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**PARKS, RECREATION & FACILITIES
MANAGEMENT**

Dean R. Gazza, Director

1819 East Witzke Boulevard
Appleton, Wisconsin 54911-8401
(920) 832-5572 FAX (920) 993-3103
Email - dean.gazza@appleton.org

TO: Parks & Recreation Committee

FROM: Dean R. Gazza

DATE: 7/25/2022

RE: Action Item: Authorize staff to engage in further discussions with Trout Museum of Art representatives in order to continue exploring the feasibility of locating the museum within Ellen Kort Peace Park and, if feasible, further develop plans and agreements for subsequent approval by the Common Council during future steps in the process.

On June 13, 2022, the Mayor's Economic Development Team was presented a concept and a request to locate the Trout Museum of Art (the 'Museum') in Ellen Kort Peace Park. After studying options, the Museum's Board of Directors has decided to build a new museum instead of renovating the existing building as renovation costs are prohibitive for the extent of renovation required. In addition, the board has made it a priority to keep the museum in the City of Appleton. Its current building adjacent to Houdini Plaza will be sold and presumably returned to the tax rolls. The Museum's search committee explored several locations in Appleton and more specifically, in the Downtown and adjacent areas, with Ellen Kort Peace Park as the ideal location. The Museum wants to engage with the City to explore the possibility further for this community improvement.

To date, discussions have been conceptual in nature, meaning there are still many details, concerns, and opportunities to be explored should the Council authorize further consideration.

Staff does support further conversation if the Common Council agrees. The concept of locating an art museum in Ellen Kort Peace Park, which has been conceptually designed as a "passive park" in which the design reflects art and creativity, and contemplation throughout, may be complementary uses if appropriately structured and designed.

Our team briefly discussed some minimum conditions that would be required for our support, and recommends Council affirm the conditions in authorizing further discussion. These include:

- The City will not sell the land and will retain ownership. A long-term lease would be

recommended.

- Park development costs and the value of a lease will be determined through the evaluation process, and the Museum will appropriately compensate the City of Appleton for both. Specific details of the project's finances will be determined over the course of design and drafting of a formal agreement, however, the Museum recognizes that the City expects to be made financially whole in any arrangement in Ellen Kort Peace Park.
- The building design include numerous sustainable features to minimize the aesthetic and environmental impacts of the museum building.
- City representatives must be involved in design of the museum, and approval of final design to ensure compatability with the park, neighborhood, City Plans and regulatory compliance.
- The community welcomes the plan.
- Use and maintenance for the City's park will need to be specified.

If the Common Council agrees to authorize further discussion, representatives of the Museum will continue to develop plans and work with staff to outline a collaborative approach whereby the Museum will be located in the park, its building and other improvements completed in complementary fashion with both the City's park plans and the future Nelson Heritage Bridge across the Fox River connecting from Pullman's to the future park. The result of this will be presented to the Common Council for its approval.

Please contact me at 832-5572 or at dean.gazza@appleton.org with any questions.