**From: Kate Gjaja** pres1lwvw18@gmail.com **Subject:** LWV-Wilmette Letter

**Date:** December 8, 2018 at 9:30 AM

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ganderson@wilpark.org, jolvany@wilpark.org, swilson@wilpark.org **Cc:** Nancy Hoying LWV pres2lwvw18@gmail.com, lwvwobservers@gmail.com, Lali Watt intrepidlw@gmail.com

Board of Park Commissioners:

The League of Women Voters of Wilmette (LWVW) would like to thank all of you for the work you do every day for our community. We know that you are working to figure out the impact to our parks by the implementation of the village’s stormwater plan. The LWVW recognizes the urgency of providing relief from flooding for residents on the west side of the village and submits the following suggestions with the intention of facilitating the planning process.

After observing the Committee of the Whole meeting last month, the LWVW suggests that the Park Board particularly consider the following from a short-term (during construction), medium-term (immediately after construction), and long-term (life of the tanks) perspective with respect to each park under consideration:

1. How the location of a stormwater tank will impact positively and/or negatively the

current and future ability to use and enjoy the park, taking into account both the potential benefits (e.g. flooding mitigation) and limitations (e.g. reduced development options) the tank may impose on the use of the park over the next 100+ years;

2. How consistent the benefits/limitations identified above are with the long-term plans

and potential plans of the Park District over the next 100+ years;

3. What improvements the Park District should request from the Village for the park;

4. How the tank affects the value of the park (e.g, because of a limit on the flexibility

of future uses of the land) and, if significant, what financial ramifications that change in value poses to the Park District (e.g., bonding capacity or rating);

5. What environmental considerations need to be taken into account beyond the

mitigation of stormwater flooding; and

6. What are the full range of legal relationships possible between the Park District and

the Village of Wilmette and what are the ramifications of each (e.g., easement, intergovernmental agreement, land lease, etc.).

We appreciate that some of the above questions were considered at last month’s meeting, although in some cases not with respect to each park. We understand that you are just starting to formulate your questions, but we want to submit these questions now in the hope you consider them with respect to each park. It is our opinion that these questions, among others you may have, should drive your examination of the village’s plan.

In addition, the LWVW recommends that the Park Board be advised on these issues by consultants hired and approved by the Park Board and working on behalf of its and therefore the residents’ interests. The Park Board should determine the scope of work for the consultants and reports from that work should be shared at Park Board meetings. We appreciate that Park District staff has met with consultants on this project, but it seems important that the Park Board approves the consultants selected and ensures that the scope of the consultants’ work addresses the issues above for each park.

Finally, the LWVW also suggest that all residents of the village be consulted early and often during the planning process. We noted that at last month’s meeting, Commissioners were focused primarily on input from neighbors to the parks at issue. While residents who live near the parks are of course important (especially the ones from whom easements would be requested), the parks are unique in the extent to which they are used equally by residents throughout the village. We recommend consideration of a page on the Park District website dedicated to the Park District’s consideration of the stormwater plan, where residents can look for up-to-date information on the impact of the plan on the parks.

As always, the League stands ready with almost two hundred members any number of whom would offer their time and expertise to assist with this massive planning project.

Thank you for your consideration and happy holidays to you all,

Kate Gjaja and Nancy Hoying Co-Presidents, LWV-Wilmette

Mary Lawlor Chair, LWV-Wilmette Observer Corps

c Steve Wilson