

City of Sheboygan Residents, You Need to Know This

Write or attend the City Plan Commission Meeting Tues. DEC 15, 2020, 3pm. See info below.

FBRF has followed the Kohler Company's development proposals for its land adjacent to Kohler-Andrae State Park for almost 10 years. ONCE AGAIN as in the Town of Wilson, **Sheboygan is being asked by Kohler to rush a process of granting the company a Conditional Use Permit** with exceptions, which is NOT in an approvable form.

These are our concerns with A RUSHED CUP PROJECT

We care about our friends, the City residents. We are asking you to **insist** that the Plan Commission protect your interests and follow the City's own ordinances so after the agreements are all signed you will not come to regret it.

We caution the Plan Commission:

- **To expect the applicant to provide substantial evidence** which can be verified. This includes a new golf course layout design, since the land for 4 holes in the original plan has been eroded by Lake Michigan. This includes reviewing permits when Kohler is granted them.
- **Kohler does not have any permits needed to build its course or use Kohler-Andrae State Park land.** FBRF won the contested hearing revoking Kohler's Wetland Fill Permit.
- **Kohler has NO wetland fill permit.** The Administrative Law Judge's decision was supported by the incompleteness of impact information, particularly on groundwater impacts. Kohler appealed.
- **Kohler has NO Stormwater permit.**

Kohler asks for a CUP and an extension on beginning construction, claiming that it will win all litigation. This in itself is a cautionary note as FBRF has won all our cases so far.

The application does not address the overlay zoning districts, shoreland-wetland, woodland, or steep slope. There is no traffic study addressing tournaments. What will be the costs to the City and County of these tournaments, infrastructure maintenance? Who pays for this? Sheboygan and Sheboygan County taxpayers?

- **Verification of the economic benefit to the City of Sheboygan** by a firm independent of Kohler. Sheboygan businesses remember well the PGA traffic being routed around the City. The Town of Mosel states its financial benefit from the PGA was negligible.
- **Clarification of Kohler's jobs' numbers.** Numbers provided are based on jobs projected to be created apart from the operation of the course throughout the county and state. Experts consulted regarding Shoreland Overlays and deforestation allowed.
- **How will Kohler show the deforestation of over 50% of the land will improve the environmental protection of the property particularly when no permits have been granted by the DNR?**

FBRF's standing and that of residents (the right to bring suit against an entity) was affirmed in appellate court. This was a major victory for Wisconsin residents' rights in light of several years of the politicization of the DNR which started and continued many environmental crises. Kohler has now presented this decision to the Supreme Court and asked the Supreme Court to review the appellate court decision.

Cautionary Background

The Town of Wilson knows well, as does FBRF, that Kohler arranges every agreement to meet its aim of getting what it wants. We have documented that this involves skirting environmental law, maneuvers only certain Town or City officials are privy to, asking for exceptions based on their word that the details can be worked out later. You may know that Kohler secretly planned an annexation of its land to the City while keeping its CUP application to the Town of Wilson incomplete. Wilson spent many hours and legal fees reviewing Kohler's requests in good faith. Kohler has stated that the political climate of Wilson changed thereby necessitating that move. That meant that

people had been elected to make sure the applications and permits were in line with Town ordinances which may could have resulted in Kohler's making adjustments to its procedures. **The Company didn't want to.**

During the annexation vote the majority of the Common Council dismissed any concern for the impacts to the 4th most visited park in the state, the impact of massive fertilizer and pesticide flowage into Lake Michigan, the impacts to local wells, flooding from filled in wetlands, loss of wildlife, killing endangered species, AND the human costs to Wilson residents and Park visitors from skirting environmental law. **Everything came down to how it would increase Sheboygan's tax base.**

If it all comes down to money, the question City residents should have is how much will my taxes be impacted by paying for the hidden costs that have not been mentioned. (The Town of Mosel's taxes went up because Kohler sued to reduce its tax base by 5 million dollars citing a bad year. There are 800 residents in Mosel. This was a significant blow to the services that had already been funded.

Please follow the link to write, register to attend virtually or in person. Written comments are due by noon Dec. 14. <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQgNyzPoX1V-1eWTFkDCuaeixeduK-jivOit-h9TOvWNiK0w/viewform?gxids=7628>
For your own protection please tell the Plan Commission to obtain all necessary information to make informed decisions that will not come back to harm the Sheboygan taxpayer. Additional related documents are available on friendsblackriverforest.org

We encourage all who care about competent representative government, state parks, our health, and our common resources of land, air, and water to comment, attend or write.