

Parker, Lesley

From: Jesse Ishikawa <booanbee@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 5, 2022 12:43 PM
To: Mayor; Conklin, Nikki
Cc: OBrien, Joanna; Fries, Gregory; Cryan, Kathy; Petykowski, Christopher; All Alders; Board of Public Works
Subject: Sauk Creek Greenway

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Dear Officials:

I am a resident of Sauk Creek writing in support of the City Engineering's proposed Sauk Creek Greenway Restoration.

The stormwater basin at the southeast corner of High Point Road and Old Sauk Road, which empties into the Greenway, is designed such that there is only a 0.5 to 1 percent annual chance of flooding, meaning it is designed to handle a 100- to 200-year flood. (<https://cityofmadison.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=939cd73b0b594a0aa2d926a6b0e41f40>; <https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/100-year-flood>).

Yet this basin has overflowed into High Point Road and Old Sauk Road several times since 1990, the year my family moved to Sauk Creek. City Engineering can probably tell you the precise number. When the basin overflows, it threatens to sweep away people and pets. Madison's most recent flash flood in August, 2018 required dozens of water rescues in the Yahara River basin and took the life of a Madison man who was swept away by flood waters. (<https://www.tmj4.com/news/local-news/divers-rescuers-hunt-for-man-missing-in-madison-area-floods>). We in Sauk Creek have been lucky so far, but with the increasing number of 100-year floods, this is a problem that is going to get worse, not better, if the problem is not dealt with sooner than later.

Nobody likes to see trees cut down. But sometimes that's necessary to provide good forestry management. If the status quo is maintained, we risk losing *all* of the oak trees in the Greenway. See the Sauk Creek Ecological Summary (<https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/documents/projects/Sauk%20Creek%20Ecological%20Summary.pdf>) cited in the engineering report: "[o]n the current trajectory, the mature oaks will slowly die off without being replaced." The youngest oak trees, according to the ecological summary, are 80 to 100 years old. The ecological summary notes that the continued health of existing oaks and regeneration of new oaks requires the girdling or removal of less desirable species. This sounds more like good forestry management rather than wanton environmental destruction.

The City Engineer's report (<https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/projects/sauk-creek-greenway-restoration>) notes that the City in the 1990s elected not to implement less intrusive proposals due to neighborhood opposition. In hindsight, the neighborhood would be better off had those proposals been implemented.

We face a similar situation today. The City should act now rather than let the drainage and erosion issues worsen, requiring even more drastic solutions in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Jesse Ishikawa
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Madison, Wisconsin 53717

P.S. The engineering report notes the inaccuracy of a statement that 2,200 trees will be removed. FYI, the number now being cited is 5,600. See <https://foleymediagroup.com/home/friends-sauk-creek/>.