

CITY OF VERONA

PARK, RECREATION, AND FORESTRY COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY JULY 15, 2020 - 7:00 P.M.

HARRIET PARK SHELTER

201 MARY LOU STREET

A G E N D A

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call.
3. Approve the minutes of the June 17, 2020 meeting of the Park, Recreation, and Forestry Commission.
4. Consider a proposal for Ice Age Trail improvements along the Badger Mill Creek.
5. Update on the status of summer recreation programming.
5. Consider a special event request.
6. Adjourn.

Tyler Powers
Chairperson

POSTED: Verona City Hall
Verona Public Library
Miller's Market

ALL AGENDAS ARE POSTED ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE AT www.ci.verona.wi.us

IF YOU NEED AN INTERPRETER, MATERIALS IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS, OR OTHER ACCOMMODATION TO ACCESS THE MEETINGS, PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY CLERK AT 845-6495 AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRECEDING THE MEETING. EVERY REASONABLE EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR REQUEST.

Verona – Badger Mill Creek Corridor Project Proposal

“Verona’s Linear Park”

Overview

- 1) Restore prairie along Ice Age Trail on County M hillside (terminal moraine) just south of Whalen Road (unknown landowner – road right of way?) Area “A” on map.
- 2) Restore prairie on open field along Ice Age Trail just north of Whalen Road once gravel pit/quarry/storage area is closed up (city of Verona land) Area “B” on map.
- 3) Restore oak woods (several springs) along Badger Mill Creek south of Lincoln Street Bridge (city of Verona landowner). Area “C” on map.
- 4) Restore oak woods (“horseshoe woods”) north of Lincoln Street bridge, and wetland, and Schultz property honeysuckle area (three landowners – Cathern Schultz, city of Verona, Dane County). Area “D” on map.
- 5) Ice Age Trail improvements – mainly boardwalk, about 1000 feet. Also trail re-route and improvements.

Narrative

The Badger Mill Creek (BMC) corridor in the city of Verona is an important natural feature. It has geologic significance as the major outwash channel from the last Ice Age. It also is a corridor for the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. It has significant wetland features, and oak woodlands that attract hikers, bikers, as well as a variety of wildlife.

The 1.5-mile BMC corridor is a very attractive recreational feature for residents and visitors to Verona. This proposal seeks to use the upcoming sewer project as an opportunity to enhance what is, in effect, “Verona’s Linear Park”.

In recent years, the corridor has become overgrown with dense stands of non-native vegetation such as buckthorn, honeysuckle, garlic mustard, and phragmites. In addition, a large storm in 2017 knocked over a large number of trees in the woodland area. Badger Mill Creek has suffered two large floods in the past three years, damaging the Ice Age Trail boardwalk both times, and flooding the trail repeatedly.

The city of Verona is planning a major sewer overhaul along Badger Mill Creek starting in late 2020, continuing for about the next year. Heavy equipment will disrupt the Ice Age Trail corridor, forcing temporary closure. A 30-40 foot wide trench will be dug, with an additional 20-30 feet of soil and vegetation disruption, alongside the creek. At the end of the project a 8-10 foot wide paved bike trail will

overly the sewer, and the remaining ground will be restored in a to-be-determined way.

This presents an opportunity to stakeholders – the city of Verona, the Ice Age Trail Alliance, Dane County Parks (and possibly Upper Sugar River Watershed Association) - to improve/restore this important natural corridor into an attractive natural feature for all concerned.

Proposal

This is a proposal for a 2-3 year project, combining resources of the city of Verona, Dane County and the Ice Age Trail Alliance to accomplish the above objectives. With access to the area by heavy equipment during the sewer construction, a lot more restoration can be done than could ever be accomplished with hand tools. A “forestry mower” could remove much of the honeysuckle, buckthorn and other overgrown brush. A tracked vehicle with a grapppler could remove many of the large downed trees from recent storms.

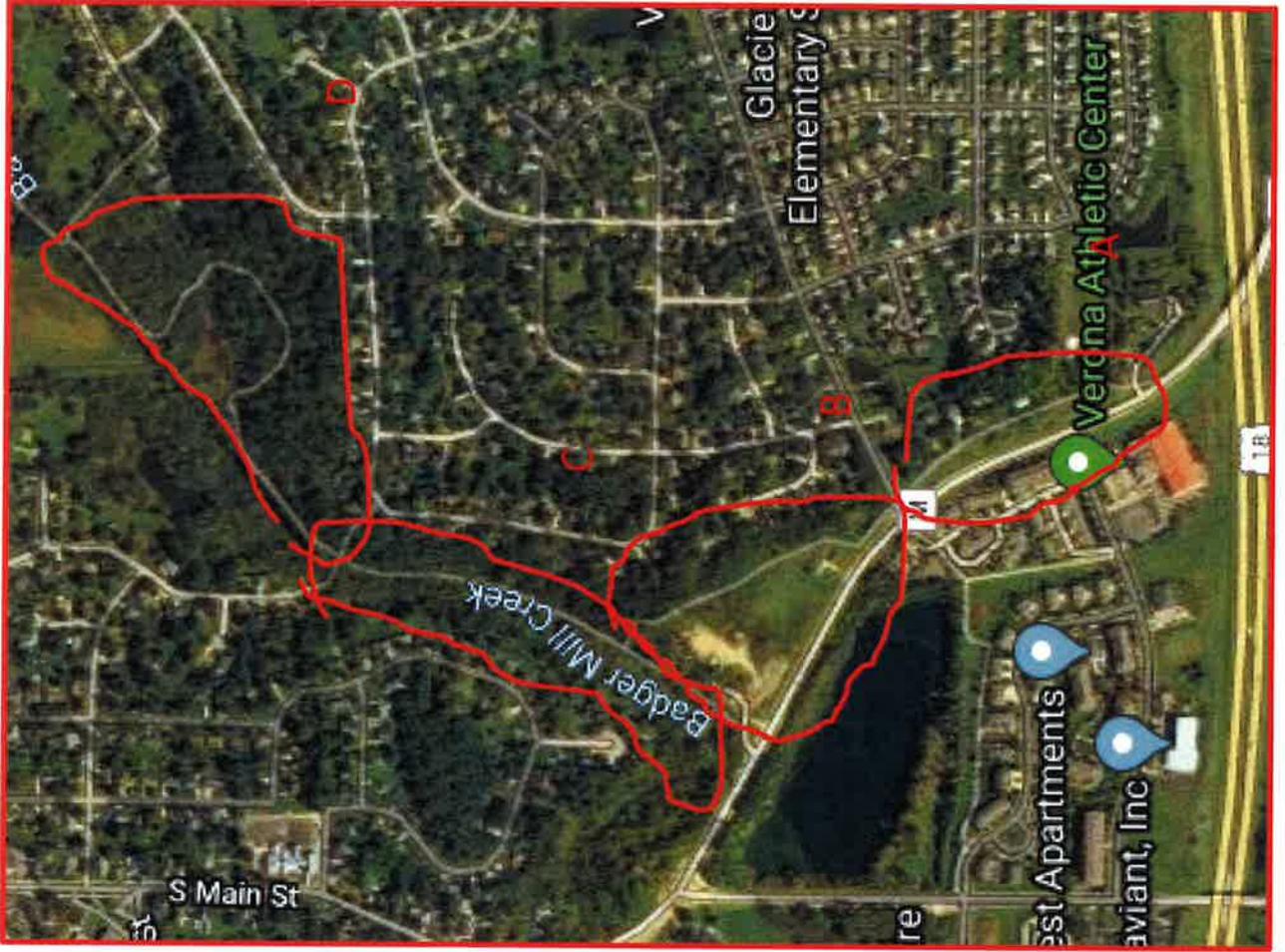
The two weedy areas along the Ice Age Trail north and south of Whalen Road – can be cleared of unwanted vegetation by a combination of hand tools (IAT), and larger mowing equipment (city of Verona?). Prairie plantings can be done once the weeds are removed, and the ground is prepared, and then maintained by IAT volunteers.

Badger Mill Creek oak woodlands (south and north) – city and/or county equipment can be used to “forestry mow” as described above. Hand crews from the IAT with possible help from Operation Fresh Start crews (Dane County hired) can do a lot of the other hand work. A prescribed burn “break” can be set up around restored areas and county or IAT crews can perform periodic burns to maintain the restoration.

Ice Age Trail volunteers can design and build the desired boardwalk in the wet areas. Interpretive materials about the geology, wildlife, history, etc could be developed.

This could be a unique cooperative project between the City of Verona, Dane County Parks, and the Ice Age Trail Alliance. In 2017, Verona became an Ice Age Trail Community, which signifies its special relationship with the Trail. The Trail Community agreement calls for the two partners to undertake projects together for the betterment of both the community and the trail. This project is a perfect fit to satisfy that goal. The end result would be a beautiful natural corridor along a pair of trails (bike and foot), for the enjoyment of many people!

David Lonsdorf
Ed Spoon
3/4/2020



REPRESENTATIONAL ONLY - Badger Mill Creek, Ice Age NST draft tm 5/26/2020



1. Red line = existing Ice Age Trail.
2. Yellow line = existing boardwalk @ ~200 ft L.
3. Black lines (south @~350 ft & north @~ 300 ft) = boardwalk needed if retaining existing IAT alignment.
4. Brown dashed lines = ~1,000 ft proposed IAT relocation (south); 900 ft (north).
5. Orange dash-dot-dot line = proposed paved multi-use trail.



ABOVE: IATA-owned 20' wide trail easement

- A) From South Main St north to Lincoln St. Bridge, the Ice Age Trail and Multi-use path should be separated by at least a ~10' wide "median" planted with 4' - 5' tall native shrubs. Ice Age Trail design standard should be 48" wide with rotten-granite/ crushed-aggregate surface.
 - B) Ice Age Trail should be relocated approximately as represented by the brown dashed line (south of Lincoln St. Bridge = 1,000'); and, potentially an additional 900 feet (north brown dashed line).
 - C) Assuming B occurs: i) ~550 linear feet of new 48" wide elevated boardwalk @ \$45/linear foot = \$25k plus aggregate etc. costs. ii) ~900' new 48" w boardwalk = \$41k, plus additional TBD \$ for vegetative clearing (rough estimate is \$20k).
 - D) Vegetative plant-mix to be provided by Dane County Chapter/IATA.
 - E) Special measures are needed to stem and control the spread of Phragmites throughout the wetland corridor.
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- 1) OTHER: Restore prairie on open field along Ice Age Trail just north of Whalen Road once gravel pit/quarry/storage area is closed up (City of Verona land)
 - 2) Restore upland oak woods (several springs) along Badger Mill Creek south of Lincoln Street Bridge (City of Verona land)
 - 3) Restore oak woods ("horseshoe woods") north of Lincoln Street bridge and Schultz property honeysuckle area (three landowners – Cathern Schultz, City of Verona, and Dane County land).