

Pollinator Preserve at Homestead

**Proposal to City of Lake Elmo Park Commission
from Homestead HOA, Lake Elmo**

April 15th, 2015

resources. Based on this report, homeowners voted to approve specific plans for native restoration and water quality improvements. All 18 homeowners agreed to yearly assessments for three years to fund this work. In addition to funding the improvement plan, homeowners have given hundreds of hours of volunteer time toward this effort. We are very engaged and committed to complete our master plan.

Cohesive Landscape Will Preserve over 16 Acres of Pollinator-Friendly Open Space

At the November, 2014 Park Commission meeting, landscape architect Stephen Mastey presented the Homestead's concept master plan for out lots. Extensive conversation, research, and planning have gone into creation of these concept plans in order to:

- 1) Create a cohesive look throughout the neighborhood that showcases the historic barn and exemplifies agrarian and pre-agrarian themes
- 2) Use native plantings for conservation of habitat and for water quality
- 3) Remain naturalistic and low-maintenance
- 4) Exemplify MN Land Trust conservation values
- 5) Exemplify stewardship of open space that is safe and advantageous for pollinators

For all of these reasons, our preference is that Lot B become a native wildflower prairie interspersed with native trees so that it seamlessly blends with Lot C and coordinates with the prairie meadows recently installed in Lot A and next to the barn.

MN Land Trust-Approved Design

MN Land Trust approved the Homestead's master plan concept as it pertains to Lots A through C as being consistent with conservation values.

Homestead's Caretaking and Recent Investment in Lot B

As part of Homestead's commitment to open space improvements and in anticipation of finishing our cohesive master plan, we jump started Lot B improvements. Ecosystem management in the northern portion of Lot B and within the right of way area includes: buckthorn removal, management of invasive and non-native plants, tree trimming, tree and bush planting, pollinator-friendly native seeding, irrigation changes, as well as professional design services and professional survey work. These recent efforts funded by the Homestead HOA total approximately \$30,000.

Public Benefit

We recognize and respect the public benefit that the large field area of the Homestead offers. It is referenced in the conservation easement agreement in place with MN Land Trust:

“The Protected Land has outstanding scenic qualities that can be enjoyed by the public from Washington County Road 17 in the city of Lake Elmo.”

It is our belief that the community of Lake Elmo will benefit from restoration of Lot B in a naturalistic, low-impact, and beautiful way. Homestead believes this important public benefit will be enhanced without signage or promotion of public access. Our point of view is that the Homestead field will offer the public an ecologically correct, scenic landscape to enjoy and appreciate for years to come.

Public Use Near HOA Property

Homestead believes that the fullest public benefit of the field is realized when it is one harmonious open space. Our desire is to avoid landscaping or structures in Lot B that could seem disjointed in the natural landscape of the field covering Lots B and C.

Because Lots B and C are designed to be seamless and cohesive, the public will not recognize where city land ends and protected HOA property begins. On-site signage to promote public use of Lot B is, in effect, the same as promoting public use of HOA-owned Lot C. As a neighborhood, Homestead does not desire the liability, risk, or responsibility associated with promoting access to Lot C.

Funding Request

The Homestead neighborhood respectfully requests that the city of Lake Elmo support the direction we propose for Lot B by allocating park dedication funds toward creation of a passive use park focused on bee-safe habitat and pollinator-friendly management practices. Our neighbors are excited to complete our master plan. Cost sharing gives us assurance that our investment of time and money is well-spent and in harmony with the City of Lake Elmo’s objectives.

Low-Maintenance Stewardship

Native, pollinator-friendly enhancements in Lot B are cost-effective to maintain over time. Homestead continues to work with MN Native Landscapes to provide best management practices in the field. Additionally, by not adding structures to Lot B, we are able to avoid the expense that maintenance or replacement of structures might require.

Supporting the Ideals of Lake Elmo

The Homestead neighborhood's original 1800s barn and open field space are nostalgic elements that reflect Lake Elmo's identity and values. We are uniquely situated to share views of the Homestead field with the public from Lake Elmo Avenue. We are excited to enhance this experience with pollinator-safe, low-maintenance, and naturalistic choices designed to preserve the Homestead field as a legacy for years to come.

Sincerely,

Forestry Committee of the Homestead Homeowners Association, Lake Elmo

Ellen Johnson

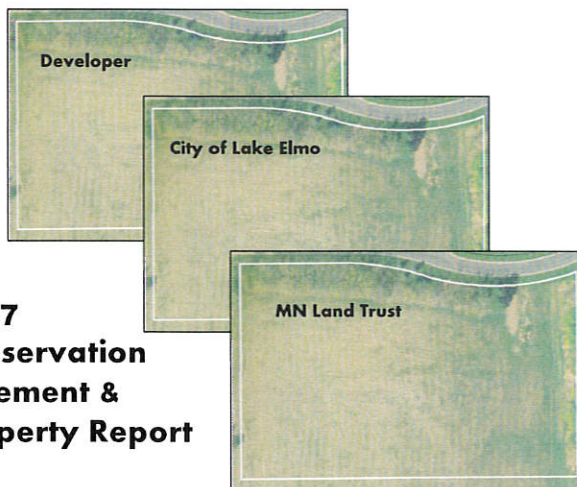
Jeffrey Kluge

Shelli Wilk

Pollinator Preserve at Homestead



**City of Lake
Elmo
property:
Out Lot B**



**1997
Conservation
Easement &
Property Report**

**Owner of Lot B = City of Lake Elmo
Owner of Lots A & C = Homestead HOA**

Conservation Easement 18a:

“Owner shall remain solely responsible for the operations, upkeep, and maintenance of the Protected Land.”

Homestead HOA Stewardship

- Field & tree maintenance since 1998 estimated at \$9,200
- Lot B incorporated into unanimously approved HOA Master Plan, 2011-present:
 - 2013 improvements to a portion of Lot B
 - 2015 project is ready to install

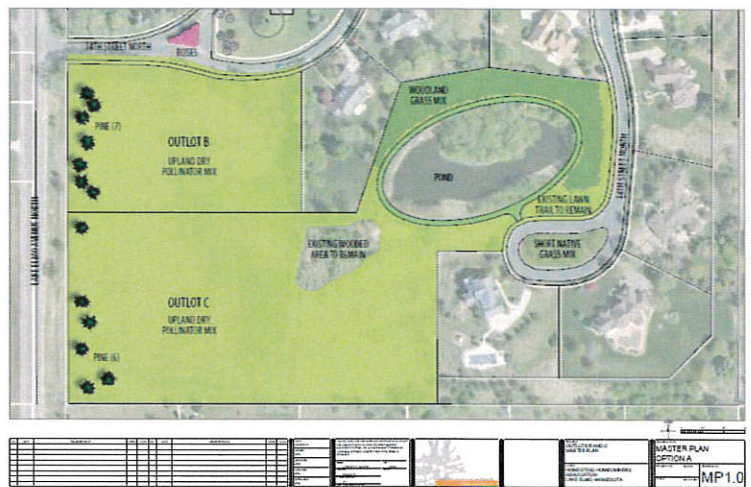
2013 Completed Work





REQUEST #1
2015 Proposed Work

- Homestead HOA requests City agreement to install pollinator-friendly native prairie & trees on Lot B that are cohesive with Lots A & C
- Plans for protected Lots A, B & C are approved by MN Land Trust
- 2015 project budget for Lots B & C = \$63,000



**Benefits for City of Lake Elmo
 Park Management:**

- First Bee-Friendly project following up on City of Lake Elmo resolution
- No resources required of Public Works to survey, design, prep, install, or maintain
 - Shovel ready for spring 2015
 - Low maintenance plantings
 - No structures to maintain or upgrade over time

Public Benefits of Conservation:

(1)

Legacy investment:

Protected land with outstanding scenic and natural qualities can be enjoyed by the public for years to come

Public Benefits of Conservation:

(2)

Passive use park is aligned with the values of MN Land Trust

Public Benefits of Conservation:

(3)

Useful model for pollinator preserves in other Lake Elmo neighborhoods

Public Benefits of Conservation:

(4)

Homestead HOA offers to coordinate with City of Lake Elmo to host an Open House on site one day during Pollinator Week

Public Benefits of Conservation:

(5)

Homestead HOA committee is resource for other grass roots initiatives to improve neighborhood ecology & bee-friendly stewardship

Pollinator Goals

- Make sure something is blooming at all times from March – October
- Choose a variety of colors
- Choose for nectar, pollen, larval development, shelter, foraging
- Bees aren't the only pollinators; also moths, butterflies, hummingbirds

Total pollinator-friendly space at Homestead will increase to over 16 acres



REQUEST #2

EQIP Grant for Pollinators

- Homestead HOA requests permission to apply for USDA's EQIP Grant for pollinators as stewards of Lot B
- As a city, Lake Elmo is not eligible to apply
- Lot B grant value = \$2,348
Total grant value (Lots B & C) = \$7,769
- Application due May 22nd

REQUEST #3

Funding Request

Homestead HOA respectfully requests city funds be allocated toward a passive use park focused on bee-safe habitat and pollinator-friendly management practices on the City of Lake Elmo's Homestead Lot B, creating Pollinator Preserve at Homestead

In full partnership, ongoing maintenance will be pledged by Homestead HOA

If city funds are allocated to create Pollinator Preserve at Homestead, then Homestead HOA is committed to provide pollinator-friendly management practices aligned with Lake Elmo's bee-friendly resolution and with MN Land Trust conservation values for perpetuity.

- 1998-2011 maintenance = approximately \$9,200
- Future maintenance = estimated at \$2,500/year

Investment in Pollinator Preserve

2011 - 2013 Planning & Prep (approximate)	\$ 8,580
2013 Improvements	\$ 22,180
2015 Pollinator Preserve	\$ 16,050
<i>prep \$2,000</i>	
<i>pollinator seed mix \$6,250</i>	
<i>pine trees & irrigation \$7,800</i>	
Supplemental Pollinator Habitat Plantings	\$ 9,865
<i>7 Hawthorn and/or fruit trees \$7,665</i>	
<i>mass of bushes and/or vines \$2,200</i>	
USDA EQIP Grant for Lot B	\$ (2,348)
TOTAL COST FOR LOT B	\$ 54,327

Summary of Homestead Requests

Request #1

Agreement to install

Request #2

Permission letter for USDA grant application

Request #3

Recommendation to apply city funds toward Pollinator Preserve at Homestead

Funding Options

OPTION A = \$16,050 + future maintenance

2015 Pollinator Preserve
Ongoing Maintenance \$2,500/year

OPTION B = \$25,915

2015 Pollinator Preserve \$16,050
Supplemental Pollinator Habitat Plantings \$9,865
All future maintenance by Homestead HOA

OPTION C = \$54,327

Full funding: prep/2013 initial installation/2015 Pollinator Preserve
All future maintenance by Homestead HOA



Pearl Crescent & Honey Bee on Butterfly Weed



Golden-orange pollen basket on Honey bee