

Main House  
+ 300 acres

Resolution 96, 2001-2002

Accepting a Donation of Land With a Life Estate  
From Irene Silverwood. Town of Albion

Irene Silverwood recently offered to donate nearly 300 acres of land located in the Town of Albion to be used for park, recreation, conservation, research, education, and agricultural purposes. The property contains approximately 1/2 mile of unimproved shoreline on Rice Lake surrounded by 60 acres of oak woods and 240 acres of rolling farmland. This property is highly desirable for public land, as this area of the County currently offers no County park resources. The farmland portion of the property offers an opportunity to preserve a significant agricultural resource as a farm preservation/education/demonstration area for school groups, research, and the general public. The land is currently being appraised.

This property has been in the Silverwood family since 1870. Mrs. Silverwood's late husband, Russell, served on the Dane County Board of Supervisors from 1949 to 1963 while Chair of the Town of Albion Board, and was a long-standing member of the Dane County Agriculture and Finance Committees and Fair Board. Irene Silverwood, a career business education teacher in Rockford and Edgerton for 44 years, staffed the Dane County Fair for 39 summers.

Mrs. Silverwood's donation would be conditioned upon a number of provisions including:

1. Retention of a life estate which will give Mrs. Silverwood exclusive use of the property during her lifetime, or until such time as she may choose to surrender that right. During that time, Mrs. Silverwood will be responsible for maintenance and insurance on improvements and taxes on the real estate and will continue to receive land rent.
2. A three to five-acre parcel including the current tenant building will remain in private ownership. The County will be granted a Right of First Refusal in perpetuity for the purchase of that portion of the property. → County purchased in 2003 for \$131,000 (2.29 acres)
3. The County agrees to name the land "Silverwood County Park."
4. Recreation to include fishing, hiking, swimming, picnicking, as well as "Day at the Farm" type activities.
5. Public hunting be prohibited from the park.
6. Motorized off-road vehicles be prohibited from the Park except those related to farming operations or park maintenance.

- 7. Continue active farming practices. Revenues generated from farming, the lease of buildings, and park operations shall be placed in a segregated non-lapsing endowment fund specifically earmarked for the maintenance and development of Silverwood Park. In addition town taxes in the form of a municipal service fee will be paid out of revenues as long as the County retains ownership.
- 8. Over the next 5 years, Dane County Parks will develop a master plan for Silverwood Park in cooperation with Mrs. Silverwood, Dane County Land Conservation, UW Extension and others. This master plan will identify other parcels that could be added to the project area in the future.
- 9. If the County, at any time, determines that the land is no longer suited for a public park, title to the property will revert to The Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation or, in the event that organization no longer exists, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources State Parks Division.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors and the Dane County Executive hereby authorize the County to accept the donation of approximately 300 acres of land from Irene Silverwood subject to the terms outlined above and express appreciation to Mrs. Silverwood for this generous and beneficial gift.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a segregated, non-lapsing endowment fund be established in the Dane County Parks Operations and Maintenance budget with corresponding revenue and expenditures accounts to receive and disburse funds earmarked for the maintenance and development of Silverwood County Park.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the land be accepted under the jurisdiction of the Dane County Park Commission according to Wisc. Stats. Chapter 27.05(3).

Submitted James E. Anderson  
Donald Nelson  
Dave Pipp  
Paul [unclear]  
John [unclear]

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Referred to: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted as Submitted  
 Fiscal Note Not Required  
 Policy Note Not required  
 Forward to: Parks  
 for completion of:  
 Policy Note  Fiscal Note

Executive  
 Pers./Finance  
 Hlth/Hum. Needs  
 Pub. Prot./Jud.  
 Pub. Wks/Fac. Mgt.  
 Transportation  
 Zoning/Nat. Res.  
 PARKS Commission