

**Citizen Questions**  
City of Fitchburg  
Conceptual Park & Open Space Proposal  
Public Hearing

March 6, 2008

- “In coming up with the Conceptual Proposal, did planners rank resources?
  - We established resource rankings based on staff and public opinion via surveys. While we did give high priority to areas with overlapping resources, we did give some individual resources higher priority over others when it came to demarcating the boundaries of the proposal. Resources that were given the highest rank include water features, wetlands and a 300-foot buffer around these resources. Forest resources, the Dane County environmental corridors, and public lands (state, county, federal) we considered the next highest ranking group of resources. Any other resource not mentioned was typically included in the boundaries if it was near in proximity to the higher ranked resources or an area of high resource concentration. This was done especially for the purpose of creating environmental and recreational corridors.

In addition, to minimize possible sources of conflict, parcel boundaries and private structures sometimes dictated the placement of the proposed park and open space boundaries.

- “...Land that is already slated for development- developers must preserve older trees on property- work around them- not plow everything under. Perfect example: property on Lacy Road, west of McGaw Park- where condo recently put in. Every tree was cut. Why couldn't some of them be saved? I believe some tree preservation should be mandated.”
  - “In regard to the preservation, what occurred there was not good, but the type of development, grading and storm pond didn't make it feasible to keep any tree. We do not have a tree preservation ordinance to require preservation. We try to look at trees, but often the grading plans, or other factors cause too many problems.” – Tom Hovel (City Planner)

A tree preservation ordinance will be a definite possibility for the future. Ed Bartell is currently drafting one for approval by the Parks Commission and Common Council and it will hopefully meet approval this summer. It will certainly address the issue of development.

- “Why would an oak tree that has been completely hacked into an eyesore be deemed a ‘heritage oak tree’ when it should be cut down?”
  - The heritage oak tree inventory is an extension of the original 1976 survey done by Walter Scott. His survey located oaks at least 200 years old within an 8-mile radius of the capitol. The age is estimated based on size of the trunk at breadth height. For the purpose of our inventory, we are mapping any oak trees in Fitchburg that are estimated to be at least 200 years old. This includes trees from the 1976 survey and additional ones. Aesthetic appeal or condition of a living oak tree does not exclude it from the inventory; its “heritage” and size is the significance. Also, keep in mind that any heritage tree considered unattractive because of the presence of a power line was here before settlement began.
  
- “Will the two railroad corridors be connected by a multiuse recreation trail?”
  - Yes, the current proposal includes the concept of connecting the Syene and Seminole railroad corridors through a recreational trail along County Highway M. This link, along with the rail corridors and the Capital City State Trail could form what has been proposed as the Heritage Circle Route.

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1. "This proposal surely will burnish Fitchburg's reputation as a green city. So long as it respects the rights of the landowner, I heartily endorse the concept. Its execution seems to be thoughtful and comprehensive."
2. "This plan is laudable! Longtime coming and in the nick of time."  
  
"There are magnificent viewsapes in this area and treasures tucked all over."
3. "I would support increasing the percentage of park dedication developers are currently mandated to set aside. I feel developers should bear a larger burden than they currently carry to help preserve land/other resources in Fitchburg. I would support a change in ordinances to support implementation of this plan."  
  
"I would also support adding the area north of McGaw Park toward Lacy Road into park land. Preserve the stand of oaks and entry to park."  
  
"Fitchburg is poised to be productive in making this an incredible community to live in by preserving green space- natural resources, attending to water regeneration, rather than letting develop run amok. It will make our community very desirable and sustainable."  
  
"I also support purchasing development rights- but they are permanently purchased- not for a limited time."  
  
"I really support looking forward to preserving greenspace/resources!"
4. "I would appreciate that in the areas that are slated for future development, a survey of historic trees in those areas be done and an effort be made to preserve them and incorporate them as an important feature in the development plan."
5. "Great to plan that far out. Please spell out [how] plan will address ways to relieve user conflicts (i.e. identify existing hunting/trapping areas on State/Federal land and lands that may be closed to certain activities.)"  
  
"Overlap plans with existing State/Fed/County properties and partner with County/State in those areas of Dane Co. Parks & Open Space Plan to maximize partnerships."
6. "Preserve what is precious about this 'beyond the urban service area.'"

“Irish Lane is truly a lane filled with Fitchburg’s Irish settlers- it should stay a ‘green’ lane.”

“Get some lookout towers on our city high points and moraines.”