

June 22, 2017



Madison West Neighborhood Association

To: Members of the Long Range Transportation Committee

**From: David Handowski, Chair and Organizer of the Madison West Neighborhood Association
Neighborhood Plan Review Committee**

**Re: Additional information and analysis regarding Jeffy Trail not included or incorrect in the
proposed High Point Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan**

The Madison West Neighborhood Association and the dozens of neighbors that came out on May 30 very much appreciated the trip by the Long Range Transportation Committee to personally come out and see the Jeffy Bike Path and adjoining City-owned conservancy area. Not all neighborhood assets can be expressed on paper, and we appreciate the time that you took to see the area for yourselves.

Despite early recognition by the Planning Department about the neighborhoods sensitivity and concerns about the Jeffy Trail extension in the current Neighborhood Development Plan, as well as the significant neighborhood feedback provided about that extension, the Madison West Neighborhood Association is disappointed that the Plan text devotes only two paragraphs regarding its thought process regarding Jeffy Trail. Worse, many key facts are missing and in some cases, incorrect and misleading information has been included in those two paragraphs that present a one-sided analysis.

To help fully inform your decision-making, we have provided additional in-depth information and analysis not included in the Plan regarding Jeffy Trail. **We believe that with this additional information not presented in the Plan, you will reach the same conclusion as the Madison West Neighborhood Association: the Jeffy Trail street extension to Raymond Road should be removed from the High Point Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan.**

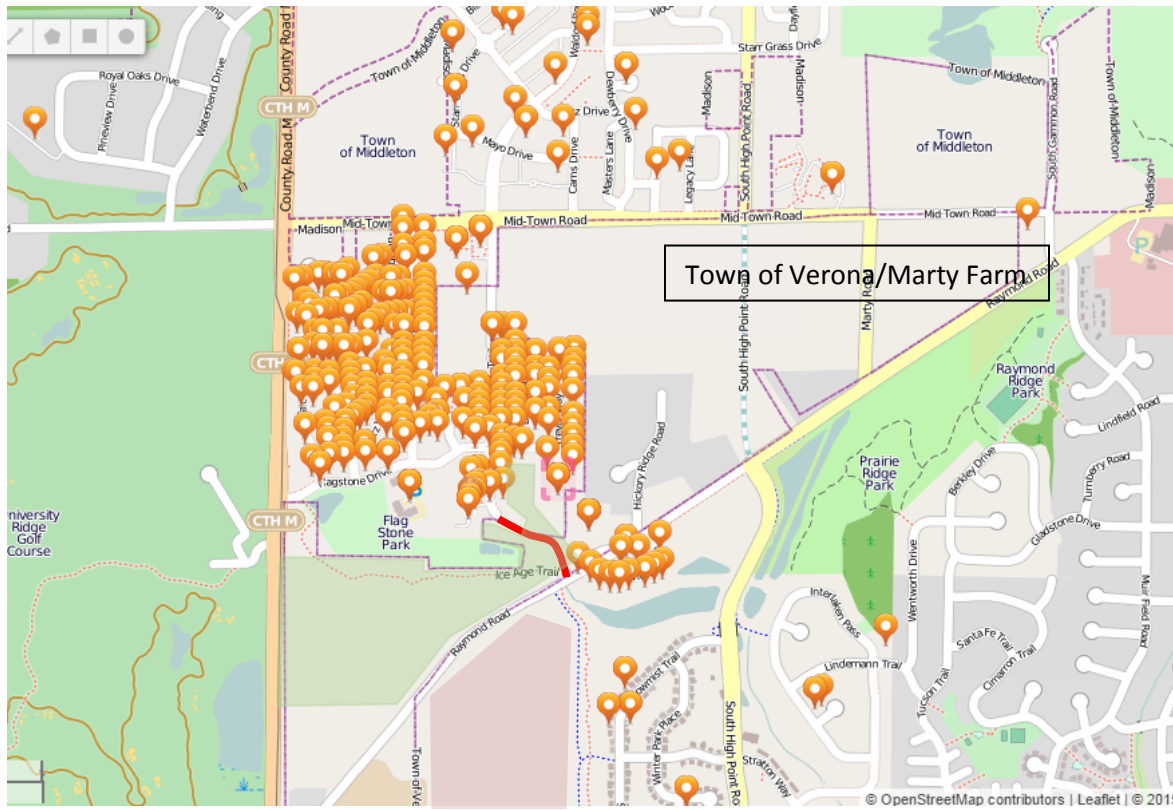
Map #5 of the proposed NDP – Existing Zoning fronting the proposed Jeffy Trail street extension

Misleading and incorrect information: The zoning map shows the length of the proposed Jeffy Trail street extension as traversing residential zoning. This is both incorrect and highly misleading. As agreed upon following the City's purchase of the Smithies property from the Audubon Society, the land on either side of the potential future Jeffy Trail extension was to be zoned "Conservancy." In May 2013, **the Common Council enacted Resolution #29422 which approved the zoning of the Smithies/Audubon Society land that the street would front traverse as Conservancy.** The West Madison Neighborhood Association has repeatedly informed the Planning Department that the land was zoned conservancy – a fact that they have sought to avoid. The street extension would serve only a single 0.67 acre parcel zoned residential just 40 feet from the current end of the Jeffy Trail street.

Page 9 of the text of the proposed NDP: “Jeffy Trail The extension of Jeffy Trail to Raymond Road is included in the current adopted HighPoint-Raymond NDP, but has faced significant neighborhood opposition.”

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text: Neighborhood opposition has been widespread and overwhelming. Over 420+ residents of the neighborhood and users of the Jeffy Bike Path have signed a letter opposing the extension of the Jeffy Trail street. Below is a distribution of that opposition. This information was presented in February to the Planning Department.

Petition Signatures Opposing the Jeffy Trail Street Extension By Address
420+ Signatures; 80% of the Neighborhood to be Served by the Street



(Map was inadvertently left out of the June 22 letter and was added on July 6, 2017)

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text: District 1 Alder Barbara McKinney joins the neighborhood in recommending that the Jeffy Trail Street Extension not be included in the NDP. “ALDER ACTION: AFTER REVIEWING THE RESPONSE TIME TO BE WITHIN 5 MINUTES OF THE ACCEPTABLE RANGE, I AM SUPPORTING THE RECOMMENDATION TO REMOVE JEFFY TRAIL FROM THE HIGH POINT ROAD/RAYMOND ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN.” (All caps emphasis added by Alder McKinney)

<http://www.cityofmadison.com/council/district1/blog/?ld=12190>

Page 9 of the text of the proposed NDP: “The [Jeffy Trail] extension would occur through the former Smithies property, purchased and developed by the City for that purpose, and would establish a southern outlet for the neighborhood.

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text: The City did not purchase the “former Smithies property” from the Smithies, but instead purchased the property from the Madison Audubon Society, who had purchased the land from the Smithies after the Smithies could not find a developer for the land.

Misleading and incorrect information: Since the beginning of this process, City Planning staff have said that the city purchased the Audubon Society/Smithies property for the purpose of completing the Jeffy Trail street extension. **We have repeatedly pointed out the factual inaccuracy of that statement to the Planning Department,** but they continue to state that because it better justifies their position. Here are the facts:

- Council Resolution #27973 enacted on November 28, 2012 authorized the purchase of the Audubon Society/Smithies property from the Audubon Society for \$435,000.
- Per Resolution # 27973, the funds for the purchase of the property came from the “Bikeways project within the Engineering Department.” **It was budgeted as a bikeway expense because the primary reason for purchasing the land was to enable the completion of the Ice Age Junction Bike Path.**
- Consistent with the budgeting of the purchase, the resolution itself lists multiple purposes for the purchase of the Audubon Society land, and unlike other specified purposes for the purchase, lists extension of Jeffy Trail not as a necessity, but as a *potential* extension of Jeffy Trail:
“The acquisition of the Property would facilitate the expansion of the Ice Age Junction Trail, *potential* extension of Jeffy Trail, and extension of sanitary sewer to serve the undeveloped lands in Hawks Creek Plat subdivision, related infrastructure improvements, and the creation of public open space. The Property has been identified in the High Point - Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan. The proposed uses shown on said Development Plan range from low density residential development, park, drainage, and open space. The acquisition of the Property would satisfy these multiple uses.”

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text: An additional \$560,000+ in City of Madison Capital expense would be required to build the Jeffy Trail street extension.

Page 9 of the text of the proposed NDP: “Residents cite concerns about safety, traffic volume and loss of open space in their opposition.”

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text: This summary of resident concerns significantly minimizes the concerns and counter points raised by the neighborhood in the West Madison Neighborhood Association’s February 3, 2017 comment letter to the Planning Division. That letter also identified concerns on priorities other than automobile connectivity in the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan, including negative impacts on **the EXISTING walkable and bikeable connections** to the south, loss of a **unique natural resource asset** for the neighborhood, impacts on the **Ice Age National Scenic Trail and Badger Mill creek**, and **utilizing neighborhood input** to build upon the neighborhood’s unique assets.

Page 13 of the text of the proposed NDP: The NDP recommends Jeffy Trail be extended to Raymond Road as planned since 2005. The extension is consistent with City policies, planning best practices and is required by the City’s land division ordinance.

Misleading and incorrect information: Completion of the Jeffy Trail street extension **is not REQUIRED by City law.** In fact, leaving Jeffy Trail as is is expressly PERMITTED under exceptions provided under the 16.23(8) Land Subdivision Regulation cited by Dan McAuliffe to the neighborhood:

“16.23 Land Subdivision Regulations.

(1) Introduction And Purpose. The purpose of these regulations is to regulate and control the subdivision of land within the corporate limits and extraterritorial plat approval jurisdiction of the City of Madison in order to promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the community....”

In other words, section 16.23 regulates the platting of land; it does not require the inclusion of any street in an NDP or require the city to expend resources to build a street.

“(8) Design Standards.

(a) Streets and Alleys.

1. General. In any new subdivision the street layout shall conform to the arrangement, width and location indicated on the official map, master plan or component neighborhood unit development plan. In areas for which such plans have not been completed the streets shall be designed and located in proper relation to existing and proposed streets, to the topography, to such natural features as streams and tree growth, to public convenience and safety, to the proposed use of the land to be served by such streets, and to the most advantageous development of adjoining areas.... **Cul-de-sacs shall not be used in any street layout, unless the topography or other unique physical feature of a development makes cul-de-sacs the only, or most logical, street layout.** Where cul-de-sacs are determined to be necessary, a sidewalk, connecting path or multi-use path shall be provided to connect to another public right of way unless topography or other unique physical features make this connection impossible....

7. Intersections

g. Cul-de-sac streets designed to have one end permanently closed shall **not exceed six hundred (600) feet in length.**”

The distance from Mill Creek Drive to the current cul-de-sac end of Jeffy Trail is 109 feet. The distance from the center of Flagstone Drive to the current cul-de-sac end of Jeffy Trail is 576 ft. In contrast, the Trevor Way cul-de-sac that was built in 2014 in order for the City (in this case the City of Madison was the actual developer and owner of the land and lots) to sell lots on Trevor Way is 803 feet. So, while an exemption from the requirement is not needed to permanently cul-de-sac Jeffy Trail, exemptions to the ordinances must have been granted in the past given the length of the Trevor Way cul-de-sac.

The unique natural feature of the City conservancy land also triggers an exception to the cul-de-sac ordinance: “Cul-de-sacs shall not be used in any street layout, unless the topography or other unique physical feature of a development makes cul-de-sacs the only, or most logical, street layout.”

Alternatively, the City could consider terminating the existing Jeffy Trail street at Mill Creek Drive without a cul-de-sac, as in its current configuration, Mill Creek Drive is only 109 feet from the current end of Jeffy Trail.

Misleading and missing information: While the Planning Department points to the cul-de-sac ordinance, it **ignores a different ordinance regarding block length** that the Jeffy Trail street extension would greatly exceed in Sec. 16.23(8)(c)1.:

“While there is not a minimum block length requirement included in the subdivision ordinance, in the TR-C3 Zoning District, **block lengths shall not, as a general rule, exceed 500 feet** in length between street lines **unless required by exceptional topography** or other limiting factors when approved by the Plan Commission.”

The total length of the proposed Jeffy Trail Street extension is just short of 900 feet, well over the “general rule” stated in the ordinance. Added together, with the extension of the Jeffy Trail street, the

length of the block from Mill Creek Drive to Raymond Road is 1000 feet or measured from Flagstone Drive would be over 1500 feet.

While there is not a minimum block length requirement included in the subdivision ordinance, in the TR-C3 Zoning District, block lengths shall not, as a general rule, exceed 500 feet in length between street lines unless required by exceptional topography or other limiting factors when approved by the Plan Commission.

Misleading and missing information:

If automobile connectivity is the sole determinant of “best design principles” and “City policy,” then the Jeffy Trail street extension should occur. In fact, the Planning Department has only pointed to connectivity principles in supporting its Plan. However, automobile connectivity is only one of multiple design goals Madison’s Comprehensive Plan as well as New Urbanism street network design principles. At the May Planning Commission meeting, these other Comprehensive Plan provisions were provided to the Commission and the Planning Department. However, the **Planning Department has failed to consider those other** principles including the following that are in the Comprehensive Plan:

- “Foster[ing] neighborhood involvement in all development decisions that will impact the neighborhood.”
- “Madison will grow and develop in a sustainable way that will protect the high quality natural environment, promote energy efficiency and conservation of natural resources, and create a built environment that is adaptable to future changes in conditions.”
- “Preserve natural areas with outstanding ecological and aesthetic qualities.”
- “Require the design of subdivision plats to protect and enhance outstanding views of natural resource features.”
- “Adopt and enforce zoning code, land division ordinance and other regulations that protect from development environmental corridors and the natural resource features of which they are comprised, such as lakeshores, hilltops, and significant wooded areas, for example.”
- “The design of neighborhoods and districts should create memorable places for people and be designed at a human-scale to create a strong sense of place and community.”
- “When designing new neighborhoods, seek opportunities to establish and preserve defining views and visual references that contribute to neighborhood identity and character.”
- “Foster the creation of engaging and visually attractive neighborhoods, each with a distinctive sense of place.”
- “Neighborhood street networks should be designed to discourage cut-through non-local traffic and excessive travel speeds.”
- “Ensure that views and vistas of significant value, such as views of the lakes, open space or the Capitol, are treated sensitively by new structures or potential visual obstructions.”
- “Neighborhood streets and sidewalks should provide an interconnected transportation network that links neighborhoods, districts and corridors without forming barriers between them. Dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs shall generally be avoided **unless necessary to protect sensitive environmental features or address significant changes in topography.**”
- “Neighborhood street spacing should create compact blocks with short block faces and perimeters to enhance pedestrian convenience and activity. For example, the common short block face standard is 400’ to 600’ long.”

Page 13 of the text of the proposed NDP: The extension will provide a southern outlet for the neighborhood, enhance connectivity and improve emergency access to the area.

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text: At times, policy makers have gotten the impression that Jeffy Trail is a connector street. In other presentations, the Planning Department has made it clear that the Jeffy Trail is a LOCAL STREET and not a connector, and that the street extension is intended to solely serve the neighborhood that is opposed to the street extension.

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text. The neighborhood has connectivity to the south via the already established bike paths. The connectivity to the resources to the south is served by the existing bicycle and pedestrian connection.

Misleading and missing information: As has been pointed out multiple times to the Planning Department, any improvement in emergency access caused by building the Jeffy Trail street extension will be temporary as the Neighborhood Development Plan is proposed. In the Plan, Raymond Road is realigned to connect with Midtown Road, resulting in a severing of the existing Raymond Road diagonal. **Any improvement in fire response created by a Jeffy Trail connection to Raymond Road will be eliminated as soon as the Raymond Road diagonal is severed as is proposed in the Neighborhood Development Plan.**

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text. Even without any construction of the realigned Raymond-Midtown arterial, the current fire routing distance to the corner of Jeffy Trail and Flagstone Drive is 2.0 miles. That distance will be shortened and two turns will be eliminated when the realigned Raymond-Midtown arterial is completed. In contrast, in the existing, pre-realignment configuration of the Raymond Road diagonal, the distance utilizing a Jeffy Trail extension to reach Jeffy Trail and Flagstone Drive is barely shorter at 1.9 miles. The national urban standard fire response distance for a Class 1 Fire Protection Community set by the Insurance Services Organization – a standard that the City of Madison recently publicly achieved and touted – is 5.0 miles.

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text. In order for the city to develop the lots at the end of Trevor Way, the City of Madison had to apply for an amendment to the Dane County Land Use and Transportation Plan. The January 2013 document “Staff Analysis of Proposed Amendment to the Dane County Land Use and Transportation Plan and Water Quality Plan, Revising the Central Urban Service Area and Environmental Corridor Boundaries in the Town of Verona,” addresses public safety services for the lots at the end of Trevor Way and **reached a conclusion that public safety access was not a problem: “Public Safety Services.** The proposed amendment meets the CARPC criteria and standards for provision of a full range of urban public safety services.”

Page 13 of the text of the proposed NDP: “Providing multiple outlets balances neighborhood traffic across multiple streets instead of concentrating it on a few. While more streets will have some traffic, fewer streets will carry higher volumes.”

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text. The Madison West Neighborhood Association pressed the Planning Department for data to document a problem with traffic in the effected neighborhood. On May 8, the Planning Department presented data to the Madison West Neighborhood Association showing that **only 11% of trips** beginning or ending in the neighborhood would be diverted from existing connections to use the Jeffy Trail street extension. The Planning Department further said that the **traffic counts within the neighborhood are all so low that they fall below the measurement threshold of 1000 vehicles per day.** Planning staff “found no routing that resulted in or generators of ‘cut-through’ traffic,” but the neighborhood is highly skeptical given the lack of current completion of the Raymond/Midtown arterial and South High Point connector.

Page 13 of the text of the proposed NDP: “While the general path of the road has been previously determined, the specific design of the roadway has not and is recommended to incorporate design techniques that slow traffic speeds. It is also recommended that the street have a high-quality bike

facility replacing the 300 feet of temporary path installed to link the neighborhood to the Ice Age Junction path. As part of the plan, conceptual alternatives have been created to assist and guide detail street design to be completed by City Engineering. One alternative includes on street bike lanes until the existing path; another includes an off-street multi-use path parallel to Jeffy. It is recommended that the new sections of Jeffy Trail be designed as narrow as possible to slow vehicular traffic and minimize space requirements for the road. On-street parking is not recommended to be included.”

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text. Because the City of Madison owns 85% of the frontage of the Jeffy Trail extension (all of it zoned Conservancy), it will be responsible for the costs of the additional “improvements” suggested above. Without those “improvements,” the cost is already at least \$560,000 in Capital spending – spending that could be used for other City priorities.

Additional information not conveyed in the NDP draft text. Due to topography, an alteration of the Conservancy zoned land at the north end of the proposed extension will likely be necessary to construct a street. At the northern end of the proposed Jeffy Trail street extension, there is a 25 foot difference in grade in the 30 feet between the center line of the proposed street and the edge of the right of way. Without the construction of a costly and unsightly wall, grading into the wooded conservancy zoned hill will be required in order to construct a street.

We appreciate your significant attention to considering the specific issue of Jeffy Trail, and we hope that you find this additional information left out of the Neighborhood Development Plan informative.

Lastly, we leave you with this question to consider:

If the need for automobile connectivity justifies spending \$560,000 to construct a local street opposed by the neighborhood, over a popular 3-year old bike path connecting to the Ice Age Junction Bike Path, through conservancy zoned land adjacent to the Ice Age National Scenic Trail to serve less than 11% of the neighborhood’s automobile trips when no traffic problem in the neighborhood has been identified and when fire response already meets city standards and will not use the connection with the Raymond Road arterial when it is reconfigured in accordance with the plan, then is there any scenario in which street connectivity would not justify a road project in the City of Madison? We have other priorities in Madison and the plan for the Jeffy Trail street extension places street connectivity above all other design and spending priorities.