

3/7/22

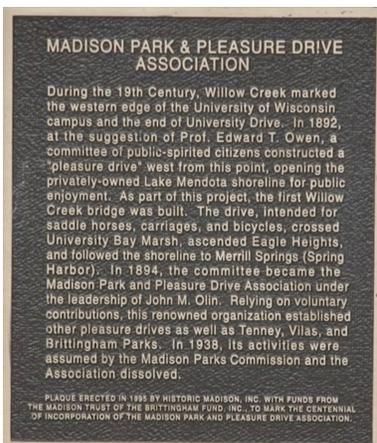
To: City of Madison Transportation Committee

From: Maureen Rickman

RE: Lake Mendota Drive plan

For more 20 years my family has inhabited a 2-bedroom house in the Spring Harbor neighborhood in the Indian Hills area on property demarcated in the National Registry of Historic Places to acknowledge the cultural value of the Merrill Springs Effigy Mound group which was intact and undisturbed until the late 1800's. This memo is meant to convince you of 3 important things.

- 1) LMD is actually a park that with time has been inhabited by lots of people living in houses around it. And it is still a park.
- 2) LMD is not a city street and should not fall victim to the standard policies of the city. If that happens, the city will miss out on a once-in-an-every-few decades opportunity to use this park to do what parks are supposed to do. Connect us to each other.
- 3) LMD is a park that already has a centralizing theme. Water. The human history of our need for water. People have been drawn here for literally 10,000 years because there is fresh spring water for humans to drink year around and deep lake water for other creatures to thrive in.



LMD was the first park and pleasure drive created in Madison by a coalition of visionary citizens who imagined building a city that was rich with opportunities to connect with history and nature.

In hindsight, some of what they did was exploitative and profoundly distressing, as the horse and carriage riders who travelled along LMD to ‘take the waters’ at the sacred spring Maąka’ Maą’i (Merrill Spring) also dug up burial sites and desecrated effigy mounds.

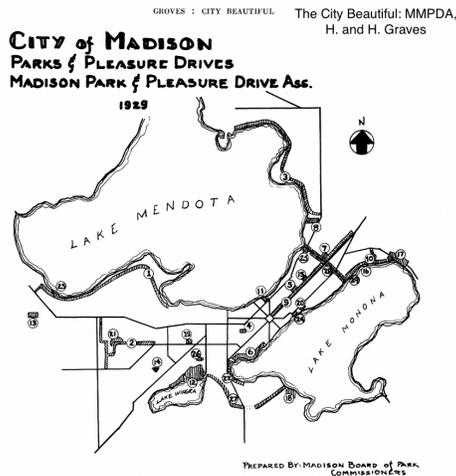
Still, MPPDA’s overall contribution to the city was profound. They deeded their holdings to the City of Madison in 1938.



DESCRIPTION

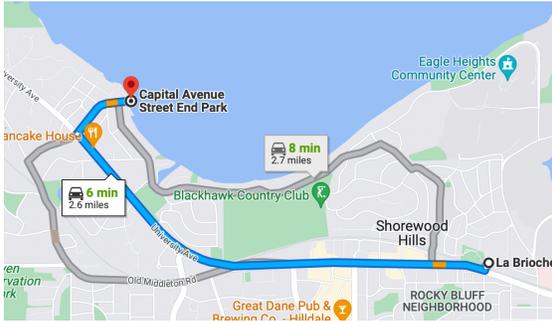
A group of men pose atop a conical burial mound on the south shore of Lake Mendota in Madison, Wisconsin. (also known as Merrill's Spring)

The City has continued to preserve these gifts to the City. Similar to LMD, parkways such as Arboretum Drive, Vilas Drive, and Yahara Parkway are still destinations for bikers, walkers, folks in wheel chairs and parents pushing strollers to stroll leisurely and safely with cars moving slowly and cautiously.



We know where we live. We live in a park.

We have no coffee shop, no restaurants, no grocery store, no gas stations. That is all on University Drive. LMD is not a commuter route. Apple and Google Maps direct drivers to University Ave, even when they are leaving a lake court on LMD.



Bike commuters have a dedicated path 500 yards away.



LMD does have many of the things a park should have.

Lake Mendota Drive

- Public beach
- Public boat launch
- Public lake access
- Playground
- Effigy mounds
- Maąąą' Maąą'í

Merrill Spring Park

Capital Avenue Street End Park

Maąąą' Maąą'í

Spring Harbor Beach

Boat Launch

Effigy at Spring Harbor School

And more important than that, LMD is on sacred ground that is included on the National Registry of Historic Places. There are remnants of effigy mounds that date back thousands of years. A 1200 year old canoe was lifted from the lake just this past year.

There was a Ho-Chunk village in this region in the 1800's. The sacred Spring Maąąą' Maąą'í still provides bubbles up fresh drinkable water all year around.

The City of Madison needs to take this opportunity to enhance LMD in a way that connect us to the natural world by preserving the features that make traveling along this drive pleasurable. And the City needs to take this opportunity to enhance LMD in a way that creates meaningful connections to the people who lived here for millennia before us.

We don't need traffic calming concrete. We need to create authentic connections to each other and our history. LMD is a park. The City needs to slow down and take this opportunity to make it an historic parkway for generations to come.

