

Lake Monona Sailing Club
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October 19, 2022

Lake Monona Waterfront Ad Hoc Committee
Mike Sturm, City of Madison Parks Dept
City-County Bldg
210 M. L. King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

RE: Lake Monona Waterfront Design Challenge

This letter offers comments from the Lake Monona Sailing Club about the Lake Monona Waterfront Design Challenge for consideration by the consultant teams, as well as the Friends of Nolen Waterfront and Lake Monona Waterfront Ad Hoc Committee, to engage with the efforts in proposing a new vision for the Lake Monona waterfront. My name is Ward Paxton and I am on the club's Board of Directors, serving as the volunteer Treasurer. We have formed a sub-committee of members for engaging with the waterfront design process and will be happy to make ourselves available for supporting the design process.

It is great to see the development of this new planning project to improve the Lake Monona waterfront. It would be so exciting to create more opportunities for truly special lakes experiences. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our input and look forward to joining efforts with lake partners and offering our support, especially with strategies for boating experiences.

As our name indicates, the Lake Monona Sailing Club is a non-profit recreational sailing organization founded in 1969. We offer a sailing program from May thru Sept, including racing in four fleets; C-Scow, Flying Scots, Multihull, and One Design. We own and operate a pier in Olin Park for non-riparian members to rent a slip and keep their sailboats during the sailing season. The Olin Pier is under a lease agreement with the City of Madison and is located within the project site boundaries. It is essential to us that we are able to continue to offer this service to our members.

As you know Lake Monona has some very special qualities, including its location in the middle of a chain of lakes. It is ideal for inland lake small-boat boating/sailing/racing because it is large enough to set sail for meaningful distances but small enough that steep chop waves don't develop. Overall, it makes for a very pleasant boating experience for a great number of people.

In looking at ways that we might contribute, it has been a vision of our club to have an indoor meeting space on the lake to allow our activities to expand. We suspect this is true for other boating interests too, including windsurfers, kayakers, canoers, rowers, paddle-boarders, and ice-boaters.

A new facility, or perhaps a space in the new Parks Dept facility on Lake Monona off Lakeside St., could fill a need for meeting rooms to hold events like a “guest sailor” program, “learn-to-sail” program, meet and greet socials, and as a regatta headquarters. The potential demand for these activities is excellent because, in the case of sailing, it is a family sport that is growing as evidenced by increasing boat sales in recent years. Perhaps a shared use facility for the wide variety of boating enthusiasts that operate on Lake Monona could be developed to meet this demand.

As a sailing organization, one special opportunity we envision in having a facility available is that it would allow us to be competitive in attracting regional regattas and bringing in visiting weekend sailors. We were able to do this in hosting the 2016 C-Scow Nationals (photo attached) which launched from Olin Park. As you know Madison is a popular destination for visitors with excellent options for accommodations and restaurants.

We’re truly excited to see this project being undertaken and look forward to hearing about the options being proposed and engaging with the parties involved. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the project further with us please let me know.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ward Paxton

Ward Paxton
Treasurer

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