

Agenda Item No. 91

**From:** Walter Ostrenga  
**To:** Lisa Veldran  
**Date:** 12/12/2005 4:47:50 PM  
**Subject:** Coldspring Barrier Issues

Lisa,

As indicated in my earlier e-mail, due to the placement of this agenda item (# 91) the Fire Chief and I will not be attending the Madison City Council meeting. We would appreciate it if our letters could be added to the discussion of this item. Attached are letters from the Monona PD, Monona FD and the Blooming Grove FD.

Thank you  
Wally

Walter J. Ostrenga  
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**CC:** council@ci.madison.wi.us, district15@council.ci.madison.wi.us, Mayor, Dale Suslick, Doug Wood, Kathy Thomas, Lisa B. Nelson, Peter McKeever, Robb Kahl, Bob Van Etten



# MONONA POLICE DEPARTMENT

*"Partners for a Safe Community"*

*Walter J. Ostrenga - Chief of Police*

December 12, 2005

Mayor Dave Cieslewicz and Members of the Madison City Council:  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard, Room 403  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Dear Mayor Cieslewicz,

I am writing this letter at the request of Monona Mayor Robb Kahl and the Monona City Council to comment on the Coldspring Avenue situation.

As I'm sure you are all aware, a majority of the students that drive to the Monona-Grove High School travel from Cottage Grove. Prior to the barriers being put in place, the preferred route was to travel west on Buckeye then south on Jerome to the school. When leaving, the most convenient route was north on Jerome or Bainbridge Street back up to Buckeye.

In October of 2004, in response to complaints from area residents, a joint experiment took place between our two jurisdictions, with the City of Monona placing a barrier across the width of Coldspring Avenue just west of Jerome. Upon the conclusion of the 90-plus day experiment the barriers were removed. Residents of Monona and Cottage Grove were in favor of removing the barriers; while residents of Madison's Lake Edge neighborhood were in favor of keeping them in place.

Unable to reach a compromise between the two jurisdictions (Madison and Monona), this last summer the City (Madison) authorized barricades along the City's jurisdiction at the south end of Jerome at Coldspring and at the Bainbridge-Coldspring intersection. This action has resulted in taking away **two** of the **three** vehicle access points to the high school. Only the busy intersection of Monona Drive and Coldspring Avenue remains as the **single** entry/exit point for the school, athletic field and several Madison residents who live on the north side of Coldspring Avenue.

From a safety standpoint this is a very dangerous condition, not only for the high school, but also for the area residents. It's one thing to not have additional access points, but to have it, use it frequently and then have it taken away gives the general perception of moving in the wrong direction when trying to improve better cooperation and relationships between our two cities.

In the event this one intersection is blocked and an emergency event were to occur (i.e., fire, medical emergency, major criminal incident, weather related emergency, etc.), emergency services would be prevented from responding in a timely manner. Additionally, occupants of the school, athletic field and area residents would be prevented from evacuating the area. Most healthy individuals could surely walk out of a dangerous area, but there are also elderly and disabled persons who use the school facility who don't have that ability. The whole situation is compounded when adding inclement weather conditions

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I realize the Madison Police Department has many responsibilities that are of a much higher priority, but if this is a speeding auto/traffic complaint, I would suggest some appropriate assignment from the Madison Police traffic unit. In my experience, it only takes a few timely citations a few times a year to influence driving behaviors. In fact I believe this point was voiced by one of the long time Lake Edge residents during the public discussion of this topic. He seemed surprised that this aspect of a solution had not been addressed in any of the earlier discussions.

I don't consider myself a traffic expert, but using a common sense approach there would seem to be other options available to calm traffic in the area. These could be barriers placed in other locations (i.e. Jerome and East Winnequah Road); reconfiguration of the streets with limited access (do not enter or one-way signs); traffic speed bumps/humps, etc.

I have to believe the city services to the area (emergency responders, garbage collection and snow plowing) would all be improved with the removal of the barriers.

Our school liaison officer has always tried to follow-up on speeding auto and driving complaints in the immediate area, many times with citations being issued. The problem arises when an event occurs further into the Madison jurisdiction in areas where our officers should not be taking routine police action. In these cases we have tried to work with the Madison Police Department to ensure that justice has been served. Our Monona officers were also able to provide an additional "visible police presence" for the neighborhood, but with the current configuration this is no longer taking place.

Finally, during the first diverter experiment a theft occurred in Madison on Monona Drive. As the offender fled on foot an officer spotted the subject. This offender was able to escape capture by simply running around the diverter which blocked the officer's squad car.

Thank you for considering my comments. I understand the concerns of the neighborhood, but I have to believe there must be other ways of calming the traffic without putting other citizens at risk by permanently limiting access to such a busy area.

Respectfully,

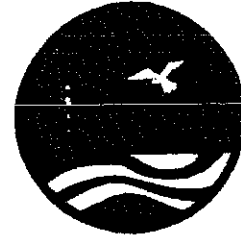


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## Monona Fire Department

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December 12, 2005

Common Council  
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Members of the Madison Common Council:

I am writing this letter at the request of Monona Mayor Robb Kahl and the Monona City Council to express my concerns relating to safety issues that are impacted by the placement of barriers at two locations on Coldspring Avenue.

I understand that barriers were placed at the end of Jerome where it intersects Coldspring and another across Coldspring just west of Bainbridge in order to stop student vehicle traffic going to and coming from Monona Grove High School. While this solution addresses some concerns that were raised by area residents, I feel other options may be as effective without compromising safety.

Fire chiefs are responsible for reviewing all areas in their jurisdiction for potential hazardous or emergency events. We plan ahead for significant incidents that may require the aid of other emergency organizations. Such is the case with Monona Grove High School.

Monona uses several area fire departments for mutual aid, including the City of Madison. The Blooming Grove Fire Department automatically responds with the Monona F.D. Monday through Friday during business hours to all potential structure fires. Their fire station is located just a few blocks from Monona Grove High School. However, their direct route to the school is now blocked with barriers. They must take an alternative, slower route when responding to Monona's emergencies. (Please refer to the attached letter from Blooming Grove)

Madison Fire responds with an ambulance into Monona when paramedic services are needed or when Monona's ambulance is unavailable at another incident. Madison Rescue 5 would respond, when they are in quarters, from their station on Cottage Grove Rd. to the high school. However, that ambulance is frequently on the road when called; they may be in an area, such as Stoughton Road, where the closest route to the high school is now blocked.

Generally, any major emergency incident at the high school while a special event is underway will create a risk for first responders, mutual-aid units and the public. The only exit available to the public is the same entry point for emergency vehicles.

I urge the Madison Common Council to take action that will remove the current barriers and seek alternative solutions that consider the safety of all who live, work and go to school in the Coldspring area.

I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Van Etten, Fire Chief  
Monona Fire Department



## Bloomington Fire Department

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Glenn Linzmeier Fire Chief

December 12, 2005

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF MADISON, WISCONSIN

This letter is in support of the removal of the barricades located on Coldspring Avenue near Monona High School.

As Fire Chief of the Bloomington Fire Department, it is my responsibility to get to fires and other emergency calls as quickly as possible. Our Department has an agreement with the Monona Fire Department to provide backup emergency services to the City of Monona as a whole, which includes the Monona Grove High School.

With the barricades in place, there is no "fast" route from our Fire Department to the school. This road closure results in a delay of the delivery of emergency services to the community and the high school. When every minute *really* counts, these barricades are a detriment to public safety.

I realize there is an issue of noise and traffic for some City of Madison residents. All I can suggest to you is that emergency response should have priority over someone's perception of noise or traffic

Thank you for your serious consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Chief Glenn Linzmeier  
Town of Bloomington Fire Department