

**From:** [Douglas Buege](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 1617 Sherman Avenue development proposal  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 8:40:08 AM

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The proposed development of 1617 Sherman Avenue by a Chicago developer concerns many, but I'd like to address this development (and others like it) from my perspective as an educator.

I've worked in the Madison public schools for 23 years. In that time, I've witnessed the negative consequences of Governor Thompson's destruction of welfare, Walker's union busting, and many other political decisions for our children, their families, and our schools. Each of these state-wide actions have been devastating for the people of Madison and our schools.

Our schools are in crisis with the last dozen years involving great erosion of our educational institutions.

We have had an increase in child trauma with depression, suicide, and other destructive forces having greater impact every year. I've worked with children that have moved from community to community to get away from violence, racism, and poverty. Many families move regularly in search of affordable housing. And our schools are staffed by younger teachers who are leaving the profession after two or three years for better jobs. Schools have empty positions; kids don't have the teachers they need.

At the same time, the price of a family home, be it condominium, duplex, house or other, has sky-rocketed. Likewise, rents have increased dramatically. A friend on Allied Drive had his landlord raise the monthly rate by \$300 last year, precipitating his re-location. And Wall Street investors are buying up property at alarming rates.

These two actions—school crises and expensive housing—create conditions that make it harder for children to learn and for families to stay together. Madison's school district and the city council are separate entities, ruled by different systems. I suggest that the two come together, though, to address the conditions of the lives of our struggling children and families. We need affordable housing, preferably housing that can be purchased by families, so that families can stabilize, build equity for the future, and give their children safe, secure homes. When kids and families can put down roots in the community, we create coherent communities of active, responsible citizens.

Vermilion Development Corporation does not concern itself with the well-being of our community, our children, or their families. They seek the highest returns on their investment (ROI) and are doing what many million- and billionaires are doing, buying up housing that they can control. That is why they have refused to have either affordable housing units or purchasable units in their proposal. Their plan is to remove as much money from our local economy as possible with their rents.

Vermilion will pay property taxes, but those are small potatoes compared to the real earnings

our city could have by investing in the type of housing that allows people to pull themselves out of poverty.

I recommend that the Counsel say no to Vermilion and work to formulate a plan for the city to develop the land at 1617 Sherman. The city could take that ROI and re-invest in our local infrastructure, decreasing our dependency on the state and its gerrymandered legislature. The neighborhood planning commission, on which I served, recommended bungalow-type residences, owner-occupied, at a much lower density than proposed by Vermilion. The teachers of our city need homes. Our struggling families need homes! Following that plan would not only create housing; it would create housing worth living in.

A final note: I have just become aware of nearly \$200,000 injected into our aldermanic races by the Realtors' Association of South Central Wisconsin, evidently invested to push forward proposals like Vermilion's. The city should not be beholden to these wealthy investors. We will be watching how you vote.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Douglas J. Buege  
Madison resident in a home I own, and MMSD Employee

--

Dr. Douglas J. Buege  
15 Sherman Terrace, #1  
Madison WI 53704

(608) 441-9833 [djbuege@gmail.com](mailto:djbuege@gmail.com)

**From:** [Cheryl Elkinton](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Filene house 1601-1617 Sherman Avenue-Oppose  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 5:38:14 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders:

I am looking for your support to oppose and defer this project back to the landmarks commission. Non-feasibility due to incomplete plans of the landscape, boundary lines not legally established, there is high environmental risk to the area and it's potential damage thereonto. Aesthetically repugnant for the neighborhood as it is presently zoned for low-middle income. A change in the zoning would open up problems for the rest of the neighborhood and their future plans.

From bottom of page:

"How is there a judgement for the passing of any plans or rezoning requests when property boundary lines can't be established? It must be turned down. Missing completed information, it's impossible.

How does one judge if there's room for the buffer, and where does the buffer go? Who still owns what throughout the addresses of 1601-1617? How effective can a buffer be for this location? The current pictures express a view of the river with a bench, and no trees present along the edge of the river. What would happen if there were a rockslide catastrophe? There is provable erosions at this point it time on the side of the lake, and probably an underground reservoir under the property, digging and building may not safe for this location. History information denotes there has been man-made disruption to the river composition and size.

My primary concern is damages it will make to the area including the edge of the lake across the street and the riverbank and the bridge. I want to know if permissions were made by FEMA, being that it is in a flood zone. A rockslide could happen underneath, due to aesthetics of the block area, disruptions caused by construction and new traffic volumes."

There's plenty of good futures information in this email message. Much of it is details, whether they are needed to terminate this project, or if that decision has been made and it can be held for it's value for further ordinances.

I am requesting that the contract with the developer be terminated, and the item referred to the landmarks committee for deferral and to dispose at a further meeting. I have been investigating how to purchase, or receive the property, but due to technical difficulties, I am not able to register on vendor-net. I have some great charity purpose plans for the Filene House. I will go into that after further after there can be a change to the current plan.

I have been following this project for a little over a month. I understand that I may have rights as a joint authority to bring an issue from the floor, according to ordinance 1, Construction.

From the obvious perspective, I do not believe there is right to change an ordinance simply for this project.

The terms I am using are repugantly repellent. In fact, this project has used it's time limit, as far as I know, in that it has been through twice. Ordinance 1.02.

The plan has defects. There are legal discrepancies regarding 1. Establishing the legal boundaries of the property(s) against the developers plan on the Project Outline maps. 2. Ownership/control of each of the addresses involved, and their legal inputs at this point in time, against the stated information on the City of Madison Assessors property lookup website and on the County of Dane's

property access website. There is incorrect information regarding one of the addresses and a presented document of actuality must be included in order to judge the project. It should not be assumed that the error would otherwise contain it as part of the property in question. Because old maps state that the park had space beyond the river, (more than 30 ft.) and the new plan completely eliminates park ownership beyond the edge of the river. The natural buffer of the river bank and beyond needs as much as it currently has. Re-establishment of Tenny Park property might need investigation as to whether there has been a referendum annexing that part of the property, and to whom it was annexed, or sold to. As far as I would gather and most of the public would assume, it is currently and legally, open lands being part of a City of Madison Park Another address on the plan includes the Madison Water Utility currently owns well 7 and it states square footage within it. And, 3. The feasibility and safety of the individual project. There have been stated neighborhood concerns that, apparently were attempting to put their wording close to the planning and development office's mission, or the urban design's, perhaps. The actuality of the opposition issues are much more extreme. It's neighborhood and legal aesthetic concerns, together with safety risks that must include possible projections during construction and afterward. Please work to judge the outside(parameter) environmental/landspace for safety risks and all possible/probable future component risks. Landslide/rockslide of the 1600 property and the possibility for probable cause to cancel/terminate the contract. probable damage afterward, would this effect take place, at all. The fact exists that it is flood zone, and there may be under ground water passage currently that has not been included in assessments for safety. This property will get completely drenched during spring rains. to build on this plan or not. and address. How does this assessment affect your theory of a potential winter snowslide? Please compare old maps of the park boundaries to recent ones, paying special attention to the difference in size of the 1600 block park address(es) and it's accumulated erosion.

Simply put, a futures projects might describe that over time, having not the current natural structures to block any potential damages, is a priority risk to factor to assess. Adding the weight of everything included in the Project Timeline plans, the fact that it does overbuild, should being established. There are property ownership, control and rights/offers to resolve issues to address. adding the potential traffic increases to the thoroughfare to the potential damages cause this projects risks to be beyond any availability to judge safety, and therefore should be adjudge as not meeting the commission's mission requirements to zone or to permit.

I have no way to present documents that I would be able to if it were at an in-person meeting, such as an undistorted chart comparing the mapping issues. I'm asking for you to take a quick look to verify my statements in from this email. I request that the issue of a proper review having not been made be included in these statements of concern, on behalf of the public. Deferral back to the Landmarks Commission should have happened long ago, and a plan to dispose, if proper. There are safety reasons now to have that done.

The WKOW website has the best picture I've seen for the current building and property where it is not distorted.t distorted. Understanding that right is made to distort plans to equally distorted original pictures exists, the plans were further distorted to include plans that cannot meet planning and zoning requirements.

Firstly, it has been established the income level primarily stopping at medium. It would be repugnantly repellent to try to change this property's rights by an ordinance change. It would have the potential to cause further negative changes in the neighborhood.

Secondly, it's infeasibility due to risk. It didn't even state how much square footage would be in each

apartment and townhome. How is the entirety of the space requirement judged? Nor the garages, the sidewalks, the bike rack, and the buffer. The street, and any planned grassy areas. State law requires grassy areas, if that law hasn't changed. Lacking completed information regarding the apartment and townhomes planned square footage, indoors and out, and pertaining to each building, how much grassy area in sq. ft. ? Everything I mentioned has to be measured for proof of feasibility and safety, for the entirety of project and all possible areas that it can affect.

What about expected soil decomposition from the noise of the machinery, and the aesthetics of the buildings? Compare to the new project on Aberg Ave. How are their buffers doing. Will they be watched, to see if erosions goes past the ability to gain should composition? What about the environmental losses while building? Does a neighborhood have a right to complain and bring it up as an issue? How long is the project is expected to take, and what kind of damages does it incur under extreme conditions? Compare the Blair Street Project. What happens when it falls outside of normal and expected parameters? Are environmental impact statements being utilized as required for any new business? Added buffers cannot work up to the expectation of cancelling all of the damages without better assessment requirements to the plans. Are there rules to subtract the potential sq. ft. loss during construction, in their plans?

How is there a judgement for the passing of any plans or rezoning requests when property boundary lines can't be established? It must be turned down. Missing completed information, it's impossible. How does one judge if there's room for the buffer, and where does the buffer go? Who still owns what throughout the addresses of 1601-1617? How effective can a buffer be for this location? The current pictures express a view of the river with a bench, and no trees present along the edge of the river. What would happen if there were a rockslide catastrophe? There is provable erosions at this point it time on the side of the lake, and probably an underground reservoir under the property, digging and building may not safe for this location. History information denotes there has been man-made disruption to the river composition and size.

My primary concern is damages it will make to the area including the edge of the lake across the street and the riverbank and the bridge. I want to know if permissions were made by FEMA, being that it is in a flood zone. A rockslide could happen underneath, due to aesthetics of the block area, disruptions caused by construction and new traffic volumes.

Cheryl Elkinton

President/CEO

Vegan Haven Central, Inc

501(c)(3) Public Charity

EIN 46-3368065

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Madison, WI 53704

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Espenshade Jean](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Concerns re development proposal for property at 1617 Sherman Ave  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 5:38:30 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

The current development proposal for the property at 1617 Sherman Ave has been revised in ways that begin to address the concerns expressed by the Urban Design Commission members, the Landmark Commission members, and the property owners and residents living in the neighborhood. From my attendance at meetings related to the proposed development and my review of the most recent public documents, I remain **opposed to the current proposal in its current form.**

I appreciate the need for additional housing, higher density infill, and the developer's plan modifications to date. Nevertheless, there are significant issues remaining that must be addressed before we lose the chance to do so. Slowing down the approval process may help neighborhood residents, City staff, the developer and knowledgeable experts further modify the proposal in ways that result in high-quality affordable housing, minimize negative environmental impacts, allay concerns regarding traffic, and create a better fit with the neighborhood.

**Concerns that remain and continue to trouble us include:**

The **scale** of the proposed development for the neighborhood. The size of the five story buildings, both in building mass and number of housing units per acre, **does not fit on that property.** This results in **adverse visual intrusiveness of the proposed buildings** on the Yahara Parkway, Tenney Park, Filene Park, and the residents on Sherman and Marston Avenues. The proposed buildings are squeezed between and tower over the Sherman Terrace Condominiums on one side and the Yahara Parkway and Tenney Park on the other side, reducing green space and lacking fit with the other residential properties in the neighborhood. The proposed number of units/acre exceeds the Medium Residential Density of 16-40 units/acre recommended in the Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara Neighborhood Plan approved by the Common Council in 2016.

The **increased volume of traffic and parking problems associated with the proposed development on neighborhood residents, park users, pedestrians and bikers, combined with lack of easy access to public transportation.**

Sherman Ave is a two lane street with considerable foot traffic, multiple street crossings to the park, bike lanes, park and boat ramp entrances, and traffic calming devices. The closest BRT will be on East Washington Ave. *The bus service on Sherman Ave is being cut back significantly in June of this year to one-way outbound peak service only* (Route 28, 6-9 AM and 4-7 PM). This will further increase the use of cars to access services such as grocery stores that are not within easy walking distance.

The public street in the development proposal dead ends at the back of the property,

with 5 privately owned parcels of land containing buildings and parking areas between the dead end and Fordem Ave. There are no current plans to extend it to Fordem Avenue, and it seems very unlikely that it will be extended within the next decade. *The only egress for the 1617 property is via Sherman Ave.*

**Given the unique aspects of this property**, especially it's proximity to Lake Mendota, the Yahara River, Tenney and Filene Parks, **it is particularly unfortunate that none of the proposed housing includes affordable owner-occupied units**, allowing not only for accumulation of generational wealth, but also for a mix of younger residents wanting to raise families with older residents wanting to downsize from larger single family dwellings. This is one property where these aspects of Madison's housing market might be effectively addressed.

Those of us living across the street from this property were left out of the neighborhood association maps when they were drawn, so we do not have a neighborhood association to inform us of meetings, or address our concerns. These same properties were also moved from one aldermanic district to another in the recent redistricting. Then our (new to us) District 12 elected alder resigned as of Nov 30 of last year. The interim alder appointed in January has not interacted with us about this proposed development, and was not in attendance at the Plan Commission meeting. The sign announcing the Plan Commission public hearing on March 13 was not posted in advance of that date; thus many neighborhood residents, as well as pedestrians and bikers who regularly pass through the area, were not notified of the proposed demolition and residential development.

I am trying to remain hopeful that the developer, the City and the neighborhood residents can work together to address the valid and significant concerns of those who reside in proximity to this beautiful property while we still have time to do so.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jean Espenshade  
1640 Sherman Ave  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Paul and Donna Janquart](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda #76309 Vermillion project  
**Date:** Monday, March 20, 2023 5:17:46 PM

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Agenda # 76309

Common Council Alders,

I strongly oppose the rezoning of the proposed residential building complex from 1601 to 1617 Sherman. This property is across from Lake Mendota and adjacent to Tenney Park which provides a quiet respite for the community.

The neighborhood doesn't have any other structure that complements the proposed structure. This is a residential neighborhood that consists of 37 buildings that all have a three-story structure along with single family homes. To replace this site with a medium density housing complex completely offsets the aesthetic nature that promotes a respite from higher density neighborhoods.

The existing infrastructure does not support the projected population density as proposed in this development. The volume of traffic and poor ingress and egress will cause substantial problems on Sherman.

Lastly this project does not allow any low-income housing which contradicts the purpose of creating housing for ALL the residents in Madison.

Thank you,  
Donna Janquart  
Condo owner 37 Sherman Ter. #4

**From:** [Robert F. Johnson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 3/21/23 Common Council Meeting - Vermillion Projection  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 22, 2023 9:46:29 AM  
**Attachments:** [2023-03-21 Common Council Presentation.DOCX](#)

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Dear Alders:

I attended the Common Council meeting on March 21, 2023 to address my opposition to the Vermillion project. Because of the 3 minute time limit I was not able to complete my presentation which I had prepared. Attached is the presentation I prepared, and I am requesting the presentation be added to the record of the proceedings. Thank you.

Robert Johnson

**Robert F. Johnson | Attorney  
von Briesen & Roper, s.c.**

411 East Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1000  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

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This message (including attachments) is privileged and confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete it without further distribution and reply to the sender that you have received the message in error.

I am one of a group of eight non-existent homeowners who apparently have non-existent homes between 1636 and 1662 Sherman Avenue. I make this observation because at p. 2 of the Vermillion Groups February 13, 2023 letter of intent to the Landmarks Commission, they identified the site of their proposed project as “surrounded by existing multifamily developments (Yahara Landing and River’s Edge Apartments) to the southeast, the Sherman Terrace Condominiums to the north, the community of Maple Bluff to the northwest, Filene Park and Lake Mendota to the west, and the Yahara River and Tenney Park to the south.” What they neglected to identify are the homes and residents between 1636 and 1662 Sherman Avenue who have never received an invitation to one of their so-called neighborhood meetings, but who have attempted to express their feelings and concerns about this proposed project in any way they can, albeit the City does not seem to be inclined thus far to consider them to be of any particular concern.

These are the people most affected by this project, not the people who drive by the site of the proposed project once in a while, not the members of any of the City Commissions who have been reviewing this project and holding meetings to discuss at which comments by the public are limited to 3 minutes, not the representatives of the project itself who do not live anywhere near the site, but the people who live directly across the street from the project, and the Sherman Terrace Condominiums to the north of the project. I find it interesting that the vast majority of individuals who have spoken in favor of this project during public comments in the past about the project do not live anywhere near the site, while those opposed do. These are the people who have maintained this area as far back as the 1930s to the present, pay significant property taxes and obey all of the rules for the privilege of living on Lake Mendota with the degree of privacy living in a single-family residence brings.

My family has been a resident of 1646 Sherman Avenue since 1934, when the home at 1646 Sherman Avenue was surrounded by woods, and where the land occupied by Sherman Terrace Condominiums was a corn field. Sherman Avenue is a two-lane street located in a largely residential area. Those residences consist of principally single-family homes on the west side of the street from the intersection of Sherman Avenue and Fordham Avenue to Tenney Park, and single-family residences on both sides of the street south of Tenney Park. On the east side of Sherman Avenue to the Filene Building there are a number of apartment complexes and/or condominiums between Fordham Avenue and the Yahara River, with those bordering Sherman Avenue, with the exception of the newly erected McKenzie Place (4-stories), limited to three stories, and those bordering Fordham Avenue principally three and four stories.

Traffic congestion has been an issue on Sherman Avenue for a considerable period of time, and has progressively worsened over time. The recent addition of The Gordon and McKenzie Place on North Sherman Avenue have accelerated this issue, and now with the addition of the newly constructed apartments on Aberg, the proposed Hartmeyer project and the plans being floated for the Oscar Mayer property, one can only imagine the traffic issues on this two-lane street. In this context, the Vermillion project is now being proposed which would add 400 automobiles on a daily basis to the already overburdened Sherman Avenue. There is simply no rational basis for this addition.

The suggestion that at some point in the future there will be a public street between Sherman Avenue to Fordham at the project site is a proposal without verification as to any contemplated date or whether it would even be able to be achieved. Currently the public street

proposed dead ends at the back of the development. For the street to continue to Fordham five privately owned apartment complexes with parking areas between the dead end and Fordham Avenue would have to consent, and in all probability alterations made in one or more of the privately owned properties in order to accommodate a public street. Further, even today when automobiles are traveling south on North Sherman Avenue and come to the intersection of North Sherman Avenue and Sherman Avenue, as opposed to continuing on North Sherman Avenue onto Fordham they make the jog onto Sherman Avenue presumably because it is a more pleasant drive and the opportunity to view the lake as they are going past Tenney Park. Explain to me why that mentality is going to change.

The Vermillion Group at the initial public meeting suggested Madison will need 10,000 additional residences in the next five years. Based on the current and proposed density of the area bordered by Aberg Avenue, North Sherman Avenue, Sherman Avenue and Fordham Avenue, it appears Madison is trying to meet this alleged need with the new apartments on Aberg, the Hartmeyer project, the Oscar Mayer plans, and now the Vermillion proposal. Why is this the chosen area?

The proposed Vermillion project is entirely incompatible with the existing residences along Sherman Avenue. In all due respect, Sherman Avenue is not East Washington Avenue. The area for the most part has attempted to remain a quiet residential area, and any new development should be compatible with this goal. One could understand, to some degree, if what was being proposed for the Filene site were side-by-side two-story townhouses which would maintain the residential character of the area, but not a five-story monstrosity which both physically and from a density perspective is inconsistent with this area.

Madison seems to pride itself on preserving the environment. How does a high-rise apartment complex virtually bordering the Yahara River and Lake Mendota, with water run-off issues, 400 cars polluting the air, the river and the lake on a daily basis improve the environment. Additionally, the waste issues that will be created by a minimum of 600 residents in this complex can only be imagined. From an environmental perspective, the Vermillion proposal has no environmentally redeeming value.

Interestingly, the Filene Building is set back approximately 75 ft. from the bordering sidewalk along Sherman Avenue making it somewhat unobtrusive to the area. However, the proposed five-story component of the Vermillion proposal is set back 30 ft. from the sidewalk making it massively obtrusive to the area. In any event, setting this aside for the moment, the noise level that will be generated by this massive complex will be extremely disruptive to the existing residences, both on the east and west side of Sherman Avenue, as well as the Tenney Park area, and adding a minimum 600 new residents to the area is completely incompatible with the history of this area.

During the earlier presentations by the Vermillion Group they touted the lake views the then six-story now five-story massive structure bordering Sherman Avenue would provide. However, with respect to the four additional apartment buildings that are part of the project along the north side and to the rear of the project, their views will be virtually blocked for the most part. Although we object to the project as a whole, it would seem placing the five-story structure at the back of the site and the lower structures at the front would offer lake and park views to more

residents, and also be an overall design more compatible with the neighborhood from an aesthetic point of view.

The people who live on the west side of Sherman Avenue in the immediate vicinity of the Vermillion project, as well as, we surmise, those living on Sherman Avenue generally in this area, did not purchase their residence to be confronted with a massive apartment complex with a five-story centerpiece virtually across the street housing an average minimum of 600 residents. They purchased and maintained their residence, and surrounding area, because they wanted to live in a largely single-family area, or at least in an area where the non-single-family residences were at least physically compatible, i.e., a maximum of three-stories high. We submit the building of this proposed project will completely destroy the residential character of the area and the surrounding park-like setting, and urge you to reject the Vermillion project.

Robert and Joan Johnson  
1646 Sherman Avenue  
Madison, WI 53704

38849623\_1.DOCX

**From:** [Kevin Luecke](#)  
**To:** [Plan Commission Comments](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Filene House Redevelopment  
**Date:** Friday, March 10, 2023 9:31:39 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Members of the Plan Commission and Common Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for the current proposal to redevelop the property at 1617 Sherman Avenue. As a longtime resident of the Tenney Lapham neighborhood, I have been a strong supporter of all efforts to bring increased housing to my neighborhood and the central areas of the city.

As you know, we are facing a housing crisis locally and a climate crisis globally. We have an urgent need to construct large amounts of housing in areas that are well suited for people to walk, bike, and take transit for their daily travel. This project location is ideal for dense housing development. While I wish that the project included substantially more housing units and substantially fewer automobile parking spaces, I believe that this project meets many of the City's goals for housing and sustainability and should be approved.

Please support this project as it comes before your committee or the council.

Thank you,  
Kevin Luecke  
121 N. Ingersoll St.

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Kevin Luecke  
[kluecke1@gmail.com](mailto:kluecke1@gmail.com)

**From:** [Gray McCord](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Diane Ingulli](#)  
**Subject:** 1601-1617 Sherman Avenue rezoning 3/21/23 meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, March 9, 2023 9:54:28 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I want to voice my opposition to building 311 apartments in this location. I am a homeowner in Sherman Terrace Condominiums. While building high-density housing is a noble idea, doing so in a location without the infrastructure to support the additional people is folly. Specifically the combination of the additional vehicle traffic on Sherman Avenue resulting from more than 300 new apartments and the fact that bus service at this location is planned to be discontinued will be an absolute nightmare. Sherman Avenue in this area is a 2-lane road that will not be able to handle the additional traffic and parking without impacting the rest of the neighborhood. Regardless of “no-parking” signs, I fully expect that overflow from those apartments will spill into Tenney Park, the locks and neighboring complexes, like Sherman Terrace.

Additionally, adding 5-story buildings next to the park and Sherman Terrace will restrict sunlight to neighboring units and having such large buildings in this area totally violate the architecture of the surrounding area.

This proposal must NOT be approved.

Gray McCord

Sherman Terrace Unit 34

Gray McCord

**From:** [Kären Miskimen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Common Council agenda item 76309 - opposed  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 3:22:17 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please deny the request to rezone 1617 Sherman Ave to TR-U2.

According to the Eken Park Neighborhood Plan, developments should match the density of existing neighborhoods. The Vermilion proposal far exceeds the recommended medium density.

They also have no interest in providing the much needed affordable housing. Vermillion denies another opportunity to build condos to create ownership opportunities.

This development would create an eyesore and engineering hazard for all of the adjacent parkways, small 2-lane street, Lake Mendota Yahara River, and surrounding community.

Please vote No to rezone 1617 Sherman Ave. Thank you!

Kären Miskimen  
[608-617-5909](tel:608-617-5909) (talk/text)

**From:** [Karen Miskimen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Oppose agenda item 76309  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 3:22:28 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Thank you for taking a moment to reconsider the development at 1617 Sherman Ave.

This proposal by Vermillion offers neither affordable housing nor owner-occupancy, so economically it will aid only the developers, who will charge "market" rent. Please require **lower density** and fewer stories of these developers, and for the future, build more condos and affordable housing.

If the goal is to meet the housing needs of our growing community, let's approve housing that is truly affordable, so that citizens can build intergenerational wealth.

While many of us appreciate the development size being slightly reduced, it still would not fall within the medium density recommended by [EEEPYN2016](#). Higher density housing developments are recommended for locations on major transit corridors, which Sherman Ave is not.

You may not realize it but the hourly-only bus service (offered for years on this part of Sherman Ave) will be reduced to peak-only service by the BRT redesign, which will make more cars on the road.

More **traffic** on a 2-lane road, and loss of natural habitat, both will impact the health, balance and beauty of the **natural spaces** it borders: Tenney Park, Filene Park, the Yahara River, its lock and dam, and Lake Mendota.

Please reconsider, and reject the rezoning request, contingent on a proposal that actually meets the needs of and benefits the Madison community, and not just a few wealthy investors.

Minnie Miskimen  
[K09L06M04@gmail.com](mailto:K09L06M04@gmail.com)  
Minnie on [Facebook](#)

Unless someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better.  
It's not.  
Dr. Seuss

**From:** [Thistle](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** The Vermilion Development on Sherman Avenue - Agenda item 76309  
**Date:** Friday, March 17, 2023 6:25:38 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I just registered my opposition to the Vermilion Development project that is being examined at the next Common Council meeting.

I live at Sherman Terrace and am the Community Gardens Coordinator there.

While I support developing low-income, sustainable housing in Madison, I do not think this project will provide Madison with that.

It is too big. Five or six stories? Plus you are sacrificing a historic building that now houses Care Wisconsin?

This new development will cause all kinds of logistical problems for us as residents of Sherman Terrace, parking and traffic being a big one, and for the city since it is going to be built on a floodplain.

In this age of climate crisis and increased risks of severe weather, including drought and flooding, we need to focus on sustainable developments that really serve the people and not the wealth of a large company from Chicago.

Thank you for receiving my comments. I hope you do the right thing and vote against this project.

~ Thistle Pettersen  
25 Sherman Terrace #6  
Madison, WI  
53704  
cell 608 316 5822

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“We are stardust, we are golden and we've got to get ourselves back to the garden.”

– Joni Mitchell

**From:** [A](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 3/21/2023 Common Council Agenda Item #5  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 1:59:19 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good afternoon Common Council,

Please consider my comments in opposition for the Common Council meeting on 3/21/23 for agenda item #5.

We continually hear that there is a shortage of low/medium income housing options in Madison. This building project seems to directly oppose the goal of making housing more affordable, making fewer and fewer people able to afford living in Madison.

I just wanted to share how this could directly impact me. My name is AR and I moved into the Sherman Terrace Neighborhood approximately 2 1/2 years ago. I loved the location, the quiet streets, being so close to Lake Mendota and Tenney Park, the convenience of the bike and walking paths, and the charm of our older buildings. I am one of few renters in the Sherman Terrace Community. Since I moved here, my rent has increased every year. My monthly income in 2023 is \$2,262.50 due to medical concerns. My monthly rent is \$1,000.00. In addition to my monthly rent, I have to also pay for heating, electricity, and A/C in the summer months. Every month, approximately 50% of my monthly income is spent on housing. I can barely afford my apartment as it is currently. If rates increase further because of this new apartment complex, you will be making my current neighborhood and home too expensive for me to continue living here. I am certain that other people might have similar concerns or situations, I am just one voice being bold enough to say: please do not build these apartment complexes. Please be consistent with your words and work to make housing more affordable and safe for all. This proposal is not the answer to our housing concerns.

Unfortunately, after receiving more information about the size of these proposed buildings and the amount of residents that they would bring to our neighborhood, I am even more concerned and opposed. This will completely change our neighborhood for the worse. Please take a moment to consider the amount of new residents that this will bring in, the increase in traffic in our small neighborhood with only two-lane roads, and the impact that this project will have on the flora and fauna of Tenney Park and our surrounding neighborhood. Logistically, I do not think our neighborhood is able to accommodate this influx of residents. Please consider the impact that this project will have on our environment as well.

Thank you for your time and for considering my request.

AR

Resident in the Sherman Terrace Condominium Association

**From:** [stanjreed@yahoo.com](mailto:stanjreed@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Development at Tenney/Care WI  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 22, 2023 4:26:08 AM

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**Recipient:** All Alders

**Name:** Stan Reed  
**Address:** 73 Fuller Dr., Maple Bluff, WI 53704  
**Phone:** 608-219-7726  
**Email:** [stanjreed@yahoo.com](mailto:stanjreed@yahoo.com)

**Would you like us to contact you?** Yes, by email

**Message:**

Packing too many people and cars into a small space would negatively impact the Madison jewel of the Tenney Park area. The traffic would be a huge safety concern on an already busy street. And what about the families in Sherman Terrace who rent and have purchased their homes to enjoy the setting and would be left with a giant apartment complex as their next door neighbors? Come on people. Don't succumb to the big bucks pressure of development and instead vote for the beauty and charm of a quiet Madison neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Stan Reed

**From:** [reps@cs.wisc.edu](mailto:reps@cs.wisc.edu)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] 1617 Sherman Avenue  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 11:31:23 AM

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**Recipient:** All Alders

**Name:** Thomas Reps  
**Address:** 1010 Sherman Avenue, Madison, WI 53703  
**Email:** [reps@cs.wisc.edu](mailto:reps@cs.wisc.edu)

**Would you like us to contact you?** Yes, by email

**Message:**

Dear Alderpersons,

We urge you not to approve the Vermillion Development plans for 1617 Sherman Avenue at tonight's Common Council meeting.

You are making at least a 75-year decision because the building will likely be used for at least that long.

You should not roll over for these developers.

In all of the meetings of the Landmarks Commission, the Urban Design Commission, and the Plan Commission, all parties agreed that the property should be developed for housing.

What should be of primary importance in your decision is that Madison obtain a good outcome, based on a good design of a project of appropriate size.

Among the plans that the city has approved is the Yahara River Parkway Master Plan.

Some of the plan's items are already implemented-and they are excellent, such as the bike and pedestrian underpasses in the Johnson Street and East Washington Avenue bridges.

The Yahara River Parkway Master Plan also considered new construction, saying that it

... should reflect the overall character, scale, and aesthetic attributes of the surrounding neighborhoods ..."

We don't see how anyone can say that Vermillion's proposal is in keeping with the overall character, scale, and aesthetic attributes of the surrounding neighborhood.

There are alternative approaches, and the only way you will be able to achieve it is to show some muscle by pushing back on the present Vermillion plan. For instance, the City Row Apartment complex on Johnson Street is a great example of new construction that matches the character and scale of its neighborhood.

For another approach, consider the apartments around James Madison Park, which were developed in the mid-1980s.

The city was fortunate to have enlightened developers.

Instead of constructing gigantic new apartment complexes, they reused the existing Nichols Station and Lincoln School buildings.

At last week's Plan Commission meeting, the developers stated that, from their study of possible adaptive reuse of the Filene House, only 50% of the structure could be retained."

They used that number as an argument about why not to pursue adaptive reuse, but consider some of the other buildings that have been adapted in projects in Madison:

Nichols Station apartments, Hotel Indigo, and the Yost-Kessinich

Department Store storefront that is part of the Overture Center.

50% retention sounds about right for adaptive reuse!

David McLean of the Landmarks Commission summarized the proposed project as follows:

... the design echoes downtown infill or an office park in the suburbs."

We agree, and urge you not to approve any measures that would allow the present plan to go forward.

The city deserves a better design and a better outcome.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Reps and Frances Wong

**From:** [Kevin Revolinski](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Agenda Item 76309 | 1617 Sherman rezoning  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 12:40:53 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To the City Council:

At this point in our struggle to push back at what we see as reckless development, I admit we are not surprised at where that the project at 1617 Sherman continues to move forward. From the very beginning the developers at Vermilion boasted in a Zoom meeting that they had already gotten a “green light” from the city and were told to “go big” but declined to explain where, when or with whom these conversations took place. But we knew then that we were up against insider politics and something that likely would get rubber-stamped and pushed through despite all arguments against it by the people who actually live in sight of and will be most affected by the project. Be that as it may, I am presenting my opposition to the rezoning for this Vermilion project at 1617 Sherman. The proposed project is not appropriate for the site and neighborhood.

Developers continually excuse themselves for only building rentals, which increasingly creates a culture here in Madison beholden to a landlord class with rents that are increasing at a staggering rate. The excuse is that banks won't fund such a project without an unreasonable number of pre-sales of the planned units. Yet here is a project that claims to not be taking any bank money so as to avoid the requirement for affordable housing inclusion. When asked about condos in meetings, Vermillion makes it clear it has no interest or intention. And still they request that our Eken Park Neighborhood Plan be ignored and they ask that you, the City Council that represents us Madisonians, give up yet another opportunity to provide needed **affordable** housing and possibly another opportunity to create ownership opportunities in favor of what amounts to lakeside and riverside housing for the **privileged**. They will say “market rate” but no one is naïve enough to think this won't be pushing the upper end of that, especially when we see Capitol view apartments along East Washington as far away as First Street already demanding astonishing rates that no school teacher in the district would be able to afford.

The profile of the project will harm one of the oldest and most beautiful, photogenic parks in the city and the green corridor that is the Yahara Riverway. We go to the park for its illusion of being wild. We should protect that visually. Low-built housing or complexes shielded from view by taller trees and the current thick brush where the local children play. When a support of the project pointed out two apartment towers on Fordem being visible from the park, I actually had to go over to Fordem to figure out what they were talking about. I've lived here over 16 years and had never noticed them, narrow and set back a *quarter-mile* from the Yahara River and colored in earth tones. Honestly, that's remarkable.

The developers also argue the structure won't be visible or mar the view from Lake

Mendota, as if two or three trees in Filene Park would somehow hide the elephant in the neighborhood, a full front-facing five-story-plus façade that comes forward all the way to the sidewalk unlike the shorter historical Filene Building which is set back over 30 feet.

The developers speak of “Green Roofs,” when in fact not a single resident structure will have any sort of green roof or solar element that might address our uncertain climate future. The green roof being referenced is that small area above the underground parking area that protrudes from beneath the residential buildings.

The Landmark Commission has reservations about how the height and landscaping of this development will affect Tenney Park and the Yahara Riverway, natural beauty that brings character to Madison and respects the very things that have made us such a desirable city in which to live and raise a family. Daniel Tenney, James Olin, and the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association had foresight and understood the importance of preserving this area already back in 1899. And here we are considering allowing **apartments for the privileged** to rise into the view so that the rest of the community, from all walks of life, will lose that beautiful surrounding green view, that unforgettable sense of place. This is no small matter; there are many of us who saved our sanity during the pandemic by strolling amid this insulated green space. It would be a shame if that were marred by the desire to charge higher rents.

Finally, there is an existential threat for many of us. We wonder when local government and private contractors will collude to force us out of the modest condos we have worked and paid for here over the fence at Sherman Terrace. Plans are already floating around out there with new streets drawn right through our homes, along with the affordable apartments at River’s Edge, Yahara Landing, Lakewood Gardens, Briarwood, some of the very last of the truly affordable housing left along the isthmus. At Sherman Terrace we have a lot of retirees on fixed income, graduate students, families, single parents, low-income/Section 8 units, and until recently, a politician of the people, our own former Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes.

As we push to scale down and adapt proposed development which will cast its literal shadow on us, there will be eye rolls and infantile calls of NIMBY. But **we** are the property that no one wanted in their backyard over the years. 219 two-bedroom units that have seen everyone from impoverished folks in need of help to a lieutenant governor. This is the sort of development we need. Affordable, built to suit the neighborhood, moderate density, three-story, and, ideally, an entry point for those who want to break the cycle of renting from big landlords.

We know affordable living. We know the value of keeping urban tree cover and all its relying wildlife along the riparian zone of the Yahara. We know investing in property and coming together as a community to effect changes, improvements, community gardens, and neighborhood watches. We understand that the usual suspects show up at these public development planning meetings who are often unreasonable and reject change or moving forward. In fact, many of us have stared at that wasteful empty parking lot at 1617 Sherman for years imagining development that could bring more people to our neighborhood, a project that would harmonize with Sherman

Terrace, Tenney Park, the Yahara, the Lake, and the historic Tenney-Lapham neighborhood. This Vermilion project is not that development. We beg you to consider other options moving forward, and to respect the decisions of the community as put forth in the Eken Park development plan.

Sincerely,

Kevin Revolinski  
17 Sherman Terrace

**From:** [Mary Ellen Spoerke](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item 76309 - Opposition to 1617 Sherman Avenue development  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 21, 2023 1:28:55 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Council members,

I am writing in opposition to the development proposed for 1617 Sherman Avenue. I have written my opposition to the Urban Design Committee and the Plan Commission and also registered my support for landmark status for the Filene House currently located on that property...all to no avail.

As a resident of Madison's east side and specifically Marston Avenue which borders Tenney Park, I feel a development of this size (330-plus apartments and 5 townhouses) is completely oversized for the lot size and the character of the neighborhood. We neighbors have discussed with various committees the adverse effects this would have on residents with increased traffic and noise, the deleterious effects on wildlife and migrating birds in the area, emergency vehicles access onto Sherman Avenue, to list only a few concerns

While Madison appears to have a growing need for housing, this development is rental only with no affordable housing and no pathway to first-time home ownership. It is strictly rental for individuals with large-enough incomes to afford the high prices of these units. Where is the commitment to community, schools, green space and overall quality of life when people do not have a vested interest in home ownership and in creating a viable, livable community? Many of us moved into housing on the eastside when it was not the most desirable place to live in Madison. Yes, houses were more affordable then but we also were committed to creating a strong community where we could raise our children, support their schools and help small businesses thrive.

Part of creating that community was preserving what is lovely here and that includes our historic Tenney Park and Yahara River Parkway. A high rise building plunked on a two-land street at the edge of the park will do nothing to enhance the park and its skyline.

Madison is at a critical crossroads in meeting an anticipated need for housing in decades to come yet preserving what makes our city a desirable place to live. So many box-like apartments have gone up in the past year, it's hard to even recognize certain streets.

I would like to emphasize that we have engaged in this struggle with little to no support from our once elected alders in districts 6 and 12. Equally disturbing is this week's revelation that the Wisconsin Realtors Association of South Central Wisconsin is pumping some \$170,000 into nine aldermanic contests this spring. This leads me to ask "Who is running Madison?"

We owe it to future generations to preserve what is beautiful and historic in Madison., including the Filene House. A development of this size will completely overpower the park and destroy what so many Madison residents enjoy. Once it's gone, we'll never get it back.

I ask members of this Council to consider closely the long-term effects this development will have on Madison and vote either to scale it down to a reasonable size that fits with the neighborhood or completely halt it. Instead of diminishing the beauty of Tenney Park, you have the power to continue the legacy of preserving and enhancing Madison's charm or you can choose to turn it into another box city.

Thank you.

## *Sherman Terrace Neighborhood Association*

March 19, 2023

Dear Members of the Common Council,

Sherman Terrace is the immediate neighbor of the proposed development at 1617 Sherman Avenue. As a neighborhood association we desire to inform you of our concerns and recommendations regarding that property and the Vermilion proposal.

The members of the Sherman Terrace Neighborhood Association support the City of Madison's interest in developing more housing by infilling. Furthermore, we share the City's interest in greater shared prosperity, building generational wealth, and the development of affordable housing insofar as we, ourselves, represent affordable owner-occupied as well as rental housing. We would heartily endorse a proposal for affordable, owner-occupied housing. The current proposal, however, falls short of the laudable goals and the neighborhood priorities in the 2016 Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara River Neighborhood Plan. Since that report, many City officials' have repeatedly expressed need for affordable rental properties. With the views of Tenney Park, the Capitol and Lake Mendota being touted by Vermilion, these units will command luxury rates. Rental rates in the area will increase as a result. We would prefer that the City of Madison invest in developing the location so that a socially and economically diverse group of Madisonians can purchase homes in which they can raise families, build equity, and become economically sound while being active members of our community.

This preference registered, we are most concerned about the scale of the proposed development for this neighborhood. The proposal envisions a density that is far greater than anything nearby. Furthermore, it exceeds Medium Residential Density of 16-40 units/acre that was recommended in the 2016 Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara River Neighborhood Plan for this property.<sup>1</sup> Neither of the conceptual site plans for this property outlined in 2016 plan exceeded 200 units yet Vermilion's current proposal has 331 units. It also exceeds the recommendation in the 1998 Yahara River Parkway Master Plan. "New residential construction should create housing types and densities that are *consistent with the existing housing adjacent* to each redevelopment site. Each housing development should have an affordable housing component."

The Yahara River Parkway Plan recommended 16-25 dwelling units/acre with selected areas higher at 26-40 for this site.<sup>2</sup> The preferred density of 16-40 units/acre in the 2016 plan concurs with this earlier recommendation and represents recognition of the larger context. The proposed development is sited on a largely residential two-lane street and is adjacent to Tenney Park. Other developments in the city of this scale are serviced by four and six lane arterial streets. The preferred Medium Density reflects a concern about more traffic on Sherman Avenue especially the segment that passes through Tenney Park. ***Furthermore, grocery stores, pharmacies, coffee shops, restaurants and other services are not within easy walking distance and the Transit Network Redesign has cut back on bus service to Sherman Avenue. The #2 bus route that now runs***

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<sup>1</sup> The 2016 Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara River Neighborhood Plan p 25: "Medium Density is the preferred land use." Medium Density is defined on p. 77

<sup>2</sup> Yahara River Parkway Plan, 1998, p. 66, italic emphasis added.

***toward downtown on the hour and away from downtown at quarter past, 18 hours a day, will be replaced by a peak-only service that is less direct.*** Residents at 1617 will need to use their cars with great frequency. The increase in traffic compromises both the safety and the recreational value of the park for pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of the boat landing that is immediately across the street from 1617 Sherman.

***Therefore, we do not support upzoning to Traditional Residential-Urban 2 and recommend instead Traditional Urban-Varied 2, consistent with the zoning designation for Sherman Terrace with its 217 units on 9 acres and consistent with both scenarios envisioned for the redevelopment of this property in the 2016 Emerson East-Eken Park-Yahara River Neighborhood Plan and the earlier Yahara River Parkway Master Plan.***

The proposed project calls for the demolition of Filene House currently occupied by Care Wisconsin. On January 9, 2023, the Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Common Council that the building be granted landmark status because the building housed the Credit Union National Association during the critical years of 1950-1979. The Common Council did not reject that recommendation but filed it without prejudice. It recognized that CUNA played an important role in burnishing the reputation of Madison both in the United States and the world as was so well articulated in the nomination filed with the Landmarks Commission. We endorse recognition, preservation and adaptive reuse of this building.

The larger trees on this lot are of great value to us, our neighbors, and visitors to this neighborhood. We fervently hope that they can be preserved.

While the Sherman Terrace Neighborhood Association appreciates the Vermilion's efforts to respond to neighborhood concerns, we encourage further review of all aspects of the plan before deciding on any destruction or development of the property at 1601-1617 Sherman Avenue.

Sincerely,

Larry Nesper  
Dan Wiltrout  
Monique Isham  
Kevin Revolinski  
Melissa Coons  
Ed Jordan  
Crystal Martin  
Douglas Buege  
Karen Miskimen  
Thistle Pettersen  
Bronwyn Shiffer  
Michael A. Cook  
Nick Hanke  
Blake Walter  
Kathryn Martin  
Nina Sparr  
Ann Shade  
Keely Mruk

Robert Schneiker  
Kevin Mullen  
Nathan Brelsford  
Donna Janquardt  
Jerry Pero  
Laura Jacoba Epstein  
Christine Knecht  
Colm & Jane McCarthy  
Kristina Klehr  
Andrea Olmanson  
K. Everett Fischer  
Gale and Regina Kirking  
Mark Freeman  
Jack Symes  
Lorraine Rondon  
Lee A Sippola  
Michael Kuharski  
Gillian Shaw

Jaime Hernandez-Mijangos  
Vikki Kratz  
Nereida Quiñones  
Allison Radke

**From:** [danwilttrout634@gmail.com](mailto:danwilttrout634@gmail.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Item 5, 76309 1617 Sherman Avenue zoning  
**Date:** Friday, March 17, 2023 8:31:05 AM

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**Recipient:** All Alders

**Name:** Daniel Wilttrout

**Address:** Sherman Terrace Building 29 Unit 2, 26, WI 53704

**Email:** danwilttrout634@gmail.com

**Would you like us to contact you?** No, do not contact me

**Message:**

Common Council 3.21.2023 allalders@cityofmadison.com

My name is Dan Wilttrout. I am an owner occupant in Sherman Terrace. I support reasonable development that meets this residential neighborhood needs now and for the future. The Common Council should consider the uniqueness of the location and adjust approval for the oversized buildings proposed for buildings at 1617 Sherman Avenue. Regarding Item 5 76309 zoning:

Sherman Terrace offers a better neighborhood example. It has a one story commercial building, on Sherman Avenue. The rest of the 216 residential units are on the remainder of the 9 acres, in three story buildings. About 60% are owner occupied, the rest are rental units.

The immediate neighbor Sherman Terrace on Sherman Avenue has a reasonable number of units per acre. At 26 units per acre it is within medium density recommended in the city adopted Emerson, East-Eken Park, Yahara neighborhood plan.

Its target demographic of market rate rentals, in a census tract characterized as a “low income investment opportunity” ignores affordable home ownership - a top priority in Madison.

The proposed height and landscaping plans for this project will result in a large and visually intrusive front and side buildings that will negatively effect the neighborhood and green cover over the landmark Yahara river parkway..

Thank you for your consideration and approval of a much smaller development for this site in order to both meet housing needs and maintain the integrity of the Yahara neighborhood and Yahara river parkway.

Dan Wilttrout, Sherman Terrace 29-2