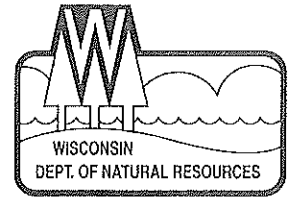


State of Wisconsin
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
2300 N. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive
Milwaukee WI 53212-3128

Scott Walker, Governor
Kurt A. Thiede, Interim Secretary
Telephone 608-266-2621
Toll Free 1-888-936-7463
TTY Access via relay - 711



To: City of Wauwatosa
Members of the Common Council
Mayor Kathy Ehley

Cc: James Tarantino, Milwaukee County
Paulette Enders, City of Wauwatosa
FEC Board of Directors

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) appreciates the opportunity to share with the City of Wauwatosa leaders information related to current and future plans for the Forest Exploration Center (FEC) and other properties that are owned by DNR in your community. I am aware of a May 12, 2017 communication from Wauwatosa Development Director that, among other things, requested Milwaukee County to make a request to DNR to place permanent non-development restrictions on the DNR owned land for the use and development of the FEC. I can confirm that Milwaukee County and City of Wauwatosa staff have met this request and we have had productive discussions on the use and development of the FEC.

The FEC is a public-private partnership between the non-profit FEC organization and the DNR whose mission is to help visitors explore, explain and experience Wisconsin forests and forestry. Further reinforcing that this will be the case over time, there already is a permanent restriction placed on the land. At the time that Milwaukee County transferred the FEC land to DNR in 2005, the County placed a Deed Restriction on the property restricting its use "to public recreation, conservancy, and educational uses". This is a legally enforceable restriction and Milwaukee County has not requested that the restriction be lifted or altered in any way. As such, the FEC's current use is ensured going forward.

The Natural Resources Board reviewed and approved a management plan for the FEC property. FEC primary mission is focused on education about sustainable forestry in Wisconsin. The FEC forest is critical to this mission. The FEC organization and the state reserve the right to manage the FEC property (both forested and un-forested parcels). This management will involve the removal of trees on a planned and sustainable basis for educational, forest health, and safety purposes; to construct trails in and around the forested area; and to construct a building for educational purposes on the property in the future. Neither the FEC organization nor the state can agree to any property designation that would limit our ability to proceed with these plans, which will be offered for public comment as they develop.

In summation, DNR's intentions remain the same as we have stated all along: We want to use that property to teach about forestry, forest management, about natural resources in general, and related topics. The only development of any kind, as we have stated before, would be an

entrance road and parking, interpretive trails, and any buildings to help achieve this objective. Should members of the Wauwatosa Common Council, the Mayor, or City staff have additional questions regarding the FEC, DNR is happy to continue the discussion to ensure a high level of collaboration between our organizations going forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Liebau Jr.", written over a white background.

Joe Liebau Jr.
Secretary's Director
Southeast Wisconsin

Attachment: May 12, 2017 Letter – City of Wauwatosa
Milwaukee County Deed Restriction