



August 29, 2011

## Notes on Walking Tour with Pilot Knob Preservation Association

Pilot Knob, across the river from Fort Snelling in Mendota Heights, MN is a place of distinctive historical, cultural and environmental importance, a sacred site, and a landmark of Minnesota's beginnings. This hill for centuries has been a gathering place for Native Americans, and a place for ceremonies and burials. In 2002, developers announced plans to build 157 townhomes on this land. A broad coalition of Native Americans, local residents, historians, archeologists, faith communities, and environmental groups united to preserve the area. Due to their efforts, Pilot Knob is once again a place that everyone can visit to enjoy the view and wildlife, to learn about ecological restoration, and to reflect on the history and meaning of this sacred place.

FOIH contacted the Pilot Knob Preservation Association (PKPA) and were delighted that on July 30, Bruce White (co-founder of the Pilot Knob Preservation Association), and Ann Regan, historian, graciously accepted our invitation to tour Indian Heights Park (IHP) with us and provide information to mentor us in our efforts to preserve and restore our park. We discussed many parallels between IHP and Pilot Knob. PKPA too had to deal with politics, developers, and city officials to convince the land was special and sacred. They too were called "tree huggers" and many hoped they would tire of the adversity and just fade away. Bruce shared some knowledge of the area and its usage. Bruce and Ann were quite impressed with this "jewel" in such an urban setting and encouraged our continued efforts to preserve and restore our park. We would like to use Pilot Knob as a model for IHP. FOIH has presented this recommendation to the Park Board Steering Committee.

To learn more about Pilot Knob please go to their website; <http://www.pilotknobpreservation.org>



Jim Wilson (Native American Center), Barb Hudson, Ann Regan, and Bruce White

We have met such wonderful people through this endeavor! We will continue to keep you informed of our progress.

Barb Hudson  
President FOIH