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Sent: Thursday, July 05, 2012 8:45 AM
To: Martin, Al
Cc: Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan
Subject: Document for distribution to the UDC Staff for the July 11 meeting

Thank you for continuing to take input from the current neighbors as well as the developers for the final design of the new building at the current site of the Ideal Body Shop.

I am aware of the need for change to more density in this neighborhood. I am just requesting that the change be guided with respect to the current neighborhood. I am here to urge the city of Madison to restrict the height of the apartments at the Ideal Body Shop to no more than 4 stories, as is called for by its guidelines in the Urban Design District 7 Ordinance. I would like the city of Madison to guide development in our neighborhood so that the character of our neighborhood is protected. Old stable neighborhoods take generations to create. Once they are gone, they are gone forever.

Staff from the city of Madison and neighborhood business owners and volunteers put countless hours into writing the Park Street Revitalization Guidelines, and the Greenbush Neighborhood Revitalization Plan in addition to the Urban District Design Ordinance. These documents were professionally and thoughtfully crafted by impartial staff. Such guidelines are invaluable in situations such as the one in which we find ourselves. Government standards allow developers and residents to express and understand what is, and is not, appropriate in different locations in the city. Although impressive proposals may come along, the guidelines give stability which can protect the City for the future.

According to Urban Design District 7, a building here must be proportional to its neighboring buildings. However, this proposed five story will dwarf its one and two story neighbors. This building will be 5 stories, taking up the space of 5 current properties. The neighboring buildings are either one or two stories tall and have one or two units. The Ideal will have 62 apartments. This building will contain apartments, not condominiums. Only 15 of these will have two bedroom apartments. The other apartments will be smaller. The only planned community room will be the size of a one bedroom apartment. This building will be facing Park Street with it's heavy traffic. To me, that indicates that these apartments will attract students who want easy access to campus or young single people who are starting their careers. The influence of their 62 apartments on the rest of the neighborhood that is mostly homes or one and two unit apartments will be huge. I expect the amount of partying, and the problems that go with it, to significantly increase. Some consultants and developers would like to promote more Chicago style living in Madison. That style is good for people who want to focus less on where they live and more on their jobs and going out for entertainment, but that is not currently the character of this neighborhood.

The city of Madison experienced negative unintended consequences when it implemented its urban renewal project in the Greenbush in the 1970's. Madison's only Italian neighborhood is forever gone. Each year, those families still share their pride and loss for their former neighborhood at events such as the Triangle Fest and the Wisconsin Book Festival.

To write guidelines and plans and then make the conscious decision to disregard them when a controversial project comes along is a total waste of time and effort. This is precisely the time the guidelines and plans are needed.

I urge the city of Madison to restrict the height of the building at the current Ideal Body Shop to no more than 4 stories as was clearly written by the city's own staff in the Urban Design District 7 Ordinance.

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