

VILLAGE MAPLE BLUFF

December 7, 2015

Ken Opin
Chair, Madison Plan Commission

Dear Chairman Opin:

I've been asked by a number of Maple Bluff residents to contact the Plan Commission regarding the Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara Neighborhood Plan 2015.

Of particular concern are the recommendations on page 30 to convert Warner Drive from a street to a bike path and reconfigure Sherman Ave. to follow the current location of McGuire St. While I agree with the objectives of improving bike and pedestrian access to and through Burrows Park as well as the safety of the Sherman/Fordem intersection, I'd respectfully ask the Plan Commission to consider that:

- Both Warner Drive and Sherman Avenue connect Maple Bluff's Fullers Woods neighborhood with the rest of village, and closing one and reconfiguring another would compromise travel and public services between those neighborhoods as well as travel to and from downtown Madison.
- Any reconfiguration of Sherman Avenue could only be done with the Village's permission.
- We have a history of working together in this area. The Maple Bluff police department regularly patrols Burrows. And approximately 8 years ago, Maple Bluff—with the city's approval—repaved Warner Drive and added the bike path next to it.

In short, I'm confident that we, working together, could satisfy the safety and access objectives outlined in this portion of the plan in other ways.

I also question how much additional density is appropriate in that particular area:

- Another 50+ unit, multi-story building will effectively "wall off" Burrows Park from the neighborhoods to the east and the people who regularly travel through our neighborhoods on Sherman Ave.
- If anything, northeast side residents would be better served if there were a visual and physical gateway to the park from Sherman Ave.
- And while the northeast side can certainly use more multifamily housing, I question the long-term wisdom of concentrating it in the triangle formed by Sherman Avenue, Fordem Avenue and East Johnson, which is already the most densely populated area on the northeast side—especially when we have so much developable area along Packers Avenue.

Finally, I'd urge the city Planning Department to include adjacent neighborhoods (even if they are in different municipalities) like ours in future planning exercises. To the average Madison resident, there's very little awareness of our boundaries—just that we're all part of what makes the northeast side such a great place to live.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Schuler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jim Schuler
President, Village of Maple Bluff