

13. Riverfront Private Open Space Parcel (Map K)

Site number: K-2

Ownership: Private

Overall size: 4.01 acres

Subwatershed: West Fork of North Branch of Chicago River

Mapped Land Cover on Site:

Wet/Wet-Mesic Forest / Unassociated Woody Growth (3.21 acres):

Site dominated by degraded remnant wet/wet-mesic forest with cottonwoods and oaks, mixed with unassociated woody growth such as elm, ash, buckthorn, and box elder.

Stream/River/Ditch (0.20 acre): West boundary is the West Fork.

Developed (0.60 acre): Southeast corner is developed.



Existing Ecological Conditions: A private parcel with mostly wooded open space along the West Fork, directly across from Tall Trees Park. The vegetative composition on the parcel appears to be very similar to the wooded buffer along the West Fork observed at Tall Trees Park. Because this is private property it was viewed from across the West Fork at Tall Trees Park. The woods are a degraded wet/wet-mesic forest mixed with unassociated woody growth. Species observed include cottonwood, ash, elm, box elder, and buckthorn. Although not physically observed, garlic mustard is likely a problematic species in the ground layer. Approximately 1,000 linear feet of the West Fork borders the west edge of the site. Erosion is moderate to severe on the steep banks.

Restoration and Management Recommendations: Streambank restoration and woodland restoration should be the focal restoration activities for this site. However, due to the private ownership status of this parcel implementing restoration activities may be difficult because the landowner would be responsible for most if not all of the cost associated with any restoration activities on the site.

It is recommended that the Village talk with the landowner and discuss opportunities to acquire a drainage or conservation easement on the site. With an easement the Village could be more actively involved in providing financial and technical assistance to the landowner to implement restoration activities. At minimum, the Village could offer a workshop/seminar to Village residents on the benefits of native landscaping and stream restoration. It may also be beneficial for the Village to inquire about future development plans for this parcel, and the possibility of acquiring this parcel, restoring it, and keeping it as open space. This may be a priority site to locally zone as an Environmentally Significant Area to enforce development restrictions to protect the site.