

Sept 25, 2020

Dear Mr. Stephen Anderson, President, and Board of Trustees, Village of River Hills

The members of The River Hills Committee on The Environment have reviewed the Project Plan for the development of the 53.4 acre parcel between West Brown Deer road and West Green Brook Road ("Eder Farm"). We are excited about the possibilities this last large undeveloped area of River Hills holds, but we are concerned to see the direction and development suggested in the Project Plan. The Sept. 9th letter is presented to the residents, as a "fait accompli" without any public input.

The September 9th letter failed to inform the citizens of the two important meetings coming up on the Sept. 28-29th. According to the development consultant the Ehlers company, (cited on the web site) the land will cost \$2,500,000 but the total cost to develop it will cost \$9,625,000. Creating the "Tax incremental District" (TID) is used to justify this public funding of a municipal water system for a developer(s) gain. The \$36,000,000 in cited benefits of tax value projections, are mere speculation with no guarantee of success. The plan fails to address the established nature of the River Hills community or take into account the development disruption, noise, traffic, dust, increased density and several years of loss of quality of life for the village residents.

The public community meetings with the Mandel Group in River Hills made it very clear that a change in zoning and an increased residential density is NOT what the River Hills' community desires. The village residents did not expect to see the Trustees take off Mandels Developer Hat, and put that Hat on themselves.

We have serious concerns regarding the feasibility and potential impacts of the direction the Project Plan is pursuing. It is our understanding that Mandel Group put in a "test" high capacity well. That well did not draw or yield enough water to support an increased population density. It follows that the nature of development proposed in the Project Plan would put the aquifer at risk and affect neighboring properties. To avoid that, (as noted) it would be necessary to bring in a municipal water line and a sanitation system at a significant capital cost. That cost should not be subsidized by the village residents who already have the cost burden of maintaining their own well water.

You may recall an earlier effort was brought forward to secure the property as "community parkland" which was fully supported by Village Hills President Bob Brunner before he passed on. That proposal could be 50% funded by the WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program. That funding program is still a viable funding source to offset the purchase price and restoration.

The Committee on the Environment, with community input would, like develop a landscape plan that fits within the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program. That program could include trails,

restored forests, wetlands, wildlife habitat, ponds and natural features that echo the spirit of our landscape for future generations. In addition, some of the land along Brown Deer Road, could be reserved for other "community space" that could potentially be utilized for other more developed recreational uses. A variety of uses may surface as important: such as a dog park, playground, sports fields, or buildings like a library or municipal service support area that may serve the community in the future. We feel this would be a wonderful addition to our Village.

This is consistent with the resolution that the River Hills Village trustees adopted in August as reported in the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel on August 18th 2020, that the village would acquire the land for: "Conservation and rehabilitation of the land in such a way as to promote the general welfare of Village residents."

The committee would like to submit a Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant for those funds. We would appreciate the Trustees full support, endorsement and staff cooperation with the grant approval process.

We would be happy to meet with the you and the trustees to discuss this exciting project further.

Thank you sincerely,

Robert Boucher, Past Chair, Committee on the Environment

Co-Signed, Members of the Committee on the Environment

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