

To Commissioners:

I am under the weather and will be unable to attend tonight's meeting.

I support and appreciate the memo Dick has sent out. I would, however, like the commissioners to consider adding or strengthening two issues that are important to me: the urban forest and stormwater. The plan peripherally addresses the urban forest on p. 45 and stormwater on page 105, but in my opinion the text is quite general and inadequate.

There are numerous environmental benefits to developing a strong urban forest and one of the most significant is to mitigate the urban heat island effect (and the plan notes this). The urban forest is, however, an architectural component of the city as well and just as the plan provides general guidelines for architecture we need to do this for trees as well. Heights, spacing, etc. of trees are significant to space creation, developing edges, ceilings, etc. and guidelines to how this can be done would be helpful. I would hope that the plan at minimum recommends that the City develop an urban forest plan for the downtown area including the square. Such a plan would include the minimum sizes of street trees (preferably species that grow greater than 60'), maximum *average* spacing (I recommend 35'-45' to create a true canopy ceiling), planting area (we complain that many species won't grow in the city, when the real factor is don't grow because we don't provide adequate growing conditions- Dick memo alludes to this but I'd like to see this strengthened), and diversity (using a 5-10-20 rule of no more than 5% of one species, 10% of one genus and 20% of one family). To support diversity we should encourage that plant composition be viewed by neighborhood, not by the individual parcel. I look at the plantings on the outside of the square and along North Hamilton and know we can do much better, but we need guidelines to do so. I don't think the downtown plan as written provides the guidelines that would result in a different planting along these corridors, however.

Secondly, the downtown plan needs to consider stormwater issues. Within the downtown too many developments are still pushing stormwater to the sewers. High density development makes sense in our cities but one of its drawbacks is how to deal with stormwater when green space is inadequate. Where green space is available rain gardens *if correctly built and maintained* help, but there are too many situations where adequate green space is not available. The plan needs to include stormwater guidelines and rewards that encourage solutions such as green roofs, permeable pavements, and recycling of grey water in situations where green space is inadequate for infiltration. General guidelines are best done at the downtown plan level and not on a case-by-case basis. Berlin in its redevelopment of its eastern sector has said no development can contribute more than 10% additional stormwater offsite. This has resulted in all sorts of innovative ways to contain stormwater. A number of other cities in Germany require green roofs on all new developments unless financial hardships can be documented. I'm convinced these solutions are necessary if we want truly dense, but sustainable, development. I am

hoping that Madison can look toward be a leader within the Midwest on sustainability issues that are important to creating a viable and rewarding city.

John Harrington