

From: Dawn O'Kroley <[REDACTED]@dorschnerassociates.com>
Sent: Friday, February 15, 2019 10:51 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Lerner, Sarah <SLerner@cityofmadison.com>; Ledell Zellers <ledell.zellers@gmail.com>
Subject: James Madison Park Master Plan 02.13.19 meeting

Board of Park Commissioners,

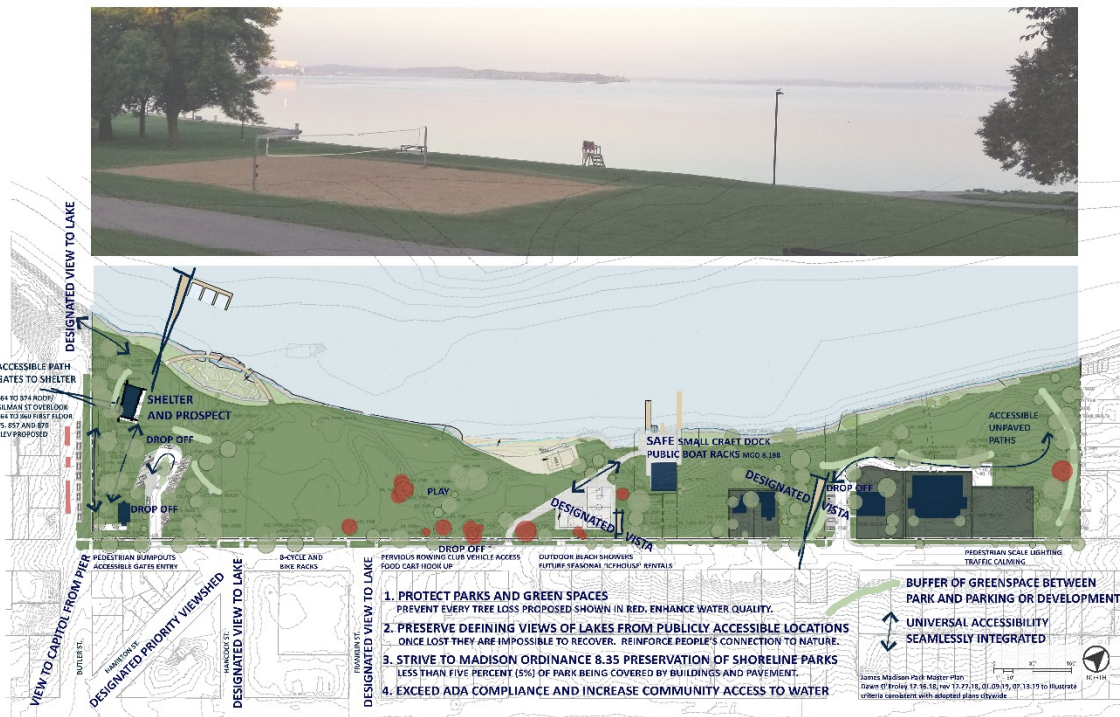
Attached please find my comments and handout in pdf format for your posting on legistar.

Please post the presentation and graphics staff presented at Wednesday's meeting.

In addition, provide all numerical values represented in the bar chart comparison graphic. For example, the square footages of existing vs. proposed surfaces represented in the comparison graphic.

Thank you,

Dawn O'Kroley
[REDACTED] E Gorham Street



February 13, 2019

Members of the Board of Park Commissioners,

My name is Dawn O’Kroley. I am an architect, resident of one of the homes in the park, and I was asked by Parks staff to be a stakeholder in this process. I have also served 11 years on city design committees.

I have several questions but am requesting only two changes to the plan. Changes that do not omit any community use or program goal. Omit the Blount Street parking lot expansion and locate the new shelter at the west end of the park. Then, all parking associated with the shelter moves to the west.

My questions are the gaps in information provided to the public. I have previously mentioned several of these items:

- Provide the public with the RFP required cost estimates prepared by a third-party contractor. At the last meeting cost was a criteria of staff level decision making.
- Provide the amount of green space converted to pavement. Provide a preliminary lighting plan.
- Provide the public the work product of the \$18,000 design change order staff stated was due to my comments. Per staff response at the 10.03.18 UDC meeting: “Based on Dawn’s comments and her concerns we extended this contract and pushed it back by a month, added about \$18,000 to the design contract to really...try and I think there are some great points about not having parking. Parks doesn’t like parking.”
- I have told staff that I estimate the design team is only 60% complete with the scope of the RFP.
- Provide the written DNR preliminary approval. Parks staff indicates the emergent wetland will be difficult to permit, how will it possible? Submit a 2020 budget request for this project identified as top priority.

My first concern is the needless sacrifice of green space. Strive to meet the City’s Shoreline Park Preservation ordinance which sets the bar for buildings and paved areas to be no more than 5% of a shoreline park. Excluding paths and ground leases that translates to about 25,000 SF.

This plan continues to double the amount of paved parking area. In the Blount lot alone converts over 5,000 SF of green space to pavement for 4 stalls. Traffic Engineering agreed to the opportunity for increased street parking on Butler Street. These 4 spots can be provided at no cost and without loss of any green space - why is this option not in the plan?

My second concern is the senseless viewshed obstruction. This is not on the table for compromise, this is a requirement. The proposed shelter blocks views. The proposed parking lots block views. A west shelter nestled in the wooded hillside of Mansion Hill preserves green space, all designated views, is safe and better connects the community with the water. The west shelter supports Gates of Heaven by wrapping it with a natural context and provides Gates accessible restrooms, both requested by the public. A west shelter is feasible and meets the CPTED criteria for all building entrances to face the street. The designated views from the sidewalk would be of green space and shoreline, not parking and an elevator tower. The basketball and volleyball courts would be screened from designated views by simply using the existing topography with the sidewalk perched above the existing volleyball court and paved area.

Access for Independence, which I learned this week was a paid consultant on this team who spoke during public testimony, recommended to 'designate a few ADA street spots with curb cuts... Street spots are a much more efficient use of space than ADA parking lots stalls.' And that 'Stable surfaces do not have to be concrete (e.g., can be crushed limestone like at Governor's Island).' The attached concept does not show any paths that could be natural materials. This is a missed opportunity. You are required to protect green space and views. That in no way means sacrificing accessibility or improved community access. Please consider incorporating these two changes into the plan tonight. I am happy to answer any questions.

Thank you,

Dawn O'Kroley

█ E Gorham Street

From: Abi Barnes <█@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, February 16, 2019 1:10 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Cc: Zellers, Ledell <district2@cityofmadison.com>; Lerner, Sarah <SLerner@cityofmadison.com>; █@urbanassetsconsulting.com

Subject: James Madison Park Master Plan

Dear Board of Park Commissioners:

My name is Abigail Barnes. I am an attorney and hold a master's degree in environmental management from the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies. I am a resident of one of the grandfathered homes in the park. I am a daily park go-er and routinely use the bike lane on Gorham St. to commute to work. I'm the founder & CEO of a local start-up, and the author of the December 11th Isthmus article titled "From Park to Parking Lot."

In the week following the publication of the Isthmus piece, your committee received roughly 130 comments. Of those, nearly all opposed the new parking design and any net increase in concrete. This comment figure excludes the 100 signatures the neighborhood collected this past fall in opposition to the proposed parking scheme. Of the 150 total comments, I found fewer than 10 supported the proposed parking plan. Notably, most of those in this minority stated their support for parking more generally in and around Gates of Heaven and/or adding ADA stalls. The city broke up the 146 pages of comments into six attachments with no coherent system that I can see, save for nearly all of the letters supporting parking conveniently being in the first attachment. I spent several hours combing through the comments, and I sincerely hope you all took the time to read through the comments as well.

There are several glaring issues with the latest design, but I will address the two most troubling.

First is the lack of transparency and misinformation that has mired this process. Square footage figures around lost green space and added pavement have been inconsistent or absent throughout, the number of lost trees has changed several times and this figure has been

routinely absent in public documents, and any analysis involving alternatives explored - e.g., parking and shelter location – has been largely missing from reports and presentations. Moreover, many of the stats presented to this committee on public engagement were misleading or otherwise distorted the degree of substantive public input.

The second issue is the reason and justification offered for moving the parking lot.

First, the public was told we needed to move the parking lot for safety reasons, and invoked a crime prevention through environmental design rationale. After a member of the stakeholder committee pointed out that the city's figure on police calls was incorrect, and that the 700 figure was actually closer to 40, the narrative changed to the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) process demanded for it. Upon closer inspection, this process was exposed as woefully inadequate and flawed. Their RESJI process involved meeting with six different organizations (of which one was paid) across notoriously underrepresented groups from the community. Despite having over a year and more than \$200k at their disposal, the city and planning committee met with only 20 people across these six underrepresented groups. The consulting firm tasked with the public engagement effort, Urban Assets – led by Zia Brucaya – then ranked participant input based on “times mentioned,” which made it difficult to ascertain common threads or identify popular recommendations or criticisms. Based on a review of that feedback, Urban Assets appears to have arbitrarily selected parking concerns from the “dislike” pile, as neither the lack of parking nor parking location was a common grievance or criticism.

The city and planning committee should have polled at least 100 people from underrepresented communities to call this a process or toolkit, and implemented a more sophisticated ranking system to organize feedback and recommendations.

Once it was made clear that the RESJI process was flawed, the narrative became handicap access. Importantly, Access for Independence—a paid consultant to represent the handicap community—recommended during a focus group to designate a few ADA **street** spots with additional curb space near buildings like the shelter and Gates of Heaven. Their recommendation is therefore compatible with keeping the parking in its current location and not adding any new parking, save for a few ADA street spots.

The narrative in the end appeared to be predominantly convenience. Moving the parking lot and centralizing activities will be more **convenient** for park goers and rowers. Convenience.

Never mind that you lose the volleyball court (which was absent from the latest design), convert an estimated 14,00 SF of green space to concrete—and roughly double the amount of total concrete, obstruct 400 feet of viewshed, and lose about a dozen trees. You'll have convenience instead.

In the years I've lived next to the park, I have never seen both parking lots at capacity or a lack of parking on Gorham – even on weekends in the summer. Moreover, there are currently **90 street parking spots** between Gorham, Blount, and Butler street that touch the park with no hourly limit on evenings and weekends. This is one of several pieces of information that has been misrepresented to the public, and more specifically in Alder Ledell Zeller's December 7th letter of support.

As a tax-paying citizen, the degree of incompetence demonstrated by this planning committee, its consultants, and the city has been painful to witness.

I was disappointed to see your committee pass the latest design of the Master Plan last week, although I appreciate the added amendment requiring city staff to re-examine parking needs in the future and strive to minimize off-street parking in the design.

I remain hopeful that reasonable minds will prevail, and that future iterations of this Master Plan design will better reflect smart and sound judgment, follow from more sophisticated public engagement efforts, and more accurately represent the interests of the public and James Madison park go-ers.

Thank you,

Abigail Barnes