

Phoenix Park Restrooms

by Phil Fieber, Director of Eau Claire Parks and Rec.
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In 1999, the City of Eau Claire retained the services of a landscape architecture design firm to assist in preparing a master plan for the redevelopment of the Phoenix Park area. Now, some 12 years later, after innumerable updates, modifications, revisions and overhauls of the plan, another piece of the puzzle is falling into place. The permanent restrooms, located near the Farmers Market Pavilion, are under construction with a target completion date of June 2011.

Phil Fieber, Director of the City of Eau Claire Parks and Rec, was on hand to share the story of the Phoenix Parks Restrooms. Fieber began by providing some history and background, including the original 1999 plan, the 2002 proposal by RCU to build an office building on the site, and the 2004 Phase II planning that would include the Farmers Market Pavilion and restrooms.

In July 2006, the Phoenix Park Farmers Market Pavilion opened, but without the restrooms... there simply had not been money available to build the restrooms at that time. Over the next couple of years, the debate about design, cost and funding sources continued, while usage of the pavilion area continued to grow.

In 2009, the Parks Director proposed designing a smaller yet high quality restroom facility, which enabled the project to once again gain some traction. The facility was redesigned, and over the same time line, a public/private partnership developed whereby a number of private organizations stepped up to the plate to help fund the \$200,000 project... the most significant commitment coming from the Chippewa Valley Home Builders in the form of in-kind labor.

Usage and rentals of the Farmers Market Pavilion area has exceeded everyone's wildest expectations and will undoubtedly continue to grow. On a Saturday afternoon, or for one of the many evening concerts, it is quite common to have 5,000 people in the area. In 2010, it is estimated around 200,000 people used the area. It goes without saying that a convenient, clean and quality restroom facility can only add to the community's enjoyment of this gem by the river.



Phil Fieber, Director, City of Eau Claire Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department.