

Serenity Farm

Project Description: The 126 acre-Farm, known as “Serenity Farm” and owned by Paul and Laura Phelps, is located in the Town of Oconomowoc in Waukesha County. The property is zoned as Agricultural Preservation and has a significant amount of Environmental Corridor running through it. It is adjacent to a number of large lots within a subdivision (horse farms) to the east and south. Serenity Farm is a part of the Ashippun/Oconomowoc Agricultural Enterprise Area – an area to promote agricultural activity, and to preserve farmland and open space designated by the State of Wisconsin, Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. This area has been designated not only by the Town of Oconomowoc for farmland preservation in their smart growth plan but also by the County in its farmland preservation plan, and in its 2035 comprehensive plan. The property is uniquely positioned next to 300 acres of County land that is already protected and both the County property and Serenity Farm have the Ashippun River flowing through it.

Why: The Phelps preserved their farm and sold their development rights for two reasons:
 1) to protect this unique piece of Wisconsin history and the connections they have created between art and nature on their farm, and
 2) to practice new sustainable agricultural strategies while sharing the farm with the community.

Where: Town of Oconomowoc, Waukesha County

Size: 116 acres permanently protected under conservation easement

Owners: Paul and Laura Phelps

Easement Holders: Tall Pines Conservancy with Natural Resource Conservation Service (USDA) under the Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program

Completion: 2014



“In pursuing our objective of preserving Serenity Farm, all paths led to Tall Pines Conservancy through the Koepke family. They introduced us to the Zwiogs, who are owners of Maple Acres, a farm protected by a conservation easement with Tall Pines and the State of Wisconsin. We were moved by the Zwiogs and their pride in country, love of family and reverence for the land. Their story of land protection and their partnership with Tall Pines was a true inspiration.”

—Paul Phelps

