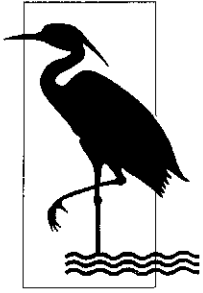


16 June 2003



THE  
HURON RIVER  
WATERSHED  
COUNCIL

PROTECTING THE RIVER  
FOR OVER 30 YEARS

Mr. Paul Garriepy  
Director of Properties  
Catholic Diocese of Lansing  
300 West Ottawa Street  
Lansing, MI 48933-1577

Dear Mr. Garriepy:

On behalf of the Huron River Watershed Council, I write to express support for the preservation of Dicken Woods as a natural area.

The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) is a coalition of watershed residents, businesses and local governments established under Michigan's Local River Management Act in 1965. Our services include hands-on citizen education, technical assistance in policy development and river protection projects. In particular, the HRWC coordinates the Middle Huron Initiative, a 21-member partnership of local governments, businesses and academic institutions that has worked together since 1996 to improve water quality in the Huron River and its tributaries within Washtenaw and Wayne counties. The Allens Creekshed, in which Dicken Woods is located, is part of that geographic area called the Middle Huron River Watershed.

Preserving Dicken Woods as a natural area would provide many important benefits to the environment, the wildlife, and the schoolchildren and citizens of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County. Open spaces with natural vegetation, such as Dicken Woods, provide important ecological services including infiltration of rainwater and snowmelt to recharge groundwater, protection against erosion on steep slopes, and evapotranspiration by trees that helps to maintain the hydrologic cycle. This property in its natural condition is unique as it is one of the few locations where Allens Creek flows above ground; the vast majority of this creek is piped underground, which has caused numerous problems for City neighborhoods including flooding. In addition, the site contains wooded wetlands in the headwaters area of Allens Creek and steep slopes with moderate erosion hazard on the northern portion of the Woods.

By preserving the site and enhancing its biological diversity, the Woods will continue to offer the important ecological services mentioned above, and aesthetic and recreation benefits to residents and schoolchildren. By developing the site, the features unique to the site are lost and can not be mitigated wholly. Development on the site only will exacerbate the problems of water pollution and water quantity that the people of the Middle Huron Watershed must address.

The HRWC is pleased to offer our support to the preservation efforts of the Friends of Dicken Woods. Their work demonstrates responsible stewardship of the natural environment. I hope that the Catholic Diocese of Lansing will be able to work successfully with the Friends to preserve this important natural area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Riggs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "E" and "R".

Elizabeth Riggs  
Watershed Specialist and Middle Huron Coordinator

1100 NORTH MAIN STREET  
SUITE 210  
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN  
4 8 1 0 4

(734) 769-5123  
FAX (734) 998-0163  
<http://comnet.org/HRWC>