

City of Madison
Interdepartmental Correspondence

Date: August 28, 2009

To: Board of Park Commissioners

From: Linda Horvath, Planning Division

Subject: FINAL DRAFT Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan

The Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhoods received planning assistance to prepare neighborhood plans in 1992 and 1996, and to update these plans starting in 2007. The FINAL DRAFT 2009 Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan is an update of the 1992 and 1996 plans. Review and approval of the 2009 Final Draft by 11 Boards, Committees, and Commissions is underway. Plan adoption by the Common Council is anticipated October 6, 2009.

Enclosed is a copy of Final Draft Volume I which includes all draft plan recommendations. There is also a Volume II which includes background information used to develop the recommendations in Volume I. Volume II was not included in your packet but it can be accessed on the neighborhood plan webpage at:
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/neighborhoods/northsideplan/index.cfm>

A neighborhood-based Steering Committee, appointed by the Mayor, prepared the 2009 plan update. The Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee (NWS SC) includes 23 Committee member positions for neighborhood residents and business owners. The planning process began with a kickoff Open House on September 29, 2007. City Planning Division staff managed the planning process which included facilitating 37 Steering Committee meetings all open to the public, helping the SC host four large-scale public open house events, two public input coffees, and 20 interviews with area community organization representatives. City staff also worked with the SC to regularly feature articles in the Northside News, a publication that is sent to all Northside households, and neighborhood association newsletters to share plan process updates and draft plan recommendations. Additionally, the City's neighborhood plan webpage featured neighborhood plan drafts and encouraged public comment throughout the planning process. Also, City staff and members of the SC attended area neighborhood association and other community group meetings, activities, and events to share draft plan recommendations and ask for public input. The plan's parks, open space and natural resource recommendations reflect a great deal of public discussion and debate.

FINAL DRAFT Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan

The *City of Madison Comprehensive Plan* (adopted 2006) recommends adoption of neighborhood plans for established residential neighborhoods within the City. The *Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan (NWS Plan)* is a mid-range (5-10 year) plan that will be adopted as a supplement to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The planning area boundaries include: Commercial Avenue on the south, Packers Avenue and CTH CV on the east, Wheeler and Havey Roads on the north, and Woodward Drive and Lake Mendota on the west. The *NWS Plan* recommendations are divided into categories consistent with the Comprehensive Plan: land use, transportation, housing, economic development, parks and open space, and community facilities. There are also recommendations for gateway corridors and neighborhood and personal safety.

Implementation of the neighborhood plan will take place over a 5-10 year planning horizon. To help account for limited City resources, plan implementation will be based on NWS SC priorities as indicated by the order of recommendations in each section of Volume I. The SC also set its top six priorities for the overall plan which are included on page four of this memo. Planning assistance through Community Development Block Funds is also available for the SC's list of eligible priority projects included in Volume I, Chapter Ten. Finally, a Tax Incremental Finance District (TIF) has been proposed for the Northside. This potential TIF could provide some resources for eligible neighborhood plan projects.

Board and Commission Review

The *Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan* was introduced at the July 7th Common Council meeting. Referrals include the Plan Commission (lead), Community Services Committee, Board of Public Works, Pedestrian/Bicycle/Motor Vehicle Commission, Economic Development Commission, Urban Design Commission, Board of Parks Commissioners, Community Development Block Grant Commission, Long Range Transportation Planning Commission, Transit and Parking Commission, and the Board of Estimates. Boards and Commissions will review the Plan based on their area of expertise. All motions to adopt, or adopt with conditions, will be forwarded to the Plan Commission. The Plan Commission will compile a *final report* to the Common Council. It is anticipated the Common Council will take action on the Plan at its October 6, 2009 meeting.

Plan Recommendation Summary

The Northside is largely a residential subdivision which is interlaced with large scale parks and open spaces such as Warner Park and Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park. There are also a number of smaller neighborhood parks like Windom Park, Berkley Park, Whitetail Ridge Park, among others. Through public input opportunities, discussions with City of Madison Parks Division staff, and many discussions at regular SC meetings, the NWS SC recommends that there be an update to the Parks Division Warner Park Master Plan, an older plan for the Park which has been fully implemented. The neighborhood plan includes some specific recommendations for the update to the Warner Park Master Plan. These includes such things as a complete walking path around the perimeter that is adorned with additional benches and trees especially for people who are older who indicated that they would like a place to sit and rest periodically in the shade. Other recommendations include adding winter amenities such as cross country ski trails, ice skating rental and concessions, etc.

A summary of the parks and open space recommendations along with related land use and transportation and community facilities recommendations are included below:

Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resource Recommendations (Volume I, pages 37-40)

- Prepare a land use plan for Warner Park that includes an inventory and evaluation of current use levels, and identification of future recreation activities with cost estimates and evaluation of neighborhood impacts.
 - Formal entrances into park on Northport Drive and North Sherman Avenue with public art, landscaped medians, and improved sidewalk system.
 - Permeable green paving system or bioswales to provide vegetative cover with minimal loss of parking spaces in parking lot off North Sherman Avenue.
 - More extensive path system around park perimeter that connects gaps in current system and includes amenities like additional benches and picnic tables, etc.
 - Upgrade Monterey/Warner Park playground area and add sidewalk leading to it from Monterey Drive.
 - Clear select trees and brush in heavily overgrown area off of Monterey Drive and restore native plantings where appropriate.
 - Clear select trees and brush near tennis court to make more visible to park users.
 - Make park more of a winter destination by considering addition of groomed cross country ski trails and snow shoe trails, ice skating rink on lagoon, and ski and ice skate rental.
 - Add water-related recreational activities.
 - Create small site gathering places in Warner Park for quiet respite.
 - Enhance existing playground by intersection of Troy and Forster Drives.
 - Engage in separate planning process for consideration of swimming pool to evaluate cost/benefit and impacts to nearby neighborhoods.
 - Evaluate cost/benefit of WPCRC expansion.
 - Work with State, Dane County, and other groups to determine best way to improve lagoon water quality and wildlife habitat.

- Explore options to improve water quality at Warner Park Beach.

- Explore establishing a greenway connection and/or wayfinding system between Northside greenspaces and greenspaces to the south such as Tenney Park.
- Consider adding a spray park at Warner Park Community Recreation Center, Berkley Park, or another appropriate park or open space.
- Evaluate building footbridge over culvert at 1158 Woodward Drive to connect north and south portions of Warner Park beach areas and consider enhancing changing house/restrooms with play areas, additional grills, etc.
- Support Dane County Lake View Hill Master Plan including improved connectivity with Warner Park with a pedestrian path along rear property easement of Lakeview Offices and future UW Credit Union site.
- Remove low-growth vegetation along property line between Windom Park and Packers Townhouse Apartments to improve visibility.
- Consider adding artistic screen panels between the sidewalk and road along Woodward Drive to create an attractive buffer and explore ways to involve area children/youth in panel design and installation.
- Consider adding a play structure and half-court basketball to Brentwood Village Park.

Land Use and Redevelopment Recommendations (Volume I, pages 5-22)

- Northside TownCenter
 - Increased density and more compact building form in relation to transit-oriented development (TOD) principles as stated in the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan.
 - Private and/or public main streets north-south and east-west through the site with high visibility crosswalks, sidewalks, pedestrian signs, and other pedestrian safety and access amenities.
- Airport-Gateway
 - Bike/pedestrian path through this area using City-owned rail right-of-way linking to a larger system that circulates throughout Madison.
 - Safer pedestrian crossings and intersection improvements at CTH CV-Darwin Road and Packers Avenue-Schlimgen Avenue.
- Northport-Troy
 - Public cul-de-sac with sidewalks from Northport Drive to the future UW Credit Union site, Woodlands Apartments, and commercial uses; and a pedestrian/bicycle connection using the easement behind UW Credit Union and connecting from the northwest corner of Warner Park to the southeast corner of Lake View Hill Park.
- Raemisch Farm Property
 - A compact development pattern using TOD principles.
 - Street/path system connecting to adjacent sites, the rest of the Northside, and the City.
 - Bike/pedestrian pathway linked to other proposed pathways to the Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park and south to existing and proposed bicycle routes.
- Northgate – Oscar Mayer
 - Increased density and TOD principles.
 - Consider relocating North Transfer point to this site.
 - “Main street” system connecting existing streets like Stephen Street and Ruskin Street, and new streets to enhance connectivity within and through the site.
 - Extend Ruskin Street near Commercial Avenue north to Huxley Street – mitigate traffic impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.
 - Connection between potential street/path system, commuter rail, and bus transfer point.
 - Street or pedestrian/bike east-west connection near Schlimgen Avenue across Packers Avenue to Pankratz Street.
 - Support Sherman Flyer bikepath and interim bikepath proposed to extend from Commercial Avenue to Roth Street and Huxley Street.

Transportation Recommendations (Volume I, pages 33-36)

- **Short-term (0 to 3 years)**
 - Pedestrian safety and aesthetic improvements along North Sherman Avenue from Trailsway Street to Northport Drive with landscaped pedestrian islands and high visibility crosswalks.
 - High visibility crosswalks and other pedestrian amenities at locations along Northport Drive, North Sherman Avenue, and Packers Avenue.
 - Remove free-flow right turn lane from Northport Drive onto North Sherman Avenue and replace with a dedicated right turn lane and pedestrian safety enhancements.
 - Support efforts to continue planning for the Sherman Flyer and Hartmeyer bike paths.
 - Relocate bus stop on Northport Drive currently located adjacent to the East Bluff Condominiums and align it with the entrance to WPCRC.

- **Long-term (more than 3 years)**
 - Comprehensive transportation plans for the North Sherman Avenue and Northport/Packers/CTH CV corridors with recommendations for pedestrian, bike, bus, and motor vehicle movement and safety improvements; corridor connections to potential high-speed rail station; economic development strategies; aesthetic enhancements.
 - On Northport Drive from Packers Avenue to North Sherman Avenue or Troy Drive consider: a) reducing Northport Drive from three lanes to two lanes; b) widen terrace, and plant street trees and other landscaping; c) mark bike lanes.
 - On Northport Drive from Troy Drive to Knutson Road, consider widening street terrace and narrowing median, plant street trees and other landscaping, install environmentally friendly drainage on median, and mark bike lanes.
 - “Main street” along North Sherman Avenue, perhaps where commercial development is concentrated, with safer pedestrian and bicycle connections, streetscape enhancements, etc.
 - On Aberg Avenue, pedestrian island at Huxley Street, high visibility crosswalks, bike lanes from Packers Avenue to North Sherman Avenue.
 - Work with DOT to explore options for pedestrian, bike and motor vehicle safety and traffic flow improvements to intersection of Northport Drive/Packers Avenue/CTH CV with possible reconstruction to a roundabout or t-intersection, high visibility crosswalks, wide sidewalks and bike facilities.
 - In Airport/Packers Gateway area, new public street connecting Packers Avenue/CTH CV/Northport intersection and American Drive.
 - Widen sidewalk along Warner Park side of Northport Drive from North Sherman Avenue to Troy Drive.
 - Consider marking bike lanes along a possible future street connection from Eliot Lane to Prairie View Road with any new development in Tennyson Lane and Raemisch farm areas.
 - Pankratz Street connection to Shopko Drive.
 - Sidewalk and street lighting on southside of Darwin Road from Packers Avenue to River Food Pantry.
 - High visibility crosswalks, and pedestrian islands at Woodward Drive intersections with Farwell and northwest end of Warner Beach; also install sidewalks in Warner Park along Forster Drive.
 - Close gap between Warner Park beach sidewalk and sidewalks on Sheridan Drive and Farwell Drive in Maple Bluff.

Community Facilities and Services Recommendations Summary (pages 41-44)

- Explore options to improve social services and community support resources.
- Increase academic and recreational programming for children/youth.
- Continue support for area groups such as the Northside Planning Council, River Food Pantry, and the Northside Farmer’s Market.
- Consider expansion of facilities such as the Warner Park Community Recreation Center and Lakeview Library.

- Create neighborhood-based network that assembles and disseminates community information about neighborhood programs, events, and activities.
- Strengthen and increase job preparation resources for youth and adults.
- Encourage employment of local residents at area community organizations and schools.
- Explore and encourage improving Northsiders' access to affordable and nutritious food.

Priority Plan Recommendations

The *Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhood Plan* identifies six top recommendations:

- Strategy to improve the identity, branding, marketing, and retention of Northside businesses (*Economic Development #1*).
- Land use plan for Warner Park (*Parks, Open Space, and Natural Resource #1*).
- “Main street” along North Sherman Avenue, perhaps where commercial development is concentrated, with safer pedestrian and bicycle connections to businesses and adjoining neighborhood streets, and streetscape enhancements. (*Transportation Long-Term #2 and Gateway Corridor #1 for further streetscape details*)
- More programming for children/youth within the neighborhood including after/before school programs for school age children, positive youth development activities, academic support and recreation for middle school and high school age youth. Strive to grow, enhance, and support existing youth programs, and replicate or grow successful programs in areas with unmet needs. (*Community Facilities #1*)
- Neighborhood stabilization options for emerging neighborhood areas including Brentwood, Karstens, Kipling, and Vera Court; include landlord training, property inspection and maintenance, and hiring of local residents for property management or neighborhood improvement activities. Provide support for resident involvement, strengthen connection to local schools and community centers, and improve access to and information of local resources for children/youth and families. (*Housing #3*)
- Improve social services and community support resources for the Northside (*Community Facilities #7*).

Public Participation

The Northport-Warner Park-Sherman Neighborhoods solicited input from a wide cross-section of the community prior to and during the planning process:

- *Community Group Interviews* with 20 organizations prior to planning process to identify key issues.
- Four *Large-Scale Public Open Houses* to identify neighborhood issues and review plan drafts.
- Steering Committee members and City staff attended various *neighborhood events and activities* such as Kennedy Heights Spring Fling, Northside Farmer’s Market, and North-Eastside Senior Coalition concerts in Warner Park to inform people about the planning process and to solicit input.
- *Participation in meetings of stakeholder groups* such as the Northside Planning Council, Northside Business Association, and 11 neighborhood associations to discuss plan.
- *Two public input coffees* with representatives of community groups such as the Northport and Packers Community Learning Centers, neighborhood associations, schools, the Northside Planning Council.
- *One-on-one stakeholder interviews* with organizations representing primary property interest.
- *12 focus groups* with stakeholders as part of the Northside Market Study to solicit economic development input and ideas.
- *Neighborhood planning articles and announcements of public input opportunities* in the Northside News, Northport News, Sherman Neighborhood Newsletter, etc., beginning in fall 2007.
- *A planning website* (<http://www.cityofmadison.com/neighborhoods/northsideplan/index.cfm>) with plan overview, agendas, minutes, background information, public open house results, and plan drafts.

Neighborhood planning information was also made available at Lakeview Library.

cc: Ald. Satya Rhodes-Conway, District 12
Ald. Michael Schumacher, District 18