

FRITSE PARK REDEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Brief History

In anticipation of the development and completion of the Trestle Trail, a group of citizens and local leaders met in 2004 to discuss development options for the existing five (5) acres at Fritse Park and the newly acquired ten (10) acres known as the Rydell property. Since that time, various options and revisions have been developed and presented. As of November 2008, the Town Board requested a newly revised plan based upon five (5) specific criteria. The expressed criteria are as follows:

- Renovation of the boat launch
- Redevelopment of the seawall per WI-DNR requirements
- Redevelopment of the play equipment
- Construction and placement of a comfort station (restroom facilities) to serve trail and park guests
- The project can not exceed the committed \$1.2 Million (by the Town board in 2007)

Upon further recommendation from the staff and the Park Commission, the reconstruction of the parking lot and installation of an ADA access to the Trestle Trail was to be included in the overall scope of the Fritse Park Redevelopment project.

Specific Project Descriptions

1. **Boat Launch (motor and quiet water launches):** Historically, the Town of Menasha has provided a two-stall motor boat launch at Fritse Park. With the increased trend of canoeing and kayaking, we see an opportunity to better serve the Fox Valley region. A quiet water launch will be designed specifically for canoeing and kayaking access to Little Lake Butte des Morts and one motor launch will be reconstructed.
2. **Removal of existing seawall (south) and installation of native shoreline restoration:** The existing south seawall has fallen into disrepair with the wall leaning into the lake, rust holes developing throughout wall and sink holes in the asphalt. After working with the Wisconsin DNR Aquatic Division, we developed a plan that not only continues to provide public access to Little Lake Butte des Morts, but contributes to increased overall environmental friendliness through the reduction of asphalt near the lake and a rock rip-rap native plant shoreline for increased habitat. This plan has the endorsement of the WI-DNR and provides the necessary structures to ensure the appropriate level of cost effectiveness and long term shoreline stability and integrity.
3. **Play Area:** The present play areas are disjointed in location and placement, as well as being undersized for the current park use. The current playground equipment pieces do not meet current safety guidelines and because of their disjointed locations throughout the Fritse Park site, this creates a concern and difficulty for parents trying to monitor children. The proposed plan centers all play activities around the historic hill slide area and also appropriately addresses any safety and erosion issues in and around the hill slide. A specific play equipment plan will be developed collaboratively with the Park Staff and interested residents.

4. **Comfort Station:** Fritse Park at one time had restrooms and a small pavilion. During the summer of 2006, some significant plumbing issues occurred and it was not cost effective to repair; therefore, the old facility was taken down. Since that time, Fritse Park has been without permanent restroom facilities.

The proposed comfort station is a bi-level facility designed to serve both trail and park guests. During the main bicycle and pedestrian season (April-October), trail guests will be served by male and female restrooms located on the trail level. The architectural design for this level represents an old railroad station theme and matches the existing red roofs located on the Trestle Trail kiosks and center pavilion, as well as open railings also found on the Trestle Trail. While standing at this level guests will have a clear sightline of all park activities.

The lower level will be accessible from both the parking lot and from the Trestle Trail via stairs or an ADA accessible ramp. This level is designed to represent historic structures found in our national or county parks built during the depression era. The stone façade matches the stone found on the existing trail kiosks and gateway monuments. The lower level restroom facilities will be heated and open year-round to serve general, boating, sledding hill, trail and future ice skating guests.

On average the comfort station must be designed to accommodate over 300-400 guests per weekday and 500-600 guests per weekend day (source: trail counters). Therefore, the building and materials must be robust and able to withstand the expected use of potentially 100,000-120,000 annual guests. The use of cost-effective construction material such as fiber cement siding, masonry construction, a low-maintenance metal roof and stone façade are robust and will withstand the existing and future use of the facility.

5. **ADA Accessible Walk to existing Trestle/Friendship Trail:** Presently, there are two (2) crushed limestone trails connecting the existing parking lot to the Friendship Trail, neither of which meets current ADA accessible guidelines. A full ADA accessible trail connecting the parking lot and comfort station to the Friendship/Trestle Trail will be installed.
6. **Installation of entry, driveway and 32 parking spaces:** The present parking area is disjointed and does not permit adequate and safe flow of traffic through the park. The revised parking arrangement will define parking areas - providing for a uniform and safe flow of vehicles and pedestrians. In addition, the reduction of asphalt throughout the park site will enhance the overall storm water management required for the site.

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Town of Menasha,
Winnebago County, WI



