

Elsen, Nikki

Subject: FW: Upcoming Vote on Camping restriction

From: Jon Ellefson <broker.jon@icloud.com>
Date: April 6, 2024 at 3:36:17 PM CDT
To: klekamp.jane@co.la-crosse.wi.us
Subject: Upcoming Vote on Camping restriction

To my elected City Council members, please read the message I just sent to the Board of Public works who will be voting on this. Just to be clear, I am not opposed to camping on City land. I am concerned for the reasons below about allowing camping in the marsh by the La Crosse River. This is unsuitable for any camping and not the same thing as the area by River Point. Thank you for reading this and for your service and to all la crosse Tax payers

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From: Jon Ellefson <broker.jon@icloud.com>
Date: April 6, 2024 at 1:35:29 PM CDT
To: elsenn@cityoflacrosse.org
Cc: dickinson@cityoflacrosse.org
Subject: Camping restriction

I have been informed that the Board of public Works meeting on Monday April 8th will have an agenda item regarding restricting camping on the City owned property specifically in the marsh area next to the La Crosse River.

I live adjacent to this marsh area in the Landings Condominiums building and have a direct view of this beautiful natural resource right out my window. It is one of the main reasons I chose to live here.

Unlike the marsh area near the River Point location that allowed camping at one point, this marsh area is different. It is not suitable for camping by anyone. The natural marsh hosts a lot of delicate wildlife and rare species of animals and wildlife that rely on the protection of it against avoidable disruptions and man made threats. It is not an area that will eventually be "clear cut" and rezoned for another purpose. It also differs greatly from the other site by River Point due to the different topography. Any clean up of trash and debris left from campers would be many times more difficult to remove as the entry and use of heavy equipment would not be possible. Any clean up would require lots more manual labor and consequently much more taxpayer dollars. This is why it needs to be protected from campers disrupting wildlife and leaving litter and debris before it becomes unmanageable. Whenever any necessary work has been done to the marsh as it relates

to maintenance, utility work, etc. proper care and extreme measures have always been taken to minimize harm or disruption to its delicate ecosystem. A recent example would be the current work being done by Xcel energy. Excel has taken extraordinary measures to lay a protective matting on our trails and through the marsh where use of heavy equipment is necessary at great expense to avoid disturbing the delicate marsh and its ecosystem. XCEL has also pledged to replace and repair any damages done at their expense to maintain the integrity of the wildlife and the marsh. This is why I am in favor of banning camping in this area. It is not because I'm opposed to camping in certain areas on City land for the homeless until a long term solution can be found. It is because of the nature of this location and the above mentioned reasons that I encourage this board to vote to ban camping in this marsh area. Please consider that this is still a manageable situation in its "early stage" as the numbers of campers is still fairly low. If allowed, and the numbers get larger, it very well may become overbearing and no longer easily manageable.

Respectful,

Jon E Ellefson

VP The Landings Condominium association

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Sent from my iPhone