

MINUTES
Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 20, 2022
Location: Teleconference

Meeting began at 9:07 a.m.
No quorum was established

PRESENT FOR BIPAC

Attending remotely:

Michele Hodges; Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan
(Had technical difficulties, but observed most of the meeting)
Michael Curis; Detroit, Michigan
Bud Denker; Detroit, Michigan
Sommer Woods; Detroit, Michigan

UNEXCUSED ABSCENCES

Lonnie Peek
Brad Dick
Bryan Barnhill

DNR STAFF PRESENT

Ron Olson, Chief
Scott Pratt
Mike Terrell
Joel Thomas
Jeremy Kemp
Darlisa Terrell
Amanda Treadwell
Lt. Todd Szyska
Mia Moore
Kimberley Hicks
Barbara Graves

OTHERS PRESENT

Lance Couturier, MSP
Bill Schreck, MDOT
Aly Melnik, Belle Isle Conservancy
Ayo Thomas, Belle Isle Conservancy

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Minutes for October 21, 2021, and December 16, 2021:
No quorum

Approval of the 2022 BIPAC Meeting Dates

No quorum

GENERAL UPDATES

Ron Olson, DNR Parks and Recreation Chief

No movement yet on the three introduced Senate Bills regarding the American Recovery Act (702 – 704), the funding for parks and recreation. The Conservancy did send letters of support for these bills. The Governor will present the budget in February and hearings will commence from there.

Park Update – Joel Thomas, Jeremy Kemp, Mike Terrell, and Scott Pratt; PRD

- There is a ranger position and a full-time janitor position that have been posted. Two more seasonal janitor positions will be posted in the future.
- They are searching for 27 seasonal positions to fill.
- They are being impacted by the pandemic, and staff is slim; some are in quarantine.
- Working on downed trees and beaver problems, and some maintenance on buildings and vehicles.
- Main venues, casino, Flynn, Conservatory, are all having major construction done, including safety repairs, so it is impacting their ability to host events this year. Only one wedding is scheduled for this year. They are hoping to open them at the end of this summer but will have to monitor the progress before they open up reservations.
- There has been no water in the conservatory basement which is good news. A second boiler is set to be installed next week. The dome project is out to bid, work to start mid-summer.
- 450 baby trees will be delivered today to the conservatory be planted in the Flatwoods this spring. Orchids have been delivered.

Special Events - Darlisa Terrell, Event Coordinator, Belle Isle Park

- She is working with 47 teams to coordinate future events: walks, triathlons, family reunions.
- Some favorite events are returning; Spring Cleanup April 23, Grand Prix June 3 – 5, kite festival July 10, and Metro Youth Day July 13.
- She has been working with park event teams, which is a better way to promote ahead of time so people interested would be able to have information early and sign up early. She has met with a lot of them already and everyone is looking forward to the season.

Law Enforcement Update – Lt. Todd Szyska, DNR Law Division

- There have been fluctuations with lights that the DNR is working on.
- Have had to patrol the new artwork due to people climbing on it.

Infrastructure Update - Amanda Treadwell, Urban Field Planner (see attachment)

Stakeholder Update – Aly Melnik, Belle Isle Conservancy

The Belle Isle Nature Center will hold Winterfest on January 29 outdoors while building is under construction and will feature ice carvings, snow shoeing, winter crafts and smores. The Dossin will open with a new maritime exhibition with ship models.

Belle Isle Nature Center, Ayo Thomas

Has had a lot of people ask about the goose droppings – needs insights because people are asking. Scott Pratt said that Goose Be Gone has helping clean up, and relocate them annually. Chief Olson said Wildlife has also been part of this complex issue and everyone will continue to seek appropriate solutions.

She asked if there will be discussions on the paddock post-Grand Prix and if it will be return to its natural state. Chief Olson said they are having a meeting with the Grand Prix staff in February and will discuss at that time, but agrees it is something that needs to be addressed. Scott Pratt said the mobility study will guide on how they utilize this space as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Patrick Livingston (submitted written statement) – Thanked the DNR, MSP, and BIPAC for the efforts toward making Belle Isle the premier urban state park in the nation. Urges the DNR and BIPAC to begin planning to prioritize conversion of the race paddock area to a welcome center and the surrounding area returned to year-round public access. Encourages the DNR and BIPAC to work together to apply for funding support for the conversion from the Detroit Grand Prix and the Penske Foundation, whose legacy deserves to be seen positively for their ongoing contributions to the Park.

Deborah Taylor (submitted written statement) – Requests that the DNR use the resources available to restore Belle Isle centering City of Detroit residents and nature lovers. The original intention of gifting the park to the City of Detroit was for a safe outdoor space to convene, relax & engage in healthy socialization. Also thinks there should be a surcharge for the annual pass and day rates for non-Detroit residents to help maintain the park. Is also advocating for the protection and preservation of the natural and cultural features of the island.

Ice Frio (submitted written statement) - Asked why the meetings are held at a time not conducive to the public and why they are not held in the evening, and why the park is closed at 10 p.m., although allows yacht club members. He plans to write the City of Detroit and ask them to assume the management and upkeep of Belle Isle.

Michael Alberts – Spoke about the artwork at Sunset Point by Stan Dolega that was moved due to the pathway. He asks that the DNR not move the artwork and that it should be maintained and kept up to the artist’s original intent.

“VG” – Asked when the DNR anticipates taking reservations at the casino in 2023. Scott Pratt said once they get the construction timelines down, there will be a better idea. It will be publicized when it is complete. Mike Terrell said it is a health and safety issue and so a decision

was made to not take reservations until the last construction truck leaves the island. Chief Olson said they will do everything possible to get things done as quickly and reasonably as possible.

JW Mitchell – Was there a response to the concern about accessing the meeting?

Scott Pratt said they do offer one evening meeting and if they hear from a majority that do seek evening meetings, they will take that into consideration. As far as the bridge closing at 10 p.m., those rules were taken over from the City. There are no buildings in the park open after 10 p.m., and the closures are only for vehicular traffic. As far as the Yacht Club having access, it is for their facility only, and not to access the park. As for closings in the summer months, they try to limit them as much as possible and only when there is concern that emergency vehicles cannot get through.

Mr. Mitchell said he had to “jump through hoops” to attend this meeting. Could we tell him if there will be a link that is readily available and not have to chase it down.

PRD staff said that the meeting info can be found on the DNR Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee web page at [DNR - Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/belle-isle-park-advisory-committee), and the public can also sign up to receive e-mail updates and public meeting notices by accessing the DNR home page at www.michigan.gov/dnr under “News and Updates” and selecting “Belle Isle Park”. Mr. Mitchell requested meeting links be put on the BIC website.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Michael Curis asked if the paddock could use trolleys. Also, he is open to having three evening meetings (spring, summer, fall) and wants to remind the public that the BIPAC meetings were set up to be every other month, but they agreed to hold them every month to keep the information flowing. He also inquired about the zoo presentations and if they will hear anymore from them.

Scott Pratt said the zoo information will be back, and he has been looking into trolleys and cabs. Chief Olson said it is up to the committee to hold evening meetings and it will be put on the next agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Moved by: **Michael Curis**

Seconded by: **Bud Denker**

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

February 17, 2022

9:00 a.m.



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update

January 20, 2022 Detroit, MI





Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Trail Gateway

Construction Status –

- **Ribbon Cutting**
rescheduled for spring 2022
- **Amenities for Gateway on back order for spring installation**
- **Trail work near DYC entrance will be completed in phase 2 scope of work**



Sculpture installed at Ralph Wilson Gateway



Athletic Complex Handball Courts

- All Ongoing Masonry work to be complete 12/20.
- Steel Framing to be installed in January.
- Additional masonry, coping and painting will be complete next spring, weather dependent



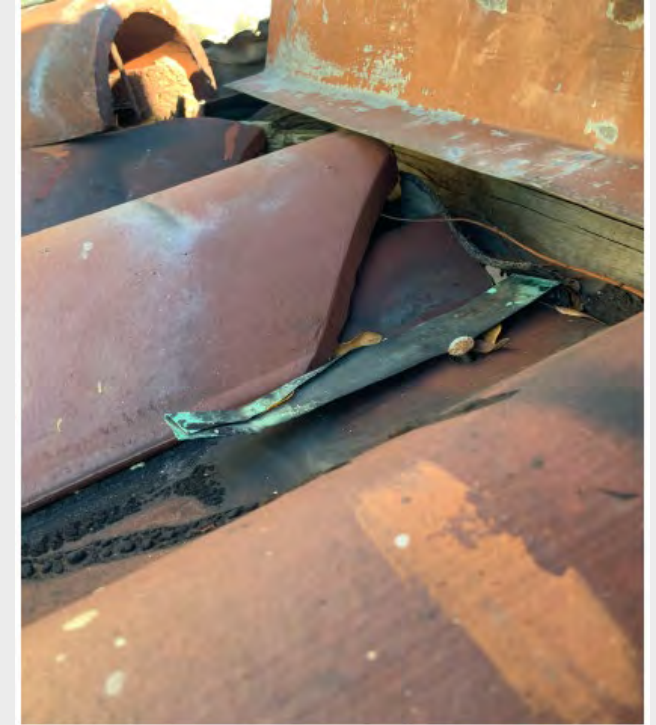
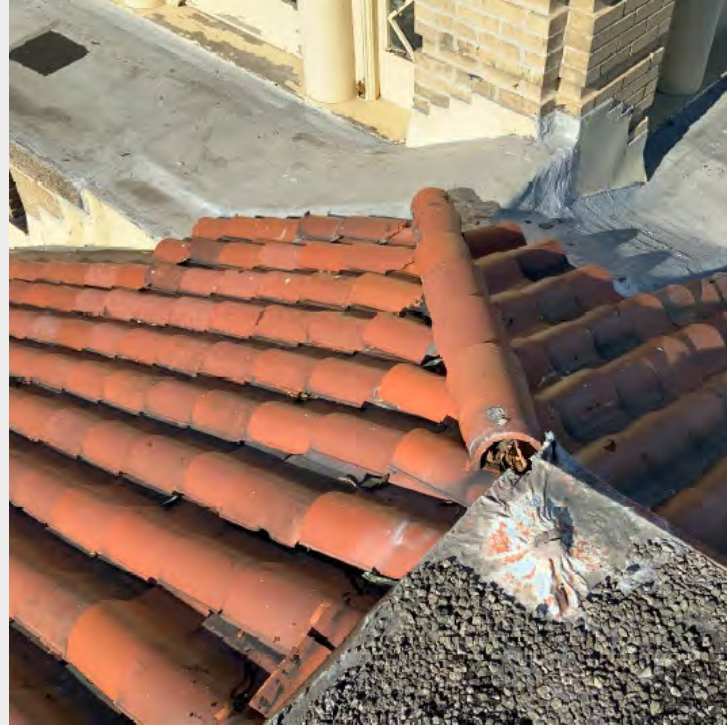
Additional Masonry work required once roof structure was removed

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, January 2022



Engineering Casino

- Contractor preparing to make immediate repairs on roof
- Scope of work includes making roof weather tight and ceiling repairs from water damage on the building interior
- A full roof replacement is anticipated for 2022.



Casino Roof Deterioration

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, January 2022



Athletic Shelter Roof Replacement

- Finishing carpentry work, painting and preparing for lighting arrest system.
- Veranda installation (decking and handrails) will take place in January.
- Project completion date expected for mid-March.



New painted soffit and supports being installed

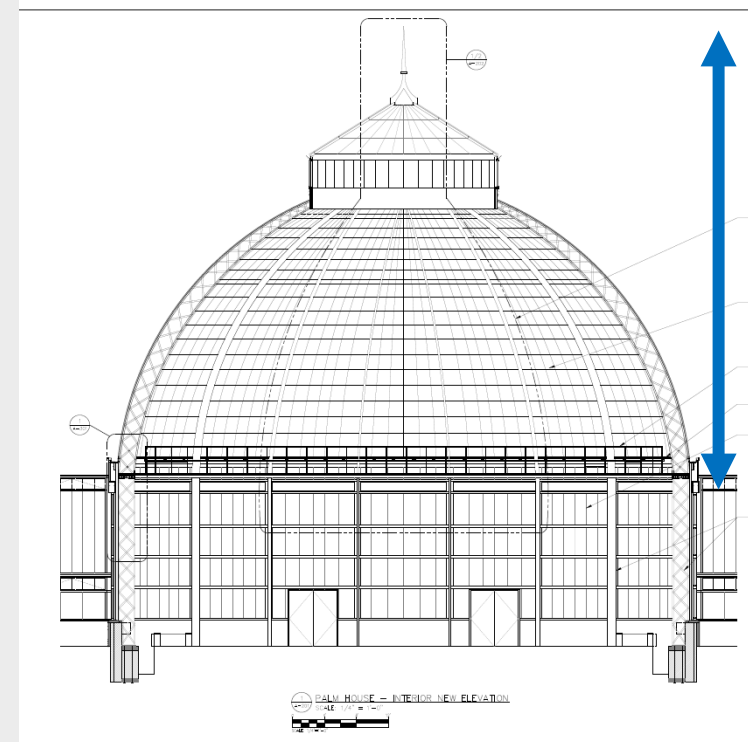


Newly painted window and fascia



Engineering Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory

- Plans are being reviewed by SHPO and DLARA now.
- DNR and BIC coordinating funding for \$12 million project.
- Scope will focus on steel maintenance, lead abatement and new glazing in upper dome.



Scope of work to primarily address the upper 65' of the dome



Sawmill

- Phase 2 Engineering plans are being prepared
- Phase 2 scope of work will address building envelope below roof line
- Masonry repairs in phase 2 scope of work
- Windows and doors to be restored or replaced as needed
- Electric upgrade engineering to be complete



Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, January 2022



Park HQ Site Work

- Contractor completed concrete work in rear of park HQ
- Remaining work to take place this spring includes grading the berm along the shoreline and paving of the front parking lot for guests.



ADA access and paving scheduled for Park HQ

Belle Isle Park Infrastructure Update, January 2022



Engineering Scott Fountain

- Additional core samples of concrete have been taken on steps of fountain. Project team to review testing results to determine critical repairs required for fountain structure
- Currently, a second project team is finalizing a maintenance and operation manual for starting up and winterizing fountain. To be complete this spring after team runs through start up and reviewing manual

SAMPLE IDENTIFICATION			
SAMPLE ID	Core No. 1	Core No. 1A	Core No. 2
SAMPLE TYPE	2¾ in (70 mm) Diameter Hardened Concrete Cores		
LENGTH	3½ in (89 mm)	1¾ in (44 mm)	6½ in (165 mm)

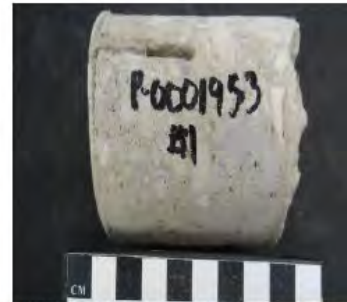


PHOTO NO. 6A: Core No. 1 – Core profile, as received, top surface at left.

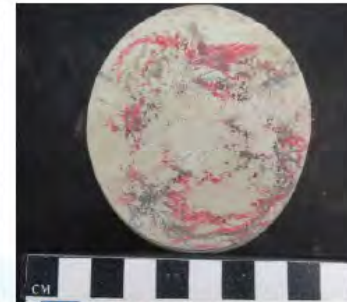


PHOTO NO. 6B: Core No. 1 – Top surface, as received.



PHOTO NO. 7A: Core No. 2 – Core profile with top surface at left. A small amount of original concrete is shown at the right/bottom of the core.



PHOTO NO. 7B: Core No. 2 – Loose/fractured fragments of original concrete at the base of core.



Wet-Mesic Flatwoods Habitat Restoration

- Upcoming work includes boardwalk installation on Nashua Canal loop, and demolition of abandoned electrical building
- Plantings on hold for pending elevation review of Tanglewood and Shadownook



1) Oakway ditch #1 installed across walking path

Boardwalk will be installed over ditch



6) trees planted and protection installed near Sylvan canal

Native flatwood species planted