


Elsen, Nikki

From: Gretchen Guinn Paquette <gretchenguinn@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2020 1:35 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Hixon family opposition

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Please read. It is not a few disgruntled neighbors. There are many of us all over the coulee region that agree with this article.

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Frederick Hixon Glore: Reconsider proposed Grandad Bluff trail **4** comments

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EDITOR'S PICK

COMMENTARY

Frederick Hixon Glore: Reconsider proposed Grandad Bluff trail

From the Two views: Is Grandad Bluff trail good for La Crosse? series

Feb 4, 2020

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I have recently been made aware of the Outdoor Recreation Alliance's petition to develop certain trails under the face of Grandad Bluff.

It is my understanding that a part of this opportunity comes as a result of the International Mountain Bike Associations grant to ORA to help fund this.

I am gravely concerned about the impact on the gift that my great-great-grandmother gave to the city of La Crosse for the benefit of all citizens of La Crosse.

I gave a mountain bike to my oldest son when he was 12 years old and am very aware of the mountain bike community, the IMBA, the Eastern Fat Tire Association and many of the concerns and issues that have evolved over the years.

My son competed extensively in New England through EFTA and was his age group's champion for two years before heading to Colorado, where he continues to ride and is owner of his own bike shop, Colorado Cycle Dynamics in Arvada, Colorado.



Bluffside trail project causes concern for neighbors, excites mountain bikers

Olivia Herken

4 comments

While I understand that ORA promotes all outdoor activities, it is my understanding that there is a significant focus on the mountain bike community. Our family donates to IMBA and I am a supporter of mountain biking in the right locations.

Ellen Hixon's gift to the city of La Crosse was made to preserve the bluff and forests from the quarrying that was occurring for gravel.

It was her belief that all citizens of La Crosse should have the ability to see their city from the top of the bluff as well as enjoy the woods that ultimately were acquired to help preserve this space. La Crosse, as noted when we dedicated the statue in her honor, was fortunate to have that vision and gift for the future.

In that era, Ellen could not have envisioned the types of activities that are being proposed by this petition.

While the ORA's website has used her name and vision regarding this proposal, I believe that they have done so inaccurately and in a misleading way.

It is my understanding that two proposed trails (1A/2A and 1B/2B) will be cut through the base of the Granddad's Bluff and that there is a significant concern that the potential work and ensuing activity will cause irreparable damage to the sanctity and integrity of the property and quite possibly cause the bluff, over time, to collapse.

It is also my understanding that there has been inadequate research and study into this possibility and that U.S. Geological surveys and reviews have not been thoroughly vetted.

It is my belief that this proposed trail network will create a permanent scar on one of the area's most important landmarks.

For these reasons alone, I would ask that you slow this process down and reconsider the extent of this proposal.

This is not what Ellen envisioned and it would be a tragedy if that potential damage and destruction was discovered too late.

Is it really necessary to have these trails developed when other trails already exist and can be expanded upon with much less impact on the beauty of the face of this bluff and woods?


Must one select community be allowed to overtake this pristine and untouched jewel?

Frederick Hixon Glore: Reconsider proposed Grandad Bluff 4 comments

I also am concerned that the citizens are being misled by the verbiage suggesting that these trails will be shared trails. In the mountain bike world, there is no such thing as shared trails as there is no place for walkers and riders to share the trails at the same time.

This is the reality in New England and in Colorado. Specifically, there are areas where days are designated for one or the other. Vertical drops, a feature in the ORA's proposed trails, are incompatible with walking and even hiking trails.

Damage done by bikes to this terrain make it almost impossible to share these types of trails. In speaking with my son, who is familiar with Grandad Bluff, he acknowledges that the proposed trails at the base of the bluff's face are not a good idea. New England and Colorado have had significant problems with shared trails and I believe it is misleading to the public to suggest that all will benefit.

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I spent many hours with Ellen's daughter-in-law, Alice Hixon (my great-grandmother) and Ellen's granddaughter, Ellen Hixon Glore (my grandmother) both in La Crosse and in Illinois and they shared with me that vision that Ellen Hixon had on many occasions.

The primary focus was always on the preservation of this land and not its exploitation for a limited group of people. Additionally, they never once referred to her as "grandma" and I know that they would not be pleased that her vision would be referred to in this manner.

Personally, I am disappointed that no one from ORA or the Parks and Recreation Department made any effort to connect with our family to discuss how they might use her name and vision for their benefit. Ellen was known as mother, grandmother and Mrs. Hixon.

I ask you to consider the impact that this proposal will have on the bluff and its immediate surrounding areas.

I implore you to not allow the lure of outside investment in aggressive methods of integrating one style of outdoor activities to destroy a truly unique part of the world in an irreparable way that would not be in keeping with the original vision that Ellen

Hixon and her sons had for this beautiful spot.

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Frederick Hixon Glore, West Boxford, Massachusetts

4 comments

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