

Town of Verona  
Open Space and Parks Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 5, 2015

Present: Keen, Mathies, Stellick, and Hoffman  
Absent: Maxwell and Siehr  
Also Present: John Wright, Clerk-Treasurer (C-T)  
Called to order at 7:33 PM

### **Approval of Agenda**

Stellick moved to approve the agenda; 2<sup>nd</sup> Mathies. Motion to approve the agenda carried.

### **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **Updates from Staff and Membership**

Chair Keen announced that this year's Paddle and Pig-out event will be held August 15, 2015. On August 8, 2015, volunteers will meet at the park in Paoli at 9:00 AM before clearing downed trees and low-hanging branches along the Sugar River. C-T Wright announced that construction of the Sunset Drive parking lot will be delayed until September. According to Chris James of the Dane County Parks and Open Space, a new bridge will replace the one that had been removed on the Falk Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area property to the east of the STH 69 parking area. Member Mathies stated that an application is before the Department of Natural Resources to consider a gravel ford across the Sugar River to the west of STH 69 and south of Oak Grove Road. The 30 day comment public comment period began on July 16, 2015.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Stellick moved to approve the July minutes; 2<sup>nd</sup> Mathies. Member Stellick noted that on page 1, paragraph 3 of item 5, the restored prairie is adjacent to Flagstone Park, not in Flagstone Park. Member Mathies asked that the word *easements* be stricken from page 3, full paragraph 1 of item 6; without objection. Motion to accept the minutes from the July 1, 2015 meeting as amended carried.

### **Update Regarding Plan Commission Consideration of OSPC Recommendation Regarding Possible Easement on Locust Drive Property Purchased by the Verona Area School District**

The members present reviewed the letter to Adam Sayre, the City of Verona Director of Planning and Development from the Town of Verona Plan Commission. C-T Wright included a copy of a map he prepared for the Town of Verona Plan Commission to show the location of the School District land relative to multiple natural resources including: Falk Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area, Scheidegger Forest, Prairie Moraine Park, and the Ice Age Trail. The members present also reviewed a map prepared by the City of Verona labelled Exhibit A from their 2009 Southwest Neighborhood Plan. This map shows the possible future development and classifications of this same area if and when it is annexed into the City including new or rerouted streets. As a means of comparison, Wright presented a map of the current streets and highways within the Town relative to the current Corporate Boundaries of the City of Verona.

### **Discussion Regarding Repurposing the Retained Acreage of Town Land Purchased for the Proposed Town Hall/Public Works Facilities Including Prairie Restoration**

C-T Wright reported on the discussion at a Special Town Board meeting held July 29, 2015. This meeting focused upon two possible acreages for property to be retained by the Town, changes to the size of the parking area, changes to the Public Works facility, and where brush storage/processing is best handled. It was noted that the duplex had been razed as a training exercise for regional fire fighters and the Conditional Use Permit has been approved by Dane County which will allow for the construction of the proposed municipal buildings. The existing buildings on the land will be available for inspection on August 22, 2015; sealed bids will be accepted that day or within the following seven days. Those who bid must remove those items they bid upon providing they have proof of liability insurance and the means

necessary to remove the structures within a limited period of time defined by the Town. A future Town meeting has yet to be scheduled to share with the public the likely cost for the site development and buildings. It is possible that this meeting may also include an agenda item to consider dissolving the Open Space and Parks Commission; the Board could then create a Parks Committee in its place with fewer members and shorter terms. Furthermore, the Town Chair may introduce the concept of a Public Works Committee that could report to the Plan Commission or directly to the Town Board.

### **Identify Areas within the Town of Verona for Preservation and/or Development**

Member Mathies reported on a concept plan discussed at the Town Plan Commission meeting he attended on July 30, 2015. The land is located in the northwest quarter of Section 5 of the Town of Verona. The internal roads would likely be private and the residences set up as part of a condominium association to avoid extraterritorial review by the City of Madison. The parcel is partially wooded and partially prairie.

### **Continue Discussion of Future Conservation Efforts within the Town of Verona**

Chair Keen stated he conducted some research to find if a stone home on Oak Grove Road was once a stagecoach stop; he found nothing to support that use. C-T Wright recommended the librarians at the Wisconsin State Historical Site be consulted; they have been very helpful with research on local history in the past.

### **Discussion of Pollinator Preservation**

Dane County has organized a task force to review the protection of pollinators and is seeking the input from municipalities. A listening session is scheduled for August 6, 2015 at the UW Arboretum Auditorium. The members present reviewed a list of topics to be discussed. Chair Keen identified as good locations to plant species that are supportive of pollinator health the Falk Wells Sugar River Wildlife Area and the Scheidegger Forest; he noted the Prairie Moraine Park as another possible location as well. Member Mathies stated the task force has focused mainly upon bees as there are fewer bat or bird pollinators in our region. He further noted that preservation was more than a source of pollen; a habitat that includes food sources, locations for eggs, and larvae is also needed. Member Mathies wondered if the small parcel of land in the Goose Lake neighborhood that is owned by the Town and managed by a neighborhood association might be another location for a possible pollinator habitat.

There followed a brief discussion regarding the balance of allowing native plants to grow along ditch lines with the need to control invasive species. Member Stellick suggested residents could receive some information on this issue through a newsletter or a fact sheet included with property tax bills. Member Mathies noted there is Federal support of a program to plant milkweed from Minnesota to Texas. There was brief discussion of neonicotinoid use and its effects upon bee population. Mathies will attend tomorrow evening's meeting.

### **Establish an Agenda for the September 9, 2015 Meeting**

Many members will be unavailable on the regular meeting date of September 2, 2015; they agreed to meet the following Wednesday evening. The proposed agenda is as follows: Call to Order; Approval of the Agenda; Public Comments; Updates from Staff and Membership; Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 5, 2015; Response from the City of Verona Regarding Plan Commission Letter Outlining OSPC Recommendation for a Possible Easement on Locust Drive Property Purchased by the Verona Area School District; Discussion Regarding Repurposing the Retained Acreage of Town Land Purchased for the Proposed Town Hall/Public Works Facilities Including Prairie Restoration; Identify Areas Within the Town of Verona for Preservation and/or Development; Review Preliminary Certified Survey Map(s) (this item should only be added if there are maps to review); Update on Dane County Parks Sunset Drive Parking Lot (this item should only be added if there is an update); Continue Discussion of Future Conservation Efforts within the Town of Verona; Set October Agenda; and Adjourn.

### **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn made by Stellick; 2nd by Mathies. Motion carried at 9:14 PM.

Approved: September 9, 2015

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John Wright  
Clerk-Treasurer