

Project to shed light on Bridge St. dam

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
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Village OKs privately funded public arts effort to illuminate waterfall from fixtures mounted under bridge

Visitors to downtown Grafton may soon be seeing a familiar landmark in a new light.

The Village Board on Monday approved a public arts project that would illuminate the Bridge Street dam with lights mounted on the nearby span over the Milwaukee River.

The project, recommended by the Public Arts Board, calls for lighting fixtures to be placed on the underside of the bridge facing the dam. As many as a dozen LED lights with interchangeable colors could be focused on water cascading over the dam to provide a spectator-friendly attraction, officials said.

The project is expected to cost \$20,000 and will be privately funded. After discussing ways to illuminate the dam for several months, the Arts Board agreed to a design created and demonstrated by students at the Milwaukee School of Engineering.

"They did a stellar job figuring out the best way to do it," Arts Board member Robert Wagner said.

Village Engineer Dave Murphy said original plans called for the dam to be illuminated by underwater lights. However, bridge-mounted fixtures will be less costly and have fewer potential problems with glare onto adjoining properties, including the Bridgewater Condominiums, he said.

Plans call for the village to install conduits and electrical extensions to the bridge as part of a dam repair project scheduled to be done from July through November.

The estimated project cost includes \$7,000 to \$8,000 for the light fixtures and \$12,000 for labor, Murphy said.

Wagner told the trustees the Arts Board will spearhead fundraising efforts for the project, including contacting local businesses for donations.

"We already have a \$5,000 offer," he said.

Village Administrator Darrell Hofland voiced support for the project but noted it will require private funding. He said the village contacted the Department of Natural Resources but was told the project would not qualify for a grant.

Arts Board members agreed to inform owners of properties adjacent to the dam about the project and solicit their comments.

The Village Board approved the project by a 6-1 vote. Susan Meinecke was the only member

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opposed.