



George Reistad
Food Policy Coordinator
City of Madison – Office of the Mayor
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Room 403
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

March 6, 2018

Dear George Reistad,

On behalf of the Sheboygan Avenue Community Garden (SACG) please extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to City of Madison Mayor Paul Soglin, Alders Arvina Martin, Steve King and Mark Clear, Past Alder Tim Gruber, Food Policy Council, Parks, Planning, and Community Development divisions, Department of Civil Rights and Community GroundWorks for seeking public engagement and securing community support to provide additional community garden space. SACG endorses the staff recommendation of providing additional community garden space in Rennebohm Park to be presented to the Board of Park Commissioners on March 14, 2018.

For thirty-five years, SACG was located on the State Department of Transportation (DOT) site until the garden was forced to vacate in October 2015 due to site redevelopment. The community garden was reestablished in Rennebohm Park in time for the 2016 growing season and replaced approximately 20% of the original community garden space. Resolution 42079 was initiated in June 2016 for city staff to identify additional community gardening space to offset space lost in the Hill Farms DOT redevelopment.

As you are aware, the recommendation provides 11,000 square feet of additional community garden space adjacent to the existing community garden located in Rennebohm Park. This recommendation is the outcome of Legislative Files 42079 and 42334, Legislative File 42334 Staff Report and its Recommendations on Potential Garden Sites within the University Hill Farms Neighborhood and Nearby Areas, and RESJ Tool: Comprehensive Version for Community Engagement Strategies for University Hill Farms Community Garden Siting – 2017. Public input was provided through community discussion meetings, project website, and surveys.

SACG's mission is to provide equitable access to social, environmental, and health resources through a community garden environment in an urban setting. As such, the community garden is open to all on a first-come, first-served basis with a sliding fee scale. Fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs grown in the garden are for family and food pantry consumption only.

Carrying out this mission will be challenging given the continued development of commercial properties and multi-family housing in the Hill Farms area which will increase Rennebohm Park usage and the need for community garden space. Less than 50% of the original community garden space will be replaced when the proposed additional space is added in 2018. SACG will continue to work with Community GroundWorks to incorporate urban garden design best practices.

It is our understanding that design details and the specific location of the additional garden space in Rennebohm Park have not been finalized. The garden strongly recommends maintaining the existing asphalt path as it provides excellent circulation through the park and would be expensive to move. We are willing to work on a design that includes the existing path in an aesthetically pleasing way.

With the information documented above, the Sheboygan Avenue Community Garden, located in Rennebohm Park, confirms the objectives of Resolutions 42079 and 42334 have been successfully met – no additional space will be requested by SACG in Rennebohm Park.

Sincerely, Cindy Statz, Garden Coordinator, and the Sheboygan Avenue Community Garden

cc: Karen von Huene, Nan Fey, Shelly Strom, Pat Soderholm, Leann Tigges, Yuhua Li, Jim Baumann, Ruth Cadoret, Jim Dudley, Geren Zhang, Pranali Lad