



To: Members of the Wilmette Park District Board
Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District

From: Mark Sloane, President

Date: October 7, 2018

Re: Opposition to the proposed easement for the Keefe Family Trust on Canal Shores Golf Course

The Board of Directors of the Central Street Neighbors Association voted unanimously on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 to oppose the proposed easement requested by the Cook County Highway Department to build an access road on the 10th hole of the Canal Shores Golf Course to property owned by the Keefe Family Trust.

Our Board is on record opposing the previous proposal to construct this road through Isabella Woods. We applaud the MWRD Commissioners for their unanimous vote to support the preservation of the woods and wetlands.

Adjacent to the Isabella Woods are the 9th and 10th holes of the golf course. This is a pristine area of old growth trees, native habitats and designated wetlands. A road running south on the golf course from Maple Avenue to the east of Golf Terrace would have a negative impact on this important ecological and aesthetic area of the golf course. It would negatively impact the natural drainage of stormwater runoff to the North Shore Channel and possibly increase flooding of existing properties.

The CSNA Board is of one voice in opposing the use of public land for private benefit. The Keefe Family purchased the property in question many years ago with the knowledge that it was landlocked. We understand that a driveway to the Keefe Property was approved to run along the CTA tracks on the west side of Golf Terrace.

The Keefe Family Trust now proposes to sell the property at significant profit with an eye on a larger development, requiring a street. This street would cause irrevocable

harm to the golf course, to the neighborhood and to the intrinsic value of our public space. The golf course is a community resource, running through Wilmette and Evanston offering recreational opportunities for residents of all ages. And, taxpayers would be forced to pay, through tax dollars, for the maintenance and construction of what will essentially be a private road.

Central Street Neighbors Association represents some 350 households in and around the Central Street neighborhood – north to the border with Wilmette. We have worked cooperatively with neighbors in both communities on a number of issues.

Over the years, the Board has opposed the sale or granting of rights to public land for private interests, especially where it would deprive or limit the public use and enjoyment of the land. We see the road as the gifting of public open space to a private commercial venture.

We support the continued public use, ownership and preservation of the golf course. We support the Evanston Wilmette Golf Course Association, a charitable organization, in its effort to continue a 100-year tradition of golf and recreation along the channel. A public road would tarnish that legacy and would not benefit our community.

Although we recognize that the Wilmette Park District vote would be advisory, we believe it is an important voice in this process – as the lessee of the land. Canal Shores is a special property, a charity that benefits us all. We ask the WPD and the MWRD to soundly defeat this latest effort to take from the public.

A “no” vote will be in the mutual interest of all the residents of our greater community. We ask that you make it a priority to preserve and protect our greenspace so that it can be fully appreciated and enjoyed by the public at large into the next century.

Thank you.

Central Street Neighbors Association “Together we have a stronger voice.”

www.centralstreetneighbors.com

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