

**Tamarack Trails Community Services Association, Inc.**  
**Tamarack Trails West Place II Workgroup**  
110 S Westfield Road • Madison, WI 53717

Date: October 1, 2017 **ADDENDUM** to September 27, 2017 Submittal  
To: Plan Commission  
Cc: Alder Paul Skidmore  
City of Madison Planning Department -Kevin Firchow,  
Tim Parks, Sydney Prusak  
Urban Assets - Melissa Huggins  
From: Tamarack Trails West Place II Workgroup  
Janet Hirsch and Jean MacCubbin  
RE: **302 S Gammon Road Development, Phase One** - File # 45253 & 48334  
Plan Commission Meeting on Monday, October 2, 2017

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This document is in response to documents that were posted on Legistar on Friday, September 29, 2017.

**In view of the fact that the Planning Division Staff Report and the Traffic Impact Analysis were not available until Friday, September 29, 2017, we ask that you take comments and defer a vote on the conditional uses requested for this project until a future meeting. This would allow the Plan Commission, City staff, the public and the affected neighborhoods to see written documentation that would address how the developer is responding to the deficiencies listed by Planning Division Staff and City agencies.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

We would like to clarify that our comments are tempered by the concerns that we expressed during the first iteration of West Place, which included a Master Plan with zoning change to MXC for the entire 23 acres. This was being reviewed by UDC last winter and incorporated tall buildings immediately adjacent to the Tamarack homes along our east boundary. The development included softer building forms with Memorial Drive and a series of public spaces being the organizing features. Our concerns at that time centered around the height and concentration of tall buildings at the northwest end of the site and their minimal separation from our property, lack of green space, the negative impact of the proposed transition between the site and the neighborhood, and the impact of egress from the site directly to Tree Lane. Refer to File #44779 to see the previous plans and comments.

We understand that the concept of this proposal has changed to a single corporate campus for a highly regarded local business with a national reputation.

This new proposal retains the original SE zoning. It concentrates the new development at the south end of the property while retaining the existing buildings, parking, landscaping, and traffic patterns at the north end near Tree Lane.

In mid March, the entire process was put on hold. On July 27, 2017, the development team presented the new project to neighbors. **Since that time, several changes are shown on the plans and referenced in the Staff Report and TIA which are counter to the information that we received.**

#### **CONCERNS, OBJECTIONS and CLARIFICATIONS**

Internal Streets:

**We oppose the recommendation in the Staff Report from Traffic Engineering on page 14 Item 46 to put internal streets within the site. This was never part of any previous discussion or plan.**

It would result in an increase of impervious pavement and an additional loss of green space. It would negate the idea of a corporate campus for Navitus. It would encourage additional traffic through the site.

Entrance to Tree Lane:

We have concerns about the suggestion of an extension of the north-south internal street to Tree Lane, its impact on traffic and its effect on Tamarack Trails homes. At the neighborhood meeting, it was specifically noted that there was NOT an entrance from Tree Lane to the site. The traffic and parking areas at the north and south ends of the property would remain separate, as they are currently.

Trees:

**We request that additional overstory deciduous trees and tall evergreen trees be included in Phase One in quantities that comply with the zoning requirements.**

The Parks Division noted on Page 16 Items 62 and 63 of the Staff Report that "Additional street trees are needed...". We agree with this analysis and believe that this situation continues throughout the site and does not provide a transition to the urban forest at the Tamarack property. The Parks request for additional trees on the city terrace should not diminish **our request for additional trees on site**. A review of the Landscape Worksheet, Plan Sheet L200, indicates that the lack of required overstory deciduous trees and no tall evergreen trees has been compensated for by increasing the number of shrubs and low-growing plants.

Many of the existing trees shown on the Phase One plans are in poor health and should be replaced. Also many of the existing trees will be removed during the construction of Building G in Phase Two. Landscaping should be planted to the northwest of proposed building G now to allow these trees to become established.

Building Heights:

References throughout the Staff Report refer to a building height of 75' which does not appear to include 12' rooftop screening. Our previous comments reference the overall height of 87' (75' to the cornice plus 12' screening for the rooftop mechanicals), which is 19' over the 68' maximum for SE.

**We can support the following: 5 stories for buildings A and H, 2 stories for buildings B and G and 4 stories for E and F as noted on the contextual and illustrative drawings L001.**

Additional sound buffering of the HVAC units is needed. The HVAC units are at the same height as the outdoor living spaces and open windows of the nearby Tamarack Trails condos.

Site Design and Open Spaces:

**An increase in open space needs to be incorporated into the initial plans.**

While the Phase One plan lists lot coverage of 63%, the full build out of the site shows 75.3%. This exceeds the Maximum Lot Coverage of 75% in SE zoning.

The originally proposed West Place structures also had inviting landscape features facing the public streets with interior parking and circulation positioned behind the buildings and away from the sidewalks and public view.

The plans presented to the neighbors at the July 27<sup>th</sup> meeting showed small water features at the corner of Gammon and Mineral Point Roads. On the August 16<sup>th</sup> plans, the water has disappeared along with any gathering or public areas. What had been proposed as a focal point for the site and a placemaking space for the neighborhood is now shown as a narrow walkway between the outdoor eating areas of the restaurants.

The current plan has parking along both Mineral Point and Gammon Roads. We view the large amount of parking between the office buildings and the public streets as a negative. After reviewing several versions of Chapter 28, we are uncertain if this conforms to the current Chapter 28 codes for Suburban Employment. This corner is already heavily used by pedestrians and bus riders. **An attempt should be made to accommodate the public.**

SE Allowed Uses:

**We oppose the request for "convenience retail uses" (conditional in Section 28.082 of the Zoning Code) in Buildings C and D as mentioned on page 6 (mid page) of the Staff Report.**

All conversations with the developer have indicated that the retail would be fine dining restaurants and coffee shops as noted in the Neighborhood Meeting notes.

Hours of Operation:

The Staff Report lists office hours from 7:00am to 7:00pm. It is our understanding that the telecommunications functions in Building B will have extended hours. We are uncertain of Saturday or Sunday hours that might occur.

**We would not oppose office hours of 7:00am to midnight maximum**, allowing until 10:00pm for staff plus an additional two hours for cleaning personnel. Our goal is to minimize late-night traffic, noise, and lights.

We understand the restaurant hours are 7:00am to midnight. Tamarack Trails wishes to be informed in time to participate in the Item 59 of the Staff Report “additional review of the restaurant conditions by Building Inspection staff.”

Traffic:

As part of the transportation demand management, bus pull out areas for the Bus Rapid Transit planned for Mineral Point Road should be incorporated into Phase One as part of the “off-site improvements” required in Conditional Use Standard #6 on page 7 of the Staff Report.

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Thank you for your careful consideration of our comments.

**Following is the September 27<sup>th</sup> letter from Tamarack Trails**

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Tamarack Trails is a residential development with 320 owner-occupied homes immediately adjacent to the northwest corner of this site. We enjoy an urban forest environment with a well-maintained canopy of deciduous and evergreen trees. We work to preserve our landscaping, green spaces and walking trails. We strive to extend these goals to our larger neighborhood.

These comments regarding the 302 S Gammon Road Project have been compiled by the Tamarack Trails West Place II Workgroup. They represent the views and concerns of our residents and the Board of Directors. We thank the Livesey Project Group and Alder Skidmore for providing plans for our review.

Following attendance at the Neighborhood Meeting in July and a review of the materials submitted on August 16, 2017, we submit these comments.

**We support the revised CSM to create a four-lot planned multi-use site.**

**We support the demolition permit.** We request notification of when demolition details will be reviewed by the Board of Public Works. Refer to "MacCubbin email 302 S Gammon 1-30-17.pdf" submitted to the Landmarks Commission for concerns regarding deconstruction.

**We support, with concerns, the Phase I construction for the office and general retail complex as shown on the plans dated August 16, 2017.**

Building Heights:

We appreciate the fact that the taller buildings are sited away from the residential homes at Tamarack Trails and request that this configuration be retained for future phases.

We will support the overall height of 87' for Bldg A (19' above the 68' maximum for SE Zoning) with the condition that a) no additional height be permitted on this building, b) Bldgs B and G not exceed the 40' height shown on the plans, and c) Bldgs E, F and H not exceed a height of 87'.

Green Spaces:

The minimal amount of green space is our major concern. This is especially evident when full build-out is achieved. When combined with the low plantings that skirt the perimeter and the parking areas, there is little to distinguish it from West Towne. Employees, restaurant patrons and neighbors would appreciate an inviting and shady seating area, a walking path for work breaks and lunch time, a grassy knoll for collegial discussion groups and a visual focus for the eye that is natural, not a built environment. These types of views enliven what the employees and visitors see from office windows and the eating areas.

Open Spaces/Placemaking:

On the latest drawings, the loss of the public spaces at the corner and between the restaurants at Bldgs C & D have eliminated the placemaking features identified on earlier plans. This is a disappointment. Consideration should be given to restoring the water features at the corner of Mineral Point and Gammon Roads. This would greatly benefit the restaurant area and be reminiscent of the fountains that were active in front of the Rural Insurance Building.

Landscaping:

Currently, this location has many existing deciduous and evergreen overstory trees. Many of these will remain in place at the north end of the site during Phase One. The plans show that most of these trees will be removed at full build-out, leaving few canopy trees. To comply with the SE District Statement of Purpose to improve landscaping and site design, additional overstory trees need to be incorporated into the initial plans. This is especially true at the north end, where the construction of Building G and the changes to the internal roads and parking will remove most of the existing trees.

The Landscape Worksheet on L200 shows a minimum of overstory trees. To provide an environment that is compatible with the existing character of the area, we request that additional overstory trees, including evergreen trees, be added to the site.

Storm Water Management:

Phase One has 63.3% coverage with impervious surface; this expands to 75.3% as the site achieves full build-out. We are concerned about the effect of so much surface parking on storm water management. The "soccer fields" at the southeast corner of Mineral Point and Gammon regularly fill with storm water.

We are happy to see the underground chamber system for water collection on this site. We are relying on the City Engineering Department to review the Storm Water Management and determine the appropriate measures to be taken. Pervious pavement might be considered, as it is becoming a standard option in car parking areas that do not accommodate trucks and semis.

Environmental Considerations:

The plans that we received did not indicate the treatment for the roofs. We encourage the addition of photo-voltaic panels, perhaps on frames to optimize solar gain. We urge use of white roofing that reflects sunlight and does not absorb heat into the building and ambient air. We do not support a flat, black or dark, non-reflective roof. Cool or green roofs should be encouraged.

Traffic:

The impact of increased traffic on the transportation corridors in the area is a major concern. The limited scope of the study for this project misses many daily frustrations encountered by residents of the area. Despite numerous requests to City staff, our Workgroup was never able to receive information from any traffic study. We feel that it is important to move forward with a study of the area that includes Westfield Road, Tree Lane and the private drive which runs behind Old National Bank, Culver's and UW Health. We are working with Alder Skidmore to seek an expanded traffic study.

The City is moving toward Bus Rapid Transit on Mineral Point Road. The necessary site improvements should be considered. Bus pull-out areas should be identified.

Impact on Adjacent Neighbors and Community:

Operational issues which will occur during construction and post-occupancy can adversely affect the quality of life for the surrounding neighborhoods. These issues include: excess noise, service access and deliveries, trucks, extraneous lighting, on-street parking. It is our understanding that these concerns will be addressed in construction contracts, tenant leases and employee incentives.

*We realize that a master plan for the full 23 acres is not included in this project. We look forward to working with the Livesey Development Team to create a smooth transition to Tamarack Trails as the property continues to develop.*