CHAPTER 11
Pedestrian Survey of the Herron Property, Waukesha County
by Robert J. Jeske

On October 26, 2000 the regional office conducted a site file check on a development that had the potential to affect adversely several known mound sites near West Bend in Waukesha County (Figure 11.1). The property is located in portions of the Northeast and Northwest quarters of Section 33, Township 5 North, Range 19 East (Vernon Township). Because their proposed development was near several recorded burial or mortuary sites, Diane and Don Herron were required by the Waukesha Planning Department to have an archaeologist make a determination that their development would not impact any human remains.

Physical Setting
Waukesha County lies within the Eastern Ridges and Lowlands physiographic province (Martin 1965). The project area is located in the Kettle Interlobate Moraine (Paull and Paull 1977: 164). The topography is characterized by rolling terrain, small rises, small wetlands, and small ravines and marshes. The soils for the survey region are in the Hochheim-Theresa association: well-drained soils with a subsoil of clay loam and silty clay loam (Steingraber and Reynolds 1971). The soils were formed in the loess and the underlying loamy glacial till on the ground moraines. The area is on a flat ridge that drops to the southeast, to a large marshy area. Pre-European vegetation would have been dominated by a mesic deciduous forest, dominated by white and black oak, along with sugar maple and basswood (Curtis 1959; Goldstein and Kind 1983).

Previous Research
No previously reported sites were located within the development boundaries, but the surrounding landscape is well known for its archaeological sites. Within a kilometer of the proposed development, 47Wk203 contained 11 conical mounds (Brown 1906). Immediately north of that site is the Crawfordville Mound Group (47Wk204) which contained three conical, 22 linear or oval, and 10 effigy mounds (Brown 1906). Immediately north of Maple Street, bordering the development is 47Wk205, which contained four or five oval mounds. The mounds had been nearly obliterated by the time Brown reported the site in 1906, but local informants claim that the mounds are still visible today. A kilometer to the south of the project area is a set of one round and three linear mounds (47Wk211/212). While at least two of the mounds have been surveyed and codified, the actual boundaries of the site were never clarified in the state site files.
Figure 11.1. Location of project area on USGS 7.5 minute Mukwonago topographic quadrangle.
Fieldwork

The site file check confirmed that, although the proposed development falls among several reported mound sites, no burial sites were reported within the boundaries of their proposed development. Yet, because of the vague boundary descriptions for some of the reported mound sites (47Wk211/212 in particular), a visual inspection of the property was undertaken. The fields were in corn stubble with some standing corn. Since ground conditions prohibited a formal survey at that time, we agreed to a return for a pedestrian survey in the spring.

On April 8, 2001 a crew of nine trained undergraduate and graduate students from UWM, under the direction of Robert J. Jeske, conducted a pedestrian survey of the Herron Property. Survey was conducted at 10 meter intervals. The fields had been planted the week before in beans and surface visibility was 100%. A total of 43 acres were surveyed. No cultural material of any sort was recovered by the survey.

The crew did visit the area of 47Wk211-212 where the mounds are platted. Two mounds were noted under the vegetation, one conical and one linear. Both seemed undisturbed by any recent activities. No other mounds were located at that time.

Conclusions

Pedestrian survey of the Herron property yielded no cultural material nor sign of mounds. The results of the survey were communicated to the Planning Division of Waukesha County’s Department of Parks and Land Use. The site boundaries for the 47Wk211/212 have been revised and submitted to the Wisconsin Historical Society.