

Proposal for Plaque in the Merrill Springs Park

Friends of Merrill Spring (FMS) – 6/9/2019

NATIVE AMERICAN COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

The Friends of Merrill Spring was founded in October of 2015. Its mission is to facilitate a community effort of preservation and improvement of Merrill Spring Park's diverse natural and recreational resources. Since then, FMS has had yearly fall cleanup events, spring Earth Day cleanups in collaboration with the Spring Harbor Middle School 7th graders, yearly Summer Solstice Celebrations for the neighborhood and has constructed an informational kiosk.

One of our founding goals was 'Raise consciousness of Native American spiritual significance of Merrill Spring'. While this historical influence is referenced on the kiosk we would like to make it more visible by attaching a small brass plaque to the large boulder next to the cistern (Image rockA) – which visitors pass as they enter the park. It would have the spring's Native American name, **Maąka' Maą'ii**, and underneath would be the English interpretation **Medicine Spring**. We have been in contact with Bill Quackenbush (HCN CRD Manager) of the Ho-Chunk regarding the proposed plaque. He has approved the text for the plaque and given us the correct spelling. FMS has also been in discussion with Ann, Freiwald (Madison Parks Planning and Development Manager) who asked us to bring forth this proposal to the Board of Park Commissioners.

A representative from Pechmann Memorials has been out to inspect the boulder. He recommended using the side facing the tree or the lake. We would like to ask the city to rotate the boulder 180 degrees so the long, flat lake side (image rockB) will face the entrance. The boulder is fairly new to the park. It appeared sometime after December 2011 when the new land was added to the park and the old boundary of fence and trees was torn down. Pechmann estimates a 12"x 3" bronze plaque created and installed to cost in the range of \$400-\$800. Ours would be a bit larger to add the English Interpretation. FMS would provide these funds.

We hope you will approve this proposed plaque honoring the Native American history in this area.

Friends of Merrill Spring Board

Alice Erickson

Faith Fitzpatrick

Linda Layman

Kim McBride

Dick Pearson

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