

From: Sue Ellingson <sue.ellingson@icloud.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 6, 2021 9:55 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Knepp, Eric <EKnepp@cityofmadison.com>; Evers, Tag <district13@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Fwd: Vilas Park - In favor of Campbell St

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I'm sorry. I guess I didn't have the correct email address

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sue Ellingson <sue.ellingson@icloud.com>
Subject: Vilas Park - In favor of Campbell St
Date: March 6, 2021 at 9:39:28 AM CST
To: Eric Knepp <eknepp@cityofmadison.com>, Tag Evers <district13@cityofmadison.com>

To the Board of Park Commissioners and Alder Evers:

There is a proposal in the new Vilas Park Master Plan to move the entrance to the zoo to Campbell St. There is a letter circulating in the neighborhood opposing this change because of concern for the Indian mounds in Bear Mound Park.

I am in favor of moving the entrance to Campbell St.

- The zoo *entrance* as-is isn't so much of a problem. But the zoo *exit* at Grant and Drake is a problem. It's an odd intersection that drivers don't always get right away. Should I go? Not go? Who has the right of way? Plus there can be many pedestrians in summer. Also, westbound traffic on Drake St has to stop at the bottom of a hill, going up to Grant St. In slippery winter conditions, too often drivers get stuck there and can't get going again.

- In my opinion, the concerns about people exiting the zoo at Campbell St and continuing north around the Bear Mound are overblown. Few drivers will choose that route. Vilas Ave around the Bear Mound is tiny. And the streets are not in a grid. You have to know the area well in order to get anywhere. Maybe speed humps could be added to Campbell St to further discourage traffic.

I hope you will approve the proposal to move the zoo entrance and exit to Campbell St.

Thank you.

Sue Ellingson

1922 Vilas Ave
sue.ellingson@icloud.com
608-320-8206

From: Meg Lamm <meglamm@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 6, 2021 10:04 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Meg Lamm <meglamm@gmail.com>
Subject: Vilas Park Master Plan

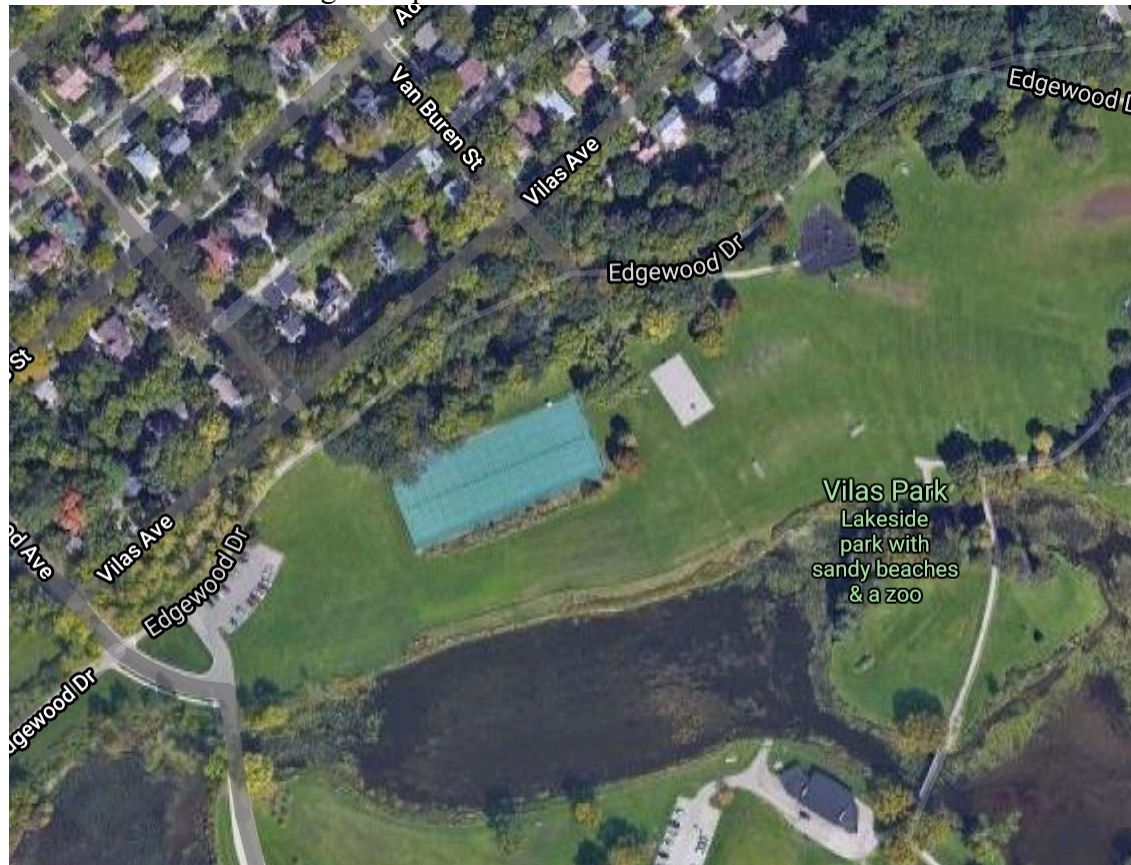
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Hello,

I appreciate all of the work that has been put into re-designing Vilas Park. I live near the park and have some concerns about the current Master Plan.

1. It seems unfortunate that the proposed playground near the beach that was in earlier drafts of the master plan was taken away. A lot of families from outside the neighborhood use this area and would enjoy a playground there, with the ability to go back and forth from the beach and the playground (and the zoo). Taking away the beach playground (which serves people from all over the city) and reinstating the one near Van Buren does not seem right. I agree with keeping the one near Van Buren - surely a park as large as Vilas could use 3 playgrounds. What better to invest in than children and families?
2. The area around the beach seems way too built up. The road and parking lot are much closer to the beach than they are currently, and much of the current greenery is being gone. This would make the beach much less attractive. Is there any way to use the parking lot at the end of Orchard St., perhaps only on weekends, and then the new parking lot by the beach wouldn't have to be as big?
3. A lot of people bike through the park. Is the new proposed multi-user path large enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists? I'm especially wondering about the area east of the beach, near the parking lot. It looks very narrow for having both pedestrians and bicyclists.
4. I'm glad to see that the parking lot near the tennis courts/Edgewood Ave was made smaller. It still seems too big, though. Can we take advantage of available street parking and not grow the size of this lot so much? And it seems like a traffic study should be done to make sure that this park entrance, which seems kind of like a bottleneck, would not be too busy or have any safety hazards. Perhaps the informal paths from Vilas Avenue into the park could be made into real walkways so that the park would be even more accessible for those parking on this street.
5. In the park currently, there is plenty of grass around the basketball court (see image below). I would urge you to retain the current separation of the basketball courts from the tennis/pickleball courts, and retain this green space, rather than having all of the athletic courts attached together, making a big monolith that would make the area feel very built up.

Current conditions with green space between basketball and tennis courts:



Thanks very much for taking into account so many different considerations from so many people — it must be hard to balance them all!

Best wishes,
Meg Lamm
resident of Vilas neighborhood

Meg Lamm
meqlamm@gmail.com

From: Emily Kohlase <emilykohlase@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 6, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Vilas Park Master Plan (Agenda Item 64455)

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Dear Board of Park Commissioners,

I am writing in regard to the Vilas Park Master Plan, which will be Agenda Item 64455 on the March 10 BPC meeting.

While I support parts of the Master Plan, I suggest the following modifications:

-The proposed Campbell Street entrance should not be considered part of the Master Plan and should not be approved because not enough data is available to justify this change. A thorough traffic study, an environmental impact study, and more public forums need to be conducted before any recommendations regarding the entrance to the park can be made.

-Preserving as many of the trees in the park as possible—particularly the mature oak trees throughout the park and the large willow tree and other trees on the waterfront near the proposed southeast parking expansion—should be a top priority.

-Parks should continue to work with St. Mary's to allow public use of their employee parking on weekends so that less parking within the park is needed.

-The entire lagoon should be dredged, not just the west side.

-The proposed paved walking paths in the middle of the park should not be added.

Thank you for listening to my feedback.

Sincerely,
Emily Kohlhase
1212 Vilas Ave #2

From: Ka'tya Fassett <katyafassett@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 9:54 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: agenda item 64455 - master plan comments

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Lack of parking for Vilas Zoo is a big problem negatively impacting the residents of the Vilas neighborhood, and I don't see that this issue has been addressed in a satisfactory way in the Vilas Park Master Plan.

The primary entrance to Vilas Zoo is on the North side, yet very few parking spaces are planned near that entrance. It is the beginning of March (several inches of snow are still on the ground) and we are in a pandemic, but even now at this early point in the season parking on weekends on streets surrounding the zoo is a problem. I live a few blocks from the zoo, and yesterday (Saturday, March 6th) I had trouble getting my car out of my driveway due to cars parked

beyond the curb and crossing over the area that is my driveway. This is unfortunately a common problem for me on weekends during the 3 seasons when the zoo is busiest. Visitors to the zoo clearly need places to park their cars and they are desperate to squeeze into any spot they find. I do not understand how it's possible that those involved in decision making for the park master plan are not addressing this issue. Perhaps committee members should walk around the Vilas neighborhood on a sunny Saturday/Sunday to see for themselves that more parking for the zoo is necessary. (Please note that if the North entrance to the zoo is meant to be more of a walk-up entrance and parking is to be focused on the South end of the zoo, the main entrance should be on the South end near the larger parking area. That is only logical.)

In addition to the above comments regarding parking, I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed change to the location of the Vilas Park Zoo parking lot entrance from the corner of Drake/Randall to Drake across from Campbell. My reasons are these:

- (1) The stretch of Drake St along the edge of the park is currently quiet and shady and I think it adds to the serene feeling of the park itself; to put a parking lot entrance in the middle of that peaceful street would be a shame.
- (2) It concerns me that mature trees would need to be destroyed in order to make the proposed entrance change.
- (3) Increased traffic on the narrow circular street around Bear Mound Park would be a problematic side effect of moving the entrance across from Campbell. Bear Mound is a sacred site. In addition, residents who live in the houses around the mound park their cars along the circle on the one-way street. Therefore heavy traffic there would be both dangerous and culturally insensitive.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments.

Ka'tya Fassett
1528 Vilas Ave

From: Meredith <meredith.mcglone@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 11:36 AM

To: Knepp, Eric <EKnepp@cityofmadison.com>; Evers, Tag <district13@cityofmadison.com>; Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Support for Vilas Park Master Plan and new entrance at Drake/Campbell

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Parks commission members, Superintendent Knepp and Ald. Evers,
My family and I live at 1414 Drake Street, midway between the current Vilas Park entrance and the proposed new entrance, and we urge you to support the park master plan including the proposed new entrance.

The proposed new entrance will primarily benefit members of our community who do not have the privilege, like we do, of living within walking distance of the park. It is unquestionably safer and better designed than the current entrance.

Housing in the Vilas neighborhood has not been and still is not equally accessible to all individuals, resulting in a community that remains overwhelmingly white and affluent. If we are committed to addressing this inequity, we need to consider improvements to the park (which belongs to and is financially supported by the entire community) not just in terms of how they impact immediate neighbors but how they affect others, especially those who have less easy access to the park than we do.

I agree the city should consider additional measures to protect effigy mounds and other historical sites - this needs to be done holistically and consistently, across the entire city. Arguing for extra protection for these resources only in certain areas, particularly when associated with "not in my backyard" concerns about improved access to and usage of the park by people outside the neighborhood, risks being perceived by Indigenous communities as inauthentic at best.

Thank you for your consideration,
Meredith McGlone
1414 Drake St.

From: Pat Scheckel <pschecke@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 2:16 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Vilas Park Master Plan, agenda item 64455

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Hello,

I am a Vilas neighborhood resident. I'm writing to express my support for the master plan position of moving the Zoo entrance to Drake and Campbell. I believe it will be significantly safer for pedestrian traffic at Drake and Randall as well as at Drake and Grant.

Thank you,
Pat Scheckel
1915 Jefferson St

From: DAN R ANDERSON <dranders@wisc.edu>
Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 4:28 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Evers, Tag <district13@cityofmadison.com>; Wendy Fearnside <wendy.fearnside@att.net>; amfrivlin@gmail.com; Joan <jfnuge@gmail.com>
Subject: Final Vilas Park Master Plan (FVPMP)-Agenda 64455 meeting, March 10, 2021

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Dear City Park Commissioners,

We have lived in the neighborhood for nearly 50 years, and in our present house for 35 years.

We attended and watched the presentation by the City Parks Department of the Final Vilas Park Master Plan (FVPMP) on February 4, 2021.

We have a major criticism of the FVPMP, which is the proposed new entrance/exit at Campbell/Drake Streets. This is a game breaker for us, so we have to oppose the FVPMP with the inclusion of this proposal.

We would highly recommend that you take note of our ALDER TAG EVERS' statement at the February 4 meeting that there is a group of individuals in the neighborhood who strongly oppose this new Campbell/Drake Streets entrance/exit. We are included in that group and expressed our opposition at the February 4 meeting.

ALDER EVERS' recommended that some written reference, in the FVPMP, be included in the appendix or somewhere, of the disagreement in the neighborhood to this new entrance/exit. We support ALDER EVERS' recommendation. This is particularly important, if the Parks Commission does not vote to remove this new entrance/exit from the FVPMP.

We also support ALDER EVERS' recommendation that a traffic analysis for the proposed new entrance/exit be conducted, by appropriate departments, and that recommendation be included, in writing, in the FVPMP plan.

Neighbors of 50 years cannot recall any serious accident that has occurred from the current entrance/exits. It seems to traffic officials that the current situation is dangerous, but no data have been presented to support this claim.

Our experience is that drivers are particularly cautious when they enter and exit, deferring to pedestrians.

We would support that historical data of accidents at the current entrance/exit be collected and reviewed before any new construction takes place.

We also feel that a written recommendation be included in the FVPMP for appropriate parties to conduct a traffic flow analysis of the proposed new entrance/exit.

Our opinion is that the proposed entrance/exit will produce substantially increased traffic on Vilas Avenue and Campbell Street. Vilas Avenue circles Bear Mound Park, which has significant historical and archeological features, and importance for Native peoples. The Park, which includes a large Bear mound, sitting rocks for the autumnal and vernal equinoxes, and the winter solstice, and the marker tree, is a place that should be respected in any proposed traffic flow.

Finally, the FVPMP will result in a gaping hole in the wall of tree and undergrowth greenspace that runs along Drake street. The present greenspace offers a buffer for both neighbors and the visitors. And the greenspace would be replaced by cement and parking places-sounds like a Joni Mitchell song.

The FVPMP cannot claim that there is overall support for this new entrance/exit, as the 3 concepts and later versions, never included a voting option that did not have the new entrance/exit. It seems that the City Parks Department had made up their minds without neighborhood input.

Also, it should be obvious that this new proposed entrance/exit and the current entrance/exit is primarily for the Zoo and not for Vilas Park. In all the discussions, no Zoo officials were present or offered any evidence as to why this new entrance/exit was necessary.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dan Anderson and Joan Nugent
1521 Vilas Avenue
Madison, WI

From: Sue Ellingson <sue.ellingson@icloud.com>

Sent: Saturday, March 6, 2021 9:55 AM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Cc: Knepp, Eric <EKnepp@cityofmadison.com>; Evers, Tag <district13@cityofmadison.com>

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I hope you will approve the proposal to move the zoo entrance and exit to Campbell St.

Thank you.

Sue Ellingson

1922 Vilas Ave
sue.ellingson@icloud.com
608-320-8206

From: Cindy Schlichte <cindy@toolshed.org>
Sent: Sunday, March 7, 2021 9:41 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Cindy Schlichte <cindy@toolshed.org>; alex wong <alex@toolshed.org>
Subject: Vilas Park Master Plan Agenda item #64455

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Dear Board of Park Commissioners and Alder Evers :

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Final Vilas Park Master Plan, agenda item #64455. We have some thoughts on some main points within the park that we've outlined below.

1. Vilas Park Drive (Interim and Master Plan)

- We strongly support an interim plan that prohibits the use of Vilas Park Drive as a drive through. We support Traffic Engineering's proposal which extends 2-way traffic from the east as far west as the shelter parking lot in order to increase safety and open more of the shoreline area for multiple park uses. The reduced speed is rarely observed and many cars use it as a commuter road.
- We strongly support the closure of Vilas Park Drive to commuter and other vehicular traffic in the Vilas Park Master Plan.

2. Wingra Overlook/Dino Park (portion of Vilas Park bounded by Erin, Orchard, Randall & Zoo)

- We believe in protecting and honoring the mounds and the perspectives of the Ho-Chunk.
- We would like to explore alternatives for a small, toddler-friendly play area.
- We believe that the exclusion of the Annie Stewart Memorial Fountain from the Master Plan process has made it difficult to determine how the various elements of the plan for that area might fit together. We strongly believe that the future of the Fountain has an impact on Wingra Overlook planning decisions that needs continued discussions and engagement.

3. Beach playground

- We support a playground at the beach. The beach has the most demographically diverse usage in Vilas Park. The decision seems to have been made without appropriate application of the City's RESJI tool.
- We support a placeholder in the master plan for a beach playground.
- We believe Vilas Park including the overlook, can support more than two playgrounds in the entire park.

4. Emergency Access Road on S Randall

- We strongly oppose the addition of an emergency access road on S Randall without a detailed study and consultation with Madison Fire Department.
- In discussions with the fire department, I was told that the placement of this road on our narrow street would require the removal of numerous trees and disrupt the very green space that the parking reduction serves to protect.
- Dan Williams of MSA said at the Feb 4 public information meeting that the emergency access was necessary because it was requested by the Fire Department; but, in response to my question about

the access road, the Fire Marshall wrote that this road is “on the plan as an option or placeholder” and not a mandatory requirement.

- We appreciate the need for emergency access and propose that the current access road at the end of S Randall be retained for emergency access.

5. Drake/Campbell Street Entrance (proposed new entrance)

- We agree that the current entrance and exit and traffic flow is problematic and we support the proposed Drake/Campbell Street entrance.

6. Parking & Paths

- We believe there is too much surface parking that mainly serves the zoo. The purpose of Vilas park is to provide green space for the community; not to provide parking for the zoo. Available street parking should be taken into consideration in the parking count. Please reduce the amount of surface parking.
- The design of the parking on the lake side of the zoo is too big. The waterfront area is being converted into a huge parking lot in this design. We should be protecting the viewshed and value of the lakefront.
- We feel that there are some extraneous paths in the Vilas Park Master Plan and in particular the paths on the island and the Wingra Overlook the surround the perimeters. These paths will not add to the enjoyment of the park, take away green space, and in some cases are disruptive to the mounds.

7. Effigy Mounds

- The effigy mounds throughout the park area need further study and protection. Several proposed features in the master plan are located in areas identified as having potential archaeological value. Vilas Park and the area around Lake Wingra have an unusual number of effigy mounds and burial sites, but the master plan process has been silent on these archaeological features outside of the Wingra Overlook area.

8. Open Shelters

- The added open-sided shelters are not a good use of space and restricts the casual use of the park areas. We understand the desire to raise funds through park rental fees but this raises concerns of equitable access to Vilas Parks for all users.

9. Lagoon

- We are very happy about the retention of skating on the lagoon however we are concerned about the lack of study on the lagoon. The master plan suggests dredging the western half of the lagoon to maintain ice skating while returning the eastern half to wetlands. Without a study, we do not know the impacts on the water quality or wildlife to both the lagoon and Lake Wingra. to better understand the done on the lagoon in terms of dredging, impact on water, impact on wildlife for returning to wetlands.

- We feel that the shelter should be located to the east of the bridge in order to shorten the access road and therefore, minimize traffic/pedestrian/bicycle congestion. A study would help access the possibility of moving the shelter to eastern half of the lagoon

In addition to the above, we appreciate the attention to the following details included in the Final Vilas Park Master Plan:

1. Maintaining open, flexible use of green space.
2. Reduction of parking lots throughout the park.
3. Improvements to pedestrian and bicyclist safety throughout the park.
4. Fixing drainage problems throughout the park.
5. Improving walkways that currently suffer from drainage problems.
6. Retaining Shoe and Cheese playground.
7. Retaining and improving the tennis courts.
8. Adding bicycle parking and a bus stop to provide alternative ways of accessing the park.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our feedback on Vilas Park. We are excited about the future of Vilas Park.

Sincerely,
Cindy Schlichte & Alex Wong
513 S Randall Avenue
