

FOREST PRESERVE ADVISORY BOARD  
REPORT TO COUNCIL

Report No. 2011-03

SUBJECT: Naming of Forest Preserve parcels  
DATE: May 24, 2011

BACKGROUND: The City Council has made a referral to the Forest Preserve Advisory Board asking for recommendations on naming of the Forest Preserve parcel or parcels. The Board reviewed dozens of suggestions submitted by the Citizens to Protect the Greenbelt several years ago, as well as suggestions of the Board members.

When the Citizens to Protect the Greenbelt sponsored their contest to name what is now the preserve, the city had not yet created the forest preserve program. The forest preserve program has been expanded beyond the areas originally known as Parcels 1 and 2 and now includes woodland in Boxwood and Belle Point. Many of the names previously recommended were specific to the preserve areas known as Parcels 1 and 2, so those recommended names no longer refer to the larger area which collectively make up the forest preserve.

DISCUSSION: The term "forest preserve" no longer refers only to a place; it also refers to a status, designation and level of protection. In many respects, forest preserve is not a geographic designation as much as it is a legal designation.

The Board believes it is important that each forest preserve tract or area have a unique name which is reflective of its location, history or other characteristic which is special to that specific forest preserve parcel or area. It is equally important that any name reflect the forest preserve designation.

Accordingly, the Board previously recommended to the City Council that all forest preserve parcels, areas, or tracts be referred to as "Greenbelt Forest Preserve". This portion of the name recognizes the importance and relevance of the parcel, area or tract as a permanently protected Greenbelt public land.

It is also important that different and unique areas be named to identify the specific parcel or tract. These names would be part of the name of the forest preserve.

The Boxwood and Belle Point forest preserve areas are part of distinct neighborhoods in the city. The Board believes these designations should become part of the formal name of these forest preserve areas.

It is a little more difficult to determine a name for the legally titled North and South preserves. While the Board believes that these names are locationally

descriptive, they do not represent anything culturally or historically important to Greenbelt. Returning to the names previously submitted to the city, the Board identified two names which have popular significance and historic relevance.

Many in the community have been using the word “north” to describe the North Preserve for years. Versions of these names are often used to reference the North preserve. Therefore, the Board believes it is important to memorialize “north” as part of the formal name.

The South Preserve has generally been referred to as Parcel 2 for many years, even though there are multiple legal parcel references to the area extending south of Northway. Of the many recommendations made, very few had specific reference to something about the south preserve, except for a suggestion to recognize the Hamilton Family. The name Hamilton has both historic and geographic relevance.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Forest Preserve Advisory Board recommends that the four distinct forest preserve areas defined in the city code be officially names as follows:

North Preserve – Greenbelt Forest Preserve  
North Woods Tract

South Preserve- Greenbelt Forest Preserve  
Hamilton Woods Tract

Boxwood Preserve - Greenbelt Forest Preserve  
Boxwood Tract

Belle Point Preserve - Greenbelt Forest Preserve  
Belle Point Tract

Each of these names reflects something significant in the city’s history, culture and identity.

As new forest preserve areas are designated, it is recommended that each be named by recognizing not only the forest preserve designation, but also giving consideration to their historical and cultural significance to Greenbelt.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Virginia Mudrock  
Chair

This report was approved by a vote of 6-0.

DRAFT