

Legislative File 42334

Staff Report and its Recommendations on Potential Garden Sites within the University Hill Farms Neighborhood and Nearby Areas

Introduction

In May 2016, the Madison Common Council adopted RES-16-00388 (Legislative File ID #42079), requesting City staff to explore land options for gardening space in the University Hill Farms neighborhood due to the loss of the 1.25-acre gardening site (~35,000 sq. ft. of active gardening space) on the State Department of Transportation property that was home to the Sheboygan Community Garden (SCG) for over 30 years. To date, a new garden lease for approximately 7,700 sf of land located to the northwest corner of Rennebohm Park near the tennis courts was provided in 2016, which accommodates approximately 20% of that gardening space from the original location.

This staff report provides details on the site options deemed to be feasible and includes a matrix and map (contained in Appendices A and B), showing 22 different options on 18 different properties (public land as well as private). In Appendix A, each of these sites is profiled in alignment with the criteria specified in Legislative File #42079.

Analysis of soil conditions for feasible sites still needs to be conducted. This responsibility has been established as a duty of garden groups. That information will be completed by Community Groundworks (the entity responsible for community gardens on City property) for the short list of feasible sites. All land area and cost estimates are approximate and will require further detailed study for selected site(s).

Up to three potentially feasible sites will go through a public input process that will:

- Be defined using the City's Racial Equity and Social Justice tool to ensure full and diverse representation and engagement with the community
- Identify potential gardeners, and finalize design site specifics, including costs, prior to any formal consideration for approval.

Any potential garden sites on parkland will require amending the park master plan and will require approval by the Board of Park Commissioners.

Demographic profile information, economic vitality indicators, housing types, and ambulatory disability (mobility) data were compiled using the Madison Neighborhood Indicators Project 2015 Edition (<http://madison.apl.wisc.edu/index.php>) and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year 2015 estimates (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>). A census tract map overlaid on City Plan Districts with evaluated feasible community garden sites is included in Appendix C.

Potentially Feasible Site Options

Bordner Park (5610 Elder Place) – Map Locator Site B

Bordner Park is located in the Crestwood Plan District, bounded by Rosa Road to the east and Bordner Drive to the west, and is 1.1 miles away from the former garden site for Sheboygan Community Garden, located at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. The total square footage of the park is approximately 281,830 sf or 6.47 acres.

Bordner Park has 2 potential sites that were reviewed: the northern area on the west side of Rosa Rd. near the intersection of Gettle Ave. and Rosa Rd., and the southern area on the west side of Rosa Rd., south of Elder Place. The northern area is not discussed further as it is not considered a feasible site due to land deed restrictions; the following information applies to the southern area.

Pros:

- Open space in the park (total of 11,200 sq ft potentially available)
- Easily accessible water main

Cons:

- Potential conflicts with deed restrictions on the property
- Cost of water system installation estimated between \$12,000 - \$15,000

Crestwood Plan District – Demographic Profile Information (NIP 2015 Edition)

- Total population: 2,110 residents
- Age 65 and older: 18.7% (est. 395 residents)
- White: 86.5% (est. 1,825 residents)
- African-American: 1.8% (est. 38 residents)
- Asian: 5.3% (est. 112 residents)
- Other Races/Multi-racial: 3.1% (est. 65 residents)
- Latino/Hispanic (any race): 3.3 % (est. 70 residents)
- Total population, Person of Color: 13.5% (est. 285 residents)

Total Population with Ambulatory Disability by Gender – Census Tract 2.01 (ACS 5-year 2015) – Refer to Appendix C

Note: Estimates have a large margin of error and therefore are represented as an estimate with an accompanying range

- Total population: 1,983 residents
 - Male: 898 - Male with ambulatory disability : est. 54 (range 0 - 138)
 - Female: 1,085 - Female with ambulatory disability : est. 45 (range 0 - 114)

Economic Vitality Indicators (NIP 2015 Edition)

- Median household income: \$83,811
- Family households: 598
- Families in poverty: 0 (0%)
- Unemployment rate: 2.6%

Housing Types

- Owner-occupied housing units: 829 units (80.6%)
- Population, owner-occupied housing (est.): 1,701 residents
- Renter-occupied housing units: 200 units (19.4%)
- Population, renter-occupied housing (est.): 409 residents

Potential land area for community gardening

- Approximately 11,200 square feet

Estimated cost for water installation

- Southern area: approximately \$12,000 - \$15,000

Access

- Walking/biking access along existing streets
- Private vehicle access (street parking available)
- Public transportation access from Old Middleton Rd (less than 5-minute walk)

Indian Hills Park (5001 Flambeau Rd) – Map Locator Site F

Indian Hills Park is located in the Spring Harbor Plan District, bounded by Flambeau Road to the north and University Avenue to the south, and is 0.6 miles away from the former garden site for Sheboygan Community Garden, located at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. The total square footage of the park is approximately 111,950 sf or 2.57 acres.

Pros:

- Close proximity to the former Sheboygan Community Garden site and multi-family developments along Sheboygan Avenue
- Minimal conflicting uses and utility conflicts (total of 21,400 sf potentially available)
- Lack of deed restrictions on use of park land
- Easily accessible water main (a 10” water main runs through the park)
- Playground replacement and path reconstruction already programmed in 2018 will provide flexibility to create a larger potential area for gardening

Cons:

- Location on the other side of University Avenue from the former SCG site
- Cost of water system is estimated between \$11,000 - \$14,000

Spring Harbor Plan District – Demographic Information (NIP 2015 Edition)

- Total population: 2,532 residents
- Age 65 and older: 12.6% (est. 319 residents)
- White: 78.6% (est. 1,990 residents)
- African-American: 5.2% (est. 132 residents)
- Asian: 5.0% (est. 127 residents)
- Other Races/Multi-racial: 3.4% (est. 86 residents)
- Latino/Hispanic (any race): 7.9 % (est. 200 residents)
- Total population, Person of Color: 21.4% (est. 542 residents)

Total Population with Ambulatory Disability by Gender – Census Tract 1 (ACS 5-year 2015) – Refer to Appendix C

Note: Estimates have a large margin of error and therefore are represented as an estimate with an accompanying range

- Total population: 2,407 residents –
 - Male: 1,134 - Male with ambulatory disability : est. 88 (range 0 - 214)
 - Female: 1,273 - Female with ambulatory disability : est. 59 (range 0 - 155)

Economic Vitality Indicators (NIP 2015 Edition)

- Median household income: \$60,759
- Family households: 634
- Families in poverty: 6 (0.95%)
- Unemployment rate: 5.3%

Housing Types

- Owner-occupied housing units: 927 units (69.9%)
- Population, owner-occupied housing (est.): 1,770 residents
- Renter-occupied housing units: 399 units (30.1%)
- Population, renter-occupied housing (est.): 762 residents

Potential land area for community gardening

- Approximately 21,400 sf (location will be coordinated with playground replacement and path reconstruction tentatively planned for 2018)

Estimated cost for water installation

- Approximately \$11,000-\$14,000

Access

- Walking/biking access along existing bike path through park
- Private vehicle access (street parking available)
- Public transportation access from University Avenue (less than 5-minute walk)

Rennebohm Park (115 N. Eau Claire Avenue) – Map Locator Site J

Rennebohm Park is located in the University Hills Plan District, bounded by N Segoe Road to the east, Regent Street to the south, and N Eau Claire Ave to the west, and is 0.4 miles away from the former garden site for Sheboygan Community Garden, located at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. The total square footage of the park is approximately 876,430 sf or 20.12 acres. Twenty percent of the original SCG capacity has already been located to an area near the tennis courts.

Rennebohm Park has 4 potential sites that were originally evaluated: the western area directly across from the existing garden (Backstop area), the southeastern area of the park directly behind the sidewalk on Regent Street near the path, the eastern area which is the area located east of the soccer field near the existing path, and the Greenway (Drainage Area) that extends from the eastern side of the park to Segoe Road. The southeastern, eastern and Greenway (Drainage Area) areas are not discussed further as they are not considered feasible sites due to land deed restrictions and costly infrastructure required in the drainage area. The following information applies to the area around the backstop.

Pros:

- Close proximity to the relocated garden space near the tennis courts
- Water access readily available
- Close proximity to gardeners who live in multi-family developments on Sheboygan Avenue

Cons:

- Cost of relocating approximately 380 feet of existing path (~\$45,000) and backstop, minor grading of the existing soccer field and installing a lateral hook-up to existing water system (\$5,000 - \$15,000)
- Increasing space and density of residential development in the area places increased recreational use pressure on the park.
- Conflicting uses in the park, including existing infrastructure (backstop) and the open recreation field areas currently scheduled for use.

University Hills Plan District – Demographic Information (NIP 2015 Edition)

- Total population: 5,372 residents
- Age 65 and older: 18.0% (est. 967 residents)
- White: 66.9% (est. 3,594 residents)
- African-American: 2.9% (est. 156 residents)
- Asian: 24.4% (est. 1,311 residents)
- Other Races/Multi-racial: 2.6% (est. 140 residents)
- Latino/Hispanic (any race): 3.2 % (est. 172 residents)
- Total population, Person of Color: 33.1% (est. 1,778 residents)

Total Population with Ambulatory Disability by Gender – Census Tract 3 (ACS 5-year 2015) – Refer to Appendix C

Note: Estimates have a large margin of error and therefore are represented as an estimate with an accompanying range

- Total population: 4,917 residents
 - Male: 2,360 - Male with ambulatory disability : est. 45 (range 0 - 138)
 - Female: 2,557 - Female with ambulatory disability : est. 164 (range 2 - 326)

Economic Vitality Indicators (NIP 2015 Edition)

- Median household income: \$49,701
- Family households: 1,149
- Families in poverty: 32 (2.79%)
- Unemployment rate: 4.3%

Housing Types

- Owner-occupied housing units: 960 units (30.7%)
- Population, owner-occupied housing (est.): 1,649 residents
- Renter-occupied housing units: 2,166 units (69.3%)
- Population, renter-occupied housing (est.): 3,723 residents

Potential land area for community gardening:

- Backstop area across path from existing garden: 11,000 sf

Potential cost for water installation (includes relocation of path and park amenities)

- Approximate cost \$50,000-\$60,000

Access

- Walking/biking access along streets and paths
- Private vehicle access (street parking available)
- Public transportation access from Eau Claire Avenue (less than 5-minute walk)

Other Sites of Note

In addition to Bordner Park, Indian Hills Park, and Rennebohm Park, staff also closely explored the Van Hise/Hamilton Campus (Map Locator Site U) and Vernon Boulevard (Map Locator Site V). It was determined that while these sites may have potential to host a community garden sometime in the future, for the timeline required by this project, they were not deemed feasible sites because of lack of clarity by school principals on willingness to host a community garden at Van Hise/Hamilton and because of long timelines and high cost at Vernon Boulevard.

It is important to note that staff will continue to engage with the principals at Van Hise/Hamilton to explore their interest in a Community-School garden somewhere on the campus. Additionally, in the next 2-5 years, when re-paving of Vernon Boulevard happens, it would behoove staff working on that project to explore the design and creation of a community garden on the site as possible.

Appendices

Appendix A: Matrix of Locations Evaluated as Potential Community Garden Sites

Appendix B: Potential Garden Site Options - Map

Appendix C: Census Tracts Overlaid on NIP Plan Districts Showing Evaluated Feasible Community Garden Sites