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October 26, 2022

City of Madison Forestry

Subject: Permit for Tree Removal for Lower Badger Mill Creek Pond Flood Mitigation

Dear City Forestry,

The City of Madison Stormwater Utility (SWU) hereby applies for a permit to remove trees on the site of the proposed Lower Badger Mill Creek Pond flood mitigation project. The SWU has an obligation to maintain its stormwater infrastructure and implement projects that mitigate flooding of neighboring residents. The Lower Badger Mill Creek Pond site was identified in previous studies of the Lower Badger Mill Creek watershed, both in 2003 and 2020, as an area that provided significant potential for reaching the City's flood mitigation and peak flow reduction goals within the watershed.

The SWU hired a certified arborist in late summer 2022 to tag and complete an inventory of all trees within SWU property identifying the species, DBH, and health of each tree. During design, the SWU worked to avoid impacts to trees where possible, which included avoiding a stand of red maples with the access path alignment and modifying the path layout in another location to save healthy bur oaks. Trees within the grading limits of the new ponds, low flow channel, access paths, and new street need to be removed with the project. Additionally, the SWU plans to remove trees that are in poor condition outside of the grading limits. The trees present on site were carefully assessed to determine if removal would be beneficial to the overall health of the site and worked to balance the flood mitigation needs of the project with tree preservation.

The SWU property in its current condition has pockets of trees, but is overall not very densely wooded. Many of the trees on site are species that are either common in urban woodlots or are aggressive non-native species. The Endangered Resources Review conducted for this site by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources lists the following as recommended actions to benefit the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee: 1) Consider thinning or single tree selection and dense invasive shrub removal that may improve overwintering and spring foraging habitat, 2) Remove and control invasive plants in any habitat used for foraging, nesting, or overwintering. The SWU also plans to improve the diversity of the property by planting native shrubs and herbaceous species that are appropriate for ecological restoration historic to this area and are tolerant of fluctuating water conditions that are anticipated adjacent to the ponds.

A contractor will begin tree removals once the Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee approval is obtained, a permit is issued, and the contract is bid by the Engineering Division, likely in late winter or spring 2023. The map attached shows the tree removals proposed.

Sincerely,

For:

Jim Wolfe, P.E.
City Engineer