

PRESIDENT
Timothy W. Sherry

VICE PRESIDENT
Kevin Hess

SECRETARY
R. Richard Wagner

TREASURER
Jennifer Curliss

PAST PRESIDENT
Janet P. Loewi

DIRECTORS
Fred Anderson
Carolyn Gilb
Julie Herfel
Dan Lauffer
Erin Ogden
Tricia Perkins
Susan Derse Phillips
Michelle Taschek
Mike Whaley
William F. White

EX OFFICIO DIRECTORS
David Ahrens
Kevin Briski
Laurel Neverdahl
Marsha Rummel
Emanuel Scarbrough
Roberta Sladky
Sue Thering

ADVISORS TO THE BOARD
Dennis Birke
Jack Bolz
Jt Covelli
Sandy Dolister
Elizabeth Ogren Erickson
Edith Lawrence-Hilliard
Jeff Levy
Dale Mathwich
Dan Matson
Jerry Minnich
Susan Stein
Barbara Tensfeldt
Paul Williams

August 1, 2014

Dear Chair Wallner and members of the Garver Criteria and Selection Committee,

The Olbrich Botanical Society conducted a capital campaign in the late 1990's to purchase the Garver Feed Mill as a landbank for the Gardens' future. The Society raised \$991,692 from 441 organizational, foundation, and individual donors. As part of this fund-raising campaign, the donors were asked by the Society to invest in the long-range future of Olbrich Botanical Gardens. It was specifically emphasized that the acquisition of the Garver Feed Mill property would insure the future of the Gardens through the dedication of approximately 20 acres to be utilized for greenspace, including public show gardens, as well as for maintenance and storage facilities. This initiative was undertaken following a special ad-hoc city committee report which recommended against development of the land north-east of the rail line, and instead opted for a greenspace corridor along Starkweather Creek. The city council later adopted the committee's report.

Before undertaking the purchase, (the private owners had approached the Society because they did not wish to sell to the city, nor did the city have funds available), the Society completed due diligence on how the City and Society would partner in this new direction. Discussions were held with the alder, the mayor and the city's Real Estate office. The understanding was that the city lands next to Garver held by the CDA (for possible public housing) would be combined with the Garver property to assure the future growth of the gardens and to create the green space corridor.

Once the Garver property was purchased, the Society transferred title of the property to the City of Madison with a deed restriction that recognized its role in the future of Olbrich Gardens. Such transfers were common of all property bought with Society funds. The city's subsequent transfer of the other lands from the CDA to the Parks Department was recognition of the joint understanding to create a place for the future needs and growth of the Gardens. The park master plan that followed (2000/2001), approved by the Park Commission and the City Council, placed the Thai Pavilion across Starkweather Creek and placed additional gardens, as well as substantial back-of-the-gardens maintenance and storage facilities, on the lands northeast of the tracks, commonly referred to as the north plat.

Later, in 2009, when the city decided to explore the reuse of the Garver building for an arts incubator, the revised Olbrich Park Land Use Plan identified nearly 10 acres adjacent to the Thai Garden as the landbank for the Gardens' future development of show gardens, as well as maintaining the existing Gardens and Parks storage and maintenance facilities in and around the Garver building. Although the total acreage ceded to Garden use in the 2009 Land-Use Plan was less than in the 2000/2001 masterplan, the 're-arrangement' seemed to provide much improved future visitor access to the full Gardens experience with maintenance and storage located nearby across the tracks in an area less desirable for visitor access to gardens. The arts incubator reuse was approved in a citywide referendum, and the Society agreed to allow a re-use for the Garver Feed Mill provided that the Gardens and Parks storage needs



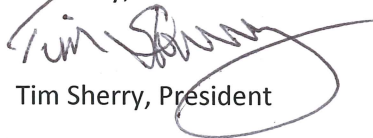
continue to be accommodated 'across the tracks' in the Garver building itself or in a newly constructed building nearby. In addition to this building, the Garver Cottage, which is occupied as garden staff offices, was to remain a part of Olbrich (the Botanical Society spent \$200,000 of its funds to restore the Garver Cottage for use as staff offices due to overcrowding of the main Botanical complex), and the leaf mulch operations, nursery, and materials storage were also back-of-the Garden needs that were designated to be accommodated across the tracks. The leaf mulch operation is just one site used by the City for leaves. The Gardens require leaf mulch to build a good soil for natural sustainable gardening, and a portion of the leaf mulch produced is provided to city home gardeners.

It is the belief of the Olbrich Botanical Society Board of Directors that the donors' intent (those who contributed to the Garver Landbank campaign) would be substantially satisfied by the trade-offs in locations for storage and additional public gardens as a long-term strategy for the future for the gardens. Furthermore, the Board Executive Committee also strongly believes that the appropriate place for the Gardens and Parks maintenance and storage facilities is across the tracks from the Gardens – not wanting to either replace areas of existing gardens or use areas across the creek that are designated for future public gardens.

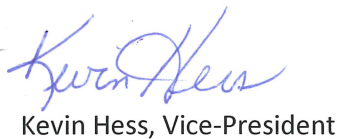
Therefore, by this letter, the officers of the Olbrich Botanical Society Board reinforce our position with the City of Madison as to the importance of continuing to honor the intent of those that made the initial purchase of the property possible. As we move forward with our City partners to now undertake a new re-investment in Olbrich Gardens and Facilities our new donors must understand that both OBS and the City of Madison have respected the intentions communicated to past donors to the Gardens. Not only is honoring donor intent important for Olbrich Gardens' new capital campaign, it is also important as we strive to raise \$1.5 million annually for operations that, in turn, help keep the Gardens free for everyone.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns.

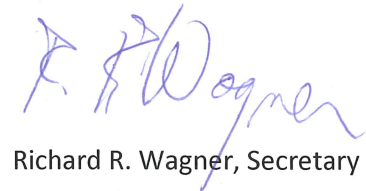
Sincerely,



Tim Sherry, President



Kevin Hess, Vice-President



Richard R. Wagner, Secretary

Janet Loewi, Past-President

Jennifer Curliss, Treasurer

(in agreement but unavailable to sign)

cc: Katie Crawley, Assistant to the Mayor
Steven Cover, Director of Planning and Community and Economic Development
Jay Wendt, Urban Design Planner
Amy Scanlon, Historic Preservation Planner
Dan Rolfs, Community Development Project Manager
Eric Knepp, Acting Superintendent of Parks
Roberta Sladky, Director, Olbrich Botanical Gardens