

From: [Loren Shaw](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Reference #91512 (5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle)
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 5:27:49 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I'm a parent of two children at Montessori Children's House on Medical Circle and I am deeply concerned about the impact the proposed building on Odana Rd will have on my children's safety and environment while at school. The 6 story building is proposed to be built too close to our playground. The proximity combined with height creates fundamental safety and privacy problems that cannot be solved by simply moving balconies or planting trees. Both windows and balconies will have direct sightlines into our playground where young children should play freely and safely. I am also concerned about the air and noise pollution that being boxed in between the Beltline and the two buildings will create on our playground. This is inappropriate and presents a liability and danger in its placement next to an early childhood setting. The existing neighboring apartment complex behind our school (on Odana Rd) is set back further from the playground. This new building should match that existing setback standard. Tree plantings cannot adequately screen a building of this height (6 stories) particularly when it is positioned this close to our property line.

I urge the Commission to require an increased setback for the Odana Rd building to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback, and remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy protection for our young children.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this matter,

Loren Shaw

646-919-7915

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Loren Shaw
(she/ her/ hers)
646.919.7915

<http://lorenshaw.myportfolio.com/>

From: [Blythe Kennedy](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Item #91512
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 2:58:13 PM

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I have not been able to attend previous committee meetings on this subject, but my understanding is that construction is scheduled to start in July when there are still some very serious questions/concerns regarding how this will affect the Montessori Children's House building that has been serving Madison families and children for over 60 years. This is a daycare center and during the summer the children (as young as 18 months) are outside for most of the day. Has there been any discussion as to how this construction project will impact the daily activities of the MCH students and staff? What are the plans to mitigate any adverse effects?

The actual building design for this new complex also presents some concerns, especially regarding the proximity of the new building to the MCH daycare center. I urge the Commission to require an increased setback for the Odana Rd building to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback, and remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy protection for the children who attend MCH.

Thank you,
Blythe Kennedy

From: [Michael Tappa](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: comment re #91512
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 2:53:37 PM

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Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing to voice my opposition to the 5555 Odana Road Project as currently designed. I am a parent of a preschooler at Montessori Children's House (MCH) and neighborhood resident. I understand the need for additional housing is significant in our community and I am not opposed to a housing development at this location, however the current design is inadequate and as such has the potential to negatively impact the community. Lastly, it cannot be overstated how much of a community asset MCH has been and will continue to be if permitted. Along with housing, having access to high-quality early childhood education is of paramount importance to livability of a city. MCH has been a leader in this space for over 60+ years, a legacy almost unheard of in our current environment of corporatized childcare. As I can attest the positive impact that MCH has had on our city's youngest residents and their families is impossible to overstate. This development as proposed will essentially box in MCH to the north and west, change the character of the neighborhood, and alter how MCH can utilize its school playground. Prioritizing the needs of the school to continue to thrive should be of paramount importance considering what it brings to the community yet that has not happened so far. Not only have the developers made no real effort to reflect their proposed buildings are adjacent to a school, but the school itself has been removed on the Project Plans presented for this meeting (first page of plans...the SE view of building B the school is missing while other existing buildings are shown) and MCH is only seen on aerial views. It appears the omittance of the school on the plans is intentional which may be reflective of how the developer sees this property. I have three primary concerns with the current proposed listed below:

1. Combining Lots:

Proposing to combine the lots on 5555 Odana Road and 5534 Medical Circle fundamentally does not make coherent planning sense. Odana Road is a major thoroughfare with many retail businesses and multi-family housing units. There is a neighboring apartment complex at 5577 Odana Road. The current building at Supreme Health and Fitness has little architectural value. I am in support of an apartment to be developed at 5555 Odana Road and the lot setbacks should be maintained as it is at 5577 Odana. Developing an apartment at 5555 Odana Road will not significantly alter the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Medical Circle is not a major thoroughfare and has no housing. Other than MCH most of the businesses on Medical Circle are non-retail and provide medical services. Four of the buildings in the center of Medical Circle are all designed by influential architect Marshall Erdman and fit a similar mid-century Frank Lloyd Wright inspired aesthetic. The Marshall Erdman building at 5534 Medical Circle proposed to be demolished is actively used and in apparent

good condition. There are no other buildings more than two stories on Medical Circle. Developing a very tall, large modern-style apartment building will be out of place and change the character of Medical Circle while also losing a piece of Madison's architectural legacy.

2. Traffic concerns:

Odana road already has congestion issues during periods of heavy traffic. Of particular note is east bound lanes often back up from the Whitney Way intersection to past Medical Circle during afternoon rush hour. Westbound cars attempting to turn left into the current shopping center often are unable to do so and spend significant time in the single turning lane waiting for an opportunity. The main driveway to 5555 Odana will similarly require westbound traffic to make a left turn through traffic. Of particular concern is that oncoming eastbound traffic turning north into the parking lot of the large shopping center at 680 Whitney Way will be directly competing for that same left turn lane. This seems very likely to cause traffic flow issues and possible accidents.

3. Bear Development LLC:

Lastly, I am concerned that Bear Development LLC proposes to use public financing for this project but may not be a corporate citizen worthy of our tax dollars. Bear Development was recently accused of not paying construction workers for wages and injury-related workers compensation on a previous Madison development project by Bear Development (The Intersect). The workers were forced to picket the Common Council meeting before Bear Development agreed to payment earlier this month. I think it is fair to question if Bear Development would still be withholding payment if not for seeking city approval of the current proposal. Additionally, it is my understanding that Bear Development has attempted to or provided cash payments in the form of equipment for two community neighbors impacted by this development (West Side Swim Club and MCH). This appears to be essentially a bribe to buy their acquiescence with the development and silence their voices. Coupled together with the unpaid wages during The Intersect construction and one wonders if Bear Development is a worthy steward of the public interest which should be a prerequisite of obtaining public financing and permitting for such a large-scale project that will impact neighboring institutions.

your consideration,

Thank you for

Michael Tappa

The Plan Commission: 03/16/2026 Meeting

Comment on Item 91512: Development at 5555 Odana Rd / 5534 Medical Cir

Dear members of the Planning Commission:

My name is Victoria Williams and I am a parent of two children who attend Montessori Children's House, as well as a homeowner here in Midvale Heights.

I am writing to express concern about the potential impacts of the proposed apartment development on local infrastructure, traffic patterns, and pedestrian safety in our neighborhood. While thoughtful housing growth is important, it is equally important that new development aligns with the capacity and safety of the surrounding community.

A development of this scale has the potential to significantly increase daily vehicle traffic in an area originally designed for much lower residential density. Even moderate-sized apartment buildings can generate hundreds of additional vehicle trips per day, particularly during morning and evening commute hours. Increased turning movements into driveways and parking areas can create congestion and introduce new conflict points for both drivers and pedestrians.

Pedestrian safety is an especially important concern at this particular location. Several months ago I witness a jogger being tragically struck by a speeding vehicle at the intersection of Odana Rd and Whitney Way, underscoring the very real safety risks that already exist here. The proposed entrance to the apartment complex would be located at a point on Odana Rd where two lanes merge into one, a condition that already requires drivers to adjust speed and positioning. Placing a new development entrance at this exact location adds additional turning movements and driver distraction at a moment when traffic is already compressing.

Compounding this concern, the proposed entrance would sit directly across from an existing shopping center entrance that already generates frequent turning traffic and congestion. Vehicles entering and exiting the shopping center often slow, stop, or turn across traffic lanes, creating unpredictable conditions for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Adding another major point of entry and exit directly opposite this location on Odana Rd risks intensifying an already problematic traffic pattern.

The proposal also includes a second entrance on Medical Circle Drive. This roadway is already frequently used as a cut-through by drivers attempting to avoid the significant traffic backup on Odana Road. As a result, Medical Circle Drive currently experiences through-traffic that was never intended for a local access street, which already poses a

significant safety risk for a school zone. Adding another access point for a large residential development risks further increasing this shortcut traffic and could worsen congestion and safety concerns for those who live, walk, or work in the immediate area – especially during peak traffic times that coincide with school pick up and drop off.

Another safety concern relates to driver behavior caused by the heavy congestion on Odana Road near this intersection. Because traffic frequently backs up for long stretches, some drivers accelerate down the turn lane in an attempt to bypass the line of stopped vehicles before merging back into traffic. This especially creates dangerous conditions for vehicles attempting to turn onto Odana Road from Medical Circle Drive. I have personally experienced several near-miss situations when attempting to turn left onto Odana because vehicles were unexpectedly speeding through the turn lane and were not visible due to stopped traffic. Introducing additional traffic and turning movements in this already complex traffic environment could further increase the risk of collisions. A simple solution would be to install traffic islands to prevent thru traffic in the turn lane, similar to what is already in place on Odana Rd near West Towne Mall. The added traffic with the new development may also necessitate a new traffic light.

Existing neighborhood infrastructure may also face added strain. Many residential areas were built decades ago with assumptions about density that differ significantly from what is being proposed today. Roadway capacity, parking availability, stormwater systems, and utility infrastructure may not be designed to accommodate a sudden increase in residents and vehicles without appropriate upgrades or mitigation measures. I trust that the Planning Commission is considering these factors as well.

Finally, the cumulative effects of multiple developments in a neighborhood should be carefully considered. Even if a single project appears manageable in isolation, the combined impact of additional traffic, infrastructure demand, and pedestrian activity can significantly change the character and safety of an area.

For these reasons, I respectfully encourage the Commission to carefully evaluate the proposed development's impact on traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and infrastructure capacity. Particular attention should be given to the safety implications of placing a new development entrance at a lane merge directly opposite an already busy commercial entrance at an intersection where a fatal pedestrian accident has occurred, as well as the potential for increased cut-through traffic along Medical Circle Drive and unsafe driving behavior in the turn lane on Odana Road. Thorough traffic studies and careful consideration of alternative site access designs may be necessary to ensure that growth occurs in a way that prioritizes safety and long-term community well-being.

In addition to my concerns above, I am also providing a written transcript of my spoken comments at this meeting for your references. Please see below:

I'm writing to ask you to reconsider the proposed developments that would surround and overshadow our neighborhood Montessori preschool – an institution that has quietly but profoundly enriched this community for more than sixty years.

We all recognize the need for thoughtful, well-planned density. But good planning is not only about the number of units we can fit onto a parcel. It is about how our decisions shape the lived experiences of the people who are already here – especially our youngest residents, who have no voice in this room.

A Montessori environment is not just a building with children inside it. It is intentionally designed around light, openness, and a deep connection to the natural world. Sunlight is not a luxury in that model – it is a core educational tool. Children learn by observing shadows, tending plants, and working in bright, calm spaces that support focus and emotional regulation. The proposed buildings would quite literally cast this school into shadows for much of the day. That is not a metaphor. It is a physical reality that will affect classroom quality, outdoor play, plant life, and the psychological well-being of our children who spend their formative years there. For six decades, this preschool has served generations of families. It has supported working parents, prepared children for lifelong learning, and created a stable community anchor. You cannot replicate that kind of social infrastructure once it is lost.

City planning should protect these long-standing community assets, not isolate them. Surrounding a preschool on multiple sides with six-story buildings creates a canyon effect – blocking light, increasing noise, and limiting airflow. With the nearby highway corridor, boxing in the preschool with tall continuous structures raises concerns of funneling and accumulating traffic exhaust directly where our children learn and play. Young children are especially vulnerable to air pollution exposure, increasing their risk for lifelong chronic disease. From a public health perspective, we should not be designing conditions that risk intensifying air pollution at an early childhood site.

The proposed apartments also fail to reflect the architectural character that makes this neighborhood unique and a point of civic pride. As embodied in the Marshall Erdman building set for demolition, this area is widely recognized for its cohesive mid-century design – low profiles, human scale, generous setbacks, and an intentional relationship between buildings, trees, and open sky. By contrast, the current proposal introduces mass-produced looming structures with no visual connection to the surroundings. Replacing a

distinctive architectural legacy with generic bulk diminishes what makes this community special. Once a historic Erdman building is gone, it cannot be reconstructed.

As proposed, the current development sacrifices both architectural heritage and child-centered urban design for bulk and density alone. We are not asking you to reject development. We are asking for a solution that offers a more contextualized, scaled, and protective design. A step down in scale and echoing existing forms would complement nearby architecture. Introducing step-backs, reduced height, and increasing the set-back would still allow for new housing while preserving sunlight and air flow for our children. I have created a simple AI rendering of an architectural design inspiration that could still increase housing density but also pay homage to the lost Marshall Erdman structure. As you can hopefully agree, it is quite possible to imagine a solution that reflects the scale and materiality of this neighborhood without importing a templated corporate design that can be seen in literally any city across this country... one that seems to emphasize profit margins over human-centered design and community identify.



Thank you for your time and consideration.

Victoria Williams

4825 Woodburn Dr

Madison, WI 53711

832-741-9435

From: [John Porco](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Item #91512
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 2:45:00 PM

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I am writing in opposition to the proposed development that would span Odana Rd. And Medical Circle. The developer by pushing to maximize the number of units (and presumably their return) going to cause irrevocable harm to the surrounding area. While Madison does need new housing, the construction of so many single bedroom apartments does not help fill the needs of our community at large. We need two and three bedroom apartments for families to get a toe hold in our community. This development should contain a better mix of single and family style apartments. Secondly, while Madison is has limited parking downtown where people go to work, not requiring adequate parking in a place with zero on street parking will needlessly create congestion and safety problems. There will not be enough parking for each unit as the plan is currently proposed, let alone the proposed retail. It will be a disaster in the summer when the pool is supposedly also sharing this limited parking. Parking is not something that can be added later on as this block is developed. Less parking makes sense downtown to limit the amount of people commenting to work, but it makes no sense out where people will live and need to park their cars. This location is not on the BRT, it is not reasonable to assume that the people who will occupy these apartments will not need a car. I am surprised that the developer did not have to complete a traffic study to see how the addition of so many single bedroom units will effect traffic in the area, particularly with a proposed alleyway cutting from Odana to Medical Circle. IN addition to the residents and customers of this proposed development using the alleyway to search for non-existent parking, people who are in a hurry to get from Odana to the Beltline will bypass the light at Odana and Whitney by cutting through this alleyway. The fact the the alley contains two 90 degree turns that shift it around the playground of a preschool should be concerning to everyone involved, particularly since the plan calls for the removal of the trees along that property line. There will be nothing to stop an errant driver from failing to make the first turn and ending up in the playground. In short, the proposed development is so focused on profit maximization that it creates undue burden on the surrounding businesses and community by having too many single bedroom units with too little parking and a poorly planned alleyway with no traffic study. Madison does need to develop housing, but not in this way. We don't need more developers building housing that is so keenly focused on maximizing their profit that they limit the growth of the community they occupy. We don't just need more boxes to put people in, we need smarter developments that help our community grow not only in terms of our population, but in terms of our opportunity.

John Porco

From: [Erin riley](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: comments on Reference #91512 (5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle).
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 2:38:23 PM

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I am Erin Riley, a board member of the Montessori Children's House (MCH) and a parent of a child at that same school. I am registering against the proposed development on 5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle. I would, however, like to note that the developer has alleviated the concern of the pet relief area being located directly adjacent to the playground by moving the proposed location of the pet relief area. This is greatly appreciated, and I look forward to finding solutions to other concerns.

As a long time Madison resident, I understand that change is a healthy part of a vibrant city. I love that Madison has continued to change in response to the needs of the community. I also understand that we need additional affordable housing for the ever increasing number of people who want to live here. The Odana/Medical Circle neighborhood on paper is a wonderful place for high density, low income apartment complexes, with shopping, public transit and bike commuter lanes right outside of the door. However, I have some concerns about the development as it is proposed. I believe these concerns are within the purview of the planning commission to address, as these items regard the scale, traffic patterns, and overall uniqueness of the neighborhood, current Erdman building corridor.

My first concern is that the increased building height scale near MCH will mean that highway noise is increased for both MCH and the new and existing apartments. The highway traffic noise will bounce off of the new hardscape of the apartment buildings, and echo back towards MCH. Additionally, the noise from the large heating and cooling systems required by such a building will add volume to the existing soundscape. As constant, loud background noise is a stressor for public health, it is not in the best interests of the students or the apartment dwellers to be in a place where it is uncomfortably loud while utilizing the outdoor spaces. Utilization of the outdoor spaces by the school is not optional, as the school is required to provide outdoor time for the students, weather permitting. It is best if this outdoor space is free of excessive noise and air pollution while the students are getting their recess time.

I strongly urge the committee to consider noise mitigations as part of the development of this neighborhood. Part of the needed noise mitigation is already in place due to the developer's proposed landscaping and tree placement. However, it is possible that additional noise mitigation will need to be in place to keep noise at a manageable volume. In order to make this determination, I strongly urge the committee to consider a sound study, taking into consideration the effect of the new apartment buildings. This noise will

have a great impact on public health for the students as well as the livability of the area, which in turn will impact the ability of the apartment buildings themselves to be a good place for renters to live.

My second concern is that the proposed building A on Odana Road is much closer and much higher than either the existing commercial building it will replace or the existing adjacent apartment complex. As such, there is a privacy concern where the apartments are directly overlooking the playground. The scale of the building will appear to be disproportionately large due to the elevation change between the proposed apartment building A and the Montessori Children's House. Again, some mitigation is already in place due to the proposed landscaping efforts in the trees, but we need to be mindful of the fact that trees take time to mature and in the meantime several generations of students will have passed through the school. During that time, the school may struggle with enrollment due to justifiable privacy concerns from parents. I would ask that the committee consider a larger setback of the building on Odana road.

My third concern is that the planned building B is a large change in scale and nature to the existing Erdman building, a medical clinic. It is the nature of commercial buildings to occasionally change hands and purpose. Regardless of the fact that demolishing the existing Erdman structure will be a substantial change to the medical corridor, adding a higher building elevation of apartments to the site, as well as addition of a parking lot corridor between Odana and Medical circle will cause a fundamental change in traffic patterns. The traffic pattern of the apartment complex will add to the high volume of cars during drop off as well as the late pick up hours of the Montessori school, as the school provides wrap-around care for the families that need it. Additionally, there will be cars potentially utilizing the newly-created parking lot passageway around the apartment buildings as a shortcut between Odana and Medical Circle during rush hours, which include these same drop off and pick up times for the school.

I also do not believe that the number of parking spaces in the garage and the associated lots will be sufficient to hold the number of cars that will be used by the residents. I know that it is a goal for the city of Madison to decrease the number of cars on the roads. However, intentionally or not, the lack of parking for the residents, as well as the commercial spaces in buildings A and B will result in additional cars utilizing the street parking on Medical Circle, congesting the street. This creates a potentially unsafe two-way driving situation on Medical circle, as the street is narrow in this location. I do not believe that the increase in traffic will have a minimal impact on drop off and pick up times for the school. I ask the council to be extremely mindful of the traffic congestion around this time. Thank you for your time and consideration

Erin

From: [Elliot Meyerson](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Comment on 5555 Odana
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 2:12:31 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

Extensive research in child development has shown that perceived surveillance by untrusted parties can stunt healthy cognitive development.

Imagine an adult stranger who, every morning, drives to the parking lot above the playground, gets out of the car and carefully watches the MCH children during their outdoor time. Do you agree that MCH would be within their rights to request the city's help to deter this individual?

Balconies overlooking the playground would create an opportunity for such a scenario, but without recourse, since occupants would be within their rights to watch the children from their own property.

It is incumbent upon the commission to reduce the likelihood of such scenarios, to understand the tradeoffs between the benefits of the balconies vs. the adverse impact on child development, and to clearly articulate the tradeoff they are making in terms of overall impact (including the harms they are accepting) when they make their final decision.

To this end, during the planning meeting, I implore the commission to verbally communicate their understanding of the harms to affected parties, and to allow video for all participants, so that they can see the real concern, and not simply brush it away as abstract and hypothetical.

Sincerely,
Elliot Meyerson

To the Honorable Members of the City of Madison Plan Commission:

I am Karen Moore, a 26-year resident of Madison's Carpenter-Ridgway Neighborhood on the east side and the grandparent of a current student at Montessori Children's House.

First of all, I would like to note that I am thrilled to see that Madison's strong commitment to housing access and equity continues to thrive. Housing, especially affordable housing, is a critical need in this community, and I am very glad that the City of Madison is working to establish more housing on the west side in addition to the multiple new developments already in place in my own east-side neighborhood.

That said, I also have serious concerns about certain aspects of the 6-story development that is proposed for 5555 Odana Road/5534 Medical Circle. I respectfully ask the Plan Commission to consider the following points.

Montessori Children's House (MCH) at 5530 Medical Circle is a vibrant, thriving child-centered preschool that recently celebrated its 60th anniversary. Indeed, there are current students at MCH whose parents attended MCH as children, making it truly a multi-generational treasure in Madison.

The proposed housing development would be extremely close to the lot upon which MCH is located – so close, in fact, that the design in its current incarnation would present an active danger to the children who attend the school. The height of the proposed new building means that windows would have direct sightlines into the MCH outdoor playground. This is both inappropriately and dangerously close to an early childhood educational facility.

The unfortunate reality of the era in which we live is that schools must plan for the possibility of violence targeted toward students. This requires schools to control visual access to outdoor areas where children congregate, to limit vantage points overlooking the school grounds, and to be able to observe potential threats. The proposed location of the mixed-use building at 5534 Medical Circle would mean that six stories of open balconies would overlook MCH's playground from a distance less than two car lengths' away from dozens of preschoolers.

Some sources have suggested tree plantings as a screen, but trees cannot possibly provide an adequate screen for a 6-story building. Additionally, trees require decades to reach their full height, meaning that even for a smaller building, decades' worth of students at MCH would be subject to inappropriate viewing from the apartment building as they engage in learning activities on the playground.

There is currently an apartment complex on Odana Road behind the MCH building that is set a reasonable and appropriate distance from the school's playground. The proposed new development should be revised so that it matches the same setback standard.

Additionally, the development design as it currently exists calls for balconies overlooking the MCH playground. This presents a further privacy concern for the children who use the playground daily. Absolutely no preschool should have residential balconies that look down on its playground.

Moreover, as a taxpaying citizen of the City of Madison, I have no desire to see my tax dollars squandered on defending litigation undertaken against the City for approving this development unchanged if a child is injured or killed due to the location of this development.

I urge – nay, plead with – the Commission to require an increased setback for the proposed Odana Road building to match the setback established by the existing apartment complex.

I further plead with the Commission to require that all balconies on new buildings adjacent to the MCH property be relocated away from areas overlooking the preschool playground.

The safety and privacy of the children, who range from 18 months to 6 years old, should be paramount in considering possible new developments adjacent to Montessori Children's House. I respectfully ask the honorable members of the Plan Commission to keep this priority in the forefront of your collective awareness as you evaluate the proposed housing development at 5555 Odana Road/5534 Medical Circle.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Moore". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and email address.

Karen Moore
mukahosc@gmail.com

From: [Kaylie Palmon](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Comments on Agenda/ Reference item #91512
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 12:44:34 PM

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Dear Planning Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and opinions on the ongoing and potential development to be located at [5555 Odana Road/5534](#) Medical Circle Dr. My family appreciates the willingness that the City of Madison is extending to those that will be impacted by the proposed development.

For some background, I am Kaylie Palmon, and my child has attended the wonderful Montessori Children's House since the fall of 2023. My child was welcomed and thrived in the half day Toddler Program and now is a student in the preschool program as he is approaching four years old. Most, if not all, parents struggle to find early childhood care and education that meets the following metrics: safe, affordable, caring, local, and intellectually stimulating. I could write an entire novel for singing and lauding benefits of Montessori Children's House (MCH); however, I know that is not the objective of this meeting. To be succinct that regard, my husband and I cherish our child's time at MCH and to declare that MCH has been both a godsend and a boon to our child and to us would be underselling how truly special and amazing this school is.

To that point, the proposed development as presented for [5555 Odana Road](#) is incredibly harmful to our children. To propose a six-story apartment building, in which said building would be factually located less than 100 feet away from the playground, is violation of privacy of the one of the most vulnerable populations we have. To state the obvious, the children attending Montessori Children's House are children- ages ranging from 18 months old, to 6 or 7 years old. These young children play every weekday (weather permitting) outdoors on the playground that Baer Development wants to build said apartment building incredibly close to. That is unsafe- in both a physical sense and a body safety sense. The building's occupants would have a direct and unfettered line of sight (both from windows and the addition of balconies) into the children's playground- which is very uncomfortable for tenants and unsafe for children. Our children, and future children at MCH, deserve security and privacy while playing outdoors. Additionally, it is to be noted that all child-care and early education schools with wrap around care must provide a minimum of outdoor play (WI-DCF 251.06, section 11), so MCH cannot simply remove the children from the sight of the future tenants of [5555 Odana Road](#). These vulnerable children will be outside, and it is both the responsibility of MCH and society to keep them safe. In summary, the development must not be so incredible close to the playground of the school. It is a reasonable solution to move the proposed apartment building farther away from the school so sight-access into the playground is mitigated and our children remain healthy and safe. Baer Development needs to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback and remove the balconies overlooking the playground. Additionally, Baer Development needs to provide secure fences to prevent access from tenants or guests into MCH's property- this is a necessity for the security of the children.

I will admit, I am being optimistic in the above paragraph as to the future of the proposed apartment building. If it was to be built, the City of Madison needs to seriously consider the impacts of said building. While we all acknowledge the housing shortage both nationally and locally, it needs to be stated that affordable housing should not and cannot come at the sacrifice of children's safety and affordable childcare. If the building was to exist it would severely impact the viability of MCH. To remove MCH from the community would be devastating. MCH is affordable for working parents, but also, it is a safe place for our children to learn and grow. I would love to state that all early education centers and school are safe, but that would be untrue. I encourage the members of this committee to look at national and local school safety numbers. In an age where we unfortunately do have to be aware of gun violence, neglect, and abuse- MCH is a haven for parents to entrust our children to the dedicated and loving teachers of MCH. I feel safe that my child is at MCH. My family does not worry about our child's safety when his in their loving and safe care. Adding this six-story apartment building (as proposed) would permanently alter the safety of my child and other children. It is reckless of the City of Madison to sacrifice children at the altar of affordable housing.

On a more immediate concern, the construction phase of the proposed development is also an issue. Baer Development must provide not only "bare minimum" of construction debris cleaning/safety at 5555 [Odana Rd/5534 Medical Circle Drive](#), but must also go above and beyond to provide safety for the children. While I am not an expert in large construction projects, there needs to be a solution in which MCH (and MCH's families) feel safe having our children attend school while on going construction is happening. Regular and continuous cleaning of the school and playground must be apart of the proposal; if that is met with opposition, is the City of Madison and Baer Development willing to accept the outcome that future serious illness are highly probable? The children are extremely young- does City of Madison/Baer Development really desire to cause extreme health issues in one of the most vulnerable populations? I do not have a bullet point list of exact measures that need to happen to prevent or considerably limit the outcome of health issues, but I trust MCH's leadership to submit to Baer Development the metrics that need to be maintained for safety and limit interruption to the school day.

There are a multitude of reasons why this project must be altered, and I am willing to provide more "bullet points" if needed, but, in the spirit of not writing a novel, I will summarize. City of Madison cannot and should not accept the current proposal- it is incredibly damaging to a vulnerable population (young children) and to parents who depend on MCH to provide safe and loving care. It is damaging to MCH, a long standing (non-profit) pillar of childcare and education in Madison, as enrollment could decrease if parents do not feel safe anymore sending their children there during construction- or even after if six-story building is built as currently proposed. Again, safe and affordable childcare and early education should not be sacrificed. It is incredibly difficult to find childcare locally (and nationally) that meets demands of parents and the City of Madison should not have to accept sacrificing childcare and the safety of children at the behest of adding additional affordable housing units when reasonable alterations to the proposal can be accepted.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide me and my families comments on the above agenda item. It is encouraging that the City of Madison is willing to listen to the public,

especially when it impacts children's safety and when our own tax dollars are being used to provide affordable housing grants and alleviate/encourage housing construction. We are hopeful that the City of Madison can provide a safe environment for our children.

Thank you,

Kaylie and Phil Palmon,

(parents of current 4 year old attending Montessori Children's House)