



Chaska Par 30 Learning Links Project

Summary of Stakeholder Engagement

March 2019

Learning Links' Vision

Our goal is to reimagine and renovate the Par 30 to make it a place where everyone in the community can participate fully in the game, and where research-based, innovative practices of golf course sustainability and environmental stewardship are embraced. When completed, our renovated course will be:

- A national demonstration project that shows how golf course design can grow the game by appealing to new populations – especially golfers with physical and sensory impairments,
- a showcase and laboratory that integrates the latest golf industry research in the areas of sustainable management and environmental impact,
- a learning and training center for new and returning golfers of all ages and abilities;
- inviting and fun for all skill levels - from beginner to pro - taking inspiration from the development of other popular short courses around the country to build a culture and playing experience authentic to Chaska, MN.
- most importantly, a place where people can come together as full members of the community – around their common passion for golf and the outdoors.

By redesigning the Chaska Par 30 to reflect these aspirations, we will open up the sport to thousands of new players, foster a greater sense of community and create a model for the growth and sustainability of golf that can be replicated across the country.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Collaborative, Stakeholder-Based Expertise

Some of the community's greatest assets for this project are the knowledge, interest, and contributions that its citizens, businesses, local officials, and technical experts made to the development of priorities for the Chaska Par 30 Learning Links project. The planning process provided opportunities for stakeholder involvement in creative and practical ways to help shape the future of the Chaska Par 30 Learning Links project. The major forces, issues, and opportunities associated with the project site have been defined through a series of interactive work

sessions and community conversations. The results of the stakeholder interactions have been synthesized into priorities to shape the vision for the project site and guide the creation of a final master plan.

Design Committee (DC)

The Design Committee is comprised of Learning Links advocates, community stakeholders and City staff. The DC has worked closely with the City of Chaska and the Design Team to evaluate the existing challenges and opportunities on the site to develop future alternatives and make recommendations on a preferred master plan. Members of the DC provided advice and assistance to the design team for broader community outreach to stakeholders and project partners.

Design Team (DT)

The Design Team (DT) is comprised of specialized consultants hired to help facilitate a design process and develop a feasible and implementable master plan for the Chaska 30 learning links course. Members of the DT provided advice and assistance to the project team for broader community outreach to residents and businesses in the study area.

Design Worksessions

Two design worksessions were held with community stakeholders, subject topic experts, City staff, design committee and design team members to engage in a conversation about the future of the Chaska Par 30 course. The worksessions focused on two specific topics, including: the design of an inclusive barrier-free golf course and a sustainable golf course. The following pages highlight a summary of the two worksessions. A special thanks to the City of Chaska for hosting our engagement sessions - and to all of those who participated in the process. Our project is immeasurably the better for it.

Worksession 1:

Inclusive Barrier-Free Golf



WORK SESSION #1 – “INCLUSIVE, BARRIER-FREE GOLF” DESIGN SESSION

The first work session was held on February 28th at the City of Chaska Event Center. The meeting consisted of a brief presentation introducing the project team, project goals and desired project outcomes. The work session also included two breakout sessions focused on strengths/opportunities and weaknesses to create an inclusive, barrier free golf course and a mapping exercise. For the mapping exercise, the groups were encouraged to develop design ideas and draw concepts that responded to some of the questions asked as part of the strengths/opportunities and weaknesses exercise. Below are a list of attendees at work session #1.

- Tim Andersen, Learning Links
- Mike Broback, Community Member/Local Golfer
- Charles DePew, Community Member/Local Golfer
- Eric Gidlow, Learning Links Board
- Marshall Grange, City of Chaska – Parks and Recreation Director
- Kari Haug, Kari Haug Planning & Design, Inc.
- Brian Horgan, University of Minnesota, Learning Links Design Committee
- John Kellin, City of Chaska, Head Golf Professional
- Dana Millington, Paul’s Pals Foundation
- Mark Moers, City of Chaska Golf Superintendent
- Susan Neuville, Community Member/Local Golfer
- Andy Sammon, Mount Olivet Rolling Acres
- Bryan Skavnak, Bryan Skavnak Golf Academy
- John Slack, Perkins + Will
- Nicholas Smith, Goodman Group/Hazeltine Center
- Eric Snyder, Learning Links
- Benjamin Warren, Artisan Golf Design, Learning Links Design Partner

- Mark Wentzell, 292 Design Group, Learning Links Design Partner

Below are the identified questions asked during this session and specific responses.

Question: From your perspective, what would be the biggest selling point of having an “inclusive, barrier-free golf course?”

- Bigger, wider draw of users
- Free golf for kids
- Host “first tee”-type programs to introduce people to the game
- Multi-purpose
 - Education
 - Learning environment
 - Golf as a vehicle for youth development
 - Good to focus on kids
- Kids can often be the gateway for parents and siblings to get exposed to golf
- “top golf” - style model – set outdoors
 - Non-threatening
 - Feeling that it’s a game, not a sport (don’t need to buy a new wardrobe to participate)
- Putting courses have a similar dynamic – fun, non-threatening, not intimidating
- Think about the park as a green space
- 1st in Minnesota
- Everyone is welcome
- Opens door to broader range of people
- Uniqueness of investment/donation opportunity
- Showing non-traditional golfers participating

- Ok to make a divot!
 - Keeping family unit together for recreation
 - Vision of the project
 - Unique green structure will resonate with core golfers
 - Opens door for historically marginalized golfers
- Opportunities
 - Organizations like Special Olympics may share insights that can inform barrier-free design
 - Opportunity for adaptive sport through schools
 - Opportunity to utilize green space therapeutically (K-12)
 - Health and Wellness for everyone
 - Barrier-free greenspace integrated into community
- Open to all
- Welcoming children/physical handicap accessible
- Length of play
- Lower investment of time and \$

Question: Is the term “clubhouse” unwelcoming?

- “event center”?
- The term can either be inclusive or exclusive
- It depends on how the place makes people feel
 - Does it feel like a place they belong?
- Traditionally, can be unwelcoming-- “do I need to be a member?”
- What is it called?

- Golf center
- Welcome center
- Hole zero
- Term can be either inclusive or exclusive
- If you want to re-brand, re-name it
 - Cabin?
- For golfers maybe not intimidating
- For non-golfers?
- Re-name to shed or shack?

Question: Who benefits from dress code culture?

- Dress code can be a form of barrier
- Only rule – “be nice”
- Should be about not making others uncomfortable
- Should be able to wear whatever you normally wear (as long as not offensive)
- Private clubs
- Dress codes are a barrier
- Dress code within limits

Question: Have you visited other facilities that were notable for their inclusive/welcoming design? What stood out to you? What lessons from those sites could we apply to the Par 30’s design (course, clubhouse, other feature)?

- Torrey Pines vs. Goat Hill Park
- Torrey Pines
 - Difficult
 - Expensive

- Goat Hill Park
 - “felt like home”
 - Varying degrees of golfer skills
 - A place I could be myself
 - Fun
 - Staff and other golfers made me feel welcome
 - Friendly community – made me feel like they were glad I was there
 - Authentic golf experience
- ADA compliance (restrooms, etc)
- Accessible restrooms
- Hard surfaces
- Minimal inclines
- Open areas, not congested
- Braille signage
- Specialized carts, equipment
- Counter heights
- Availability of adaptive equipment
- Heavy pull-down bars, grab bars
- Color
- Physical design
- Big wide, open doors
- Signs
- Dress code barriers
- Open design - glass

Question: What does your perfect day at the golf course look like? Feel like? Satisfying/dissatisfying experiences?

- 4:00 pm (not usually as busy)
- Carrying clubs
- 9 holes
- Flip flops
- Enjoy sunset
- Find balls in the rough
- With Dad, buddies, former golf lesson students
- Not rushed
- Fast play
- Sunny day
- 9 holes with wife along
- Drinks/dinner after (post golf time is important – time to connect)
- Good company
- Sunny, 76 degrees
- Others playing and having fun
- You are treated well and welcomed
- No pressure, not rushed
- Good etiquette
- Friends, family, fun
- Keeping everyone together
- Success
- Have fun
- Don't stress over score/shots

- Hard work
- Social
- Staff trained to have fun

Question: Who are the different user groups we can bring to the site for recreational/social activities?

- Non-golfers
- Sites need to be welcoming to all
- New ways to introduce people to golf
- Democratizing/Demystifying the sport
- Candy
- Social events
- Day programs for people with disabilities
- Under-privileged
- Veterans / PGA Hope
- New golfers
- Kids
- Inclusion-based programs
- Seniors – continue to engage them in their sport
 - Programmed for socialization and recreation
- Different abilities – design for a spectrum of abilities (some are only able to play for 15 minutes)
- Women
- Juniors
- All groups of color

- Low-income
- Minorities
- Inner-city
- Special needs
- Millennials - looking for experiences that are inclusive, inexpensive, authentic, and fun
- People who had a bad first experience with golf - the Par 30 should be designed to “welcome them back”
- Families - the Par 30 should work for a father/daughter twosome - enjoyable for the dad, welcoming and fun for the daughter just learning the game

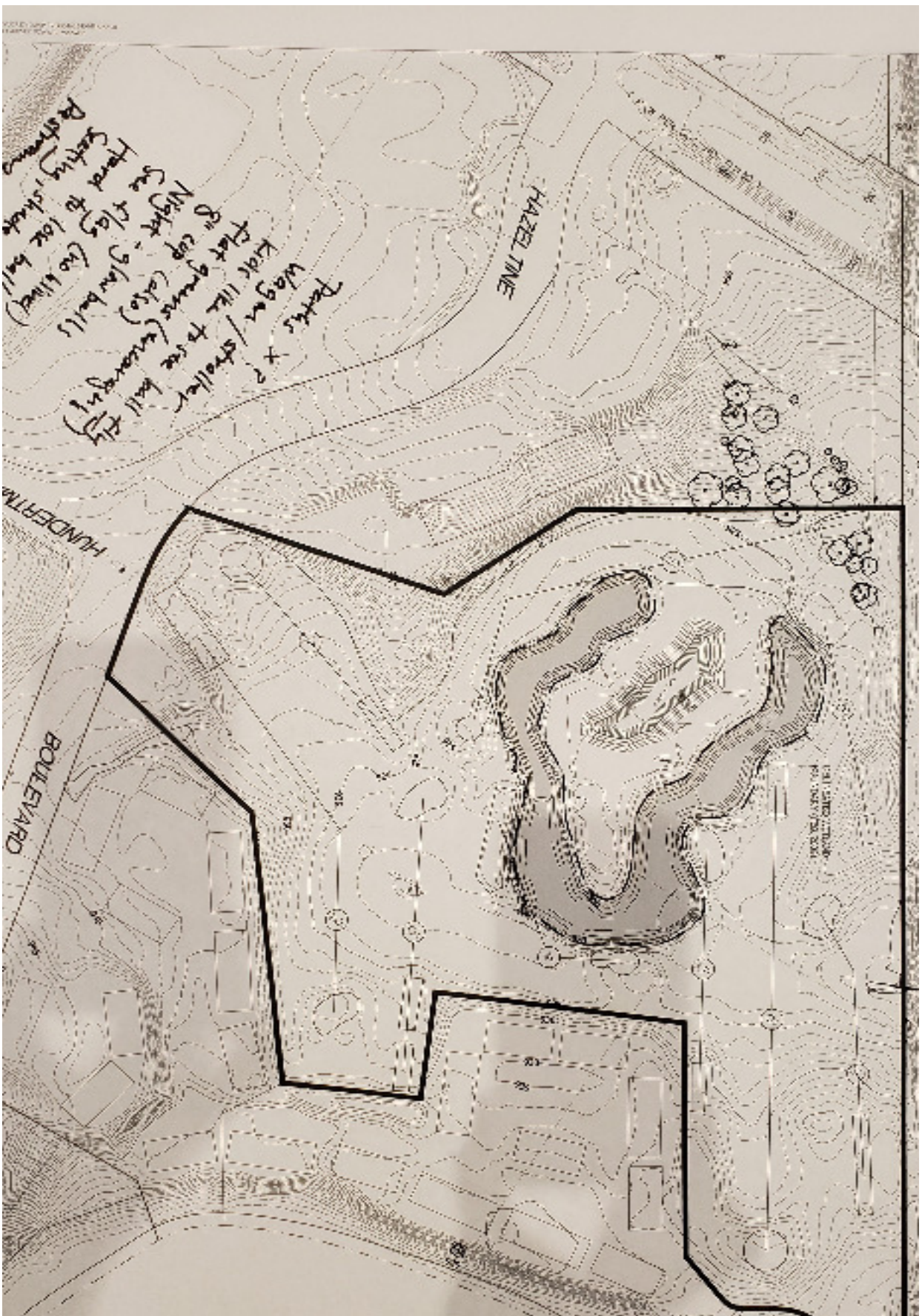
Question: Can you think of any unique wants or needs that the Par 30's design could address?

- No bunkers
- Himalayas putting green
- Walking trails
- Short grass
- Shade structure mid-course/weather shelter/shade
- Option for fewer holes played
- Program putting green only
- Different “pathways for play” to the same green
- Success loop
- No blind shots
- 8” cups
- Frogs/insects/bugs



Inclusive Barrier-Free Golf mapping exercise





Inclusive Barrier-Free Golf mapping exercise



Worksession 2: Sustainability and Programming



Work session #2 – Sustainable Design Session

The second work session was held on March 1st at the City of Chaska Event Center. The meeting consisted of a brief presentation introducing the project team, project goals and desired project outcomes. The work session also included two breakout sessions focused on strengths/opportunities and weaknesses related to creating a sustainable golf course and a mapping exercise. For the mapping exercise, the groups were encouraged to develop design ideas and draw concepts that responded to some of the questions asked as part of the strengths/opportunities and weaknesses exercise. Below are a list of those in attendance at work session #2.

- Tim Andersen, Learning Links
- Eric Gidlow, Learning Links Board
- Marshall Grange, City of Chaska – Parks and Recreation Director
- Matt Hansen, City of Chaska, Assistant Golf Course Superintendent
- Kari Haug, Kari Haug Planning & Design, Inc.
- Mark Haugejorde, Tim Herron Foundation
- Brian Horgan, University of Minnesota, Learning Links Design Committee
- John Kellin, City of Chaska, Head Golf Professional
- Eric Lembke, Stantec
- Mark Moers, City of Chaska Golf Superintendent
- John Slack, Perkins + Will
- Eric Snyder, Learning Links
- Tim Sundby – Carver County Water Management Organization
- Benjamin Warren, Artisan Golf Design, Learning Links Design Partner
- Mark Wentzell, 292 Design Group, Learning Links Design Partner
- Tom West, Hartman Companies

Below are the identified questions asked during this session and specific responses.

Question: What are the opportunities for environmental sustainability on this site?

- Improving water quality
- Opportunity to create small nature preserve – learning center
- Bird nesting sites – wood ducks, etc
- Pollinator system to attract butterflies, bumblebees
- Consider future climate change
- Signature trees to create arboretum (partnership opportunity with U of MN Arboretum?)
- Railroad – future may be a bike trail – access to golf via bike
- Solar energy
- Picking grasses that are less fragile/more resilient (mow less, less water, 2 heights of cut)
- Possibly a test site for different varieties of grass
- New/more sustainable turfgrass
- Education opportunities
- New irrigation – usage control
- Stop erosion of pond edges
- Natural filtration mechanisms / buffer zones
- Roof water management / solar
- Need sustainable \$ to success
- Storm water treatment / land trade with Goodman Group?
- Change perception of general public that the Par 30 pond is not a water hazard, but rather a sustainable feature for the community

– Frog pond

- Pollinator loop
- Storm water treatment
- Funding available for storm water treatment through State or Water Management Office foundation
- Opportunity for pollinator “islands” in turf areas, filter strips, buffer zones, grassy swales

Question: What is golf’s responsibility to nature / communities?

- Should give more than it takes
- Golf courses take up a lot of land, should give back
- Allow people to use course for non-golf activities (picnics, dogs, frisbee, walking, etc)
- Boozer loop
- Preserving natural beauty
- Be a good steward
- Education opportunities
- Storm water management
- Economic benefit / lifestyle, property value, etc)
- Cleanse runoff in pond

Question: Have you visited other facilities that were notable for their sustainable design? What stood out to you? What lessons from those sites could we apply to the Par 30’s design (course, clubhouse, other features)?

- #2 took all the rough out – reduced water usage
- Century World – natural planting areas
- Whistling Straights – relatively flat
- Daylight Outfall / Meander
 - Create a “burn”
 - Create a character feature



Question: Specific sustainability ideas for the course? Clubhouse, parking lot?

- Re-use water from pond to irrigate
- Consider bounce, water levels for amphibians
- Solar energy
- Club house – green building
- Exceed ADA- accessibility – be innovative
- Revisit Goodman Group property as a senior living facility
 - Create connection (cultural sustainability)
- Off grid?

Question: From your perspective, what would be the biggest “selling point” of having a sustainable course?

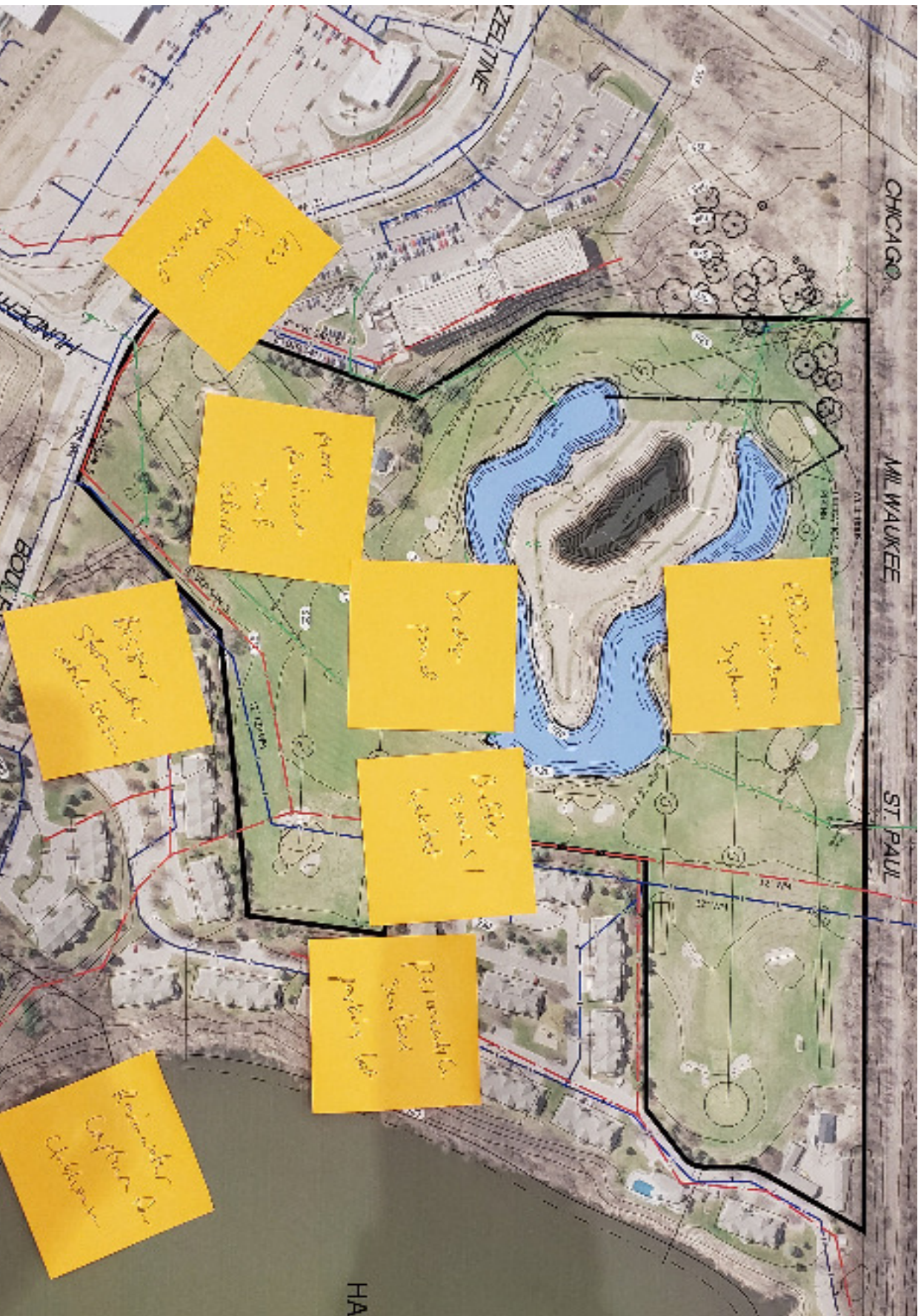
- The “right thing” to do
- Set standard of how golf gives back
- Message that it is more than a golf course
- Non-judgmental course
- Just a game – supposed to be fun
- Reclaimed water – irrigation
- Ecotourism – proximity to Hazeltine National (Ryder Cup)
- GEO – ecolabeling
- KPMG overflow
- Family friendly

Question: Should a golf course that is attuned to nature change color with the seasons?

- Absolutely – let nature dictate
- Could have year-round opportunities (simulators, etc)
- Create a “froggie marsh”
- Manage costs
- Use common sense
- Wetland credits

Question: Who are the different user groups we can bring for recreational/social activities?

- Everybody
- Multi-generational
- Season – different uses
- Weddings
- Outdoor music/concerts
- Food trucks/beer
- Winter path
- Fat tire biking
- Inclusive playground
- Daycare
- Caddie program



Sustainable mapping exercise





Sustainable mapping exercise





Sustainable mapping exercise

Additional comments received during the planning process.

- be clear on your target audience/market
 - care givers could be one such market segment
- focus on inclusive programs that include friends and family
- the Par 30 is an opportunity for kids with “nature deficit disorder”
- the Par 30’s design should be “staged” - so that golfers can “graduate” to increasing levels of difficulty as their skills evolve
 - this staged design could include the integration of artificial greens with shade
- design could include flexible tee area, rather than prescribed tee boxes
- design should consciously incorporate features that lend themselves to social media/selfies
- the Par 30 should be welcoming from the moment of arrival
- design should allow the ability to play less than 9 holes (3 hole loop for example)
- naming/branding is important

