

From: [Matthew Farrelly](#)
To: [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#); [Board of Public Works](#); [Lynch, Thomas](#); [Transportation Commission](#); [Traffic](#)
Subject: Re: Hammersley Road Redesign
Date: Monday, March 7, 2022 10:06:15 AM
Attachments: [March 5, 2022.pdf](#)

Good morning, Alders and Madison Transportation Commission and Public Works Board:

I hope that this finds you well. Attached you will find a copy of the letter that I drafted on March 5, 2022. I have appended numerous signatures both of Hammersley residents and only some of the guests from outside of the neighborhood (in Madison and beyond) that come to my home on a weekly basis. I could have provided more signatures, however, time seems of the essence.

I thank you for your consideration of this matter and the many voices in and outside of our neighborhood. Thank you.

All good wishes,
Matthew

p.s. I have copied and pasted the letter below as well, in case that is helpful.

March 5, 2022

Matthew Farrelly
5522 Hammersley Rd
Madison, WI 53711

Dear Alder Cole, Transportation Commission Committee, Board of Public Works, and Common Council:

I hope that this finds you all well. I understand that there is still time to provide input to you all. I thank you for taking the time to read and respectfully consider this letter as an earnest response to the most recent Orchard Ridge Neighborhood Association letter that included Alder Yannette Figueroa Cole's letter within it.

Thus far, I have responded to the survey that was sent to each home concerning this project. I expressed my concerns there, some of which I will address here, though with more specific detail as related to the recent letter from Alder Cole. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the Zoom meetings due to my schedule (I am a PhD candidate in the Education and History departments and I teach at the university during those times), however, I drafted a letter and sent it to Mr. Aaron Canton and Mr. Bill Bremen (of Orchard Ridge) to express my views. In addition to expressing my own views, I walked Hammersley Road in order to acquire signatures of those neighbors who were in opposition to the slated plan. Including myself, I acquired 16 signatures. I could have acquired more, but some neighbors were not home at the time.

These details seems to indicate a contrary state of affairs to Alder Cole's indication that "only a few notes of concern" have been raised. Furthermore, I would like to respond to some of the specific concerns that Alder Cole raised in her recent letter, most especially regarding how the Hammersley Road resurfacing/redesign project touches on matters of *safety*; *community input/communication*; *the Hammersley road Project and its relationship to Vision Zero*; *values of equity and inclusivity*; and *interpretations of our neighborhood parking concerns and motives*.

Please understand that the concern for **safety** of our streets and those who use our streets — cyclists, walkers, elderly, youth, handicapped, drivers — are concerns that are shared by our community. In fact, representative persons from each of these demographics live on our street. And we *do* desire safe streets for all, not just for those living on our street. Our values for safe streets, I believe, should not be questioned or assumed to be guided by purely selfish desires and only "personal use" concerns. I am not privy to all forms of communication that have been sent, nor do I want to speak for all persons on our streets, but *carte blanche* over-generalizations about our motives is uncharitable and disrespectful — assuming we care nothing about our relationship to the wider citizenry of Madison. That seems out of place and unwarranted.

Parking is indeed a concern for those of us who live on Hammersley, though not solely for our own personal and (implied) *exclusive*, selfish concerns. In fact, safety of not just ourselves, but those who use the street for multi-use purposes is chief among our concerns. Furthermore, that street parking be retained is a serious concern for people like myself for maintaining an inclusive neighborliness and

open hospitality. Weekly, I host multiple community-building gatherings in my home for a diversity of people from all over Madison, not just Hammersley or Orchard Ridge.

Without parking on the street, I am deeply concerned that my ability to be hospitable to my guests would be threatened as I do not have enough driveway room to accommodate them all. Parking on Gilbert or Whitney Way seems out of the question precisely for *safety* concerns — what the plan is ostensibly meant to safeguard. With the slated plan, I can't imagine being able to host guests as I do and maintain my own values of inclusivity and hospitality.

Hammersley Road is a public road, yes; nor does it belong to any one of us who live on it. However, we who do reside on the street maintain a vested interest that it be a safe road not just for ourselves, but for our guests and all who use it — cyclists, walkers, etc. As a citizens of Madison and Orchard Ridge, I can speak for many of the neighbors that live on my stretch of the street: they are concerned for the well-being of our neighborhood and *all* who use its streets.

Vision Zero's stated values are my own values and they are the values of many who live on Hammersley. I desire to eliminate traffic deaths and injuries on our streets, including Hammersley. The stated value of Vision Zero is to “improve the *identified high injury intersections*” and to do so by means of “data-driven enforcement *and* community engagement.” When considering the safety data provided on the Vision Zero website (“City of Madison, WI 2020 Crash Facts”) it is important to note that there have been absolutely no bicycle or car crashes on Hammersley Road. I respectfully ask that these values be honored and that *rhetorical* appeals to fear (that Hammersley is not safe) not cajole city officials into making a decision that is unnecessary or imprudent, holistically.

The highest injury and death data, to my knowledge, comes from the tragic history of the Whitney Way and Hammersley intersection that, thankfully, has largely been solved with the creation of the by-pass that was built there some years ago. The Hammersley road traffic between Gilbert and Whitney Way has drastically been reduced since then. Of course, if prudent changes should be made to ensure the greater safety of the historically “high-injury intersection” of Whitney-Hammersley be made, then I am in full support, however, I fear that the multi-purpose path would create more of a danger than imagined.

I am not, in principle, opposed to making changes to Hammersley Road if I knew that it would truly make a difference for safety for all who use it, not just those who reside on our street. However, my concern is that this plan reflects an all-too-common attempt to implement a **top-down bureaucratic plan** that does not adequately account for the “**street-level bureaucracy**” of those who live and work here — all, ironically, *not* in adherence to the plans own stated values. I was a K-12 teacher for 10 years before entering the PhD program at UW-Madison, and there was nothing so frustrating as top-down implementations that did not account for the on-the-ground needs and conditions as experienced by teachers and students in the classrooms.

Hammersley Road should absolutely be a safe road for all. I respectfully ask that serious consideration be taken to reflect on whether the slated plan *overestimates* the safety that the multi-use path and green would bring. For many of us who live on the road, we envision it as holding great risk of producing greater safety hazards than imagined by the committee — a safety hazard for those who would use the multi-use path *and* drivers, residents, and those state and local workers who utilize the street (such as postal service, lawn-care crews, tree-services, city crews who remove yard waste, etc.) and its available road-side parking lane.

I respectfully ask that you consider the above when making your decision for Hammersley Road. I cannot speak for all residents' motives, but I have interacted with enough to know that a considerable number are not motivated by purely selfish ends. Hammersley Road has been in sore need of a **resurfacing** for the safety of all who use it. Its uneven surface, potholes, and lack of vibrant and reflective painted lines has been the greatest concern I have had for safety for all.

I do very much thank you for your time in reading this. Thank you for your service to our community and for considering these concerns. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me via mail, email (matthew.r.farrelly@gmail.com), or phone (630-441-8108). Thank you.

In summary, I have bulleted the concerns as follows:

- **Safety:** we are concerned for the holistic safety of *all* who use Hammersley Road; we strongly feel that the redesign changes would actually pose a greater safety threat, most especially at the intersection of Hammersley and Whitney. Please consider each segment of Hammersley Road and its **local conditions**.
- **Parking:** I cannot speak for the entire stretch of Hammersley, but between Gilbert and Whitney, parking is utilized by many residents — *and their many guests* on a weekly basis. Please do not remove our ability to be inclusive and hospitable, if these are genuine concerns we share.
- **Vision Zero Values and Data:** please let the values of the program (and data) *consistently* guide the decision for Hammersley in a way that accounts for local conditions and local wisdom and prudence borne from many collective years of experience of that place. And **please do not assume** that these same locals do not care about these values and

for the betterment of Madison's streets and citizenry.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Farrelly

P.S. I have walked the neighborhood and have acquired the following signatures of those neighbors on and around Hammersley Road who support a reconsideration of the slated plan in keeping with the spirit of the above letter. While they may have a difference of opinion on some of the issues as I've stated them, they oppose the plan as it is currently proposed and respectfully ask for your reconsideration. Thank you.

Matthew Farrelly
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