



Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission

MEMORANDUM

To: Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission
From: Robert L. Tetens, Director
Date: August 13, 2013
Re: DF Land Development Property: 5 ac & 12 ac Parcels – Ann Arbor Charter Township

Background

In May 2013, a 12 acre parcel of land owned by DF Land Development and located in Ann Arbor Charter Township was nominated for consideration by the Natural Areas Preservation Program as part of Round 13. A 5 acre parcel, also owned by DF Land Development and located in Ann Arbor Charter Township, was previously nominated in conjunction with a property that is currently under consideration via a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

The Natural Areas Technical Advisory Committee, along with Parks and Recreation Commission staff, visited the two DF Land Development parcels on a number of occasions. The site visits identified a number of significant natural features. Both properties are almost entirely wooded, with areas of mature oaks, maples, hickories and other hardwoods. The 12 acre parcel is of especially high quality with an open understory and an absence of invasive plant species. There is a large button bush swamp located in the southwest corner of the property. The most significant characteristic of both properties is the steep slopes that are present throughout. NATAC identified both parcels as high priority properties for acquisition.

Both parcels are ranked as “medium value” areas on the Bioreserve Map prepared by the Huron River Watershed Council. The Bioreserve Map uses criteria such as size, presence of wetlands, rivers or lakes and the potential to harbor a high diversity of ecosystems to rank areas based on the ecological services they provide. Protection of the two DF Land parcels will ensure this quality environment is preserved.

An interesting aspect of the properties is the proximity to other protected land. The 12 acre parcel abuts the Goodrich Preserve along its southern boundary, offering a natural extension. The 5 acre parcel abuts the University of Michigan Horner-McLaughlin Woods and offers the opportunity to connect that property with other protected land to the south.

Discussion

As required, the following due diligence investigations have been conducted:

- Appraisals of the properties, prepared by Bosserd Appraisal Services, identified a value of \$100,000 for the 5 acre parcel and \$222,000 for the 12 acre parcel.
- Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments of both parcels, prepared by Mannik & Smith Group, Inc., found no evidence of recognized environmental concerns.
- Boundary surveys were prepared, including legal description and sealed survey drawing.

Recommendation

Based upon the review by the Natural Areas Technical Advisory Committee and staff it is my recommendation the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission authorize purchase of the DF Land Development 5 acre parcel at a price of \$100,000 and the 12 acre parcel at a price of \$222,000.

Attachments