

Acklin, Tim

From: Travis Stinar <whna.travis@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 9, 2021 9:12 AM
To: Acklin, Tim
Subject: WHNA request for CIP 2022

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Tim Acklin
Senior Planner

I am a board member and neighbor within Weigent-Hogan. From well before I got involved with the neighborhood association, I felt the storage shack at the park was an eye sore and not befitting the park it sits on. We have seen so many park structure improvements around the city and it is confusing why Weigent Park is getting the shelter shaft. Don't get me wrong, budgets, funding and timing does not allow for all improvements at once. But when will Weigent Park get its turn?

The city certainly understands that Weigent Park is heavily used and is deserving of our investment. An improvement on sanitation alone would be a major step in the right direction. We've seen the periodic availability of porta potties, locked bathrooms when porta johns are not on site, and no drinking fountain where most activity by young children is taking place. I hope that your team is able to find a solution within the budget or commit to plan to bring the necessary and deserving improvements to our city park.

Travis Stinar
WHNA Board

Weekend Letter

WHNA request for CIP 2022

Thank you for for committing to building a new shelter at Weigent Park. The available funds totaled \$400,000. As you know, bids came back higher than expected. I am thanking you now for considering our request for the additional funding towards the park shelter project.

I'm going to stop calling our request a shelter. A shelter brings to mind a brick and mortar structure used to for huddling under when the sky turns dark and the wind picks up.

What our neighborhood is asking for is more than a mere shelter. We have a shelter now. Dark, drab and dreary as it is, the shelter is far from usable. The condition of the structure is appalling with graffiti thinly painted over, locked bathrooms and no drinking fountain. Well, there is a fountain on the opposite corner of the lot. Active children and adults may not be aware of its location causing a burden and risk of dehydration.

Consider also a family with a baby or toddler that needs changing. I suppose they could find a tree for privacy or return to their hot car to change and clean the child. What about the sanitation? The park had tacky portable bathrooms but those are now gone and the onsite restrooms remain locked. Simply, the shelter and restrooms at the park are substandard for La Crosse standards.

What the Weigent-Hogan neighborhood and all visitors to Weigent Park deserve is an attractive facility with open access to drinking water and lavatory. Our request is not for a shelter but really is for a neighborhood event center, one befitting the community that gathers there and that surround the park.

Weigent Park, the jewel of La Crosse's Weigent-Hogan neighborhood, continues to see improvements every few years such as the refresh of the tennis courts, addition of the gaga pit and more in 2019 with WHNA allocated CIP funding. That allocation funded the replacement of outdated play equipment which included a new substrate which solved flooding issues due to clogged storm drains. Let's continue this momentum and take the next step to improve the park. A park that sees so much use from Weigent-Hogan neighbors, citizens of La Crosse, out of city visitors, local organizations such as the YMCA and the Aquinas school and the city itself with summer programming from Parks Department.

A recent CIP meeting suggested that there was an under utilized shelter blocks away at Powell Park. After that meeting I passed through the park to take a closer look at what was available. This was even less of a shelter than that at Weigent Park and not one that anyone could lease for a party. It did not even have a pavilion or overhang. Comparing either shelter at Powell or Weigent Parks, I encourage you to go to those parks and look at the options there. Imagine having your wedding reception there, a graduation party or a family reunion. Imagine your 80 year old parent or grandparent using the bathrooms available. What do they even look like? Does anyone know? They are all locked up.

At the CIP meeting just referred to, there were many great requests for CIP funding. Undoubtedly, you will make the best choice for La Crosse. I ask that you do not lose sight of our request as it does affect so many.

Thank you again for considering making our neighborhood event center a reality.

Travis Stinar | Member at Large
Weigent-Hogan Neighborhood Association

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