



Rotary

Club of Milwaukee

Rotary Club of Milwaukee, Inc.
750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive, Suite 320
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202

July 27, 2018

City of Milwaukee
Common Council
Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee
City Hall
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Ald. Khalif J. Rainey, Chair
Ald. Jose G. Perez, Vice-Chair
Ald. Milele A. Coggs
Ald. Russell Stamper II
Ald. Robert J. Bauman

Dear Members of the Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee,

Rotary Club of Milwaukee is a strong supporter of the Milwaukee Urban Stables project. We were concerned to hear this week that the Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee tabled a discussion regarding the land transfer and long term lease by the City that is needed for the project to move forward. On reflection we realized that the questions you have about the project are questions that we, too, had when we were first presented with the opportunity to participate in the development of this unique community asset. Please allow us to share the answers that inspired us to join other community leaders in working to bring the Milwaukee Urban Stables to life.

What is Milwaukee Urban Stables?

Milwaukee Urban Stables is a home for police horses supporting the work of the MPD Mounted Patrol, a home for therapy horses supporting trauma-informed curative work for veterans and other community members in need, and a community center for trauma-informed community building and community healing. Significantly, the Stables will be a focal point for MPD's community relations and outreach efforts and a place for positive interaction between police officers and Milwaukee's youth. This is a first of its kind effort to bring together police and therapy horses in an urban stable and to use the presence and care of those horses to anchor programs for community outreach and healing.

Why do we need horse stables in Milwaukee?

The Milwaukee Police Department Mounted Patrol has been without a permanent home for its horses in the City of Milwaukee, reducing the time officers have on patrol. The Milwaukee Urban Stables will be that permanent home. Milwaukee youth do not have sufficient community assets or opportunities to heal from their exposure to chronic trauma, and they have limited opportunities to interact in a positive manner with law enforcement officers trained to use developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed equitable approaches. The Milwaukee Urban Stables will be such a community asset and provide such opportunities. Local veterans, and special needs children and youth, currently travel to Illinois and other locations outside of Milwaukee for equine based curative care. The Milwaukee Urban Stables will be a local center for such care.

Why is a charitable organization developing the Stables project and leasing the Stables facility to the City of Milwaukee? Shouldn't the City build and own the Stables?

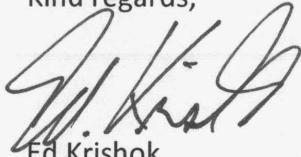
As envisioned, the Milwaukee Urban Stables is more than just a home for police horses, and it is not just a stable. It is a community center built around the activities of the MPD Mounted Patrol and the activities associated with equine assisted trauma-informed curative work. The charitable organization carrying the project forward (Wisconsin Preservation Fund, Inc. through MCEC Development LLC) has the expertise to be the coordinating body for this multi-faceted effort involving program development work with community organizations (including representatives of Hamilton High School, the VA Hospital, MPD, Safe & Sound, Rotary Club of Milwaukee), hundreds of hours of volunteer work by community members, and approximately \$4 million in private donations toward the \$5.6 million construction cost of the Stables facility. Regarding the City building and owning the Stables, we came to understand that that was not a realistic option given the \$5.6 million capital cost of construction and City budget constraints. If the vision of the Milwaukee Urban Stables is to be realized, it will take collaboration among a willing charitable organization, the City, and community partners like Rotary Club of Milwaukee. We have seen this model work before in our collaborations to renovate the playground at Brown Street Academy, to develop the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum at Riverside Park, and to rejuvenate Johnsons Park.

What is the City's commitment to the Milwaukee Urban Stables project? This is an important question for us. One of our guidelines for supporting community projects is sustainability and potential for lasting change. With our 375 members (and other community donors) making a commitment to the Stables project, we looked to MPD and the City to make a commitment as well. We see MPD's commitment from Chief Morales, who supports the Stables project as a key piece of MPD's community outreach efforts, and from Capt. Rowe, Sgt. Jeffery, and the members of the Mounted Patrol, who have given generously of their time and experience to help the project progress.

We saw the City's commitment in the planned transfer of the Stables site and the 30-year lease for occupancy of the Stables facility by the Mounted Patrol. The long-term lease, in particular, convinced us that the City stood behind this project as a long-term community asset and a platform for lasting change. Without the City's commitment to Milwaukee Urban Stables for the long term, we can't expect to bring private resources to the project.

In closing, Rotary has a history with the MPD Mounted Patrol. In 1934, Mayor Hoan tried to abolish the Mounted Police Patrol against the wishes of Police Chief Laubenheimer. The Chief reached out to the Rotary Club of Milwaukee and Rotarians raised over \$3,000 to save the Mounted Patrol. When the National Safety Council in 1934 declared Milwaukee the safest city in the nation, the Chief gave the credit to Rotary. We are proud to work with the Mounted Patrol again, alongside other community leaders, in this new effort to establish a home that is also a center for trauma-informed curative care and a place of community building and healing. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Kind regards,



Ed Krishok
President



Mary McCormick
Executive Director