St. Paul – Changsha
Sister-City Friendship Garden
at Phalen-Keller Regional Park

D5 PPEC Community Input Workshop
March 3, 2016

Linda Mealey-Lohmann, President of MN China Friendship Garden Society
Alice Messer, St. Paul Parks & Rec Senior Architect
Weiming Lu, Urban Planner and China Garden Advisor
Bill Zajicek, D5 Council & China Garden Advisor
Welcome

• Purpose
  – Provide update on St. Paul-Changsha Friendship Garden
  – Receive community input on proposed design elements

• Introductions
Tonight’s Agenda

Joint Presentation
• History of “China Friendship Garden” project
• Current status of Friendship Garden
• China Garden philosophy & design elements
• Conceptual Images of Friendship Garden

Small Group Exercise

Large Group Debriefing/Sharing

Next Steps
Anticipate: Small Group Exercise Qs

1. Identify one example of what you **most like** about the proposed plan (if anything) & why
2. Identify one example of what you would **like to improve** about the proposed plan (if anything) & why
3. Identify one example of what you **dislike** (if anything) & why
4. Identify one example of what your group would like to see the proposed Friendship Garden **used for**
Proposed Vision
How did we get to this point?
• National Organization & MN Chapter
• Non-profit established in 1974
• Mission: Dedicated to developing and strengthening **friendship and mutual understanding** between the peoples of the United States and China

→ USCPFA-MN China Garden Committee

Website: uscpfa-mn.org
1988 - Sister City Relationship
St. Paul - Changsha, Hunan Province
1988 Mayor Latimer signed sister-city agreement
With Weiming Lu in Changsha
Chinese in MN

• Chinese first arrived in MN in mid-1870s

• First Chinese scholars enter U of M in 1914

• >2,200 students & scholars at U of M in 2014

• China is MN’s 2nd largest export market – $3.2 billion from MN & $120 billion to China in 2014
USCPFA-MN → MN China Friendship Garden Society

Founded 2005
by Professor C.C. Hsiao & Linda Mealey-Lohmann, with Joyce Hsiao
MISSION:
To establish China Friendship Gardens in Minnesota in order to further promote friendship and understanding between the peoples of China and Minnesota.

Website: www.MNChinaGarden.org
Email: MN.China.Garden@comcast.net
“Meditation” at Phalen Park 2006
by Changsha Sculptor Lei Yixin
Changsha Master Lei Yixin’s sculptures
Symbol of Changsha & Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Stone of Hope, D.C.
2011 China Garden Approved as part of Phalen Park Master Plan following series of community input meetings

Bill Pesek, Parks & Rec, Linda Mealey-Lohmann, Weiming Lu
Advisor Bill Zajicek held District 5 Planning Council community input meeting November 2014
The following is written input from St. Paul Payne Phalen community members collected at the Nov. 18, 2014, PPELC Meeting

How would you like to see a China Garden used?

1. I want a tea house in/near our garden
2. Weddings
3. Life celebrations
4. Reflection
5. School/education field trips
6. Community building
7. Arts organizations
8. Concordia Village
9. Tea Lantern Festival
10. Dragon Festival
11. For anybody who comes by
12. Stone and garden arts incorporated into the features
13. Periodic displays of other art
14. Commision a gift stone from Beijing
15. Zhao Qingquan
16. Minnesota Bonsai Society
17. Have members who create/collect Chinese stones and penjing of all styles have a stone
$50,000 Legacy Funds for China Garden Conceptual Designs 2015

Representative Tim Mahoney

Senator Foung Hawj
October 2015 Changsha Trip with Mayor Coleman
China Garden Advisors: Romi Slowiak, Bill Zajicek, Brenda Fong, Linda Mealey-Lohmann
China Garden Advisors
at famous Changsha Aiwan Pavilion
Changsha Yanghu Wetlands Park signed Sister Park Agreement with Phalen Park
Traveled to 蒙族 Villages near Changsha to Conduct Research
Changsha area is Ancestral Home to MN Hmong

1.5 million 苗族 near Changsha @ 9 million 苗族 in China
苗族 History Museum

5 Waves of 苗族 movement from Southern China

Famous Female苗族 Leader
Feng Huang (Phoenix) 苗族 Ancient City
Traveled to
苗族
Country Villages
Changsha Architects in MN
Site visit in November 2015
Changsha Architects
Jennifer Junfang FAN & Jon Youhua WEN
Carole Hyder, International Feng Shui Expert
Tour of Hmong Village with Senator Hawj & Met Hmong Business Leaders
Presented Plans to City Park Department

Meetings with St. Paul Parks & Rec

Mike Hahm, Alice Messer, Bryan Murphy
Bill Pesek, Weiming Lu, Linda Mealey-Lohmann, Bill Zajicek, Romi Slowiak
Why Phalen Park?
Rebuilt Historic Stone Arch Bridge

est $1.4 million
Restored Historic Waterfall
Est $600,000
New Limestone Rock Sitting Areas & Fishing Piers along Water Channel
“Meditation”

Changsha Sculptor
Master Lei Yixin
Phalen Park - Home to large Minnesota Hmong Community

More than 66,000 Hmong live in MN (2010 Census)
China Garden Basic Principles, Philosophy & Elements

Weiming Lu, China Garden Society Advisor

- Internationally recognized urban planner & designer
- President of Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation in St. Paul
  - Mears Park
  - Bruce Vento Sanctuary
- Worked with Hmong American Partnership
- Author, “The Tao of Urban Rejuvenation” & “Shan Shui Spirit in Chinese Garden”
- Member of /National Committee for US-China Relations
Blend in with Nature
Artistic Rocks
Decorative Scenic Pathways
Water
“Borrowed” or “Framed” Views
Architectural Structures - Changsha Style
Poetry & Calligraphy
A place for arts and culture, contemplation, community gatherings, and school field trips
Proposed Conceptual Designs
The China Friendship Garden at Phalen Regional Park will be a living symbol of the peace and friendship that exists between Saint Paul and its sister city Changsha, China (since 1988). The garden will honor the many contributions by the Chinese in Minnesota since the 1870s, integrate Chinese garden design principles within the natural setting of Phalen Regional Park, and be a bridge between the Minnesota Hmong and the Hmong ancestral home of Changsha, China. A strong visual connection to the Meditation sculpture by Master Lei Wei was critical to the development of the garden plan. Several interconnected loop trails allow visitors to experience the garden from a number of vantage points.

This garden can be developed in three phases including:

- **Phase 1** - Main Pavilion and Dry Stream Bed Estimated Cost - $2 million
- **Phase 2** - Hmong Culture Plaza Estimated Cost - $2 million
- **Phase 3** - Lakeside Pavilion Estimated Cost - $3 million
Bird's Eye View of Garden - View to the west

The five elements of Chinese Garden design (vegetation, artistic rocks, water, scenic pathways, and architecture) are reflected in the concept drawings.
The main pavilion is a replica of the original Aiwan Pavilion in Changsha, China. The pavilion is situated to visually connect the China Friendship Garden to the "Meditation" sculpture.

Total estimated phase cost: $2 million
Saint Paul is home to one of the largest Hmong populations, which claims Changsha, China as its ancestral home. The “path of the Hmong immigrant” is the focus of the Hmong cultural Plaza.

Total estimated phase cost: $2 million
The pavilion will stretch along the lakeshore offering views of the Phalen Channel and restored stone bridge. It is located between existing willow trees offering a peaceful location to experience Phalen Regional Park.

Total estimated phase cost: $3 million
The lakeside pavilion includes a waterside patio, zigzag veranda, and indoor classroom. Park visitors can practice Tai Chi on the outside patio, fish from the shoreline, or take a class inside the pavilion.
The China Friendship Garden will be breathtaking all year round.
Winter Beauty
Video
Phase 1a Main Pavilion

$220,000 Fundraising Goal for Main Pavilion base and immediately surrounding plaza
Phase 1b Rock Garden & Arched Bridge
Fundraising Goal: $1.7 million
Phase 2 Hmong Cultural Plaza
Fundraising Goal: $2 million

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Total estimated phase cost: $2 million
Phase 3 Lakeside Pavilion
Fundraising Goal: $2 million

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Total estimated phase cost: $3 million
Small Group Exercise

- Create small groups
- Introduce yourselves
- Decide who will **take notes** on comments
- Decide who will **summarize comments** to large group
- Discuss questions and try to reach consensus
- 5 minutes per question
- Write response on post-it and put on wall
- At end, share responses with large group
Question 1

Identify one example of what you **most like** about the proposed plan (if anything) & why
Question 2

Identify one example of what you would **like to improve** about the proposed plan (if anything) & why
Question 3

Identify one example of what you dislike (if anything) & why
Question 4

Identify one example of what your group would like to see the proposed Friendship Garden used for
Recap & Next Steps
Sister City Friendship Gift

- Gift from people of St. Paul to City of Changsha to be installed at Yanghu Park (sister park)
- $30,000 Goal
- Peanuts Statues
HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED

Phase 1a & 1b

• Like “Friends of St. Paul-Changsha Friendship Garden at Phalen Park” on Facebook - get updates

• Seeking Volunteers:
  – Fundraising
  – Marketing
  – Social Media
  – Future gardeners & tour guides

• Visit website: MNChinaGarden.org
HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED
Phase 2 Hmong Cultural Plaza

• Hosting Hmong Community Input Meeting

• Seeking Hmong Community Input & Expertise
  – What design?
  – Cultural Symbols?
  – History Boards?
  – Pieces of Art?
  – Programming ideas?
  – Involvement of schools?

• Seeking Volunteers for Advisory Group

• Seeking Volunteers to begin Fundraising now
Volunteer or Make Donation:
Website: www.MNChinaGarden.org
Email: MN.China.Garden@comcast.net