

A couple of key points were raised when we met last month to discuss the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) hospice project. First, you and Bill made it clear that the VNA and Aurora were not open to another site for the hospice – so a land swap was not an option. Second, you and Bill raised the concern that entering the site from Dewey Avenue would do more environmental damage than access to the site from the parkway.

With all of this in mind, I said that it seems reasonable to opt for access to the south to avoid the larger environmental damage caused by access from the northwest corner of the property. As a condition, I said that it was my intent to talk with the members of my Parks Department staff and to meet with the neighbors once before taking action.

In addition, Bill presented me with some information at our meeting last month on examples of locations where easements were granted within the park system.

As you know, I met with members of our Parks Department staff several weeks ago. After that meeting, I arranged for representatives from the VNA, Aurora, our Parks Department, the City of Wauwatosa and the DNR to discuss the project. Our parks staff gave me information on the cost of repair for the parkway after construction and it was substantially higher than the amount provided by the project manager for access from Dewey Avenue.

During this meeting, I asked why the VNA would want to spend that much more to cover access from the parkway. Since it was clear that the project manager from Aurora questioned the prices from the Parks Department, I agreed to have our Department of Public Works (DPW) review the numbers and give us some quotes – not for the entire parkway, but for the area from the circular drive east to 68<sup>th</sup> Street.

Recently, the DPW returned with quotes that are substantially higher than the Parks Department (copies attached). Apparently, the Parks Department did not factor for the need to correct the bridges near 68<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> streets to make them workable for truck traffic.

Considering the size of our fiscal crisis at the county level, I cannot allow a project to go forward that will cause harm to the parkway during construction if the cost to repair is not fully covered by the project. Other examples of access being granted over parkland do not cover the length of parkway needed for this project. Assuming the cost is covered, it does not make sense to me that the VNA would not opt to go for the lower cost access from the northwest corner of the property.

In addition, our parks staff noted that the area required for access from Dewey Avenue does not include any native species. In contrast, the area near the parkway and on the east end of the property does include the most desirable parts of the environmental corridor.

I suggested, during our meeting with the various parties, that the county would be willing to provide some space along the southern end of a proposed driveway off of Dewey Avenue. This

would help ease the slope of the entrance and would remove the need for a retaining wall along that edge of the driveway.

In the end, I am attempting to provide a better alternative for everyone involved with this project so we can see a hospice at this site. Entering from Dewey Avenue is less costly than cover the cost to the county to repair the parkway.

Since you left our meeting last month with the understanding that I could support the easement, it is my intent to give you a call to talk about this on Tuesday. In advance of my call, I wanted you to get this note to understand my discussions since our meeting and how they led to my current concern about an easement for the project.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Scott Walker  
Milwaukee County Executive