

1993 PROJECT ABSTRACT

For the period ending June 10, 1995

This project was supported by Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Title: Minnehaha Park Environmental Interpretive Center
Program Manager: Sandra A. Welsh
Organization: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Legal Citation: M.L. 93, Ch. 172, Sec.14, Subd. 7(i)
Approp. Amount: \$300,000

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

To renovate the Longfellow House as an Environmental Interpretive Center.

RESULTS

The historic Longfellow House in Minnehaha Park has been completely renovated to accommodate an environmental interpretive program. The building which is on the National, state and local historic registers was moved from its former location on Minnehaha Parkway to a new site on Minnehaha Ave. - a distance of approximately 600 feet. The Department of Transportation funded the relocation of the house in the Fall of 1994 and built a new foundation and provided for new utilities. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board began extensive renovation work in late Fall. The work included repair or replacement of the buildings' exterior siding, new windows and doors, new roof, porches and chimneys and all interior renovation work. An elevator was installed in the building and all restroom facilities, door openings, and drinking fountains meet current ADA requirements. New energy efficient mechanical and electrical systems were installed. A fire sprinkler and other life safety improvements were made. Because of this work a building of significant historic and cultural value has been renewed and recycled. It will offer a safe, accessible and comfortable place to provide interpretive and environmental information and programs.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

The results of the project are visible to all park users and passerby. Now located in a very visible intersection of Highway 55 and Minnehaha Avenue, the relocation and renovation of the building have attracted a number of calls and resulted in local television and newspaper coverage. The hours of operation and program offerings will be included in future Park Summer Brochures which are mailed to all Minneapolis residents. Also, information will be available through flyers and brochures made available at the park and surrounding recreation centers.

I. **Project Title:** Minnehaha Park Environmental Interpretive Center
Program Manager: Sandra A. Welsh
Agency Affiliation: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Address: 200 Grain Exchange
 400 South 4th Street
 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415-1400
Phone: (612) 661-4821

A. Legal Citation M.L. 93, Ch. 172, Sec. 14, Subd. 7(i)

Total LCMR Budget: \$300,000.00
 Balance: -0-

MINNEHAHA PARK ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETIVE CENTER

This appropriation is from the trust fund to the Commissioner of Natural Resources for a contract with the Metropolitan Council for a subgrant to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to adaptively reuse the Longfellow House in Minnehaha Park as an urban interpretive center. This appropriation must be matched by \$37,000 from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

B. LMIC Compatible Data Language
 N.A.

C. Status of Match Requirement

Match Required: \$37,000.00
 *Funds raised to date: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board \$37,000.00
 Land Purchase Reserve Fund 92
 Net Debt Bond 70,000.00
 Transfer 60,444.00

II. **Narrative**

Adaptively reuse the Longfellow House in Minnehaha Park as an urban interpretive center to provide cultural, historical and environmental interpretation programs for Minneapolis residents and visitors.

III. **Statement of Objectives**

1. Renovate the Longfellow House as an Environmental Interpretive Center.

*Additional local funds have been added to the project.

IV. **Objectives**

A. Title of Objective: Renovate the Longfellow House as an Environmental Interpretive Center.

1. **Narrative:** The Longfellow House listed on the State Historic Site Registry will be renovated to serve as an interpretive center in Minnehaha Park, thus integrating the cultural and historical resources of the park with the natural environment.

2. **Procedure:** Retain interpretive and architectural consultants who will prepare a design for the physical renovation and reuse of the building and the design program from which construction drawings and bid documents will be prepared. The design will include repair or replacement of the building's interior siding, windows and doors, enclosed porches, roof and chimneys, new energy efficient electrical and mechanical systems; interior renovation consisting of restrooms, partition removals to create classrooms; an elevator/lift to provide access to all public floors, and interpretive displays.

	LCMR/ MATCH	OTHER FUNDS
a. Estimated Design/Engineering Costs	\$33,700.00	1,359.00
b. Estimated Construction Costs	\$303,300.00	\$129,085.00

3. Total LCMR Budget \$337,000.00 (Including match) (7/1/95)
 Total Project Budget \$468,194.00 (7/1/95)

4. **Timeline: Product Timeline:**

	7/93	1/94	6/94	1/95	6/95
Hire Consultant	X				X
Renovate Exterior		X		X	X
Renovate Interior			X	X	X
Construct and Install Exhibits				X	X
Open Center					X

5. Work started in 1994 with the demolition of the interior walls and initial framing of the porches. Lead based paint on all exterior and interior surfaces and asbestos flooring found in the building required abatement at significant cost to the project. The building was relocated by MN/DOT in July and renovation work began. Significant structural problems required additional engineering and structural work. All other identified work was completed including new restrooms, mechanical and electrical systems, elevator, painting, new windows and doors and other miscellaneous work required to provide a safe, accessible and historically significant public building. The site work required to support the building (parking areas, walks, lighting, etc.) is expected to begin in the Fall. The site work is being funded by the Federal Highway Administrations ISTEA program.

6. Benefits:

- a. The Longfellow House, a major historic resource, will be permanently relocated and adaptively reused in an appropriate setting at Minnehaha Park
- b. The reuse of the house as an Interpretive Center will become a highly visible amenity in Minnehaha Park.
- c. The Minnehaha Park Interpretive Center would complement and supplement interpretive stations being developed along the Mississippi River as well as in the park.
- d. The project will support and realize the recommendations included in the Minnehaha Park Renovation Plan prepared by a Citizen Advisory Committee.
- e. This project will reduce the overuse of specific areas in Minnehaha Park, e.g., the Falls, by encouraging usage throughout the park.
- f. A key historic structure will be preserved for future generations.

V. Evaluation: The project will be evaluated by user counts and surveys. The MPRB will solicit user comments and suggestions at the site and throughout its other program locations. The project will also be surveyed by the Metropolitan Council when it has funds to do so as part of its research on regional park needs.

VI. Context: The recent environmental education center study (E.E.C. 2000) mandated by the Legislature found that there are no centers presently located in Minneapolis. This study group recommended that one urban facility be constructed for every 100,000 residents in urban areas, with special priority given to populations with a high proportion of economically disadvantaged and people of color populations. As the first state park, Minnehaha Park is at the junction of three major recreation trails, adjacent to the major Southeast gateway to Minneapolis, and accessible by public transportation. The interpretive center will allow urban residents, as well as the large number of visitors from throughout the region, state or nation, to better understand and appreciate Minnehaha Park and the Minneapolis Park system.

The project is also part of the overall plan for the renovation of Minnehaha Park, funds for which will be sought from a number of sources including Regional Open Space funds. LAWCON funds were used in Minnehaha Park some twenty years ago for the development of the lower glen trail. It is expected that LCMR funds for continuing renovation of the park will be sought.

VII. Qualifications:

1. Program Manager - Sandra Welsh, Landscape Architect well versed in park renovation and sensitive environmental areas.
2. Cooperators/Other Investigators
John B. Winston, Chair - John H. Steven House Community, Board of Directors, 4901 Minnehaha Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55417.

VIII. Reporting Requirements:

Semi-annual status reports will be submitted not later than January 1, 1994, July 1, 1994, January 1, 1995, and a final status report by June 30, 1995.