



Madison Parks Division

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TO: Plan Commission
FROM: Eric Knepp, Parks Superintendent
DATE: January 30, 2017
SUBJECT: Woods Farm Preliminary and Final Plat

On the preliminary and final plats of Woods Farm, the developer proposes to dedicate approximately 3.41 acres of parkland and environmental corridor to the City, identified as Outlot 4 located in the northwest quadrant of the subdivision. The proposed park location is inconsistent with the location identified in the Northeast Neighborhoods Development Plan, which recommends that a park be dedicated south of this location in what would be the center of the subject development.

As stated in MGO 16.23(8)(f), Public Sites and Open Spaces:

“The following provisions are established to preserve and provide properly located public sites and open spaces as the community develops, and to insure that such public sites and open spaces are provided and developed to serve the need for parks generated by the additional person brought into the areas by such development, in accordance with standards adopted in Madison’s Park and Open Space Plan.”

As further stated in MGO 16.23(8)(f)(5):

“The Plan Commission, after recommendation of the Park Superintendent or Board of Park Commissioners shall determine that any land to be dedicated as a requirement of this section shall be reasonably adaptable to meet desirable on-site facilities as outlined in Madison’s Park and Open Space Plan, and shall so recommend to the Common Council. Factors used in evaluating the adequacy of proposed park and recreation areas shall include size and shape, topography, geology, tree and other plant cover, access, and location.”

As the duly authorized representative of the Park Commission on these matters, my comments are as follows:

The City’s 2012-2017 Park and Open Space Plan provides the framework and identifies areas where additional parkland is needed. As defined in Table 3-3 of the Park and Open Space Plan, the guidelines for different types of parks typically associated with residential development are as follows:

- Mini Park
 - Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs
 - Size typically under 5 acres
 - Park service area within a quarter mile
- Neighborhood Park
 - Are the basic unit of our park system
 - Serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood

- Typically has informal active and passive recreation, scheduling of uses can also occur
- Size typically 5 acres or more
- Park service area within a half mile without major physical barriers such as nonresidential roads
- Community Park
 - Serve a broader purpose than a neighborhood park
 - Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces
 - Size typically 20 acres or more
 - Park service area within 2 miles

Whenever possible in a new subdivision, adequate land for a Neighborhood Park should be dedicated when called for by a neighborhood plan (Mini Park areas are typically limited to highly urbanized areas such as the downtown, where availability of land is extremely limited). Table 7-3 in the Park and Open Space Plan identifies typical recreational amenities that Madison Parks might provide for each type of park. These are the guidelines we use as we try to balance recreational amenities throughout the park system. Having an open play field that meets the minimum requirements for youth soccer (240 ft x 150 ft), for example, can accommodate both formal organized field games such as youth soccer, youth flag football, and numerous Frisbee field games. This open play area can also be used for playing catch, having a picnic, or flying a kite. An open play area with only a playground would barely meet the minimum requirements for a neighborhood park in a development of this size.

Lands that are dedicated for park purposes to fulfill the park land dedication shall be suitable for park development. Outlot 4 is unsuitable for development of public recreational amenities consistent with the adopted Park and Open Space Plan for a neighborhood park and will not be acceptable for public park dedication. The wooded terrain and steep topographical constraints will not be adequate to provide space for a level or flat open play field area. This area will also not be suitable for other recreational amenities such as a playground or basketball construction unless extensive tree cutting and grading of the site is performed. Such tree removal and extensive grading may also not be possible due to the hydric soil characteristics present in and adjacent to that corner of the site. Due to the constraints on the western plat boundary and the narrow width of the proposed park (239 feet), this area is unsuitable for grading to the extent necessary.

The land used for park dedication cannot be combined with stormwater management features. The proposed environmental corridor area appears to be a natural drainage way as well as being utilized for stormwater management (discharge and drainage from proposed ponds). If used for stormwater management or conveyance, that area shall be dedicated as an outlot for stormwater management purposes and no credit will be provided to meet the park land dedication requirements. This will further diminish the amount of parkland left for dedication to meet the recreational needs of the subdivision.

As mentioned previously, the Northeast Neighborhoods Development Plan recommends that a park be dedicated south of the proposed location in what would be the center of the subject development. The Parks Division would propose this dedication be provided within the area identified as Lots 63-80 which are bounded by B, D and F streets and the western plat limits. This location is better suited for a public park that will meet the recreational needs of the development because of the less severe grades and topography, the absence of hydrologic issues and the closer proximity to the park location as identified in the Northeast Neighborhoods

Development Plan. This location will also provide the opportunity for full parkland dedication, as required.

When siting the park location the applicant shall consider the following general guidelines for park development:

1. Areas within a park to be used for open space for active and passive recreation shall be graded at 1-2% for the area of field proposed.
2. No side slopes within the park dedication area shall exceed 4:1.
3. The applicant shall provide proposed grading plans prior to approval of the area for dedicated public park lands.

The proposed plat contemplates (131) single family residences, eleven (11) 4-unit multi-family residential buildings and one (1) larger 4.3-acre multifamily lot. Depending on final unit counts, this equates to approximately 4.5-5 acres of required park land dedication based on the land dedication requirements of 1,081 square feet per single family unit, 734 square feet per multi-family unit, and 1,424 square feet per large multi-family unit, per MGO Sec. 16.23(8)(f)(4). As there is no other park in this vicinity that could serve the proposed Woods Farm development, full parkland dedication will be sought for this plat.

Park Impact Fees (comprised of the Park-Infrastructure Impact Fee, per MGO Sec. 20.08(2)), will be required for all new residential development associated with this project. This development is within the East Park-Infrastructure Impact Fee district. Please reference ID# 17101 when contacting Parks Division staff about this project.

No underground utility easements shall be located anywhere along a proposed park perimeter, unless approved by the Parks Division. If the proposed park is adjacent to private property, the applicant shall install a fence along the boundary of lands dedicated for public park purposes at the sole expense of the applicant. The fence shall be installed on private property to a design that is mutually agreeable to the applicant and Parks Division. The cost of the fence shall not be eligible for park development fee credits. The applicant shall execute a deed restriction that would require the fence to be perpetually maintained by the property owners for any lots that are adjacent to publicly dedicated park lands, and as determined by the Parks Superintendent.

Other conditions of the Woods Farm subdivision recommended by the Parks Division include:

- No farming or use of lands to be dedicated to the public for Park purposes shall be allowed unless specifically approved by the Parks Superintendent and permitted under a farm lease administered through the City of Madison Office of Real Estate Services. The applicant shall prominently stake all boundaries and property irons for lands to be dedicated for park purposes.
- City Forestry will evaluate the terrace for new street tree plantings upon completion of the project. If there is space for new trees, City Forestry will schedule planting and assess the cost of the initial planting to the property owner.
- Prior to sign off on the final plat the applicant shall execute a declaration of conditions and covenants along with an impact fee schedule for the park impact fees for this development. This document will be recorded at the Register of Deeds. The applicant shall be responsible for all recording fees.

- The following note should be included on the subdivision:
“LOTS WITHIN THIS SUBDIVISION ARE SUBJECT TO IMPACT FEES THAT ARE DUE AND PAYABLE AT THE TIME BUILDING PERMIT(S) ARE ISSUED.”
- Finally, the Parks Division will be required to sign off on the final plat, rezoning and demolition permit.