

From: barbara davis [mailto:wumpus30@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 18, 2012 2:55 PM
To: Martin, Al; Murphy, Brad; Waidelich, Michael; Soglin, Paul
Subject: Serious Concerns with the Grandview Commons Proposal

Dear Mr Martin,

I am writing in response to the letter posted yesterday by our Alder Lauren Cnare regarding her suggested approval of the Grandview Commons Amendment under consideration by Urban Design this evening. I wish to respectfully request that this letter be shared with all members of Urban Design prior to their consideration of this proposal tonight.

Alder Cnare's letter is alarming. Beginning with the gross misrepresentation of a "balance between opposition and support" in our neighborhood over this proposal. I have carefully tracked and tallied all letters sent to the city planning website, various committees and directly to Alder Cnare's email for for the entire first year through an Open Records Request. Statistically speaking, documented opposition outweighed support by more than 4 to 1.

At the last UDC meeting Veridian realtors and employees registered votes of support for their own proposal, many of whom don't even live in Grandview. One of their realtors had self assigned himself the task of collecting resident's registration notices and "compiling" them while he sat next to Alder Cnare for several hours in the lobby waiting for this item to be considered. This tactic is intimidating and questionable as to why a Veridian employee would be collecting registrations at a City held meeting.

Alder Cnare cites a turnout at a recently held neighborhood meeting to be an estimated 150 people of a potential "several thousand names". She omits however, that this meeting took place on the night of the first major snowfall of the year, amidst dangerous driving conditions and transportation challenges. Several residents contacted her to try and re-schedule this meeting, but she elected to hold it despite the weather. I attended this meeting and the overall tone was predominantly one of concern and opposition. Alder Cnare controlled the dialogue through the use of index cards to manage questions. While a useful organizational technique, there was no consideration given to the audience when they sought further clarification or had a comment. No direct participation from the audience was permitted. When one concerned resident tried to comment, she was admonished by those managing the note cards. People in Grandview and the surrounding communities of Richmond Hill and Elvehem are being micromanaged into silence and basically ignored by our Alder who is steadfastly convinced that we live in a "food desert" and require immediate rescue by foisting a big-box proposal into our community.

The Sprecher Neighborhood and City of Madison Comprehensive Plans were thoughtfully created to prevent irresponsible development and to protect people who made their home buying purchases with these plans in mind. To circumvent them in order to accomodate a proposal that so grossly deviates from the parameters originally outlined and violates both plans and the city's big-box ordinance is a travesty of the New Urbanist design and promised town center that originally drew people to live in Grandview.

Economic difficulties in the homebuying market have prevented Veridian from completing Grandview Commons by their original projection dates of several years ago. Veridian stands to gain a large profit if they can re-zone this parcel from agricultural to commercial in order to sell

it to a 3rd party developer. On the City of Madison court site, there are several cases that point to the possibility that Veridian may require a large sum of money to settle a judgement, pay delinquent taxes to the City and purchase back a parcel of land at the end of next month. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact situation as Veridian has numerous LLC's that they use for holding properties and transferring funds. Late last Fall, Veridian laid off 40% of their employees, and many people suspect that they may be experiencing financial challenges. This proposal presented to you as a "necessity" to bring "an anchor" to our community, is merely a spin on an attempt to leverage a sale of land at a better price. In approving this proposal, you are allowing Veridian to sell land to build a big-box. There is no confirmed time line for anything else you have seen in their drawings, and no definitive commitment offered by Veridian when questioned at the neighborhood meeting as to when they would begin constructing it.

Please ask Veridian:

1) Do you have an agreement in writing with the developer that he will be building the exact store depicted in their presentation? Or will the store merely meet the size parameters outlined in the application? Chris Winter of Rolle Winter group needs to be specifically asked if he plans to build the exact store in the picture that you have been asked to approve. To our knowledge there is no such application or agreement between the developer and Veridian. They are merely waiting for the zone change approval so they can build it as they want it.

2) Why is Veridian asking for a store of up to 65,000K sq in their application if their drawing is 58,000K sq? As grossly oversized as this proposal is already, it has the potential to grow even bigger after its approved.

3) Do you have a back side view of this proposal? Can you give the specific dimensions of the grade difference between where the store will sit and where people's backyards on Kilpatrick are? How many feet is that difference? How tall is the store? Adding the facade on to the box dimensions? when all 3 of these are combined, what is the total height above the single family homes? Veridian never shows the 4th side view, because this store will tower over peoples homes.

4) Traffic and Long Range planning recommended that Kilpatrick cul-de-sac be re-examined as another outlet for truck traffic leaving Roundy's. What guarantees can be provided to residents that this wont happen? Veridian says that they dont want another neighborhood access point, but how much control over that do they really have? what is the likelihood that this road will be added?

5) A traffic study that was commissioned by Veridian released their initial findings at the neighborhood meeting last week. They estimated that an additional 1600 cars a day will be entering into our community from North Star and Gemini Dr. Has Veridian shared this study with members of your committee? Has UDC considered what these numbers of cars will do to our community? To people and bicyclists trying to enter and exit Grandview? or to potentially access the projected library? Alder Cnare downplays the traffic study findings in her letter and fails to mention any statistics. 1600 additional cars per day is an overwhelming number and warrants further inquiry into the the results of the study. Please ask Veridian to provide UDC with a copy of this study, and do not approve any proposal until you have had time to read and

consider it.

This proposal will radically change the quality of life, the personal safety and comfort of many Grandview and Richmond Hill residents as well as everyone who travels along Cottage Grove Road. Please do not rush to approve such a contentious proposal without serious consideration to every unanswered or overlooked aspect. We trust in you and in the members of the Plan Commission to carefully consider what lies in front of you with the understanding that you hold many people's lives in the balance. Thank you for your diligence and careful consideration.

Sincerely,
Barbara Davis
729 Orion Trail
Madison, WI 53718