

From: [Andrew Walsh](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: 7/16 Mtg Agenda Item 3: comment letter
Date: Wednesday, July 16, 2025 2:44:49 PM
Attachments: [3565 Tulane and Streets -- comment letter.pdf](#)

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Greetings,

I have attached a document which reflects both my support for the project at 3565 Tulane Ave (Agenda Item 3) and my urging for the city to consider improvements to the streets and intersections surrounding the project property. As mentioned in the letter, I would be happy to engage in further conversation and I believe the property owners and residents would be as well.

Thank you for your consideration,
Andrew

July 16, 2025

Greetings,

I am writing regarding the Eastmorland Community Center and housing re-development project on the Eastmorland neighborhood triangle – the property bounded by Hargrove, Tulane, and Ogden at 3565 Tulane Avenue. I urge your support for the project and write specifically regarding an aspect on which, I have no doubt, raises the hackles of many: the configuration of the roads and parking lots. Nevertheless, I respectfully request you consider this perspective as you weigh alternative courses of action.

As you all know, this parcel occupies a place in the center of the neighborhood, adjacent to the Schenk and Whitehorse schools, not far from the Capital City Trail, and a block from the neighborhood's community gardens. The current structure on the property is home to the Eastmorland Community Center, Common Grace, the Ethical Trading Company, Kindling Community Arts, a Play-and-Learn site for the Madison Metropolitan School District, and a meeting place for a variety of neighborhood groups. Behind these organizations, business, and affiliations are communities of adults at all life's stages, families, and children who have established strong and interlocking bonds with one another.

This geographical siting, while perhaps not necessary for the success of the Center, has undoubtedly played a role – and will continue to play a role – in the Center's accessibility, visibility, community engagement, and ultimately, success. A project such as this, in my view, will re-vitalize the property, allowing for the Center's work to continue, improve, and expand.

I am a parent of a Schenk elementary student, part of the Common Grace faith community, a patron of Kindling Community Arts, and a contributor to the Eastmorland Community Center Capital Campaign. My stake in the success of the project should be obvious. I write not only to communicate that this project should earn your support but also to urge you to make a concerted effort to assess and improve the streets and intersections around the property.

I am aware of prior discussions having been held on the topic of reconfiguring the streets surrounding the proposed re-development. Though I have not been fully privy to the details of those discussions, I do understand all previous proposals have been rejected.

I have observed, for many years as a Community Center user and resident of the neighborhood, that these streets, while providing essential access to the higher-volume roads surrounding the neighborhood (Dempsey, Atwood, Walter, and Milwaukee) are doing so at the expense of the other use-types these streets support. The re-development of the Triangle, and the activities that will occur as a result, are likely to bring this tension further into focus.

As I see the current architecture of the streets, there are two fundamental issues:

- The width of, intersection angle between, and sight lines at Hargrove and Dennett are challenging to navigate by all modes other than vehicle
- On street-parking on the 3500 and 3600 blocks of Hargrove appear to be used irregularly, likely due to the scarcity of residential addresses on those blocks, making those parking lanes unable to serve meaningfully as traffic calming measures

Within the Eastmorland neighborhood itself, I have seen how road construction and re-construction can vitalize a community space. A prominent example is the establishment of the Lansing Street Food Forest and the conversion of Starkweather Drive into a one-way street and bike path. That area now supports organized and impromptu gatherings, recreation, and opportunities that did not exist previously – opportunities which flourished because of the infrastructure changes.

I would be remiss to not acknowledge that one compelling motivation, especially to the city, for the Starkweather Drive project, including the bridges and multi-use path connecting the Garver Feed Mill, Milwaukee Street, and OB Sherry Park, was to remove the ability of those roads, paths, and park to accommodate illicit drug activity.

Setting aside this motivation though, such a project could have easily stood on other merits. It would be hard, I believe, to find a voice that does not express appreciation of the space to walk, pick fruits, meet friends, host markets, paddle canoes, and stroll along the creek – all activities that are now more accessible than were previously.

I urge a similar re-imagination and re-vitalization of the Hargrove-Dennett-Ogden streets and intersection adjacent to this re-development. While the addition of apartments will likely increase the vehicular use of the area, the community center activities, insofar they provide activities and engagement geared for neighborhood residents, could well be understood to have limited impact on existing vehicular demands, as many can and do access the Center by foot or bicycle.

I offer the following points as generalized alternatives, in the spirit of meeting shared city, re-development, and neighborhood goals as I understand them. Further, I acknowledge they may resemble variations on ideas that have been previously rejected. However, as the justifications for past rejections remain murky, I raise them again for re-consideration.

- Regarding Hargrove Street:
 - In the 3500 block, 1) remove NW portion while preserving access for a multi-use pathway, and 2) convert SE portion to residential access and parking to eliminate or reduce the need for a stand-alone parking lot on the re-development property. Traffic traveling through the block would be diverted and calmed by using Tulane and any resulting green space on the re-development property could be incorporated into landscaping designs and programming
 - For both the 3500 and 3600 blocks, convert to one-way traffic flow, with angled or parallel parking on the 3500-block sufficient to eliminate or reduce the need for a stand-alone parking lot on the re-development property. On the 3600 block, new opportunities would arise to re-envision the green space, stormwater management, and multi-use path(s)
 - In both above, align the intersections of both sides of Hargrove with Dennett to be perpendicular, creating a ‘jog’ in Hargrove
- Regarding Dennett Street:
 - Narrow the street width from the intersection with the Capital City Trail through the intersection with Hargrove, make intersections with adjoining streets perpendicular, and add cycle and pedestrian road striping and crosswalks.

I appreciate the attention you have given this letter and would welcome continued conversation and feedback on these issues and ideas.

In closing, I believe it would be hard to find anyone who disagrees with the general premise that city infrastructure plays a critical role in advancing the city’s goals and meeting the needs of its residents. Further, I believe the Eastmorland Community Center has worked diligently to craft a proposal that meets its own needs, the neighborhood’s needs, and the city’s need. I urge approval of the project and request city make additional efforts to improve the design and construction of the streets surrounding the project.

Respectfully,

Andrew Walsh