



Canopy Hill to have 18-acre public trail

Officials refine amenities for new development

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Since its inception several years ago, much of the discussion on the new 160-acre Canopy Hill residential development on Union Grove's north side has focused on lot sizes, infrastructure needs and other technical details.

With much of the heavy analysis in the rearview mirror, village and development officials are in the initial stages of discussing another aspect of the project — a dedicated area of the property carved out for public recreation.

At a Recreation and Parks Committee meeting July 12, Village Administrator Mike Hawes discussed components of an 18-acre trail system within the overall development site, which is taking root off Highway 45, north of 7th Avenue.

The committee has forwarded the plans with a favorable recommendation to the decision-making Village Board.

The dedicated carve-out was baked into the plans when they were approved. More recently, Hawes and other village representatives have been combing through some of the details with Bear Development, the company behind Canopy Hill.

"We wanted this to be an ADA-accessible path that's 9 feet wide," Hawes said. "We also wanted it to be on certain area of ground where it wasn't going to be too hilly."

Village Planner Craig Huebner has also been involved with some of the granular details within the trail system and laid out a big picture analysis in a memo to the committee.

"The primary trail begins at the southern terminus of Kiddle Lane (end of the cul-de-sac)," Huebner wrote. "It then runs west and turns north around a large existing hill."

He adds, "It continues north, past the hill and alongside a wetland, before exiting the outlot and connected back to the sidewalks along Kiddle Lane, between lots 60 and 61."



Discussion of how the trail will be used was a front-and-center topic during the recent committee-level review. For example, several committee members inquired if the path could be an attractive spot to snowmobilers in the winter.

“It doesn’t seem like a very desirable trail for snowmobiles,” Hawes said, in response. “It’s not really connecting to anything. It’s just connecting one part of a subdivision to another.”

The planned path of the public trail is expected to cross assorted topography, including the wetlands included in Huebner’s analysis.

If the area in question were to remain a certified wetland, Hawes said a boardwalk would have to be installed within the pinpointed area. However, he said, the intent is to have the wetland filled — a maneuver that ultimately will require a review and signing off from representatives within the state Department of Natural Resources.

While the committee has given its big picture blessing to the project, the panel will continue reviewing ideal, and permissible, uses at upcoming meetings.

Canopy Hill was reintroduced two years ago and has gone through multiple municipal channels — including a litany of Plan Commission, Community Development Authority and Village Board meetings — before ultimately reaching the approval stage in March.

Based on estimates, Canopy Hill is expected to add \$112.8 million in valuation to the village’s tax base.