

Eken Park Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 7162
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7162

February 9th, 2020

Madison Common Council
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Room 417
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Madison Common Council Members and Concerned Representatives of the City of Madison:

The Eken Park Neighborhood Association and its officers, in accordance with its bylaws and with support of its membership, wish to express their support for and recommendation for the purchase and protection of the full 30 acres of the Hartmeyer property.

With some Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan recommendations extending into the Eken Park neighborhood, the Eken Park Neighborhood Association has remained extremely interested and active in the planning process for the future redevelopment of the area. The Neighborhood Association would like to express their gratitude for being involved in this process. If put into effect, many aspects of this plan will have lasting impacts on our neighborhood for many years to come.

The Eken Park Neighborhood Association, its membership and its officers, wish to see the full acquisition of the Hartmeyer property for the purposes of a public natural area.

The Hartmeyer site has the potential to serve many valuable purposes in this special plan area, including providing natural spaces for the enjoyment, learning, and wellbeing of nearby residents, and formalizing a permanent wildlife corridor for the many animals that still inhabit our city. However, there are some key aspects of this site that make it a priority for preservation.

This particular property plays both a historic and current role in stormwater management on the near north side of the city. The large 30 acre property is currently pervious and will not contribute to flash flooding from the large rain events which Madison is projected to receive in higher frequency in the future. Maintaining the full 30 acres as a pervious surface rather than dedicating part of it to development and likely impermeable surfacing will ensure that it continues to fill this function of stormwater mitigation.

The Hartmeyer property is also located near the current North Transfer point as well as near or on future Bus Rapid Transit stops. This makes the site accessible for populations in the city who do not have the luxury, or choose not to, rely on automotive transportation. Many of the other larger natural areas on the east side do not have this advantage. In accordance with the cities desire for social and economic justice in all aspects this point should be considered extremely important in determining whether or not the property should be a formalized natural area.

The Neighborhood Association recognizes that this suggestion may appear counter to some main goals of the plan, such as connectivity and increasing density in housing and employment. However, both parts of the plan are still attainable even if this site is reserved as public land.

The natural area will not impede any connections through the area, as Roth Street is already an established connection over the railroad tracks. Roth Street could be considered the future connection from Packers Avenue to Sherman Avenue while using little or no potential parkland to accomplish an East-West passage through the assessment site.

Additionally, the majority of the property that is currently proposed for development is only being recommended for Low and Medium residential use in the current iteration of the plan. This housing development would add few units or employment and using this space for parkland would have little effect on the estimations for units and employment added in the area.

For these reasons, the Eken Park Neighborhood Association wishes to express their support for the full acquisition of all 30 acres of the Hartmeyer area with the intent of preserving this undeveloped land as a formal city natural area.

Sincerely,

Officers of the Eken Park Neighborhood Association

Tom Running - EPNA Co-chair
Catie Shannon - EPNA Co-chair
Maggie Freespirit - EPNA Secretary
Zach Johnson - EPNA Treasurer