

# PRESERVE FREDRICK-MILLER SPRING & RILEY CREEK

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## Preserve Fredrick-Miller Spring & Riley Creek

We are formally requesting the Eden Prairie Planning Commission recommend a denial of the request to rezone 9955 and 9875 Spring Road from Rural Zoning to Urban Zoning (R1-9.5)

We have over 1087 Petition signatures that support this request

# Site Natural Resource Information | Considerations

The Hennepin County Natural Resources Inventory Maps (NRI) show that the the 28-acre area is *uniquely* important:

- Has a high biodiversity significance rating
- Contains an ecologically significant area which only occurs in 1/4 of Eden Prairie
- Is underlain by groundwaters rated high to highly vulnerable to contamination

Per the MN DNR + MN Audubon IBA Program Maps:

- The site is designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA)  
Lower Minnesota River Valley IBA
  - Critical Bird Habitat

# What is the Impact?

- Current Rural zoning of the site allows 2 or 3 homes
- Rezoning for the “Noble Hill” project would include building of 50 new homes and removal of approx. 456 trees

## Concerns: Environment, Safety, Community

- Riley Creek is already degraded, difficulty to restore Riley Creek to a higher-quality condition
- Potential risks to Miller Spring via Riley Creek Watershed contamination
- Loss of wildlife and their habitat
- Negative impact to critical bird habitat and conservation of birds
- Loss of Threatened Plant Species
- Possible safety hazard and sight-distance issues
- Increased fertilizers and pesticide use will have an impact to the watershed
- The landscape on Spring Road will be changed forever
- Our carbon footprint will be negatively impacted, loss of tree cover
- Deforestation and climate change
- Soil erosion
- Increase in traffic
- More accidents on Spring Road
- Air quality from removal of trees
- Increase in city noise, less wild sounds
- Past and future tax dollar spend on Riley Creek restoration
- City development fatigue

# Environment: Fredrick-Miller Spring

The Fredrick-Miller spring on Spring Road is an artesian spring fed well. It runs around the clock, 365 days per year and is a great source of untreated, natural water. People come from miles around to the well with containers to take the water home for drinking and cooking.

## Spring Water Testing

The City performs a coliform bacteria test monthly this natural spring. The test is pass/fail, so the results are only posted if a sample fails.

While the spring may not be directly affected by the project, further development of the Riley Creek watershed area places this highly valued resource at risk.

# Environment: Riley Creek

Riley Creek is currently in a degraded state with restoration efforts underway (Lower Riley Creek Ecological Restoration Project).

The Riley Creek watershed is considered impaired for aquatic recreation and aquatic life by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Much of the impairment is from existing development.

By increasing impervious area and removing forest, the Noble Hill project will make it more difficult to restore Riley Creek to a higher-quality condition.

## **According to the US Geological Survey Spring Stats Site:**

- Riley Creek at Spring Road drains a 10.22-square mile watershed.
- **22%** of the Riley Creek Watershed is covered with buildings, parking lots, streets and other impervious surfaces. Stream quality impairment begins at 10% impervious cover and at 25% restoration may not be possible.
- Forest covers only **15%** of the watershed, a minimum of 40% forest cover is needed to preserve stream quality. Noble Hill would remove 456 trees, which only a portion will be replaced and with far less ecological value.

*Don't make restoration more difficult by allowing rezoning of land in the Riley Creek watershed for intense development like the proposal for the Noble Hill site.*

# Environment: Trees

456 significant or heritage trees to be removed

**Heritage trees** are typically a large, individual tree with 32 inches or greater trunk measurement, which is considered *irreplaceable*. The major criteria for heritage tree designation are age, rarity, and size, as well as aesthetic, botanical, ecological, and historical value.

**Significant trees** are 20 feet or greater in height, or 12 inches or greater diameter of trunk measured at 4.5 feet above grade.

185 trees to be planted onsite

- but mostly within or on the edge of the proposed lots, which will not compensate for the lost habitat and other benefits the existing forest provides.
- This reduction in forest cover will increase Noble Hill impacts to the land groundwaters and Riley Creek watershed.



**Significant tree example – 40 foot trees marked for removal on the east end of the property**





**White Tail Deer**



**Raccoons**



**Coyotes**



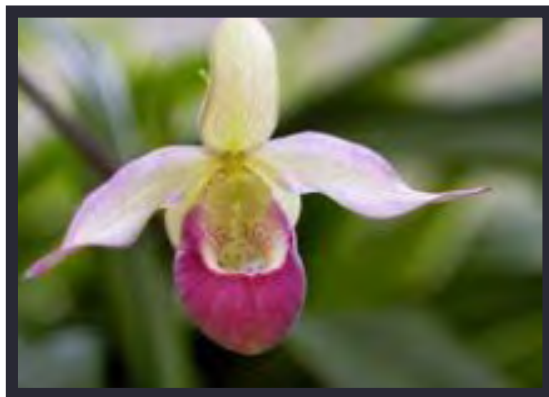
**Wild Turkeys**



**Bald Eagles**



**Mallards**



**Lady Slippers**



**Hackberry**



**Spotted Touch Me Not**

# Natural Heritage Species

DNR Natural Heritage and Nongame Research program database records an occurrence of Rhombic-Petala Evening Primrose (**Special Concern Species**) and Kitten-Tails (**Threatened Species**) in the vicinity.



Rhombic-Petala Evening Primrose  
Special Concern Species



Kitten-Tails  
Threatened Species

# Safety | Possible Unsafe Traffic Patterns: Inadequate sight-distance

## **Evaluation taken from City's Environmental Assessment Worksheet:**

The roadway is curved and sloped, and is difficult to maintain in the winter. It has been the location of several accidents. There are five major deficiencies affecting safe operation of the south end of Eden Prairie Road.

These include:

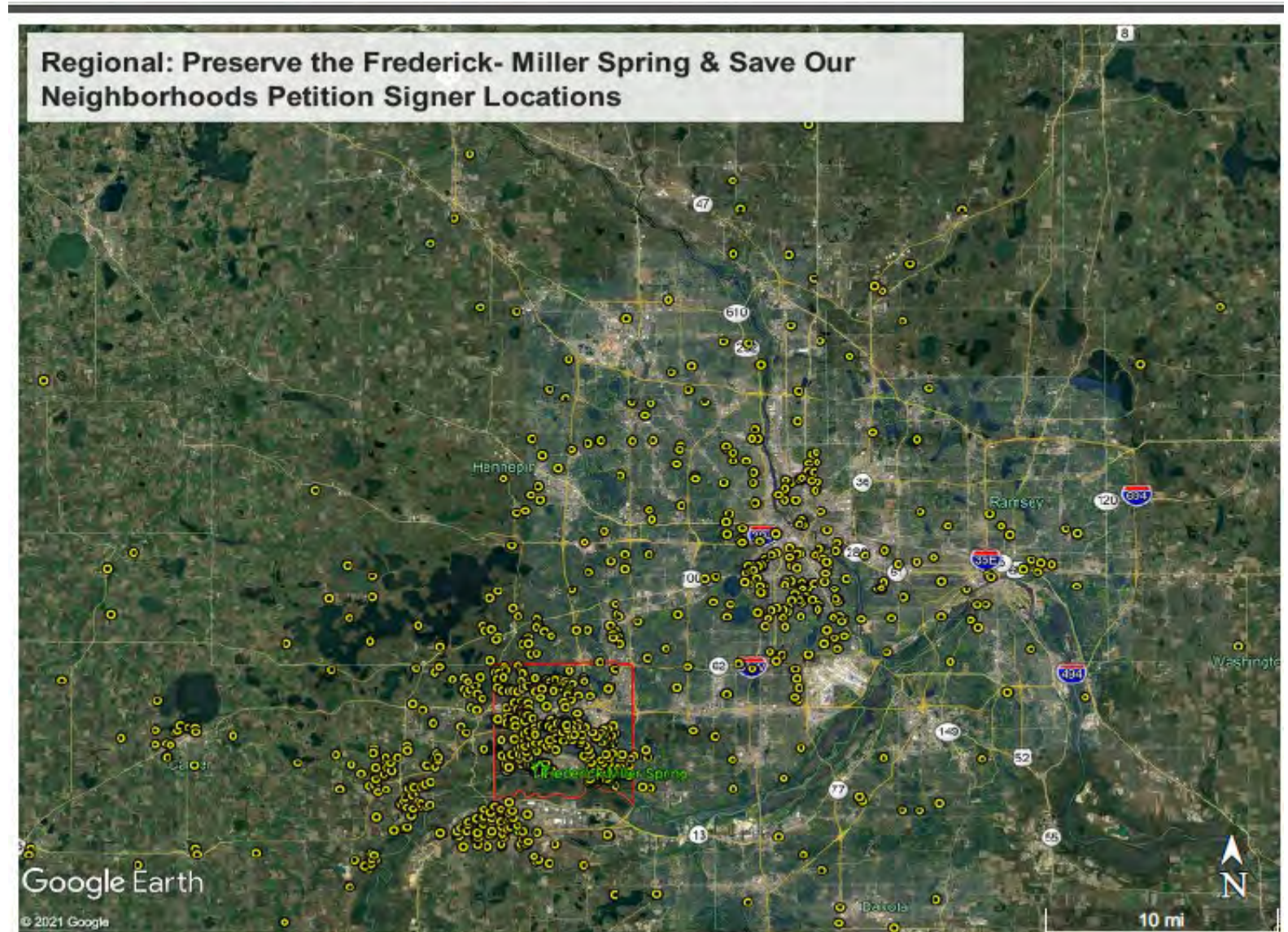
- Sight distance limitations through curves
- Curve design speed
- Grades in excess of 14%
- Width is less than 25 feet, should be 32 feet wide to handle the traffic projected for this area
- Approach grade is greater than 1% at the intersection with Flying Cloud Drive

## **Observations:**

With a posted speed limit of 40 mph, a driver waiting to turn onto Spring Road from Noble Hill should be able to see approaching vehicles when they are at least 550 feet away. While it appears that the driver would see vehicles approaching from the right when they are more than 550 feet away, this may not be true for cars coming from the left (southwest).

*We did a time study based on measurements from Google Map and the outcome was under 10 seconds, indicating a sight-distance issue.*

# Community Support: 1087 Petition Signatures



# Summary

## **ASK:**

Recommend a denial of the re-zoning from Rural to Urban

## **WHY:**

- This site is unique and has a high biodiversity significance, occurring in only 1/4 of Eden Prairie
- This project would make it more difficult to restore Riley Creek
- Indirectly placing Fredrick-Miller Spring at risk
- Negative impacts of removing a large part of the forest cover (456 trees)
- Site contains critical bird habitat
- To protect the wildlife and plant species
- Inadequate sight-distance issues on Spring Road among other road safety hazards
- Community support to keep Rural Zoning (1087 petition signers to date)

*Let's work together to preserve Eden Prairie's remaining prairielands and woodlands for future generations.*