

May 6, 2008

Dear Glen Ellyn Park District Board,

My name is Connie Schmidt and today I am speaking not only for myself but for the 2800 members of the River Prairie Group of the Sierra Club, which is the DuPage chapter in this state. The Sierra Club has been monitoring local watersheds for over a decade with research published and shared in 2 reports. I'd like to quote from the introduction of our most recent document: "The landscape of DuPage County was converted from first native prairie and wetland to farmland, then to homes, roads and businesses. In the process, over 90% of the county's original wetlands were lost and 51% of its streams were channelized." The reason we have to worry about wetland mitigation is because we have destroyed so much of our natural landscape for the purpose of development. We have not commented on this situation out of respect for the ability of the city of Glen Ellyn and the Glen Ellyn Park District to work out a compromise that would please the majority of the citizens and still maintain respect for the land. However that optimism appears to be unrealistic and I stand before you to register our collective concern. It appears that the city has now washed their hands of the situation and the park district may move forward with their plan without regard to this widespread protest. A recent investigation in another area of the park, revealed 2 permit violations for ignoring wetland easements in order to provide parking for sports events. The 2005 and 2008 violations have yet to be settled or explained to the county.

Although the City of Glen Ellyn is self regulating when it comes to storm water retention, it is still bounded by the rules and regulations of DuPage County and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Currently the IEPA is extremely interested in wetlands and their beneficial effect on the surrounding

communities. A report entitled Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program for the State of Illinois has been in progress since 2005 by the ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY BUREAU OF WATER. Within township units, potential emergent wetland sites are identified from the Illinois Wetlands Inventory database using the constraints that the wetland must encompass at least two acres and must be dominated by emergent native vegetation. The Ackerman site fits this stipulation and as of today the IEPA has been notified. The IEPA admits that there are a variety of various quality of wetland some called fens, seeps but also scub-land provides beneficial service to the responsibility of water retention for a geographic area. The more we limit the biodiversity in an area with sites of mowed grass the more we limit our own future. As we all are aware, the wheels of bureaucracy do move slowly, and no doubt this project could well be built and this land altered for progress, but will the park district really benefit if later they are tied up with yet another permit violation? Please.....consider your actions carefully and do not encumber a future board with the financial responsibility to deal with the result of your actions in this matter. Thank you.

Connie Schmidt
DuPage Issues Chairman
River Prairie Group of the Sierra Club

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