

P.C. 27-84

ANALYSIS OF CAMP VITS PROPERTY
FOR FUTURE PARK PURPOSES

August, 1984
City Plan Commission of the
City of Manitowoc

Prepared by: City Plan Commission Staff

City of
MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN
CITY PLAN COMMISSION

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August 14, 1984

To: City Plan Commission

Subject: P.C. 27-84: Preliminary Report Concerning the 75.19 Acre Camp Vits
Property Located at the West City Limits.

Dear Plan Commissioners:

At our regular July 10th Plan Commission meeting, the Commission reviewed the communication sent to the Plan Commission by Mr. William Pohlmann who represents the advisors to the Earl O. Vits Memorial Trust (please see Exhibit 1 at the back of report), which administers the Camp Vits property. During the course of the past month the staff has had the opportunity to correspond further with Mr. Pohlmann as well as with the Recreation Director and the City Assessor. The following is a brief analysis of the subject property which will hopefully lead the Plan Commission and the City of Manitowoc to take an appropriate action as regards the possible long-term acquisition of the subject property for future park purposes. This parkland is not needed for park use at this time. However, its acquisition at this time will insure public ownership and would represent a good long-term purchase of some very beautiful environmentally sensitive land. This land is conveniently located to serve the urban population as it continues to expand in a westerly direction in decades to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Greenwood

Thomas Greenwood
City Planner

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I. BACKGROUND

By letter dated July 6 from William A. Pohlmann of Associated Manitowoc Bank (see Exhibit 1 at the end of report), the Manitowoc City Plan Commission became aware of the availability of the Camp Vits property located at the west city limits. Plats A, B, and C outline the locational, legal boundaries and physical characteristics of the 75.19 acre site. By reviewing Plat A it is clear that the Camp Vits property would be comparable and complementary to parkland at both the existing Lincoln Park and Silver Creek Park which are located in the northeast and southeast quadrants of the City of Manitowoc, respectively. The Camp Vits property is just slightly smaller than the Silver Creek Park holdings and has comparable topography and ground cover. Geographically, the Camp Vits property is well located for serving the long-term passive and active recreational needs of the western portion of the City of Manitowoc where continued residential growth is expected in decades to come. Like Lincoln Park and Silver Creek Park, the opportunity presently exists to purchase one of the few substantial vacant wooded tracts of land within close proximity to the city limits well in advance of actual impending need for said parkland.

The purpose of this report is simply to review the characteristics of the subject site and its appropriateness for public ownership and use for long-term park purposes.

II. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE

Road and Pedestrian Access.

Principal road and pedestrian access to this site is via a one-quarter mile long 25 foot wide strip of land running easterly from the intersection of Parkview Road and Middle Road into the subject site. Pedestrian access is also afforded via an easement running easterly from this site to Kuchera Road as outlined on Plat B. There is also an easement providing access into the subject property from Custer Street (see Plat B).

Buildings and Structures.

There are no known significant buildings or structures on the Camp Vits property at this time.

Soil Conditions.

The known soil types on the subject property are Bellevue Silt Loam, Fluvaquents and Kewaunee Loan. Nearly all of the subject site, because of the "tight" soils, would be difficult to obtain percolation tests on and difficult to develop for urban uses without a municipal type sanitary sewer system (see Exhibit 2).

Topography and Ground Cover.

Plat C is cited for reference purposes in this portion of the discussion. The site can be broken down into three distinct areas:

The floodway area adjacent to the Manitowoc River (approximately 18 acres); Three relatively flat plateaus located in the center and southwest and southeast portions of the site (approximately 40 acres); Steep topography adjoining the floodway of the Manitowoc River and adjoining the natural drainage courses flowing through the south half of the site (approximately 17 acres).

There is an approximate 103 foot difference in ground elevation between the high point located in the west central portion of the site and the floodway area adjoining the Manitowoc River. Almost all of the 75 acre site is heavily wooded excepting for portions of the floodway area closest to the Manitowoc River. The site has approximately 2500 lineal feet of frontage on the Manitowoc River and surface drains generally from west to east utilizing the Manitowoc River as the outflow for all of the surface drainage.

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning and Other Physical Characteristics and Limitations.

The existing land use surrounding the subject site is the Manitowoc River along the north and partial east boundaries as well as a deep ravine along a portion of the east boundary, farmland to the south of the subject property, and farmland and four residential dwellings to the west. The subject site is presently zoned R-2 Residential in the Town of Manitowoc Rapids with Floodway restrictions on the north and northeast portions. The surrounding zoning is R-2 zoning to the north and east in the Town of Manitowoc Rapids and A-1 Agricultural zoning to the south and west in the Town of Manitowoc Rapids.

III. APPROXIMATE FAIR MARKET VALUE

Exhibit 2, at the end of this report, is an indication of the approximate fair market value of the Camp Vits property. According to this exhibit the present approximate value is \$45,000. Exhibit 3 is an indication of what the Earl Vits Memorial Trust felt the property might be valued at. It is the writer's understanding that the Earl O. Vits Memorial Trust will shortly be having an independent appraisal done to assist in determining the fair market value of the subject property. It is clear that the Earl Vits Memorial Trust is very interested in selling the property at the earliest possible date as cited in Exhibits 1 and 3.

IV. TRENDS AND PLANS FOR FUTURE URBAN GROWTH IN SURROUNDING AREA

Demographic information and land use trends show that the City of Manitowoc is and has been gradually expanding in a westerly direction, both to the northwest and to the southwest on either sides of the Manitowoc River. The Comprehensive Plan for the Manitowoc Urban Area

through the year 2004 shows that this general area of the proposed park site is not anticipated to be entirely urbanized during the next 20 years. However, the area along either side of the Custer Street corridor is expected to urbanize and has been urbanizing in the past. This trend will tend to cause some land sales in the immediate area of the subject site (if not the site itself) leading to further urbanization.

Because of the severe topography to the north and east of the site and the Soo Line Railroad Company tracks to the south, the major pedestrian and vehicular access to the site will be from Parkview Road. Parkview Road is shown in the Comprehensive Plan as eventually being extended northerly to connect with the Waldo Boulevard extension at a point just east of the Waldo Boulevard Interchange with I-43. The vacant properties to the immediate west of the subject site also could well figure into long-term acquisition in whole or in part, for park purposes should a decision be made to pursue acquisition of the subject property for park use at this time.

V. RELATIONSHIP OF SITE TO CITY AND COUNTY RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

The County Planning and Park Commission was approached in June of 1979 by a representative of the subject property regarding any interest the County Planning and Park Commission may have in acquisition of the subject property for park purposes. At that time the County Planning and Park Commission indicated that the subject property was not in the County's Recreation and Open Space Planning Program and that the subject property would not be a good place for a County Park.

The City of Manitowoc's current five-year Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan does not include as a recommendation the acquisition of the subject site through the year 1987. However, a map in the Plan does show the acquisition of the subject property as a City Park beyond the year 1987. Because of immediate availability of the subject property for acquisition, the subject property could well be considered for purchase prior to 1987.

In discussions with the City's Recreation Director regarding the subject property, the Recreation Director feels that the property is not needed at this time but that the subject site would be a good purchase for long-term park needs.

From the standpoint of City sewer and water extensions to the subject site, the area has been identified as being moderately or easily serviced by municipal sewer and water services that presently serve the general area within the southwest side of the City of Manitowoc. The extension of water and sewer services would likely follow the Custer Street and Parkview Road corridors. Most of the areas along Custer Street west of Vista Road and all of Parkview Road are presently outside the corporate limits at this time.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the foregoing discussion and the attached exhibits the Plan Commission staff is recommending that the following steps be taken at this time:

1. Recommend to the Mayor and Common Council that the City Attorney be authorized to negotiate a suitable option to purchase the subject property and review the abstract for the subject property.
2. Authorize the Planning Department staff to take steps necessary to amend the City's Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan and to pursue State and Federal funding toward the acquisition of the subject property.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Greenwood
Secretary

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