From: Mark Metzke
To: DNR ESTABROOK
Subject: Rebuild the dam
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To the DNR folks,

I was in attendance the night of the public hearing but could not stay until the end. I wanted to reiterate some of the good points people made, from my perspective of course. One other thing I noticed, from an outsider or independent point of view, is that both ends of the debate seen to like to cherry pick facts. I hope you people at the DNR are diligent in your research to get to the truth.

Some of the points I wanted to make are as follows:

1. It is an urban waterway, many inner city residents did use this area in the past and could again under proper management. In the past it was under-utilized and not promoted very well. To lose this city/county resource would be a shame. I am one of the past users of the waterway, and I used to waterski on the river. Many times, children (and adults) would wave to us and ask for boat rides. Obviously in these times you cannot do this without parental permission, but this could be a function of the parks going forward.
2. On that same point, I do not live on the river, the impoundment area is a couple miles from my home and Lincoln park is about five miles from my home. However, I consider this area "in my backyard" and appreciate how close it is, and that without repairs to the dam, I will have to go elsewhere to pursue my water sports passions.
3. The Thiensville dam should be a good example of how an urban waterway can benefit a community. It supports public and private activity for miles up-river. (It's primarily where I go to ski now.)
4. The fish ladder is a good addition to the project. It alleviates the fish migration problem while still keeping the water deep enough for ALL users of the PUBLIC waterway. I did however bristle when the charter fishing businessman got up and spouted how the dam hurts his business by hurting the migration of fish. NON-NATIVE PACIFIC SALMON are usually what these guys fish for.
5. It is a shame the dam has become a pawn in the elections. The MC Executive has lied about this dam and used pictures of other areas to represent the impoundment for political gain. He says the money could be used for the parks department while downplaying that the river is one of the gems of Lincoln Park.
6. Once more, it is an urban waterway, there are plenty of places a short drive from the city where complete peacefulness can be found if that's what you require. The short stretch of the river that is part of the impoundment is a very small percentage of the Milwaukee River as a whole.
7. The impoundment provides a relatively safe place for paddlers without experience/strength, a faster flowing river excludes many from the opportunity to partake of these activities.
8. Dam removal would take away yet another resource from "North side" Milwaukee residents. These are overwhelmingly minority.

These points outline my stronger thoughts about this issue. To be clear, I favor rebuilding the dam.

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