



Merrill Springs Park Natural Area

5 messages

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To: Harrison Family, Friends of Merrill Spring Board and Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association (please forward to anyone else you think needs to be included – thank you).

Over the past several months there has been considerable communication with regard to the southeast corner of Merrill Springs Park property located at 5102 Spring Ct. It sounded like all parties agreed the area was in a state of natural growth that presented an opportunity for improvement.

Chad Hughes has kept the Parks Management Team informed of the concerns, progress, and status. We had the City of Madison Attorney review the documents including the View Easement. We also had members of the Parks staff review the proposed land plan submitted by the Harrison's. From these reviews, we have concluded that the proposed plan supported the intent of the View Easement and aligned well with the Parks land management efforts to improve natural areas and habitat.

The Parks Division is interested in moving forward with planting this area and has approved the plan submitted by the Harrison's, with one exception of a natural prairie vegetation mat for a small area, which will be provided by Parks. The plan included height zones for the area that will allow for native shrub plantings to act as a screen between the park and private property, while maintaining the intent of the original view easement. While good intent and effort was put forth in finding a mutually agreeable solution, it sounded like there may remain some differences. However, Parks believes this is a good plan for the area and ecosystem and we hope any remaining differences for this area can be set aside.

This approval is based on an understanding that the Harrison's will plant and maintain the area and minimizing weed and invasive species growth in accordance to the Parks Land Management Plan. We remain hopeful all parties can come together in making this a park area the entire neighborhood can be proud of and another one of the City of Madison's natural area jewels.

We would be happy to meet to review this decision together, but we are focused on getting the planting done this fall and we will plant the natural matting yet this week.

Best Regards,

Greg Genin

Parks Operations Manager