

Master Plan Variance

Property Name: Blue Mound State Park
Current Master Plan Approved: August, 1984
Variance Title: Indoor Trailhead Shelter Building

Proposed Variance to the Master Plan

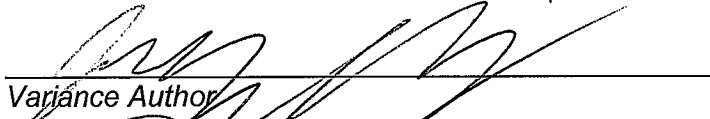
Construct a four season indoor trailhead shelter located north of the swimming pool parking lot. This site is the main trailhead for winter (cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing) and summer (hiking and mountain biking) trail uses.

The shelter will accommodate up to 100 persons, provide indoor ADA restrooms and year round drinking water. The building design will complement the new PEVS building with a stone base, siding details and general appearance.

The estimated cost is \$550,000 with the Friends of Blue Mound State Park providing the majority of the funds along with State Stewardship funds for the well and some non-building improvements.

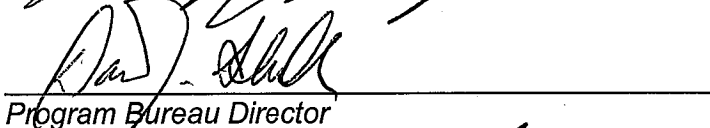
Maps, designs and background materials provided on the following pages

Approvals



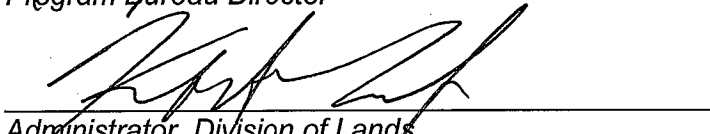
Variance Author

Date: 5/1/12



Program Bureau Director

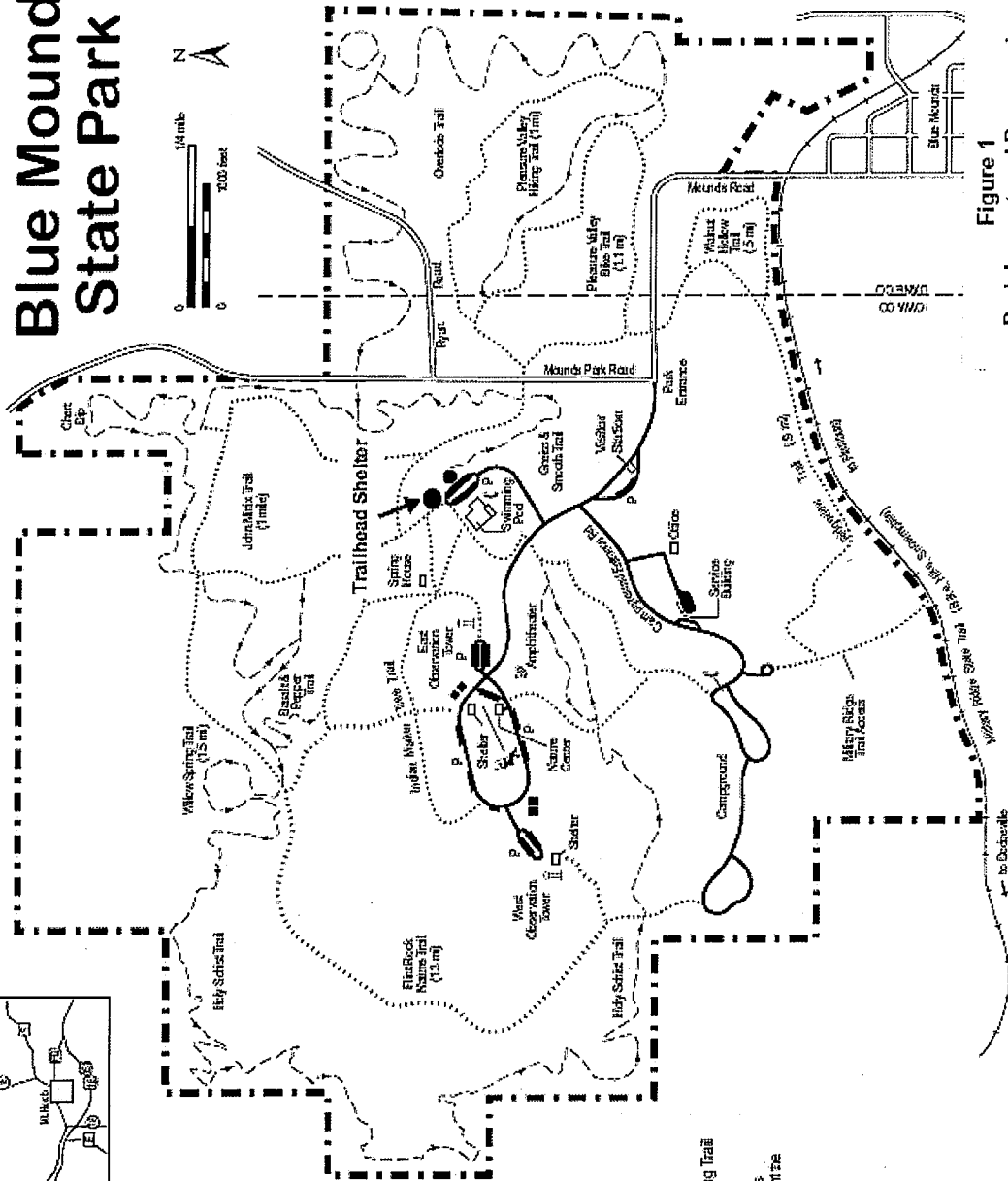
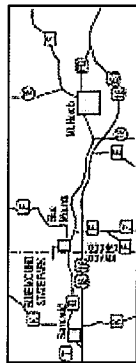
Date: 5/2/12



Administrator, Division of Lands

Date: 5/2/12

Blue Mound State Park



- Park Boundary
- Hiking Trail (unsurfaced)
- Biking/Riding Trail
- WORBA Single Track Biking Trail
- Mountain Bike Trailhead
Bike Wash—Please wash tires BEFORE riding to help prevent the spread of invasive plants.
- Nature Trail
- ☎ Telephone
- Drinking Fountains
- P Parking
- Building
- PI Toilets

Figure 1
Park Layout and Proposed Trailhead Shelter Location

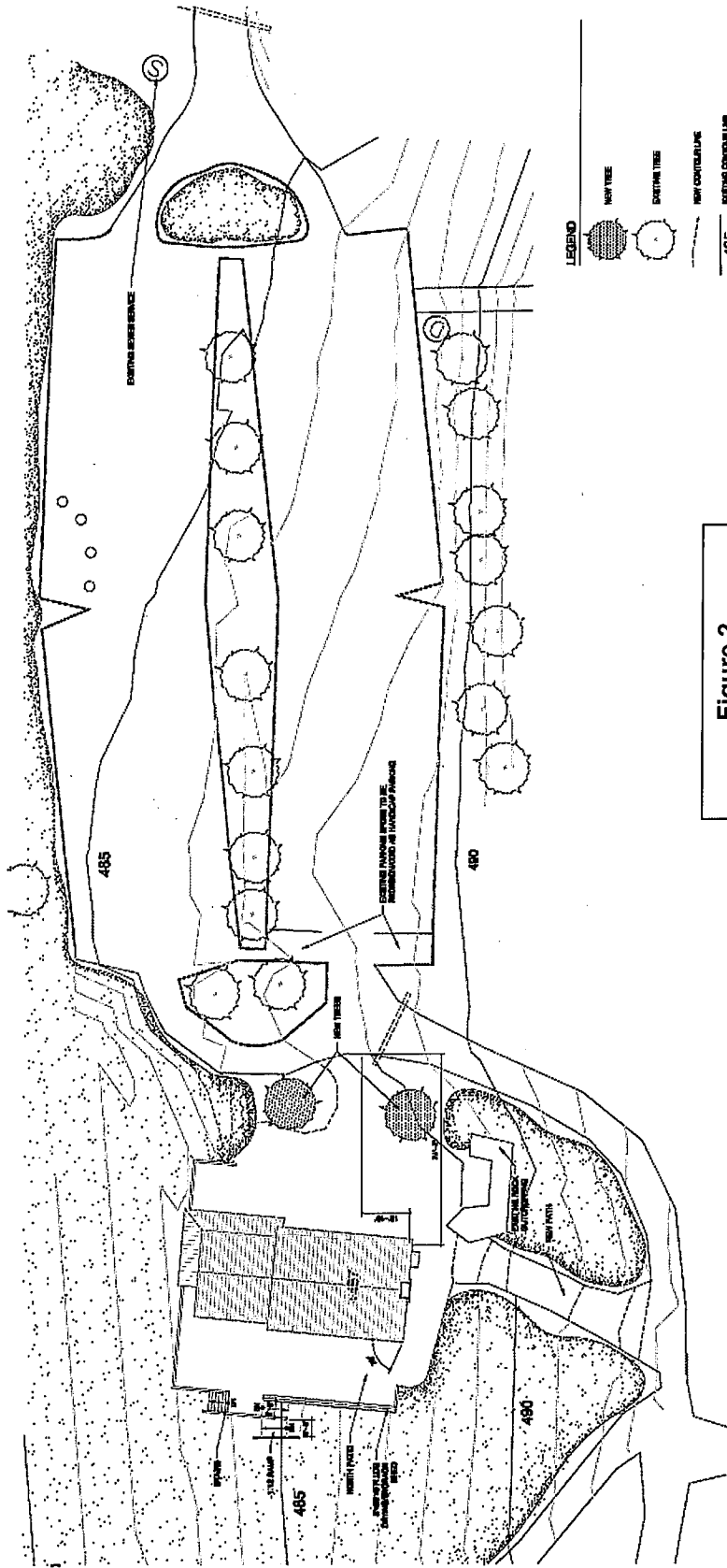


Figure 2
Site Overview

1 SITE PLAN
1-20-2-2

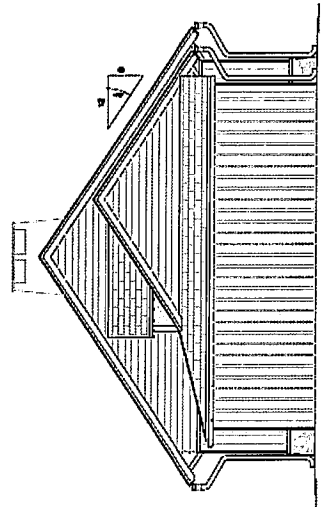
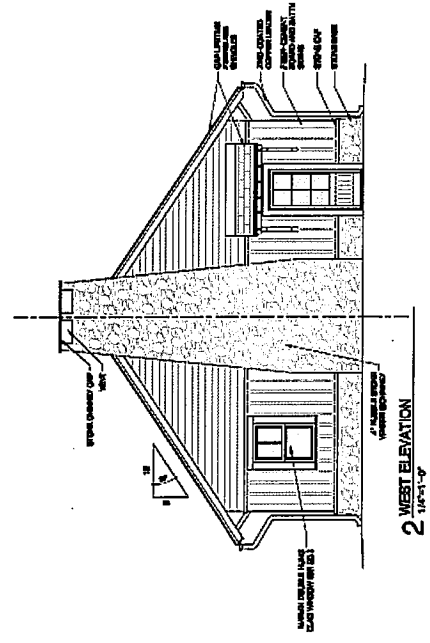
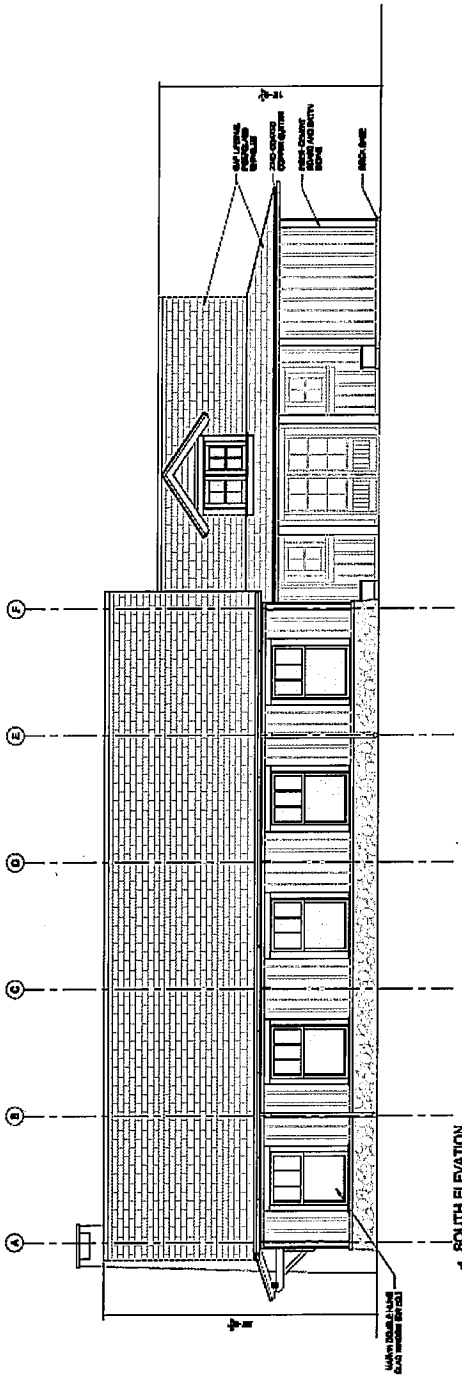


Figure 3
Building Overview

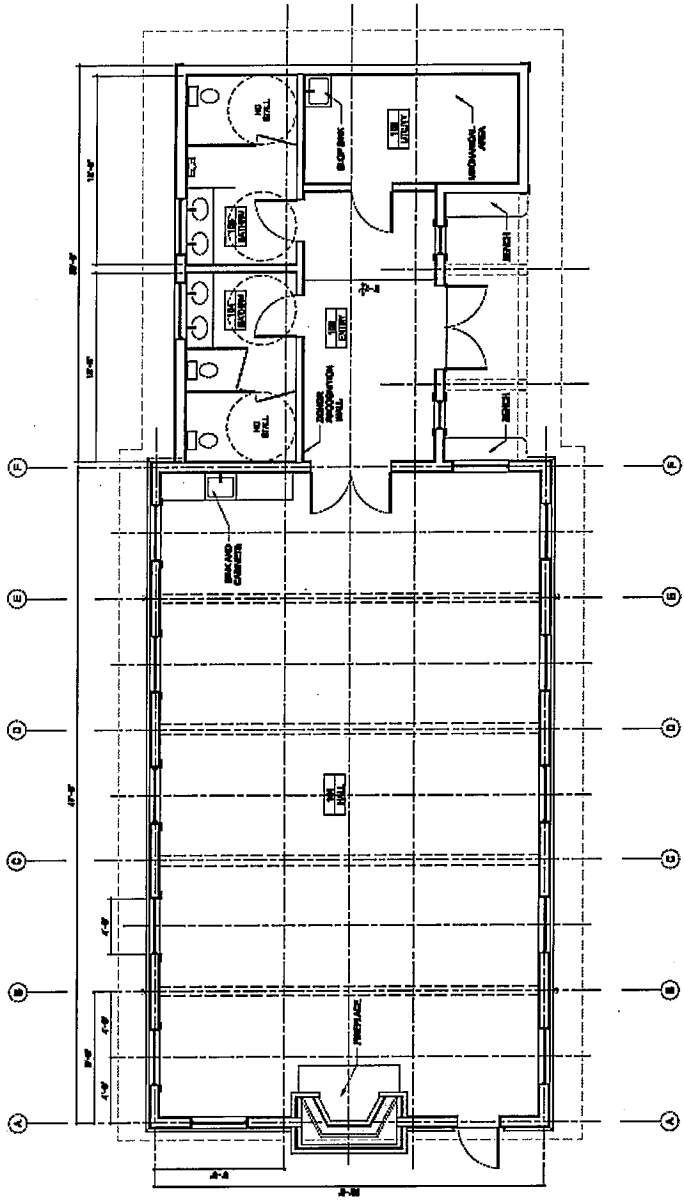


Figure 4
Floor Plan Overview

1 FLOOR PLAN
 1/4" = 1'-0"

Supporting Information

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Variance:

Winter sport shelter areas are also missing at Blue Mound State Park despite its status as the busiest winter recreation park in the South Central region. Other state parks and forests in Wisconsin serving similar levels of winter users have indoor shelter areas that are well used in the winter, including Rib Mountain, McMiller Nordic, Greenbush, and Lapham Peak. Others have at least indoor restrooms near the ski trailhead area, such as at Governor Dodge or Devils Lake.

The proposed trailhead shelter project will provide all-season shelter for trail users, ADA-compliant restrooms and meeting space for park activities. The proposed shelter building will serve many types of visitors and provide year-round ADA-accessible facilities to the central trail access point.

How is the proposed change supported by the property's vision, goals, and objectives:

This proposed indoor trailhead shelter variance is supported by the following provision in the Blue Mound State Park Master Plan (1984), and complies with the objectives of the Master Plan.

Goal Statement (page 1):

Provide a state park for 200,000 visitors annually that will serve that recreational, educational, and nature experience needs of the park visitor while preserving and protecting the resource for future generations.

Annual Objectives (page 1):

- 3.) Provide trail facilities for 35,000 nature, hiking, and cross-country ski users.
- 6.) Accommodate individuals who are handicapped or otherwise disadvantaged through the proper design, construction, maintenance and operation of the property and its facilities.

Anticipated Primary benefits of the proposed plan change:

The indoor trailhead shelter will help serve the needs of more than 150,000 annual park visitors. This shelter will provide a potable water source and ADA accessible bathrooms at the trailhead where no other year round facility exists.

Additional anticipated benefits:

Blue Mound State Park averages 23,500 skier visits a year, making this one of Dane County's most popular cross country skiing destinations. The park attracts a wide range of skill levels from true beginners to local racers. All of these visitors must use the parking lot and their vehicles to prepare for skiing. By building an indoor trailhead shelter this will allow the user to prepare out of the elements and improve vehicle / pedestrian safety.

Candlelight skiing events are popular at the park. To conduct these events temporary hay bale windbreaks are constructed for shelter. The trailhead shelter will replace these temporary windbreaks and serve as a permanent event location for these types of functions.

This trailhead shelter will also serve mountain bike users that use of the best single track trail systems in southwest Wisconsin. Over 10 miles of intermediate to expert singletrack are available from this trailhead location.

Unavoidable Adverse Impacts:

There would be minor impacts to the soil and ground cover around the existing parking lot area and building site from site grading. A portion the parking lot will be temporarily used as staging area for construction work resulting in a short term loss of some parking stalls.

Summary of any Alternatives Considered:

There were three alternatives for the indoor trailhead shelter considered. The following alternatives were developed and evaluated to determine the preferred alternative.

Alternative 1: Status Quo - Do not build the indoor trailhead shelter.

This alternative would not improve the trail user experience and master plan objectives numbers 3 and 6 would remain partially unfilled. Pedestrian safety issues would continue to be a concern at the parking lot.

Alternative 2: Build a larger trailhead shelter

Other designs were considered that provided more space for expanded programming functions within a larger structure. While these proposals had merit, cost considerations and site limitations were barriers for construction.

Alternative 3: Build at another location within the park

Two other site locations were investigated for construction. One at the south end of the parking lot but was rejected due to wet soil conditions. The other was above and to the west of the pool which was rejected due to difficult road access and the need for new parking. The current site was selected for the existing parking, dry or well drained conditions, and close proximity to the trail head for hiking, skiing, and mountain biking.

Compatibility with Statutes, Codes, and Department Policies:

This variance to the Blue Mound State Park 1985 Master Plan meets the requirements of *ch. NR44.04, Wis. Adm. Code*.

Federal Aid Limitations:

Blue Mound State Park received Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) dollars in the 1960s.