



Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway
City of Madison
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

April 28, 2020

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway,

Madison Audubon Society deeply appreciates your strong commitment to environmental protection, sustainability, and improvement of neighborhoods. Madison Audubon strongly supports the Friends of Hartmeyer, the Eken Park Neighborhood Association, and the Sherman Neighborhood Association in their efforts to preserve all thirty acres of the Hartmeyer property. We hope you will extend your excellent record by working with these residents to reach that goal.

These organizations make two compelling arguments in support of the City's acquisition, preservation, and ecological improvement of this property.

1. The neighborhoods and the larger community would benefit from this property. Its wetlands would protect water quality and mitigate floods. Those same wetlands with properly-restored uplands would support a wonderful variety of vegetation, birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. The entire property would also provide much needed and appreciated green, open space. Among the lessons COVID-19 has taught us is how important natural, open spaces are for urban populations.
2. The Friends of Hartmeyer makes an extremely important point that the wetlands are probably larger and might become even larger than shown in current City maps and plans. The changed climate in most years will produce more rain and higher water tables than have historically occurred. One result is bigger wetlands, unless large-scale drainage projects are able to limit that increase. This phenomenon is not unique to the City but is occurring across Dane County and southern Wisconsin.
3. From the perspective of Madison Audubon, preserving the thirty acres will enable the wetland to have a vital upland border. A wetland's benefits are not fully realized without some adjacent uplands in as close to their natural state as possible. Much of the vegetation essential to pollinators grow in the uplands. Much of the wildlife found in wetlands depend on those uplands for part of their life cycles. And the people of Madison benefit greatly from the many services provided by a high-functioning wetland.

Please take every step to work with these three organizations and others who support the preservation of all the Hartmeyer property to protect all thirty acres. Thank you for your environmental leadership and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Reetz".

Matthew Reetz, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Cc: Alder Syed Abbas