

Co. Exec. Abele: Milwaukee County to partner With Wauwatosa to add new county parkland

Posted on Friday, Apr 7, 2017

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MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele today announced that the County will partner with the City of Wauwatosa to add new parkland to the County's footprint, in the area of the County Grounds referred to as "Sanctuary Woods."

The County has been working collaboratively and transparently with Wauwatosa officials for months in support of the City's efforts to do thoughtful planning as it attempts to balance development interest, environmental protection, and build a sense of community on the County Grounds.

City officials and some residents have expressed concern that a portion of the County Grounds land commonly referred to as "Sanctuary Woods" would be at risk and should therefore have the protection of Parks zoning. The county executive also agrees with the City and residents that the woods should be protected by Parks zoning and is prepared to ask the City to rezone the woods to Parks.

Before rezoning can occur and County Grounds Park can be expanded, officials must determine what land in addition to the woods should be protected. Right now, the parcel that includes part of the wooded area also includes an abandoned county building, a parking lot, and land that was never part of the woods. The County is

surveying the site to establish what in addition to the woods should be protected, and what should be developed. A complete survey should take 2-4 months.

“Protecting our natural spaces has long been a priority of mine. Since I took office the County has added more than 150 acres of parkland and worked with municipalities to rezone more than 350 parcels as parks,” County Executive Chris Abele said. “In order to support this expanded footprint and invest in critical priorities, we need to grow our tax base to fund the maintenance of environmental and cultural assets. Mayor Kathy Ehley and the City of Wauwatosa have done a great job balancing smart development opportunities with protecting our natural spaces. I thank them for their thoughtful planning process and look forward to working with them to add new parkland to Milwaukee County.”

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