

## Windemere Park - Tennis Court

At the April 17, 2012 Ann Arbor parks advisory commission (“PAC”) meeting, one item discussed was the poor condition of the two tennis courts located in Windemere Park, and possible solutions or actions. We represent the Earhart Knolls Homeowner’s Association made up of residents of the neighborhoods surrounding Windemere Park, and submit this document to express our sincere hope that PAC strongly consider repairing both tennis courts.

### Overview of the Issue

There are currently two tennis courts located in Windemere Park. One court is in poor condition, the other is unplayable (see picture Addendum). For both courts, there are cracks running the full length and width of the playing area. The west court is missing a net-supporting pole. The east court has two poles, but one is leaning badly and it appears it will fall out soon. The fences (see pictures) surrounding the courts are bent, rusting, and generally in bad shape.

At the last PAC meeting, Parks planner Amy Kuras gave a presentation on the history of these courts and the challenges associated with repair or replacement. She indicated that the courts were built in 1986; they were “color coated” in 2007, and in 2009 efforts were made to repair cracks and install new net posts.

Ms. Kuras indicated that the problem appears to be associated with a rise in the water table, which affects the soil supporting these courts (creating an unstable foundation and results in damage to the courts). While this is particularly bad problem in Windemere Park, the problem is also occurring throughout the Ann Arbor area

Ms. Kuras offered a cost estimate for replacing one or both courts, with the work including excavation of the poor soil foundation and replacement with a better draining sub base.

### Importance of Windemere Courts to Our Neighborhood

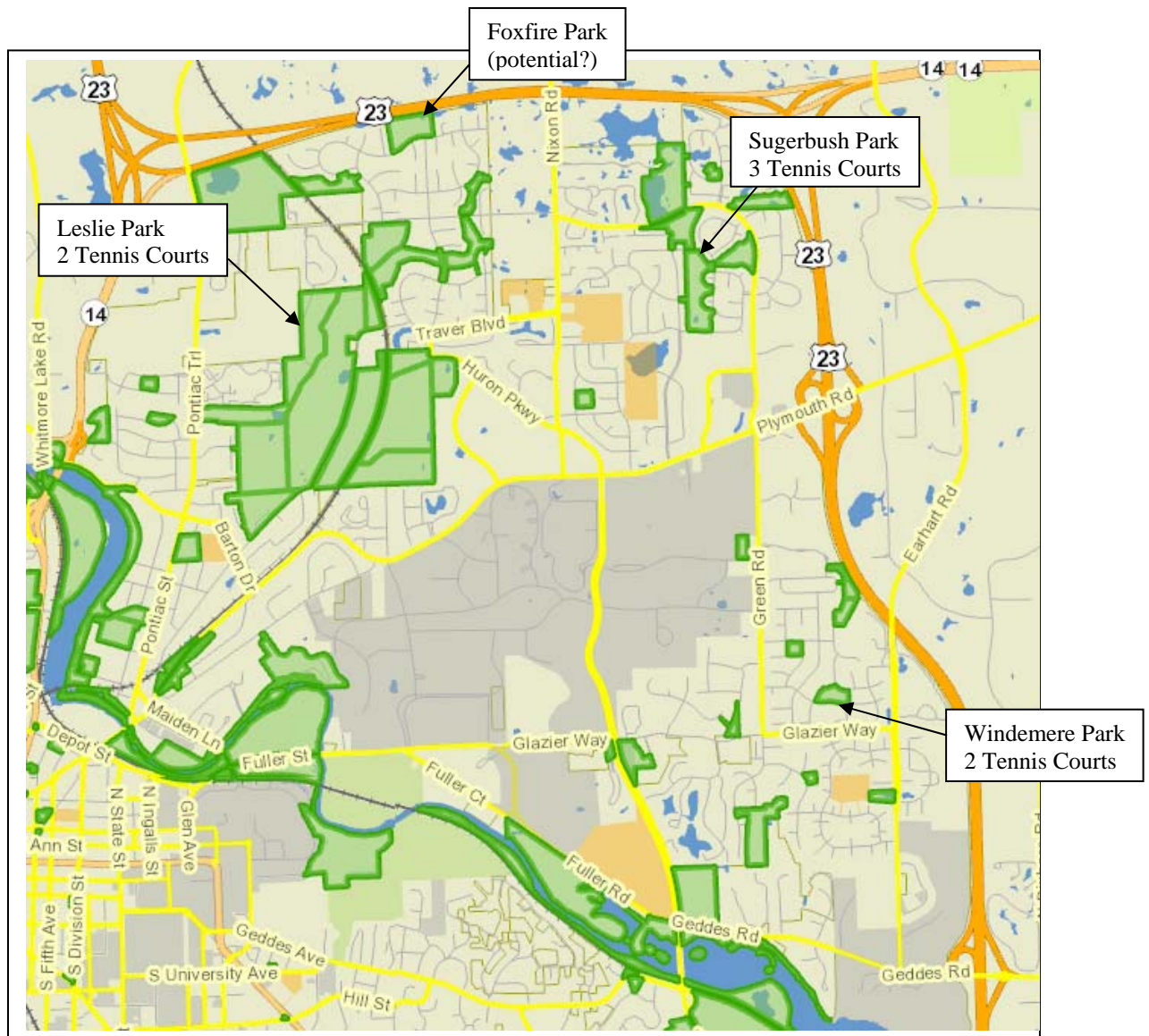
We, the residents of the affected neighborhood, certainly understand the cost pressures associated with replacement of the tennis courts, but would nevertheless request that they be replaced.

First, it should be understood that Windemere Park is, in many respects, a focal point for our neighborhood. It is a large park, surrounded on all sides by houses and quiet streets. It contains a large play structure and swing set on one side, and a large field used for soccer, baseball, and many other field sports. The Ann Arbor Parks and Rec soccer league holds its soccer games there.

Second, the tennis courts are an important and valuable component to this park. When the courts were in playable condition, they were in nearly constant use during the spring, summer, and fall. Even recently, with the courts in poor condition, the one usable court

is in use on pleasant days. Many children raised in the neighborhood learned how to play tennis on these courts, and there are many young children in the neighborhood who would learn to play there if the courts are repaired.

There are not many close alternative tennis courts. The other public tennis courts we have located in the “northeast” portion of Ann Arbor are in Leslie Park (just under 5 miles away) and in Sugarbush Park (just over 2 miles away). The Sugarbush courts are probably not even an option for adults, given that they are not long enough. And none of these courts is easily accessible for our neighborhood without traveling by car.



Maintaining the park in general, and the courts in particular, is important to us. Many of us chose our homes based on the proximity to the park; when the park is unusable (or appears rundown) it affects not only our satisfaction level, but our home values.

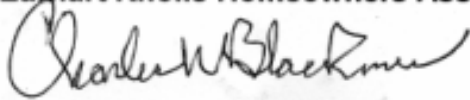
Possible Solutions and Alternatives

As mentioned above, it is our request that PAC approve a plan to replace the Windemere courts. With a proper soil base, it does not seem unreasonable to hope that these new courts would service the neighborhood as long as the old ones did – nearly 25 years. We would hope that such replacement would also include replacement of the fences.

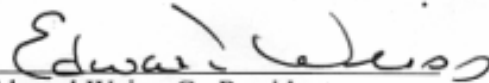
Some alternatives to replacement were discussed at the PAC meeting, including movement of the courts to somewhere nearby. If the Windemere courts were moved, we would request that (1) the existing courts be removed and filled in so that they do not continue to make the neighborhood look so rundown and (2) alternative locations be considered that are sufficiently close to the neighborhood – specifically, some location south of Plymouth Road (as the other two parks containing public tennis courts in northeast Ann Arbor are north of Plymouth road and too far away).

We would also suggest, if the courts are replaced, that PAC consider adding a hitting wall for people to practice, and some sun or wind protection (as the courts are currently quite open to both sun and wind). These additional items are, presumable, relatively inexpensive improvements that would enhance the courts considerably.

**Earhart Knolls Homeowners Association Board of Directors**



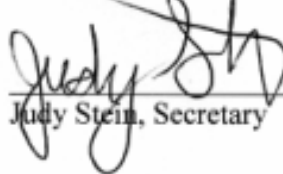
Charles Blackmer, Co President



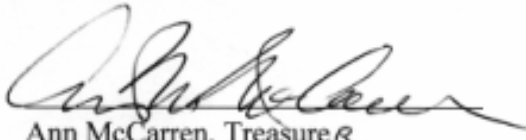
Edward Weiss, Co President



Scott D Campbell, Vice President



Judy Stein, Secretary



Ann McCarren, Treasurer



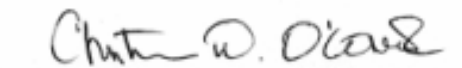
Marla Goldstein, Board of Directors



Meg Durant, Board of Directors



Miriam Weininger, Board of Directors



Christine O'Connor, Board of Directors

**Addendum**

**Windemere Park: Tennis Courts (April, 2012),  
Ann Arbor, Michigan**



West Court, **missing post**



Cracks...and cracks







and more Cracks



East Court, post on its way out





East Fence



South Fence





North fence



West fence