

Public Comment Registrants Report

Lake Monona Waterfront Ad Hoc Committee On 03/15/23 6:00 PM				Representing Organization			Lobbying	
Agenda Item Registered	Name	Support	Speaking	Y/N	Name(s)	Paid	Duties	Rep
AGENDA ITEM: 3 Public Comment								
3 03/11/23 08:30 AM	KURT WELKE 1514 Longview St Madison WI 53704	Neither support nor oppose	Yes, I want to speak.	No				
3 03/14/23 04:15 PM	JAMES E. KRAUSE 4154 Veith Ave Madison WI 53704	Neither support nor oppose	Yes, I want to speak.	No				
		Support: 0 Opposed: 0 Neither: 2 Counts distinct registrants and removes duplicate votes						
		Total Registrants: 2						
		Meeting Watchlist: 1						

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

I'd like to begin by thanking the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to offer feedback in hopes of refining the vision and lending other perspectives that may not have been included in the original outreach effort

Let me introduce myself. I am Kurt Welke. I grew up here. I was a Crestwood kid. Besides raising a family here, I served quite proudly as the DNR fisheries manager for Dane co and the Madison lakes from 2000 to 2016. In my professional capacity, the saying is the quality of fishing reflects the quality of life. If that is true, then life here is good. Quite good. Outstanding actually. I have spent literally hundreds of hours on these lakes and on this lake particularly.. I believe it gives me currency to offer perspective you may not have heard. I will also tell you I am a consumptive user. I catch and eat fish regularly from lake Monona. As do hundreds of city, county, and state residents.

Rather than speak to specifically to individual components id would like to take a more global perspective . I have shared some specific comments in an earlier correspondence with Mike Sturm and he has indicated he will pass those on to the committee. Similarly, I will pass these comments onto Mike to enter into the record and for your use and reference.

First the good news

1. Process is long overdue. It is time to move away from the almost singular auto-based commuter model and embrace the broader vision articulated by the Nolans, Olins, and Wrights . We are presented with a unique set of circumstances and I am happy to see attention paid to form, function, access, and the changing landscape of user desires.
2. I am pleased to see stormwater and urban runoff issues as central to water quality.... which of course, is central to a publicly useable waterfront. Nothing is possible without clean water. Actually, this is JOB 1. Everything else is dependent upon it. Get this right and the rest is cake. Neglect this central tenet and the rest is chasing good money after bad.
3. I like the idea of three districts. The park, causeway, and downtown divisions. Each is unique and to be treated as such makes sense.
4. Preservation of the larger Grand esplanade concept and viewshed of the Capital are, I believe, essential and central to retaining and defining Madison's special character.

Now I offer what are intended as constructive criticisms aimed at helping the process and the product it develops:

1. I was disappointed by the lack of inclusion of the stakeholders within the recreational fishing community. The Yahara fish club is 75 years old. It is not an unknown commodity to the City. Engineering and Parks have a long relationship of constructive partnership that serves the public. Talk about access. YFC gets over 700 kids each year to the water's edge at Warner and Brittingham to experience their lakes. Their omission was poor. To a lesser extent, my conversations with colleagues in the Natural resources community also lead me to believe that more inclusion would better serve the process.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS (2)

2. I think of development in general. Its trading. Usually a natural landscape for a manmade construct. I hope we think deeply about how much nature we are willing to sacrifice if our intent is to have a natural, green, and inviting gateway. Water draws people for a lot of reasons. One is quiet and calm. The sound of waves. An open vista. Keep this in mind. It's not all bandstands and food carts.
3. My 1st impression of the posters was to see a laundry list of 40 potential elements within one design plan. It reminded me of the Dells. I don't think you have to have everything for everyone. Other quality lakefront opportunities exist for hammocks gardens, dog parks, boardwalks, and such. I felt as if there was an attempt to check every box in a scoring matrix- whether it fit or not
4. Some things don't fit. They are inconsistent with the physical reality of sun light exposure, sediment type, wind fetch, ice heave, and bathymetry. More importantly a review of Wi law including the public trust doctrine (Article IX of the Wi Constitution) and public rights features (Wi Administrative code1.06) would serve the process. Frankly, some of what is being advanced is simply not permittable under current water law.

I am reminded of a powerful lecture I saw given by David Mollenhoff, who has advised this process. He argues for PRACTICAL vision with clear understandable ways to measure where we are , what costs will be and what tradeoffs must be made.

In his words: We are in the Beauty and Vison business. It is oft to our peril that we forget this. I command it to your attention.

Thank You

Kurt Welke

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3/15/2023

Design Challenge comments- for inclusion into record

Kurt welke

In my opinion, some of the elements I saw while viewing the poster boards struck me as nothing more than window dressing and marketing bells and whistles. The casting of a super wide, everything included net, diminishes the credibility of the process.

Have maintenance and repair costs been identified or factored in ?. It seems that the level of inputs required to keep all elements functional, safe, clean and in good stead will be considerable and require parks staff beyond current levels and budget.

Some examples of project and design elements that I see as superfluous are:

1. The "Madison Avenue" posters adorned with Scarlet Tanagers, snowy owls, egrets. Nonsense. The current forest types and urban setting preclude the presence of these birds except for the briefest transient migrant. It is not reality. Reality is city ducks, gulls, redwing blackbirds. You will expand the goose problem by creating more marsh habitat. Geese numbers already constitute a significant waste issue.
2. Placing a beach off Law Park makes little sense. The water is deep here. Beaches are supposed to have gradual slope, not abrupt drop offs. The reason the ski team operates here is precisely because of depth.
3. Tear down woods and habitat at Olin Park to build a nature center to talk about woods and habitat? I grew up in Crestwood. That neighborhood produced dozens of young men and women who went on to be natural resources professionals: fisheries and wildlife managers, refuge staff, parks managers, conservation wardens, researchers. Was there a nature center? Yes! It was called "Ericksons farm", now Owen conservancy. One learns nature by being in it. Firsthand.
4. You cannot grow marshlands where the sediment type is sand, marl, and rock. You cannot establish vegetation where wind and wave action are constantly moving things around. These features appear to be putting things on a map with little respect to the fact that they are not there now. For a reason. Nature doesn't allow it. Some things cannot be engineered.
5. The area near the sailboat dock at 330 E. Lakeside (below the Dan Moran Bench on the lakefront) is the best bluegill spawning habitat on the lake. Hundreds if not thousands of fish nest there annually. It is no place for a beach, kayak course, or other feature. It should be left alone.
6. A mussel bed? Certainly, there are freshwater mussels in lake Monona. But mussels are primarily flowing water fauna, riverine, not lacustrine. The requirement for suitable fish hosts, suitable substrate, freedom from zebra mussel competition and an absence of readily available appropriate stock make this an unlikely and unrealistic element.