



To: Alcohol Licensing and Review Committee

Re: Proposed Bier Garden at Olbrich Beach House

From: The Friends of Starkweather Creek

In regards to the proposed Bier Garden at the Olbrich Beach House, we feel it is premature to locate a development of this magnitude next to Olbrich Beach, which is already suffering due to high *E.coli* contamination and blue green algal blooms. We are aware of an engineering study, *GLRI Beach Sanitary Survey Project Olbrich Park Beach (Madison, WI)*, which analyzed the pollution sources impacting Olbrich Beach and proposed a redesign of the landscaping around the beach and improvements to the beach house structure to help reduce runoff to the beach. Specifically mentioned in the study is a stormwater outfall that discharges 120 meters east of the beach and carries pollutants to the beach. There is also mention of runoff from the adjacent parking lot and the roof of the beach house to the beach because of the steep slope of the beach and the poor grade of the adjacent turf grass. We are attaching the plan for your consideration. Specific improvements recommended for the structure include:

- Repairs to the gutter system,
- Redirection of surface runoff from the rooftop, sidewalks and adjacent parking lot to a rain garden/vegetated swale and/or rain barrels.
- Grading or terracing the beach to reduce the slope of the beach
- Allowing native grasses, rather than turf grass to grow adjacent to the beach.

Before filling the parking lot with more cars and increasing the chances for polluted runoff to reach the beach, the area desperately needs to be redesigned. This should be the first order of business before so intensively expanding uses of the beach area, building and parking lot.

In addition, we have concerns that the neighborhood has not had sufficient time to absorb the plans being presented. We have heard some positive comments about the proposed canoe rental by Rutabaga, and we support efforts to enhance nature-based experiences in our parks, but we have only heard concerns from neighbors about the increased noise, traffic, parking pressure and crowds that could result from a Bier Garden. We suggest that the area would benefit from a master planning process to address how the area is currently being used, what improvements the neighborhoods would like to see, and what type of improvements should be part of a beach house redevelopment.

Finally, some elements that we would like to see in a re-development project near Starkweather Creek, with some specifics on this proposal:

- Runoff from the project is treated so that excessive nutrients and salt do not reach the creek, or in this case, the beach.

- A buffer zone of native vegetation is created to add to the wildlife habitat and aesthetic beauty of the creek.
- Rainwater is contained on-site for infiltration or re-use.
- Educational materials are provided on-site that acknowledge the proximity of the creek and that promote stewardship of it.
- Stormwater management features are properly maintained so that they function at peak efficiency. In this case, consideration should be given to minimizing problem discharges from the nearby stormwater outfall and from Starkweather Creek.
- Construction runoff measures are used and properly maintained so that runoff during construction does not negatively impact the creek.
- Some consideration is given to future property maintenance, including leaf and snow removal, so that they do not result in piles that will contribute nutrient and salt runoff into the creek.

The Friends of Starkweather Creek advocate for projects in the watershed of Starkweather Creek that will promote a healthy urban stream. Specifically, we promote projects that will give the streambanks a natural appearance and provide a healthy habitat for fish and wildlife. We want the creek to be inviting and usable for recreation. We want neighborhoods surrounding the creek to have access through an interconnected network of paths that link Lake Monona to Sun Prairie. We are dedicated to finding a place, or places, near the creek where people can learn about the watershed of Starkweather Creek. We are also dedicated to creating projects on Starkweather Creek that will result in the creek contributing good water quality to Lake Monona.

Thank you again for considering the impacts to Olbrich Beach as you consider the proposals for the Olbrich Beach House. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to discuss these elements further. We can be reached at info@starkweatherfriends.org.

Cc: Alder Marsha Rummel, Alder Dave Ahrens, SASY Neighborhood Association, Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association, and Lake Edge Neighborhood Association, Public Health Madison and Dane County, City of Madison Parks Department