unlike any other bike path in the city, a 9-mile bike path would be literally in the backyards of hundreds of homes. The path would in many cases run within a few feet of swing sets, decks, sandboxes, and lawn mowers. Beyond the massive privacy violation of the lot owners, I suspect many bikers and walkers would find it at least a little uncomfortable to be so

close to those families and their houses. Also, many residents would likely erect a variety of privacy fences (many high security) which would detract from the scenic experience. Also, since the creek floods frequently (2-4 times a month by our estimation) the path would need to be built artificially high either on stilts or some other man-made structure. Such an unnatural looking path would be an eye sore for bikers and residents alike. Another man-made eye sore would be the numerous retaining walls that would need to be erected into the steep grades along the creek, particularly just west of the Valley View-Valley Lane intersection. Also, given the frequent flooding, the path and retaining walls would rapidly deteriorate requiring frequent and costly maintenance. It seems as though potholes on our city streets can take years to fix so we suspect potholes or eroded pavement on the path would not be a higher priority, thereby detracting further from the pleasantness, not to mention adding to safety concerns. Currently, the City does not actively repair the creek area, for example, the bank around the bridge spanning the creek from Creek Drive to Heights park has been eroding for years with no maintenance. Also, with all the standing water, let's not forget about mosquitoes. The wetlands around the creek provide an ideal breeding ground for mosquitos. Ask any resident and they will tell you how badly the mosquitoes swarm near the creek in the summer. Granted we are Minnesotans and most are accustomed to mosquitos, but I suspect the massive swarms of mosquitos at dusk would dissuade even the heartiest of bikers or walkers.

(2)The entire community should be allowed to enjoy the wildlife and native plants along the creek, not just the few residents who live on it

This comment is equally misplaced. The creek is public property and many, not just the adjacent residents, enjoy the creek. As our barking golden retriever will attest, there is plenty of foot traffic along the creek. There are numerous dog walkers and a constant platoon of children enjoying nature in its raw form. Children walk in and along the creek, catch crayfish, fish, look for turtles, collect sticks, and do all the other things that kids do when exploring nature. I am not sure how many public access points there are along the entire creek, but there are several where we live and any person desiring to explore the creek can readily do so already.

Moreover, a 10 foot wide path would permanently destroy this treasured nature preserve thereby leaving little for bikers to enjoy. The 9-mile creek region is a magnificent part of Edina that should be cherished and protected, not chopped down, bulldozed, and paved. There is no debate that a manmade path will negatively impact the environment, the only debate is how much. An Environmental Impact Study has apparently not been completed but would help to try to quantify the impact. However, an in-depth study is not necessary to understand the great impact a path would have. This is common sense. All anyone has to do to understand the impact on one portion of the creek is to drive by the intersection of Valley View and Valley Lane and peer down the north-east side of the creek where the path is proposed. In this 1000 ft stretch of the creek, there are hundreds of trees, many very mature, that would need to be chopped down. Also, since the grade is steep there, massive bulldozing and reshaping of the creek and ground would likely be required to make room and level the grade for the paved path. Similarly, if you enter Heights Park from Creek Drive and stop on the little bridge, you will notice hundreds of additional trees in both directions that would need to be chopped down. I wish somebody would count the total number of ash, box elders, maples, oaks, elms, and other trees that would need to be leveled. This number will be staggering and completely unacceptable. Beyond the thousands of lost trees, native flowers, plants and shrubs will be removed. Furthermore, the multitude of wildlife would also be negatively affected. We have seen deer, raccoons, fox, coyotes, snapping turtles, ducks, herons, wild turkeys and many

other animals along the creek. Its hard to imagine these animals being able to continue to thrive along a paved bike path with 1000s of visitors. The creek is a major highway for deer moving between Bredesen park, Braemer park, Hyland park, and all the way down to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. With a path on the creek, the deer would likely disappear from Edina altogether. Again, by installing a bike path the natural habitat that was intended to be enjoyed would be substantially destroyed.

The water quality would significantly degrade since a paved path would bring inevitable salt, garbage, and other pollution to the creek. This is of particular concern to us since we fish in the creek. There is a wide variety of fish including some pretty good size green sunfish and mudfish that are fun for kids and adults to catch. It seems that the amount of fish have increased over the years, due to the improvement efforts by the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District. I haven't seen any studies, but the amount of crayfish, minnows, and other fish have increased even in the four years we have lived on the creek. A paved path would destroy all of this hard work of water quality improvement. The increased pollution of the creek would be carried downstream through Bloomington and ultimately into the Minnesota River, so the impact on these downstream communities must also be taken into consideration.

Even the pro-creek path comments were usually qualified by a concern for the environment. For example a common comment was "I would prefer following creek if not harmful to environment." This is not surprising as Edina residents are very concerned about the environment and few would still be in favor a path if they knew the impact to the environment.

Finally, the argument of "expand public access to this nature preserve" is reminiscent of the debate when the Boundary Waters Canoe Area was formed. Those against the BWCA argued that the area should be opened up with roads so that more people could enjoy it. Fortunately, the developer lost and the BWCA remains one of this states most treasured resources. For these same reasons, the 9-mile creek area should be preserved and protected.

(3)Path along the creek would be safer for cyclists.

This is not necessarily true. There were many comments that a street path would be safer for cyclists. Beyond cyclists, I dont think anyone can deny that a path would increase the safety risk to residents and homes along the creek as well as Creek Valley elementary and Edina High School students. It is difficult to assess the magnitude of this increased safety risk, but why increase the risk at all? A bike path along the streets doesn't pose any increased safety risk, particularly to adjacent home owners. Granted, Edina and 9-mile creek is not downtown Minneapolis but the frequency and severity of the crime along the downtown bike paths are frightening. One crime would be one too many. It would be impossible to adequately police the path at all times and some of the dark secluded stretches would be ripe for potential crime. Also, as previously mentioned, the bike path would undergo extreme stress due to the frequent flooding and unless it is immediately repaired, there likely will be gaping potholes and bank erosion that would be dangerous traps for even the most seasoned riders. Furthermore, flooding along the creek can be fast and furious. After heavy rains, the creek water flows at a dangerous pace and it is foreseeable that unwary or thrill-seeking kids would get swept away by the rising and dangerously fast waters. Also, each flooding would deposit silt to the paved path that would require immediate cleaning to eliminate this safety risk.

Therefore, the reasons in support of a creek path are very weak and are overwhelming outweighed by the reasons against a creek bike path. Clearly, the best alternative is to put the bike path along the city streets. A street path satisfies all of the objectives of the proposed plan. We strongly urge the Edina City Council and Three Rivers Park District Commissioner to avoid placing the path along 9-mile creek.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gregory and Monica Ansems in black ink.

Gregory and Monica Ansems

cc: Nine Mile Creek Watershed District

State Senator Geoffrey Michel, R- Edina. sen.geoff.michel@senate.mn

State Representative, Keith Downey, R- Edina. rep.keith.downey@house.mn

34

FYI

Kelly Grissman
Planner

Three Rivers Park District
3000 Xenium Lane North
Plymouth, MN 55441-1299
763-694-7635 (direct)
763-557-5248 (fax)
kgrissman@threeriversparkdistrict.org

From: Ansems, Greg [mailto:Greg.Ansems@Honeywell.com]
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2009 2:30 PM
To: ninemilecreektrail
Cc: Ansems, Greg
Subject: Letter Opposing the Proposed Nine Mile Creek Bike Path

Three Rivers Park District,

Attached is a copy of a letter we also sent via mail today to Jonathan Vlaming and Kelly Grissman.

As Edina residents we are strongly opposed to the proposed bike path along Nine Mile Creek.

Thank you for considering the attached letter as well as all the other comments.

We hope that a fair and informed decision is made regarding the proposed bike path.

We feel that the choice is obvious but understand that the decision process must unfold in fair and open manner.

Regards,
Greg and Monica Ansems
6516 Creek Drive
Edina MN 55439
ansemsfamily@gmail.com

Greg Ansems
Assistant General Counsel, Intellectual Property
Honeywell International Inc. - Automation and Control Solutions (ECC and HBS)

1985 Douglas Drive North
Golden Valley MN 55422
Greg.Ansems@Honeywell.com
Office: 763 954 5387
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FYI

Kelly Grissman
Planner

Three Rivers Park District
3000 Xenium Lane North
Plymouth, MN 55441-1299
763-694-7635 (direct)
763-557-5248 (fax)
kgrissman@threeriversparkdistrict.org

-----Original Message-----

From: Larry Olson [<mailto:lolson01@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, March 06, 2009 7:02 AM
To: ninemilecreektrail
Subject: Support for Three Rivers Multipurpose Trail

Three Rivers Park District,

We are writing to show support for the proposed Three Rivers Multipurpose trail through Edina. It's a very exciting project for the City of Edina and for all residents of the metropolitan area. The prospect of having my children, and my neighbors' children, be able to one day bike to Edina High School and Middle School safely and away from traffic is very exciting. We know there are residents opposed to this project, but they are very small in number when compared to the number of residents who will greatly benefit from this proposed trail.

Thank you,
Larry and Amy Olson
6808 Cornelia Dr
Edina, MN 55435
(952) 920-8343
lolson01@yahoo.com

36

From: Barb Swanson [mailto:dustyswanson@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 07, 2009 2:46 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: Nine mile creek trail

Mayor Hovland and City Council, and Members of the Edina Park Board.

Please vote to create the Nine mile creek bike trail through Edina. It will be a wonderful addition to our community. It will make connections and provide a safe trail for people of all ages to use. One of our community's goals is to provide more walkable and bikeable spaces. This our opportunity. Please support the trail.

Sincerely,
Barb and Rick Swanson
308 Grove Place
Edina, MN 55343
952-938-5000

37

From: Vaughn Asselstine [mailto:vaughn052@msn.com]
Sent: Saturday, March 07, 2009 3:45 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: W 70th Bike Trail

Dear City Council Members,

Not long ago I sent an email to show support for your decision to have a bike path on W 70th St. Since then what I have read in the local paper leads me to believe that it will not, in fact, be a bike path - it will be "bike lanes", created by painting white lines on W 70th. If that is true, it is a waste of paint.

On-road "bike lanes" are dangerous especially in areas where there is high traffic moving at high speeds. I do not believe that the changes planned for W 70th are going to result in a substantial reduction of traffic or speed and so the "bike lanes" will not be an option for people of all ages. Cars and bikes must be separated.

I sometimes commute to downtown Minneapolis from our house and the most dangerous parts are in Edina (before you can get on to the St Louis Park paths) and then the "bike lanes" painted on the side of the streets in downtown Minneapolis - I end up riding on the sidewalk because the "bike lane" is so death-defying. The true bike path stretches of the ride are relaxing and gorgeous - our next house will be adjacent to a bike path, if we are lucky.

We got a notice about Three Rivers Park District's revisions to their plans to drop the W 70th portion - very disappointing. We are absolutely thrilled with the rest of their plan.

Please take a stronger stance to support bike and pedestrian traffic in Edina - you will have our full support.

thank you,

Vaughn Asselstine
4413 Ellsworth Dr
Edina

38

FYI

Kelly Grissman
Planner

Three Rivers Park District
3000 Xenium Lane North
Plymouth, MN 55441-1299
763-694-7635 (direct)
763-557-5248 (fax)
kgrissman@threeriversparkdistrict.org

-----Original Message-----

From: JOYCE E BRONSON [mailto:joycebronson@juno.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 08, 2009 3:27 PM
To: ninemilecreektrail
Subject: Re: 3Rivers Trail

EDINA

After reviewing your map, I can not imagine using Parklawn Ave.

1. School Bus route
2. Metro buses day and night
3. Street parking
4. VERY IMPORTANT - Buses driving North off of 76th street have immediate blind spots, especially rounding the turn. Even cars have these problems. Cars park around that bend and buses and cars have to veer into the wrong lane.
5. There are driveways on the east and west sides of Parklawn, immediately off of 76th street.
6. Buses and cars have a difficult turn North on Parklawn at 76th street as there is a jog at that point on Parklawn.
7. At this time when our economy is in crises, why should we be spending so much money from our taxes on a bike/walking trail? As a taxpayer in Edina, I resent this action.

This is not a good idea. If you continue with this plan, I would suggest that you stay on 76th Street East and get to the Promenade from the South end. And/Or continue East, going under York Street into Richfield. Put the bridge on 76th Street.

Sincerely,
Joyce Bronson
4100 Parklawn Ave #202
Edina, MN 55435

Digital Photography - Click Now.
<http://thirdpartyoffers.juno.com/TGL2141/fc/BLSrjpdTDvmS5TS7C8PWjepABpXdt7c01kHOElBtckeOP34TvwTS7v7Pn3Kg/>

39

From: Richard Griffith [mailto:rfgriffith@visi.com]
Sent: Sunday, March 08, 2009 1:18 AM
To: EdinaMail@CI.Edina.MN.US.
Cc: Kirk Johnson; Donald Eyberg; Dianne Plunkett Latham; Alice Hulbert
Subject: New Biking/Walking Paths in Edina

The BETF-proposed addition of a path along the 9-Mile Creek will go along way to make up for the lack of non-motorized transit in the City of Edina. The proposed path is one part of the excellent 2008 City of Edina Comprehensive Plan.

I live on Comanche Court, near Braemar Park and cannot walk or bike to the ball park or the ice center without walking on the pavement in competition with cars and trucks. Parents in our neighborhood will not let their kids walk or bike to these facilities, because of the danger of being hit by a car. Biking along Gleason and Valley View roads, with the turns, driveways, and storm sewer grates that will trap a bike wheel and knock the rider over the handlebars is not safe. Biking is safer in Hopkins, St. Louis Park, Bloomington or even Eden Prairie. Walkers face the same hazards in Edina. For too long, the focus of our Park Board has not been on safe transit for walkers and cyclists within our city borders.

My friends and I believe walking and cycling are important for our long term health. We walk from our house to Bredesen Park and back at least twice per week and cycle at least 25 miles on two or more days per week. We are older citizens, some 60- some 70-years of age. Over the years we have learned that it is not good to start a ride in Edina, because there are no paths to separate us from the cars and trucks. We usually have to drive to the Hopkins Depot, or to Jerry's in Eden Prairie or to Minnehaha Park to start our rides. We would love to have paths along the 9-Mile Creek that would link up to our adjoining suburban paths and are proud of the progressive thinking shown in the 2008 City of Edina Comprehensive Plan.

The work will result in stabilization of 9-Mile Creek banks. We believe Buckthorn will be replaced with local species. The Three Rivers Park District will then build the path along the creek, taking care to protect the private property boundaries along the creek. The Edina trail will be a continuation of the Hopkins creek stabilization and trail program completed so successfully last year.

To long time residents, such as myself, making walking/biking paths in Edina will complete the cities transit development that was not completed during the 1960's and 1970's, an era long past, when most of our streets were planned and built. In that time, we were too much in love with our cars and did not have the environmental conscience of todays younger residents.

We encourage our Edina City Council to continue with the planning and construction of the 9-Mile Creek path and the other biking/walking developments in our city and thank them for the progress already in hand.

40

Email from Todd Brewer to Senator Geoff Michel
Sent March 8, 2009

Dear Senator Michel:

I am sure you have recently received much correspondence related to the restoration project and trail currently being considered for Nine Mile Creek, so I'll try to be brief. I have participated on the Bike Edina Task Force since it was commissioned by the Edina City Council to put together a biking component for the Comprehensive Plan in 2007. During that process we held several public meetings as well as events to promote open communication and gather feedback. In addition to our research and outreach, the Edina Park Department conducted a survey of all residents to determine priorities for the community. By far the largest response was for more trails and biking facilities in and through the city. Off road facilities that linked to community amenities like parks, schools and community buildings, other communities, and regional trail facilities was a top priority in every interaction our group had with the community.

The biggest frustration of our residents related to biking was the difficulty getting around the barriers created by the major highways that literally cut the city into quadrants. The biggest challenge facing the Task Force was to devise a system that overcame the highway obstacles in a "built out" community and address the needs of varied types of cyclists and pedestrians. I would encourage you to review the Comprehensive Bike Plan for Edina. I would also emphasize that this plan was approved by the City Council and was subjected to an official and open public process. The plan has since received region and even national recognition for its content, conclusions and process. I know you have received from other sources the primary advantages of a possible trail along Nine Mile Creek, so I won't restate them.

I believe through the Comprehensive Plan Process, the City of Edina has identified and is preparing to deal with some pivotal issues that will affect our city into the future. I have lived in Edina for ten years, my wife was born and raised here, our children have all gone to Edina Public Schools, a significant number of the customers of our business are Edina residents – we have vested interest in the continued prosperity of city – in fact your whole district. In my adult life I have lived on both coasts, in the Rockies and traveled extensively throughout the country. It is without question, the places that invest in public amenities that maintain prosperity over time. So I am excited by the prospect of a project like Nine Mile, strongly support a serious study of its feasibility and genuinely hope the restoration of the creek with an incorporated trail can be accomplished.

I consider myself a fiscal conservative and would not support this project if I didn't believe it could be accomplished in a fiscally responsible manner. I will also not support the trail if there are determined to be any real issues of safety or negative impact on the environment. On the issue of safety, the serious misrepresentation of the facts is an attempt to create fear and is totally unfounded. The Cedar Lake Trail abuts several school yards in St Louis Park and Minneapolis without incident.

I do want to express my disappointment in the blatant misrepresentation of facts portrayed by the small group currently opposing even further study of the feasibility of the trail. I would have greater respect for this group if they were honest and said, "We have treated this public property like our own and don't really want to share it." The fact of the matter is, without the encroachments and pollution to the creek by adjacent landowners, there may have not been a need to fix the creek, and this project would likely not have even reached the study phase. With progress under way for the creek restoration and trail planning in other communities, it's also embarrassing to see Edina portrayed in the media as catering to select few. I am sensitive to the issue of property rights. I would not support the trail if it required forced easements on private land.

I would ask that you speak in support of the public process currently underway in consideration of this project. I would advise you to be cautious about becoming aligned with a group that misrepresents the truth and promotes fear to subvert an open public process. I would also ask that you encourage these individuals to calm their rhetoric and participate positively in the process.

Finally, I would like to commend the professionalism, diligence, openness, and balanced perspective of the staff from Three Rivers Park District, Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, and the City of Edina. Any claim that this process was not open, inclusive and considerate of all perspectives is an insult to these dedicated public servants and should be an embarrassment to those making the claims for their own self centered purpose.

Thanks for your consideration.

Todd Brewer
5901 St Johns Ave
Edina, MN 55424

41

March 9, 2009

Edina City Council

Mayor James Hovland
Council Member Joni Bennett
Council Member Mary Brindle
Council Member Scott Housh
Council Member Ann Swenson
Edina City Hall
4801 West 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners

Larry Blackstad, Marilyn Corcoran, Mark Haggerty,
Sara Wyatt, Dale Woodbeck, Rosemary Franzese, Joan Peters
3000 Xenium Lane North, Plymouth, MN 55441-1299

Dear Council Members and Commissioners:

We are very concerned about the proposed bike trail through our backyard. We have lived in Edina for close to 40 years. We purchased our home due to the location and nature of the privacy we found in Edina. We are located on section 11 of the proposed map and we have several concerns that we hope will be looked at in depth.

Safety. Our four children and neighbor kids currently play in our backyard with very little concern for onlookers. With a 'boardwalk' bike trail that is proposed to be built to our north, in the wetland area, and east, gives us an uneasy feeling of the freedom that we purchased our property for. After talking with people who live near the bike trail that goes through Minnetonka, they have people going into the woods and changing clothes very often. They have been very upset about what type of people the bike trail has brought to their area.

Flooding. The area to our north and east do flood quite frequently. In fact, it is part of the 100-year flood plain. How can someone come in and develop the flood plain. This raised 'boardwalk' will not only be a disruption to the wildlife in the wetlands, but the maintenance would be a astronomical.

Property Value. This is a very large concern. Edina, unlike other communities, has been able to maintain property values during this bad economy. When you do comparisons of property values that have similar bike trails through their property, those property values are down. The reason Edina's property values have stayed positive is because we are not like those other communities with bike trails through there backyards. Our property values have stayed positive because people have privacy along with beautiful yards and a terrific location. If we add a bike path like the other declining communities, we will have lower property values. The proposed bike trail will be detrimental to the properties located directly on the creek.

Destruction of wildlife. The proposed bike trail will take away from the habitat of wildlife that has been here for decades. The undeveloped Nine Mile Creek area is what has created the beauty of this nook of Edina. The deer, fox, coyotes, herons, beavers, and more, enjoy their places to roam and has created a unique experience within the city limits.

We strongly oppose this bike trail and hope that all considerations are taken with regards to the close proximity to homes. The City of Edina Overview Map looks to have other options that would be great for a bike trail that does not include running through residents' backyards. We hope you take our comments into consideration during the upcoming discussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pete & Julie McCarthy", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pete & Julie McCarthy
6801 Brook Drive
Edina, MN 55439

42

John Keprios

From: Frank A Kendall [Frank.Kendall@nashfinch.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2009 6:58 PM
To: John Keprios
Subject: Re: In Support of Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail

John,

I wanted to express my support for the Nine Mile Bike Trail through Edina. I am a commuting/recreational biker and the development of these trails raises the quality of life and recreational opportunities for all Edina residents and other avid walkers and bikers in the metro area. The city parkland near Nine Mile Creek where the trail will run will be a legacy for people to enjoy nature and get some exercise. I have trails behind my house and I believe they add value to my property and add quality of life to all the citizens that use them.

I commute on my bike through Edina on a regular basis and the creation of this trail will make it much safer to travel on my bike to and from work. I know some Edina residents may not think this is a good idea however I have seen development of numerous trails in the metro area over the last 15 years. The people opposed to these trails almost always stop complaining and start enjoying the trails once they are completed. They realize that many of their fears/concerns were unfounded and they quickly fall in love and start using the trails on a regular basis (many post trail construction studies have been done confirming this trend). Thanks to the City of Edina/3 Rivers Park District and everyone working to make this trail a reality, it will be a crown jewel of the city when it's completed.

Frank Kendall
Senior Buyer
Nash Finch Company
952-838-1530 Fax 952-838-1646
Frank.Kendall@nashfinch.com

"John Keprios" <JKeprios@ci.edina.mn.us>

03/10/2009 09:35 AM

To <frank.kendall@nashfinch.com>

cc

Subject Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail

Frank:

Thank you for the phone call this morning. If you and others wish to express your views regarding the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail, you may submit to me either via email or postal mail or fax. In turn, I will copy and pass along all written comments to the Edina Park Board and City Council.

Thanks for your support.

John Keprios, Director
Edina Park & Recreation Department
4801 W. 50th St.
Edina, MN 55424
Voice: (952) 826-0430

4/20/2009

Fax: (952) 826-0385
jkepriors@ci.edina.mn.us
"We Create Community through People, Parks and Programs"

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43

John Keprios

From: Brian McCarthy [brian.v.mccarthy15@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2009 11:05 AM
To: John Keprios
Subject: Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail

Dear Mr. Keprios,

I would like to add my support to the extension and completion of the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail. I grew up in Edina (Edina West Class of '76) at a time when trails for bikes were not as necessary as they are today do to traffic congestion. I use the Greenway from my home in Minnetonka to Minneapolis all the time, last year I commuted to work for over six months. My parents still live in Indian Hills and a safe trail that would keep me off Shady Oak road and the business park between 169 and 212 would be welcome.

The advantages to this project far out way the xenophobic concerns of a few residents. I find it amazing that people who buy property adjacent to park land (IE public land) because it adds value to their homes turn around and try to prevent others from accessing the same amenity, with claims of falling home values and crime.

If you would like to add me to a mailing list of supporters for this project please do so. I will be following this process along with other bike enthusiasts who want to see this happen.

Sincerely,
Brian McCarthy

44

John Keprios

From: Jennings [jennings@visi.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2009 12:55 PM
To: John Keprios
Cc: ninemilecreektrail@threeiversparkdistrict.org
Subject: Nine Mile Creek Trail--Our Input

John,

We live on West 70th Street in the Highcroft townhouse complex. We have lived in Edina since 1981. We attended the open house last night, studied the displays, and asked questions. Here are our thoughts:

- On the segment 8 versus 9 & 11 question, we are definitely in favor of 9 & 11. It's not just that segment 8 runs by our complex. In fact, there are now bicycle paths on both sides of 70th street in our area. In general, we support the creation of bicycle paths and regional trails wherever feasible. Edina has been lagging many other communities in this regard.
- We are pro 9 & 11 primarily because it would be a safe, level and off-street trail. It would enable bicyclists, hikers, in-line skaters, etc. to avoid traffic on cross streets and driveways, and to enjoy a beautiful, natural setting that is now largely unavailable to the public.
- We are against segment 8 as a regional trail because it is a busy street, with numerous intersections and side-streets as well as a major hill. Also, as noted, it already has bicycle paths on either side, which seems more than adequate for bicycle commuters. Why redesign the segment as a regional trail that would presumably attract families with strollers, in-line skaters, joggers, etc. and expose them to the traffic on 70th Street as well as cars at intersections and pulling out of driveways?
- We are against segment 7 because it seems unnecessary.
- We are against segment 6 as now drawn but would be in favor of a link between the Edina High School parking lot and 5A/5B.

Thanks for considering our input.

Joe and Peggy Jennings
5545 West 70th Street
952-922-3384

45

RECEIVED
MAR 13 2009

5700 Tucker Lane
Edina, Minnesota 55436
952-930-9040

March 11, 2009

The Honorable James Hovland
Mayor, City of Edina
Edina City Offices
4801 West 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Dear Mayor Hovland:

As you know, the City of Edina has a long history of protecting and preserving the environment. That was the reason, when constructing the curb and gutter improvements in the Country Club District, care was taken to avoid cutting down trees. It also was the reason the City acquired pristine areas in the City, such as the land which became Bredesen Park and "Krahl's Hill" in western Edina.

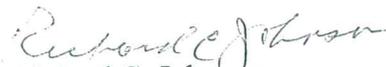
The City's approval of the proposed Nine Mile trail would be a step backward from its historical environmental focus. While the proponent of the trail, the Three Rivers Park District, has been most amenable in reflecting homeowner concerns in reducing the environmental footprint of the trail, the fact remains that the construction of the trail would still involve cutting down a substantial number of trees and the excavation of large areas of the watershed, resulting in the loss of some of the serenity of the watershed and well as the degradation of habitat for a wide variety of birds and small animals.

In view of the environmental concerns of constructing the trail, it is imperative in my view that, prior to any action by the City Council on the proposed trail, the Three Rivers Park District retain the services of an independent technically-qualified environmental firm to assess the environmental impact of constructing the proposed trail.

It also has been suggested in the newspaper and other sources that the proposed trail will accommodate pedestrians as well as bikers. That is somewhat misleading because experience teaches us that bikers and pedestrians using the same trail is incompatible and indeed dangerous.

Lastly, I have long been a biker in Edina and elsewhere and have never felt deprived by the lack of a bike trail in Edina because there are many, many fine and easily accessible bike trails in the Three Rivers Park District as well as in other areas of the Twin Cities and areas outstate.

Sincerely,


Richard C. Johnson

RCJ/tlt
cc: Three Rivers Park District

RECEIVED

MAR 13 2009

46

Edina City Council and City Staff

Mayor James Hovland
John Keprios Park & Recreation Director
Wayne Houle City Engineer/Public Works Director
Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50th St.
Edina, MN 55424

Edina State Legislature Representatives

State Senator Geoff Michel
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
State Office Building, Room 133
St. Paul, MN 55155-1206

State Representative Keith Downey
323 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Three Rivers Park District Officials

Jonathan Vlaming, Senior Manager of Planning with Three Rivers Park District
Kelly Grissman
Don Johnson
Three Rivers Park District
Administrative Center
3000 Xenium Lane
Plymouth, MN 55441

Nine Mile Creek Watershed District Official

Kevin Bigalke
Edina Business Center
7710 Computer Ave
Suite 135
Edina, MN

BikeEdina

Attn: Kirk Johnson
C/O: Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50th St.
Edina, MN 55424

Edina Neighborhood Group

Attn: Pam Johnson
5505 Valley Lane
Edina, MN 55439

Dear Sir/Madam:

March 11 , 2009

I've been following with interest the TRPD Nine Mile Creek bike trail developments, and attended the March 9 evening open house at Edina City Hall

I've had discussions with several of you in recent months , as well with many others with a wide range of perspectives and expertise on this topic

I am not a direct creekside property owner, but I am in a neighborhood that could be affected by several different trail route choices and combinations. I have many neighbors and other friends that are avid bike trail riders. I also have children and grandchildren that ride bikes. This would also of course give me great interest in the security and safety issues associated with bike trails.

I have tried in my comments to hopefully offer some balanced perspective on the varying issues and viewpoints.

For the reasons outlined below, one thing that seems very clear at this point is that southwest Edina segment choices 6, 7 and 8 cannot be realistically eliminated from further study and consideration.

For one thing, segments 7 and 8 have for some time been published as primary priority routes on the official master Edina bike plan , sponsored by the City of Edina and Bike Edina association. There were a series of reasons and goals behind the establishment of segments 7 and 8 on that local plan, as developed through a long and comprehensive city sponsored and citizen input process . It is unclear why the TRPD map seems to have now trumped the Bike Edina task force by adding brand new segments, or changing the master plan route combinations or priorities.

Other areas needing further initial phase review relate to the numerous unique and complex segments 9 and 11 wetlands and wildlife profiles, and potential high impact engineering and construction outcomes . These do not intuitively seem "green friendly" nor in harmony with the environmental impact objectives of the Edina bike task force or the Edina energy task force. The BikeEdina master plan did not contemplate the combination segment 9 and 11 route. By contrast, along the BikeEdina plan priority combination 7 and 8 route , for example, bikers not only already regularly use these segments today , but intuitively it would seem they could be enjoying TRPD trail route improvements much sooner and on a far "lower impact" basis.

Another area needing further initial phase review is the realistic likelihood of obtaining on a timely basis all of the necessary railroad and power company easements, and various government agencies permissions , which would be required for certain portions of segments 9 and 11. If ever even achievable at all, these required advance steps will likely be many years beyond the date when the alternative segments 7 and 8, or 6 and 8, could already be up and running as part of the completed trail system for bikers.

The “short route” combination of segment 6 into BikeEdina’s highly prioritized segment 8 is potentially most consistent with the TRPD and City of Edina goals to connect the Edina High School complex with Centennial Lakes , with far less disturbance of wetlands. It would also seem more realistic that TRPD should be able to achieve much earlier easement agreement with the Edina School Board public entity , in support of its own large and youthful biking community, as compared to years of negotiating with privately owned railroads and power companies which likely would not have bike trails high on their priority list.

Such additional early review of these issues might well show that the most practical route alternative is BikeEdina’s published preferred priority segments 7 and 8, or else 6 and 8 , either of which TRPD might conclude after further study is the recommended route to best ensure timely trail completion. Timely trail completion with adequate funding is very important to the biking community. Biker and neighborhood security is also very important, and may be more manageable and consistent on segments 7 and 8. Potential constraints on other segments , which the biking community has not prioritized on the Edina master bike plan to begin with, could lead to larger environmental impacts, higher costs encountered, and longer term delays, which could be so dramatic as to potentially jeopardize funding and completion of the entire Edina portion of the trail connecting with Hopkins and Richfield.

For all the above reasons , I would strongly urge all the officials addressed in this letter to ensure that none of the currently listed segments 6, 7 or 8 be dropped from consideration at this time. Rather, further study of the issues should be undertaken , noting that either segment 6 or segment 7 links in with the long published BikeEdina master plan primary priority segment 8 .

Sincerely

John Miller /
6813 Limerick Lane, / As with other resident comment letters, please protect privacy
Edina, Mn 55439 / in the customary manner.

47

From: James Landberg [mailto:jimlandberg@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2009 7:25 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: Edina bike trail proposal

City Council Members: Mayor Jim Hovland, Ann Swenson, Scot Housch, Joni Bennett & Mary Bridle

Edina Park & Recreation Department - John Keprios

Three rivers Park District - Kelly Grissman

Senior Manager of Planning with Three Rivers Park District - Jonathan Vlaming

As a property owner along Nine Mile Creek, I am dismayed and disappointed by this proposal. With all due respect, I am at a loss to understand why a parks district, a watershed board and a city council would want to pave over one of this city's few remaining wildlife habitats. I thought that such government bodies stood for preservation and care of waters, floodplains, habitat and wildlife. So why would you change this for one special-interest group, based on one unrepresentative sampling of city residents?

And to date you have done so without including those who stand to be impacted the most: The people who live on the proposed routes. Why have creekside residents never been notified about this?

What will become of the green heron that we've watched each summer for nearly a decade? The reclusive wood ducks? The egrets, fox,

woodchucks, mink, raccoons, woodpeckers, possums and other wildlife that call the creek and floodplains home? Most, if not all, will likely be evicted by the trail and/or its construction. Do you people not care about the hundreds, if not thousands, of trees that will be felled for this project?

At the most recent open house officials minimized, glossed over or could not address our concerns, all the while ensuring us that everything would be alright. It's painfully obvious that Three Rivers staffers weren't there as listeners but as trail advocates. We inquired about safety and policing. "Oh, we'll patrol 24/7," the officer on hand said. But he couldn't say if Three Rivers meager police force would be expanded if and when this trail is built.

We departed the open house with even more concerns about habitat, safety, litter, cost and priorities.

Would a bike trail be an asset? Perhaps. But do we have to destroy nature to get a trail?

And lastly, to do this in these tough economic times is simply wrong.

Jim Landberg

5408 Creek View Lane

Edina, MN 55439

48

From: LMARY691@aol.com [mailto:LMARY691@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2009 7:02 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: 9 Mile Creek Segments 9 & 11 Opposition

City Council Members: Mayor Jim Hovland, Ann Swenson, Scot Housch, Joni Bennett & Mary Bridle

Edina Park & Recreation Department - John Keprios

Three rivers Park District - Kelly Grissman

Senior Manager of Planning with Three Rivers Park District - Jonathan Vlaming

Re: Edina Bike Trail

My husband and I have lived in Edina for 11 years.

After seeing the proposed bike trail segments 9 and 11 along Nine Mile Creek last Monday night at City Hall, I want you voice my opposition.

I know some residents of Edina were polled and indicated they wanted bike trails. If I answered the questionnaire, I probably said yes also. If any of us would have known where the proposed trails would be, I know I know I would have said no and perhaps others would have filled out their questionnaire differently.

1. Negative impact to wildlife, trees, environment. Do we have cover all the earth with asphalt?
2. Safety and Crime - I was told Monday night by Three Rivers Park Police that they would patrol the trail 24/7 and he did not know if additional police are hired to cover this addition. I find it hard to believe it would be patrolled 24/7.
3. Maintenance – Who will pick up the trash? When? How? There would be vehicles on the path if trash containers need to be emptied.
4. Cost to Taxpayers – Obviously the creek route segments 9 and 11 would be the more expensive route.
5. Given our nation's current economic situation, why would we be constructing the most expensive bike path along the creek when there is another option - segment 8. More conspicuous consumption.
6. The Three Rivers information says the trail will accommodate 500,000 bikers per year. I believe the population of Edina is around 50,000. I do not want 450,000 non-local bikers through my neighborhood. Who would?

Please view your vote as an opportunity to do the right thing. Do not allow the bike trail to be constructed along Nine Mile Creek. Once it's gone – it's gone – we have no way of putting it back. It's hard to beg, but please do not allow this trail to be constructed along the creek.

If we must have a bike trail, please do not vote for the route along Nine Mile Creek.

Thank you for your careful consideration. Please view this as an opportunity to do the right thing.

Mary Landberg
5408 Creek View Lane
Edina MN 55439-1310
952-828-9619

A Good Credit Score is 700 or Above. See yours in just 2 easy steps!

John K.

RECEIVED

MAR 18 2009



Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

I wanted to write to express enthusiastic support from me and my family for the proposed 9-Mile Creek trail. Both the trail along the creek itself and any connections it can make to nearby parks and commercial areas would be a huge boon for all of south Edina and for the City as a whole. Right now Edina is a blank spot on metropolitan recreational trail maps. While our neighbors in Eden Prairie, Minneapolis, Bloomington and St. Louis Park have all developed trails (with Eden Prairie and Minneapolis systems among the best in the country), Edina has none. Edina's wealth of green spaces and natural areas are relatively underused and underappreciated by the vast majority of visitors and residents who don't live right on one of these amenities. Edina shouldn't hide its wonderful assets, or lock them away exclusively for the relatively few who can afford to buy a home right on them. These are public areas and public parks; public use leads to public appreciation and ultimately preserves these places. Our home is on Lake Edina and I would welcome more activity and recreation on that lake. Many people even in our immediate neighborhood do not know that Lake Edina, or Nine Mile Creek even exist, or where they are located. This is a vivid contrast to Minnehaha Creek. What an asset the creek could be! Edina needs it and trails like it to keep attracting the quality people who live and work here.

Edina was developed primarily for cars, with streets arranged as local, collector, and arterials. It can be unpleasant, difficult and dangerous for any non-motorist to venture out onto collectors and arterials. There are just not a lot of places kids and families can bike together safely. There are not a lot of places people can walk or bike to do errands. This is not to criticize past Edina planners and developers, but now that we know how important those modes of recreation and transportation are to our quality of life, we should not miss a chance to bring them back. The trail will maximize people's ability to ride and walk safely with minimal conflicts with cars. I know it will increase quality of life, but I believe it will also increase property values in the neighborhoods it winds through. Realtors will undoubtedly be trumpeting the trail as a neighborhood asset, before it is even completed.

Trails are efficient infrastructure. Unlike streets, they need very little upkeep and need not be rebuilt for a generation, if ever. I'll take my kids on a ride the year it opens and they may be able to take their kids riding on the same surface a generation later. It provides recreation at no cost and provides a great alternative to TV, video games and screen time. It's a wonderful investment to make in these difficult times. I would like to see a connection to Southdale through Arneson Acres and Cornelia School Park - both are big, beautiful greenspaces.

The arguments against it can be addressed in its design. It can harmonize with nature. Even the busiest trail is (like our local streets) quiet the vast majority of the time. Minnesota has experienced engineers and scientists that can design (and have already built) trails that work along a forested creek, preserving the natural experience and water quality. Homeowners on the trail may lose a buyer who is interested in total privacy, but they'll gain a larger group of buyers interested in recreation right outside their back door. In my view their property value will increase, not decrease. And all their neighbors will gain an ability to enjoy the creek just as they do. The benefit of proximity to the creek, which is now confined to the narrow corridor along it, will spread for blocks in each direction. Those neighbors will become users and many of them defenders of the creek. There are so many opportunities to improve and protect the creek - there is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the creek on the far south of Edina, in the office park adjacent to Highway 100, in the areas around the high school, at Lake Edina and the 494 area - those defenders can help guide and influence protection and preservation throughout the creek corridor.

A quick side note - I developed a neighborhood in Anoka County, which shared a creek with existing houses built in the 1960s and 1970s. We had to alter that creek, which I expected would be impossible. That creek had no public access, no trails, and no defenders except the people who lived right on it. It had become a dumping ground, an eyesore, and a hazard. It was such a detriment that almost every homeowner wanted it filled in! That can be the fate of creeks and ponds that aren't used and appreciated, as they have too few stewards and defenders. A trail will focus attention on the creek. That will bring a few negatives, but those will be dramatically outweighed by the positives.

I hope you will support the trail, and any connections it can make to Edina's commercial and recreational areas.

NEAL J. BLANCHETT
4737 Hibiscus Avenue
Edina

50

From: Neal Blanchett [mailto:nblanchett@traditions-mgmt.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 12:25 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: Support for Nine Mile Creek Trail

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,
I wanted to write to express enthusiastic support from me and my family for the proposed 9-Mile Creek trail. Both the trail along the creek itself and any connections it can make to nearby parks and commercial areas would be a huge boon for all of south Edina and for the City as a whole. Right now Edina is a blank spot on metropolitan recreational trail maps. While our neighbors in Eden Prairie, Minneapolis, Bloomington and St. Louis Park have all developed trails (with Eden Prairie and Minneapolis systems among the best in the country), Edina has none. Edina's wealth of green spaces and natural areas are relatively underused and underappreciated by the vast majority of visitors and residents who don't live right on one of these amenities. Edina shouldn't hide its wonderful assets, or lock them away exclusively for the relatively few who can afford to buy a home right on them. These are public areas and public parks; public use leads to public appreciation and ultimately preserves these places. Our home is on Lake Edina and I would welcome more activity and recreation on that lake. Many people even in our immediate neighborhood do not know that Lake Edina, or Nine Mile Creek even exist, or where they are located. This is a vivid contrast to Minnehaha Creek. What an asset the creek could be! Edina needs it and trails like it to keep attracting the quality people who live and work here.

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I hope you will support the trail, and any connections it can make to Edina's commercial and recreational areas.

NEAL J. BLANCHETT
4737 Hibiscus Avenue
Edina

51

March 24, 2009

Mr. Wayne Houle
City Engineer/Public Works Director
Edina City Hall
4801 West 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424



Dear Mr. Houle,

We are very concerned about the proposed bike trail through our backyard. We have lived in Edina for close to 40 years. We purchased our home due to the location and nature of the privacy we found in Edina. We are located on section 11 of the proposed map and we have several concerns that we hope will be looked at in depth.

Safety. Our four children and neighbor kids currently play in our backyard with very little concern for onlookers. With a 'boardwalk' bike trail which is proposed to be built to our north, in the wetland area, and east, gives us an uneasy feeling of the freedom which we purchased our property for. After talking with people who live near the bike trail that goes through Minnetonka, they have people going into the woods and changing clothes very often. They have been very upset about what type of people the bike trail has brought to their area.

Flooding. The area to our north and east do flood quite frequently. In fact, it is part of the 100-year flood plain. How can someone come in and develop the flood plain? This raised 'boardwalk' will not only be a disruption to the wildlife in the wetlands, but the maintenance would be astronomical.

Property Value. This is a very large concern. Edina, unlike other communities, has been able to maintain property values during this bad economy. When you do comparisons of property values that have similar bike trails through their property, those property values are down. The reason Edina's property values have stayed positive is because we are not like those other communities with bike trails through our backyards. Our property values have stayed positive because people have privacy along with beautiful yards and a terrific location. If we add a bike path like the other declining communities, we will have lower property values. The proposed bike trail will be detrimental to the properties located directly on the creek.

Destruction of wildlife. The proposed bike trail will take away from the habitat of wildlife that has been here for decades. The undeveloped Nine Mile Creek area is what has created the beauty of this nook of Edina. The deer, fox, coyotes, herons, beavers, and more, enjoy their places to roam and have created a unique experience within the city limits.

We strongly oppose this bike trail and hope that all considerations are taken with regards to the close proximity to homes. The City of Edina Overview Map looks to have other

options that would be great for a bike trail that does not include running through residents' backyards. We hope you take our comments into consideration during the upcoming discussions.

Sincerely,

Pete and Julie McCarthy

Pete & Julie McCarthy
6801 Brook Drive
Edina, MN 55439

52

-----Original Message-----

From: Roger Sweet [mailto:r.sweet@worldnet.att.net]

Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2009 4:29 PM

To: Lynette Biunno

Subject: Proposed Edina Biking/Walking Path

The proposed addition of a biking/walking path (BWP) along 9-Mile Creek will serve to enhance the quality of life for residents in and around the city of Edina. The lack of a BWP tends to discourage individuals who might want to start biking as part of changing to a healthier life style, but are wary of doing so because it means having to travel on some very busy streets. This is particularly true for individuals in their 60's and older, who probably stopped riding a bike 10 seconds after they got their driver's license at age 16. It is important to note that Edina has a large senior population. Biking is a low impact activity especially suited for seniors suffering from the usual joint problems that go with the territory. As one of those seniors, I encourage the Edina City Council to continue its efforts for the planning and construction of the 9-Mile Creek BWP.

Roger Sweet

53

-----Original Message-----

From: Jed_Hepworth@cargill.com [mailto:Jed_Hepworth@cargill.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2009 4:36 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Cc: jwborg@aol.com; Greg.Ansems@Honeywell.com; Jed_Hepworth@cargill.com
Subject: ATTN: MAYOR HOVLAND - Nine Mile Creek - protecting the watershed and wildlife

Dear Mayor Hovland:

I am writing to you as a member of the Legal/Litigation Committee of the Save Nine Mile Creek Task Force (S9MCTF). We are a group of citizens galvanized by recent events to organize to protect Nine Mile Creek along its full length in Edina. We share the vision of the 2008 Edina Comprehensive Plan that "More protective measures for wetlands, waterways and uplands in natural resource planning" is desperately needed.

We do not believe that Edinans want pavement at the price of destruction of habitat. As Richfield is already proving, the East-West corridor for bicycles is perfectly feasible on-road.

I will resend in hard copy upon my return to the US.

Conversations with you and John Vlaming of 3RPD at the recent Open House were illuminating.

We would like to follow up with you on some of the issues raised in those conversations and some subsequent research.

First, it is clear that all of the apparent invitation for public input on possible trail routes (see Alice Hulbert's recent letter to the Editor of the Sun Current) is in reality a carefully-planned artifice to sell the down-the-creek route as the public choice. When Jim Hildebrand and I mentioned 2 or 3 alternatives that would neither require paving the creek bank nor climbing the steep hills on either side, John Vlaming was very clear that 3RPD is not willing to look at routes other than those already on the table.

It is one of the oldest strategies going, but still effective: set up against your choice an alternative that is so patently unpalatable that your choice is the only one possible. The BETF and 3RPD are looking to generate the illusion of validation of their choice, not genuine public input.

We insist that public input must reflect the majority view in Edina that preserving and protecting wildlife habitat is as important as providing bicycle routes to the members of the BETF.

Second, we read about professional staff of the Edina Parks meeting with BETF and discussing "how to overcome opposition" to the plan to pave a path down Nine Mile Creek. We agree with your characterization of the BETF as "just another private interest group". So how do you justify having Edina Park & Rec staff serve as advisors to a private interest group pressing its private agenda? Who instructed the Park &

Rec staff to assist BETF, not to identify alternatives or develop scenarios or generate ideas, but instead to "overcome opposition" to BETF's goal of showing pavement down Nine Mile Creek? Can we have your commitment to have senior Edina staff counsel S9MCTF on how to achieve our goal of preserving Nine Mile Creek in Edina as a narrow ribbon of wilderness and in the midst of all the pavement? We don't object to having OUR employees work to frame issues, develop ideas, etc. But we think it is both inappropriate and illegal for them to be paid to support any private group's dream, and doubly so to be coaching private groups. BETF does NOT represent all Edinans.

Third, the City Council is going to be asked by BETF to permanently dispose of Edina land to 3RPD, without compensation. John Vlaming told us at the Open House that 3RPD will only consider a trail project if given a PERMANENT easement. Since the land in question has only 2 possible use - openspace as it is today, or some form of development as proposed by BETF, the grant of a permanent easement to 3RPD is the disposal of the land for legal as well as practical purposes. With no possible future tax revenue to be derived from this land, what is the difference between a permanent easement and ownership, except that Edina can continue to claim the land in its "park inventory" after it has ceded any control over or effective interest in it?

If the proposed trail runs 10 miles through Edina, you will be asked to approve giving 20 acres of Edina property to 3RPD. That is more than 10% of 157 acres of Nine Mile Creek Right of Way owned by Edina. We insist that all the procedures required under Edina's charter and the law for the disposal of City-owned land be followed.

Fourth, the "Needs Assessment Survey" is cited in the Working Draft Edina Comprehensive Plan for the proposition that ALL Edinans' top priority is more walking and biking trails, and the BETF and 3RPD use that as their mantra for the proposal to pave a trail down Nine Mile Creek.

However, we have not seen a copy of the Survey nor had an opportunity to review its methodology to confirm that 865 survey respondents meet the standard for accurately reflecting more than their own views. As we paid for the survey as Edina residents, I trust you will provide us a copy of the Survey and its review of the methodology and raw data.

We dispute the implicit corollary that any majority of all Edinans would support a paved trail where, as in this case, the pavement means the destruction of what the Survey labels Edina residents' second highest need/desire for "natural areas and wildlife habitat". Before the council votes to approve the grant of a permanent easement to 3RPD and the destruction of 20 acres of habitat on a 10 mile route (plus all the mature trees that will have to come down to make that path possible), we believe the consequences of "let's pave a trail" should be made clear to Edina residents.

Fifth, we want to reiterate our invitation to come walk Nine Mile Creek and see the wildlife that will be displaced by the BETF's vision of an urban trail, and see the mature trees that will have to be cut down for Nine Mile Creek to become the BETF's idea of paradise. We acknowledge that our conservationist vision and BETF's vision for Nine Mile Creek are not compatible. We think our vision of the preservation of Nine Mile Creek as a place for quiet and wildlife in the heart of the Twin Cities will be a much more important legacy for Edina than a 10 mile strip of pavement.

We would like from you:

1. A copy of the Needs Assessment Survey and related background information.
2. Your commitment that Edina employees in their professional capacity will no longer serve as agents of BETF and that we can count on the same access to their time and information about Edina resources and plans and proposals as BETF.
3. Your commitment that no interest in Edina land will be conveyed to 3RPD or any party without fully complying with the processes contemplated in the City's Charter and Minnesota Law.
4. Your commitment to come walk a section of Nine Mile Creek with us before you vote on any proposed path.

As John Vlaming told me at the last Open House that there will be "neighborhood assessment teams" formed to look at routing alternatives, and as the last announced schedule for determining a preferred route anticipated a decision by June, this is a matter of urgency. I trust we can count on your prompt response.

Yours truly,

H. Jed Hepworth

cc. Bruce Malkerson

Michael G. Wolff
5300 West 70th Street
Edina, MN 55439

RECEIVED

APR 02 2009

54

I will you
please respond.
Thanks

March 26, 2009

Mayor James Hovland
Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Dear Mayor Hovland:

As a citizen of Edina, I am concerned about the proposed bike trail along Nine Mile Creek. Frankly, at this point I don't think the trail is a good idea, but I also don't feel fully informed. Therefore, I would appreciate your response to a couple of basic questions.

My first question involves the source of the funding for the construction of the trail and how the costs of maintenance will be covered. I heard the term "free money." How is the money "free" and why can't it be put towards other more fundamental needs, like insurance against sewer back-up? Will the citizens of Edina be on the hook down the road for maintenance, improvements, and policing?

It appears that this project is important to the council and I wish to know what the driving force is behind the trail and its configuration. I have read the Edina Bike Task Force report and evidently don't share the same conclusions. The report indicates that Edina residents are overwhelmingly pleased with Edina's park amenities. Further, while a vast majority of residence responded favorably to the bike path question, this was a forced choice answer paired with such alternatives as pulling Buckthorn. It is like asking if you would rather eat ice cream or dirt at the park.

Given that we have more pressing needs, what major benefit do you see the community receiving from this bike trail? Also, according to information I have received, the original Edina Bike Task Force route recommendation was not along the creek. Does building it along the creek not increase the cost? Is there really that much greater benefit, particularly if you also consider the potential damage to habitat?

Finally, I watched the latest council meeting and noted that Ms. Bennett, when arguing not to let people speak at the council meeting, suggested we would have other "hearings" at which we could express our opinions. Could you please tell me to what hearings she is referring? My understanding is that once the petition to the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District has been accepted by the district, it is no longer in the hands of the city of Edina. Is this true?

Given that I am a taxpayer and that the proposed trail affects the community in which I live, I feel I am entitled to answers for these basic questions. Therefore, I look forward to your timely response. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Michael Wolff

John K.

Michael G. Wolff
5300 West 70th Street
Edina, MN 55439

RECEIVED

APR 02 2009

March 26, 2009

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Edina City Hall
4801 W. 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

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Respectfully,



Michael Wolff

55

From: Jeri Dentz [mailto:JERIDENTZ@COMCAST.NET]
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 9:19 PM
To: Lynette Biunno
Subject: 9-Mile Creek Bike Trails

Dear Major Hovland and council members Bennett, Brindle, Housh and Swenson,

YES, YES, YES!!!

We live in Brookview Heights, just along Nine-Mile Creek, and we would absolutely love a bike trail along the creek. Our ONLY real complaint about living in Edina is our lack of accessible bike and walking trails. We have 3 small children and are always encouraging them to get outside, be active, and exercise. But, when we get out to do these things as a family, it usually involves driving to Minneapolis to enjoy the paths around the lakes and along Minnehaha creek.

Please vote to accept Three Rivers Park District's Nine-Mile Creek proposed trail alignment that runs along Nine-Mile Creek. It would be a huge improvement to this otherwise exceptional city. The majority of people we speak with feel exactly the same way.

Thank you for your time,
Jeri and Steve Dentz
6716 Cahill Rd
Edina



John Keprios

From: Lynette Biunno
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2009 8:11 AM
To: John Keprios
Cc: Susan Heiberg
Subject: FW: 9-Mile Creek Bike Trails

From: Jeri Dentz [mailto:JERIDENTZ@COMCAST.NET]
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2009 9:19 PM
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Thank you for your time,
Jeri and Steve Dentz
6716 Cahill Rd
Edina

John K.

57

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APR 02 2009

5700 Tucker Lane
Edina, Minnesota 55436
952-930-9040

March 31, 2009

The Honorable James Hovland
Mayor, City of Edina
Edina City Offices
4801 West 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Dear Mayor Hovland:

Further to my letter to you of March 11, 2009 relating to the proposed Nine Mile trail, today's Star Tribune had an article germane to that proposal, to wit: "President Obama signed legislation setting aside more than 2 million acres in nine states as protected wilderness, saying it will 'protect, preserve and pass down our nation's most treasured landscapes to future generations.'"

The City has already acquired and set aside three pristine areas in Edina: Arneson Acres, the land which became Bredesen Park and "Krahl's Hill." It would be entirely appropriate if the City Council would likewise set aside that part of the Nine Mile Watershed in Edina.

Let the current Council continue Edina's legacy of protecting and preserving our environment.

Sincerely,


Richard C. Johnson

RCJ/tlt
cc: Three Rivers Park District



April 8, 2009

City of Edina

Michael G. Wolff
5300 West 70th Street
Edina, MN 55439

Dear Mr. Wolff:

Thank you for your letter addressed to Mayor James Hovland dated March 26, 2009.

The answers to most, if not all, of your questions can be found on Three Rivers Park District's web site at http://www.threeriversparkdistrict.org/trails/ninemilecreek_edina.cfm. The "Frequently Asked Questions" part of that web page is an excellent reference of information.

You stated in your letter that *"It appears that this project is important to the council and I wish to know what the driving force is behind the trail and its configuration."* The City Council was approached by Three Rivers Park District (which was actually Hennepin Parks at the time) about 10 years ago asking if the City was interested in having a regional trail through Edina to connect with other neighboring trail systems that ultimately link up to a metro area wide trail system. On two separate occasions (2000 and in 2003), past City Councils have affirmed their keen interest in supporting this effort via Resolution. The Community Attitude and Interest Survey (Needs Assessment Survey) also clearly showed that the overwhelming majority of Edina residents want more biking and walking trails.

As to your question, *"Will the citizens of Edina be on the hook down the road for maintenance, improvements, and policing,"* Three Rivers Park District will be responsible for maintaining, improving and policing the trail. Edina residents are of course within Three Rivers Park District taxing boundaries so to some extent the answer is yes; however, the City of Edina will not be maintaining the trail or be fiscally responsible for its maintenance. The only exception to that is if the City decides to plow the trail during the winter months. Winter month plowing is left up to each city's discretion to plow it at our own expense.

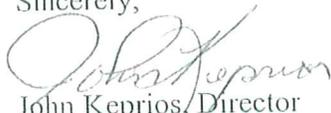
You also asked, "Does building it along the creek not increase the cost?" At this stage, I don't know the answer to that question but can only speculate that it probably does cost more to build the trail next to a creek as opposed to building a narrower trail next to a street with bike lanes.

You asked about what Council member Bennett was referring to when she *"suggested we would have other hearings."* There will be a formal and well publicized Public Hearing at a City Council meeting likely in April or May of 2010. Prior to that, the matter will also be discussed at a Park Board meeting likely on or near February 2010 at which time the public will be invited to testify. That Park Board meeting will also be well publicized.

Lastly, you asked *“My understanding is that once the petition to the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District has been accepted by the district, it is no longer in the hands of the city of Edina. Is that true?”* That is not true. I encourage you to view the power point presentation given by Jonathan Vlaming, Planning Manager for Three Rivers Park District. That can be done in one of two ways. You can either view the webcast recording of the April 7, 2009, City Council meeting (visit the City’s website at www.cityofedina.com) or that power point will soon be placed on the Three Rivers Park District web site for viewing.

Feel free to contact me with any further questions.

Sincerely,



John Keprios, Director
Edina Park and Recreation Department

CC: James Hovland, Mayor
Gordon Hughes, City Manager
Jonathan Vlaming, Planning Manager, Three Rivers Park District

59

Robert A. Schwartzbauer
Attorney at Law

6107 Waterford Court S.
Edina, MN 55436
952-933-9610

April 10, 2009

Mr. John Keprios
Park and Recreation Director
City of Edina
4801 West 50th Street
Edina, MN 55424

Re: Three Rivers Trail on Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. (Section 3)

Dear Mr. Keprios,

I am enclosing 3 copies of my comments upon the proposal to locate a portion of the Three Rivers Park trail along a route beginning near the intersection of Duncan Lane and Lincoln Drive, continuing along Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. and ending near the intersection of Vernon Ave. and Gleason Road. I believe this has been denominated Section 3. These comments supersede the written comments I handed to Kelly Grissman at the March 9th open house. Those earlier comments were accompanied by some photographs. Since the photographs don't lie, they can remain in the record for any purpose you wish.

I hope you will pass my comments on to the appropriate individuals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert A. (Bob) Schwartzbauer

Comments of Robert A Schwartzbauer
6107 Waterford Court S.
952-933-9610

My name is Bob Schwartzbauer. My wife Karen and I live at 6107 Waterford Court, Edina. Our property abuts the proposed alternative trail-route that would follow Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. Our lot is adjacent to the proposed trail for ½ of the block between Waterford Court and Habitat Court. Our twin home is in a development called The Habitat.

We understand that the proposed trail would be shared use, two directional paved trail, as defined by the Minnesota DNR's "Trail, Planning, Design and Development Guidelines", 2007 (DNR Guidelines). We do not oppose construction of all such trails. We oppose construction in the alternative trail location that would run from the intersection of Duncan Lane and Lincoln Drive, along Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. to the intersection of Vernon Ave. and Gleason Road (Section 3). We believe that the proposed route that runs along Nine Mile Creek and Walnut Ridge Park (Section 2) would do less harm, if there must be a trail through this portion of Edina.

First, I want to comment on the notice that was given to affected homeowners. I'm sure it met the legal requirements, but it wasn't fair to all affected residents. I don't have direct knowledge of the list of owners that received notice, but it appears the notice has been sent *only* to owners whose property actually abuts the proposed trail. That omits 85% of the owners in The Habitat, all of the owners in Fountain Woods Condominiums, the owners in Edina West Condominiums and those in Manor Homes of Edina. All of those homeowners would be affected by locating the trail along Vernon Ave./Lincoln Drive because each of them would have to cross the trail in their automobiles whenever they left their homes and returned.

It is our understanding that the trail will be 10 feet wide and made of asphalt with three (3) foot shoulders on either side. No obstructions should be in the trail or the shoulder DNR Guidelines 5.4. Where it follows a roadway, the trail should be a minimum of ten (10) feet inside the curb. Where space is limited, the trail should be at least 3 feet inside the curb, or in extreme cases, directly adjacent to the curb. However, "**[b]oth of these cases should be the exception and not the rule, with a 10 foot minimum desired standard being much preferred.**" DNR Guidelines, 5.11. For seventy-five percent (75%) of the distance the trail would run along Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave., either it would be physically impossible to construct a

trail at the minimum distance. or it would be very expensive. In places it would be impossible because the terrain would not permit. It would be expensive because you would have to condemn over one-half (1/2) of the property along the route owned by thirteen (13) owners. Following the guidelines would place the trail ten (10) feet from my kitchen window and four (4) feet from the house at 6121 Habitat Court. Obviously, the minimum standard would not be "the exception" and this should end consideration of this route, in my opinion. Nevertheless, since we're dealing with "Guidelines" and not laws, for the rest of my comments, I'll assume that the total width would be 16 feet (the minimum width of the pavement and shoulders).

That minimum sixteen (16) feet dictates that the trail would have to be placed on the East and North side of Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. (the opposite side from the Hi-169 & Hi- 62 exit; on the inside of the loop created by the proposed trail). That follows because there isn't sufficient space between the existing street pavement and the highway right-of-ways on the other side. That would also mean that it would replace the existing concrete sidewalk along the entire length of this section in question.

We oppose location of the trail along the stretch of Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. for several reasons. These include:

- 1) The *safety* of those using the trail and occupants of adjacent homes would be jeopardized because every resident living inside the loop created by the trail would have to cross it to leave and enter their homes. There are 7 streets and at least 11 driveways that intersect Vernon Ave./Lincoln Drive. The heavy traffic on Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave., would create a perception of a dangerous situation would be created for users, as I'll discuss later;
- 2) Many trees and shrubs will have to be removed, causing loss to the entire neighborhoods that would border the trail;
- 3) The trail would be too close to homes. At least 8 houses would abut the trail. Four (4) in The Habitat would be 25 feet *or less* from this proposed trail. There are 4 double-houses on Vernon that would be within about 30 feet. On Habitat Court and Waterford Court, the property values all of those twin homes would be reduced, especially to those properties that abut the trail like mine;

- 4) Locating the trail on this alternative route would involve many physical impediments that don't exist in the Walnut Ridge location. THIS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY INCREASE COST SUBSTANTIALLY. For example, many trees along *my lot* and *several other lots* would have to be removed, berms, that were erected over 25 years ago to add privacy and sound barriers, would have to be torn down, at least two fire-hydrants, several lampposts, utility lines and telephone poles would have to be moved. Several permanent structures such as the wall at Wellesley Place would have to be torn down. In other places there is simply not enough level ground to build the trail. It would have to enter the roadway that is already too narrow for the traffic and does not permit parking;
- 5) The experience and aesthetics of the trail for users and residents would be much poorer with the route along Vernon Ave./Lincoln Drive;
- 6) There would be an adverse impact on the deer and waterfowl that use Habitat Pond and the pond behind 6110 Waterford Court to the same extent as if the trail followed 9 Mile Creek.

SAFETY

Safety, and “[a] sense of physical and personal safety is the most important trail value in that without it people are disinclined to use a trail irrespective of how many other values it might provide.” DNR Guidelines 2.2. The section of Vernon Ave./Lincoln Drive is heavily trafficked. The Transportation Committee and the City Council are well aware of the traffic problem created primarily by the traffic into and out of United Healthcare that is located on Lincoln Drive near the intersection with Duncan Lane. That traffic required the City to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Vernon Ave. and Gleason to help with the traffic flow. While that helped the flow, it didn't reduce the number of cars that would cross the trail and drive next to it. Hundreds of cars enter and leave the parking lot of United Healthcare every weekday. Every car would have to cross the trail.

In order to leave or enter our home by car, my wife and I must enter or exit Lincoln Drive. That would require us to cross the trail in traffic. It would also create the danger of a collision between trail users and homeowners, especially because Lincoln Drive curves near both Waterford and Habitat, so visibility is restricted. This same difficulty would exist for

Comments of Robert A Schwartzbauer
6107 Waterford Court S.
952-933-9610

all of the 10 homeowners on Waterford Court because the only access/egress from the Waterford cul de sac is at Lincoln Drive. The same is true for the 18 owners on Habitat Court. The 8 owners in Wellesley Court and 9 in Chapel Hills homes would face the same dangers since they have only one exit/entrance on to Vernon Ave., by crossing the proposed trail. On Sundays, the members of Chapel Hills Church will have to deal with same the situation.

The greater risk of accidents is caused by the large number of residents of Fountain Woods Condominiums, Edina West Condos and Edina Manor Homes. There are 360 units in Fountain Woods, 160 in Edina West and 144 in Edina Manor homes, in addition to the hundreds of UHC workers. In order to leave and return home, all the residents of all of them must use a single exit on to Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. Every one will have to cross the trail each way.

There are 4 twin-homes on the North side of Vernon Ave. just West of Gleason (6414 to 6428 Vernon Ave.). Each home has two driveways entering on to Vernon Ave. The occupants would have to cross the trail upon exiting and entering their homes. Most of them must back out across the proposed trail to leave their house.

The cars that use Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave., especially those from United Healthcare drive very fast. I'm sure the police can give you statistics on the number of tickets issued. Furthermore, Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. is a route for MTC buses as well as Edina School buses. So the risks of accidents are greater than merely to bicyclists, walkers and automobile drivers.

The total length of the proposed trail along Vernon Ave./Lincoln Drive would be approximately 1.2 miles. In that distance, 7 streets enter Vernon Ave./Lincoln Drive from the North, crossing the proposed trail. In that space of about 6330 feet, there are 11 driveways that enter from the North, crossing the proposed trail. That means that there is an opportunity for a life threatening accident every 350 feet, on average. At the open house on March 9, the safety officer stated that when the trail builders had encountered street intersections in the past, they had addressed the safety issue by placing small stop signs for the bicyclists. Here, that would mean a bicycle stop sign about every 100 yards. It's simply unreasonable to think

Comments of Robert A Schwartzbauer
6107 Waterford Court S.
952-933-9610

that a bicyclist will stop every 100 yards. It's equally unreasonable to ask them to do so, especially when there's an alternative with none of these risks.

DESTRUCTION OF TREES AND SHRUBS

Many mature trees and shrubs would be destroyed all along the trail route if it were placed along the thoroughfare. My house is screened from Lincoln Drive by pine trees planted over 25 years ago. The pines will be lost if the trail is located along this route either because they're cut down or because in order to create the trail, the berm adjacent to my home will have to be leveled, thereby destroying the pine's roots. That berm was created and trees planted to add privacy and a sound barrier. It was an inducement for me to buy my home three (3) years ago. The berm also would be leveled next to 6110 Waterford Court. Mature trees and newly installed landscaping would have to be cut down next to the property at 6121 Habitat Court and at 6114 Habitat. Underground sprinkler systems would be torn up. Natural trees that serve as a screen from Vernon Ave. would have to be removed at Wellesley Court and between Fountain Woods and Tamarac Ave.

PROXIMITY TO HOUSES

There are 14 twin homes in the development called The Habitat (28 homeowners). The homes in The Habitat surround two cul de sacs: Waterford Court and Habitat Court. The houses that would be adjacent to the trail are 6107 and 6110 Waterford and 6114 and 6121 Habitat. One, 6121 Habitat would be **14** feet from the trail. Two, 6107 and 6110 Waterford would be **21** feet from the trail. The fourth house, 6114 Habitat, would be within **23** feet. (All distances have been calculated using an "exceptionally" narrow 16-foot trail width)

There are four twin homes on the North side of Vernon Ave. near Gleason where the proposed trail would run through their front yards. Since I don't know the owners I didn't feel comfortable entering their yards to take measurements, but my estimate is that they would be less than **30** feet from the trail.

REMOVAL OF INSTALLED STRUCTURES AND NATURAL BARRIERS

At present, there is very little on-street parking on Vernon Ave. along the proposed trail route. There is none West of Habitat Court and parking only for Chapel Hills Church East of Tamarac. If you were to use the parking in front of the church for the trail, it would run through the front yard of the Church. There is *no* parking anywhere on Lincoln Drive. That means that in order to construct a trail where there is no on-street parking, any trail would have to be on the homeowners' side of the existing curb, since there is no room in the street. Within 16 feet of the curb, there are telephone poles, street lamps, a natural gas pipeline, a concrete wall at Wellesley Place and at least two fire hydrants. According to the City Engineer, there is a utility easement with underground lines and cables, a sanitary sewer line and storm sewer lines, I believe. All of these impediments would have to be moved to construct a trail.

Between the back yard of 6110 Waterford and the entrance to Edina West condos, at about 6 feet from the curb, the terrain drops sharply down to a pond. At that point, it would impossible or extremely costly to construct any trail at all inside the curb and there is no space in the existing roadway.

LOSS OF EXPERIENTIAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE

It is my understanding that while the trail is intended to benefit all Edina residents, Family and Recreational Bicyclists are among the groups that are the primary intended beneficiaries. Family bicyclists “[w]ill not routinely use busy roads” DNR Guidelines 4.40, and “[p]refer [to use] bike trails and quiet streets (to avoid heavy traffic). DNR Guidelines 4.5. Recreational bicyclists “[p]refers trails but will also use roads that are safe, convenient, and not too busy.” DNR Guidelines 4.40. Among Recreational bicyclists, “[m]any seek escape from motorized traffic and value experiencing nature.” DNR Guidelines 4.5. These quotations from the award winning DNR work, strongly suggest that if the trail were placed along Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave., many of the Edina residents who were the intended beneficiaries will not use the trail. The route along 9 Mile Creek/Walnut Ridge Park does not create this risk.

Comments of Robert A Schwartzbauer
6107 Waterford Court S.
952-933-9610

Another part of the reason to build the proposed trail is to create additional aesthetic value for the walkers, joggers and bicyclers who would use the trail. No one could seriously argue that the aesthetic experience on a trail that runs along a busy street, with passing cars and busses and homes within 20 feet of the trail and adjacent to a strip-mall, would be equal to the experience of a trail that follows the creek and through a park where there is already an existing walking path. If you have any doubt in that regard, please just walk or drive the propose route from the intersection of Vernon Ave. and Gleason, to Duncan Lane. There's a sidewalk all along the way now and a Caribou Coffee and D•Brians in the strip-mall at the end in case you get thirsty.

At present, that sidewalk is used for walking by some United Healthcare employees. The primary users, however, are the residents of Edina Manor Homes, Edina West Condos and The Habitat, most of whom are retired and over 65. Although I have no statistics to prove it, I believe that if you replace that concrete sidewalk with a bike path where bicyclists travel at up to 25 m.p.h. (DNR Guidelines 4.7), those many elderly residents will not use the trail and would loose their place to walk.

INJURY TO WILDLIFE

I agree with those here who are concerned with the impact on wildlife. I'm an amateur wildlife photographer. I would hate to loose any of the wildlife in the area. But whatever impact on wildlife would result from location of the trail along 9 Mile Creek through Walnut Ridge Park, would be the same as the impact on the wildlife that frequent Habitat Pond and the Pond behind 6110 Waterford Court. I have seen at least 5 species of waterfowl, 3 of which nest there. This morning, the hen mallard was killed by traffic on Lincoln Drive, so now there are only two species. I have seen deer, squirrels, rabbits, hawks, birds and a local Osprey who feeds there.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude with one final point: If the issue is, to use Mr. Keprios' words, which route would be: "the least-worst," I submit this is not even a close question. If you have any doubt at all, please simply travel the proposed route along Vernon Ave. and Lincoln Drive before you decide.

EDWARD J. SCHWARTZBAUER

6085 LINCOLN DR. NO. 315
EDINA, MN 55436

TELEPHONE: 952-935-4205
FAX: 952-935-4208



RECEIVED

APR 17 2009

April 12, 2009

James T. Hovland, Mayor
City of Edina
4801 W. 50th St.
Edina, MN 55424

Re: Bicycle Path

Dear Jim:

It would be nice to have an easily-accessible bike path near my home at Edina West. Presently, I take my bicycle down to Lake Harriet and ride around the Lakes. I don't like to ride down Lincoln Drive/Vernon Ave. to Bredesen Park for a couple of reasons, both of which mitigate against the proposal to create a "new" bicycle path along Lincoln Drive and Vernon.

First, I don't feel comfortable with the traffic whizzing past me. At times, there is quite a bit of traffic in that locale. Second, coming back means a climb a full mile in length. I know that there will be some kind of climb someplace, but like most bicyclists, I can conquer a short steep climb better than a long gradual one.

It seems to me it would be a waste of a good idea to route the new bike path along a busy street because nobody will use it. Better to adopt the proposal to locate the path along Nine Mile Creek, which will be much more pleasant.

Yours very truly,

Edward J. Schwartzbauer