

Cleveland, Julie

From: Scott Faust <scott@rentmadison.com>
Sent: Monday, December 11, 2023 5:39 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments
Subject: Item #11

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We have concerns as owners of the property to the south regarding access for loading and unloading during student move-in & outs and other vehicles needing access to service the property. Currently we have very limited loading and unloading space for the residents and retail spaces along this street. Please investigate how commercial deliveries will continue to take place daily and access for students moving in and out along Frances Street. This development is on a busy intersection with limited access for Students to move in and out and commercial tenants getting daily deliveries.

Scott Faust

scott@rentmadison.com

Access Resident Portal @ boardwalkprop.appfolio.com/connect/users/sign_in

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From: [Stevee Kraemer](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Comments on 529 University Avenue
Date: Friday, December 8, 2023 11:20:32 AM

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Greetings.

My name is Stevee Kraemer, and I am a 17 year old student at Middleton High School. I am in the middle of my Senior year, and I have a piece of writing for your private consideration. My parents opened the Vintage a few years before I was born, and I have had the great fortune of calling 529 University Avenue my workplace and second home for almost 4 years now. When applying to college, namely UW Madison earlier this year, I had to write my personal statement. I knew that there was no other topic I could write about than the possible destruction of the Vintage and how devastating it has been to think about a place that has made me who I am today be destroyed. I have linked the essay below, and urge you to consider the implication on the community over the monetary value of the proposed project, and demolition of Vintage Spirits and Grill.

Thank you,
Stevee Kraemer.



[Common App Essay](#)

From: [Krissie Fretschel](#)
To: [Bennett, Juliana](#); [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: My letter of support for Vintage Spirits and Grill
Date: Saturday, December 9, 2023 9:26:35 AM
Attachments: [Vintage.pdf](#)

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Please take a look at the attachment for my letter. Thank you for your time and please feel free to contact me for any follow-up questions or concerns

Best Wishes

Krissie

From: [jeffrey grabowski](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Vintage Spirits and Grill
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2023 8:04:52 PM

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Good evening.

I am writing to express my support for keeping Vintage Spirits and Grill, as it is a vital part of the downtown community, and to oppose the plan calling for the building demolition and subsequent construction of limited, boutique style apartments.

The Vintage business has taken on the personality of two of its principle owners, Trent and Brittany Kraemer, who have in over two decades of doing business, brought in people of all races, backgrounds, sexual orientations, and genders, and created an ever expanding, close knit-family unit. This inclusive community of people has in turn created a space that the downtown community and UW student body deeply loves, whether it is holding one of innumerable charitable events, hosting families visiting on Badger game days, or operating as a simple meeting place for friends. It is no exaggeration to say that generations of students passing through the Madison community have enjoyed, and benefitted from this tiny bar. It is my hope that this business will continue on as it is currently for many years to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read what I hope will be one of many, many emails in support of an iconic Madison bar, and please feel free to reach out if any further information is wanted or needed.

Best regards,
Jeff Grabowski

From: [tim.knox](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Concerns Regarding the Proposed Demolition of Vintage Spirits and Grill at 529 University Ave
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 2:31:06 PM

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Dear Planning Commission,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concerns regarding the proposed demolition of Vintage Spirits and Grill at 529 University Ave. As a longstanding member of the community and a frequent patron of this establishment, I believe it is crucial to consider the potential impact of such a decision on both the historic and social fabric of our neighborhood.

Vintage Spirits and Grill holds a special place in the hearts of many residents, serving as not just a place for dining and socializing, but also as a symbol of our community's history. The unique architecture and character of the building contribute significantly to the charm of University Avenue, and its removal could erode the distinctive character that sets our neighborhood apart.

Additionally, Vintage Spirits and Grill has played an integral role in fostering a sense of community. It has served as a gathering place for friends, families, and neighbors, creating a welcoming environment that encourages social interaction. The loss of such a venue would be felt deeply by those who have come to appreciate and rely on it.

Before making any decisions regarding the demolition, I urge the Planning Commission to thoroughly assess the potential consequences on the community's identity and social cohesion. I propose that a comprehensive study be conducted to explore alternative options, such as preserving the historical elements of the building or repurposing it in a way that retains its unique character.

Furthermore, I would appreciate it if the Planning Commission could provide more information on the rationale behind the proposed demolition and any plans for redevelopment. Transparency in this process is vital for the community to understand the motivations and potential benefits of such a decision.

I understand that development is inevitable, but I believe that with careful consideration and community input, we can find solutions that balance progress with the preservation of our neighborhood's rich heritage.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I trust that the Planning Commission will carefully weigh the implications of the proposed demolition and work towards a solution that aligns with the best interests of our community.

Sincerely,

Tim Knox

From: [Nick Schreiber](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Vintage Spirits and Grill
Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023 1:02:08 AM

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Dear City of Madison,

My name is Nicholas Schreiber, and I am a student at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. I am writing to voice my opinion against the disgrace that is the soon to be approved destruction of Vintage Spirits and Grill in favor of an apartment building.

It blows my mind that the city has been considering this and plans to approve it. Vintage has been a beloved restaurant and grill in Madison for decades. It's a family run company, something that one would like to think the City values.

To think that another apartment building is on its way to be constructed in the location of a Madison staple is heartbreaking. My dad, an alumni of the University of Wisconsin, barely recognizes Madison today versus when he attended school here. It makes me upset to imagine a day where I bring my kids to visit this great university and not be able to revisit my fond memories as has happened with my dad. Clearly, the values of those in government are not placed where they should be. I hope those reading this reconsider.

Sincerely,
Nicholas Schreiber

From: [Marcos Lares](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Vintage Spirits and Grill Redevelopment
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:30:13 PM

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To whom this may concern,

Leave Vintage alone. Please seriously reconsider this decision.

I have been closely following the plans to demolish Vintage for a 33-unit luxury apartment building. I was in attendance during the August 10th Vintage redevelopment meeting to learn more about The Carey Group's proposal, and I wanted to reach out to you to voice my concerns and frustrations about this ridiculous plan.

Briefly, my name is Marcos Lares; I am a 2019 UW Alum and have been a resident in the downtown area over the past seven years. Like many others, I have developed a strong connection to Vintage and have been a loyal patron since I began living in Madison. I'm sure by now you have heard countless personal anecdotes detailing why Vintage is such a special place in the community. My experiences are not unique in that regard and there is nothing more I can say that hasn't already been expressed on this [petition](#).

However, my frustrations about this development plan go beyond my personal feelings toward losing Vintage. There are several reasons this development is upsetting.

- **This development does not address the need for affordable housing.** The developers vaguely mentioned that the prices per unit will align with the current market rate, which indicates their target demographic for residents are those with strong financial privilege. Therefore, building this apartment further exacerbates the issue of housing inequality. How many more luxury apartments do we really "need"?
- **This location limits occupancy to 110 people.** Again, this does not significantly address the need for housing. Why tear down a highly successful small business for such a small number of **unaffordable** units? Why not build in a different location that can expand the number of units and/or offer affordable units? The developers justified the size by saying "it's 110 people who otherwise wouldn't be able to live downtown." I find this to be an extremely weak justification considering the obnoxiously large new luxury complex in the W Gorham/W Johnson area adding to the housing inequalities. Also, the silent part implicated in that statement is it's 110 **wealthy** people who otherwise would have the misfortune of not living in a luxury apartment downtown. What a horrible tribulation that would be.
- **Downtown Madison will soon be saturated with unaffordable high-rise luxury apartments. When will enough be enough?** Madison is rapidly losing character and

sense of community by sacrificing small businesses to build luxury apartments that appease the wealthy. One of the best attributes of Madison is the diversity, and we are not supporting the growth of a diverse population by continuing to build unaffordable housing. The average price of rent for non-luxury apartments is already high relative to the square footage. What is being done to support the housing needs of the population of students, and non-students for that matter, that are less fortunate financially? As of now, less financially privileged people are being driven out of the area. If that's the goal, then congratulations!

- **The area is already horribly congested during events.** UW student move-in/move-out weekend is the perfect example of how bad this development would be for the area. With the existing large apartment complexes in the area, car and pedestrian traffic is extremely high during move-in/move-out weekends causing safety concerns. In fact, I recall I was almost hit by two cars during move-in this last August crossing the intersection of N Frances and W Johnson on foot because the drivers neglected to pay attention to the crosswalk signs amidst the chaos of move-in, and other heavy traffic from the mini marathon, etc. The developers did not have a clear vision of how to circumvent this issue during move-in/move-out other than offering fully furnished units. However, there will not be a parking lot and cars will still need somewhere to stop and unload. So then what's the solution? Have police blockade the street and inconvenience everyone else during move-in/move-out? Every time there is an event that draws a large number of people from out of town, I see drivers make poor decisions in that area specifically. One of the biggest issues on University Ave is people driving down the wrong way. Adding another apartment complex will only contribute to the chaos of that area and create more dangers for those in cars and on foot. Logistically, this development does not make sense for the location and will create more problems for everyone. Again, why not build in a different location that can be more easily accessible for move-in/move-out.?
- **The uncertainty with the first level "retail space" is concerning.** A significant number of Vintage employees are students. This development will not offer the same opportunity for a similar number of students and non-students to work. The developers suggested a sandwich shop could go in there. We have enough of those. The developers suggested a fitness center could go in there, but would be exclusive to the residents of the building, which again does not benefit the surrounding community. It seems like whatever they decide to fill that space with will not benefit or contribute to the surrounding community in the way that Vintage currently does.

I am one of the [roughly 5000 individuals](#) who deeply oppose this development and wholeheartedly believe the negatives outweigh the benefits of this plan. To be clear, I am not opposed to the addition of housing downtown, but I am opposed to it at this specific location. Additionally, I am deeply opposed to the plan to take a way a cherished community gathering place to build **another unaffordable housing unit. It's beyond time for developers to**

prioritize affordable housing downtown and throughout the rest of Madison. This project can be completed at a more suitable location that allows these common logistical concerns to be properly addressed and does not remove this beloved small business. **Leave Vintage alone. Please seriously reconsider this decision.**

Thank you for taking the time to read my input on the issue.

Marcos Lares

From: [Nicholas Greene](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Vintage Demolishing Opinion
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 10:22:23 PM

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Dear City of Madison,

I'd like to share my thoughts on the proposed demolition of Vintage Spirits and Grill at 529 University Ave.

I know things change, and as a renter I know there's a housing crisis in Madison. There needs to be more housing development, but Vintage isn't the place to do it. On top of that, I do not trust that the proposed development could be considered affordable to the residents of Madison, most of whom in the area in question are full time students.

This is my 5th year living in Madison. I am proud to call this city my home. It holds a place near and dear to my heart, not just because of the beauty of the city, but because of the community of it. I think what makes Madison so special is its small town feel and plethora of community driven businesses and spaces. Vintage is one of those places that I think contributes to that the most and I know many others would say the same.

Vintage Spirits and Grill has good food, good drinks, and even better people. Not many places have all three of those things. It's more than just a bar or a business, it's a safe space where everyone is welcome. There's no "frat culture" like there is at many other bars west of the capitol. It's also where I've spent countless afternoons and evenings along with my friends and it's where I've shared some of my most cherished memories. All you have to do is walk through the door to see that the space inside truly lives up to the name "Vintage." Even if the business moved somewhere else, it would just never be the same. The look and feel of the space is just irreplaceable. When the weather is nice you can sit on the patio to enjoy the city breeze and you can stay longer to enjoy the night lights and the vibrant night life of the city. I'd say it's a venue that even rivals the Memorial Union Terrace. Vintage embodies the true soul of Madison in every single way.

It's known that housing developers take advantage of the collegiate nature of the city of Madison and the inability for many residents to afford rent without their student loan or the financial help of family. Set a precedent and don't let developers tear down a space as beloved as Vintage. Let the city grow but keep what makes it special. If it absolutely has to come down, make it equitable to the residents of the city, because I myself, as well as my neighbors and other peers, know that the proposed development is NOT in our best interest.

At the very least, all I ask is that you spend one night with your close friends or family at Vintage. Ask for a deck of cards. Play a board game you can find in the back seating area by the couches. Just go one time so that you can experience yourself how special of a place it is before it is gone forever. Happy hour \$3 Vintage taps is 3-5:30 every weekday and 9-close on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

Sincerely,
Nick Greene

From: [Cate Pfeiff](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Request to Preserve Vintage Spirits and Grill
Date: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 9:48:57 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my concern about the potential demolition of Vintage Spirits and Grill. As a resident and frequent visitor to this establishment, I believe it holds significant cultural and historical value for our community.

Vintage Spirits and Grill has been a cherished part of Madison, contributing to the unique character of our city. Its historical significance, combined with its role as a community gathering place, makes it an asset worth preserving.

I kindly urge you to reconsider any plans for demolition and explore alternative solutions that would allow Vintage Spirits and Grill to continue serving our community. Preserving such establishments enhances our city's identity and maintains a connection to our shared history.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that, together, we can find a solution that benefits both the community and the city's development goals.

Sincerely, Cate Pfeiff

Cleveland, Julie

From: Idlofgren@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 3:37 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments
Subject: Vintage Restaurant

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please do not allow this restaurant, who has served many, to be demolished, only to build boutique apartments. The people who work at Vintage will be without jobs and folks who enjoy a meal there, will be without.

Thank you for supporting Vintage remaining in place to help the community.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Lofgren

Cleveland, Julie

From: Elyse Lofgren <lofgren.elyse@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 6, 2023 1:32 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments
Subject: Save Vintage Spirits and Grill

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Members of the Madison Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed demolition of a Vintage Spirits and Grill in downtown Madison. This business has been an integral part of our community for over 20 years, providing a safe space for everyone who visits. It employs over 40 people, who are all members of our community and depend on this business for their livelihood. I understand that the committee is considering demolishing Vintage Spirits and Grill to make way for boutique apartments, but I strongly believe that this decision would be detrimental to our community. Madison needs affordable housing for its residents, not just high-end apartments that only serve a small group of people. Furthermore, the loss of this business would leave a significant gap in the downtown area and negatively impact the local economy. I urge the commission to consider the potential loss at hand if demolition is approved. There will always be another housing opportunity in Madison, there can never be another Vintage Spirits and Grill. I am confident that we can find a way to incorporate affordable housing in our community without sacrificing the businesses that make it unique and thriving. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely,

Elyse Olson

--

Elyse Olson
Area Manager
674 S. Whitney Way
803 East Washington
600 Water St
(608)512-2348
elysel@vintagebrewing.com

From: [Erik Daczko](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: 529 University Demolition Permit
Date: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:59:03 PM

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To whom it may concern:

I had some questions and comments regarding this project. What benefits will this small project bring to our city and at what cost? There are already at least 3 major ongoing housing projects in the area. Is this small 30 unit project really going to solve the housing problems? Will students even be able to afford living in these "boutique apartments"? How will this affect the look on our city when we turn a bustling lively corner into a lame apartment building? A lousy way to attract visitors from out of town if you ask me!

The current tenants of the building are doing a great job supporting the Madison community, not to mention the building they occupy is historic. If we tear down this building, we not only lose yet another Madison small business, but also a beautiful piece of our past. Even if the current tenants don't stay, at a minimum the building should be placed on the historic registry. Between new housing and university buildings, this city is losing its historical character and charm. If we allow this to go on, soon all the small businesses, shops, restaurants, and taverns will be gone and so will the desire to live in this city!

Not to mention the developer hasn't even pulled the building permit or had their plan approved by the design committee. Shouldn't these steps come first? If they don't, the developer may demolish the building and take years to get approval to start new construction. What's worse than an empty lot on the busiest corner in town when we could have a lively restaurant and tavern that the people love?

I appreciate your time and concern in this matter.

Sincerely,

Erik Daczko

Cleveland, Julie

From: Mollie Deyo <molliejdeyo02@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:06 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments
Subject: Vintage Spirits and Grill

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Hello,

My name is Mollie and I am the Assistant General Manager for Vintage Brewing Co. Sauk Prairie.

I know that being associated with the company gives me a biased view, and that I am also working for a location that is not in the direct Madison area. I did, however, have the experience of being a young adult in the Madison area and feel that gives me a great outlook on the goings on of the area .

When I was 18 I moved to Madison because I wanted to experience living in an area that has all the amazing benefits of a city, but still has that wholesome, smaller community feeling. Madison had exactly what I was looking for. I got to spent 6 very formative years in that area, and I truly cherish that time of my life.

A huge part of my experience was at the restaurants and bars around the University Ave and W. Johnson area. Being a 21 year old, and living on West Johnson, I spent a good amount of my time hanging at bars with my friends. We always gravitated towards the hectic, busy, college student filled bars, which were always a good time. But, we knew that whenever we wanted a safer, more calm night that Vintage Spirits and Grill was the best spot.

I spent countless nights having dinner, drinks, and great conversation at Spirits and Grill in my early 20s. The staff was always so friendly, and so attentive. My friends and I always felt safe and welcome whenever we would go there, which I can't say was always the case at other establishments.

While I wholeheartedly believe that Vintage Spirits and Grill should get to remain, I understand the need for more housing. Since I did spend many years living in the area, I experienced the difficulty of finding a new apartment every year when our leases were over. What I don't understand though, is why boutique housing is the goal to replace VSG. Why remove a wonderful, historic, safe, and welcoming restaurant and bar, and replace it with barely enough apartments to put a dent in the housing issues in the greater Madison area.

I could understand if a larger, more affordable apartment complex was being put in that location. I wouldn't be writing this email at all, despite my great love of Vintage Spirits and Grill and the amazing people who own it. Boutique apartments are not the answer to any problems, in any way. Making Madison less affordable, less comfortable, less accepting, and less safe does not feel like the correct direction to be going.

I truly appreciate whoever takes the time out of their day to read my email, and I appreciate any thought or hesitation my email hopefully creates about the decision that is being made

Thank you.

Mollie Deyo
Assistant General Manager
Vintage Brewing Co. Sauk Prairie

Cleveland, Julie

From: Rory Nienajadlo <rniejadlo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 4:05 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments; Bennett, Juliana
Subject: Urgent Request: Vote "No" to the Proposed Demolition of 529 University Ave and Vintage Spirits & Grill

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to urgently express my deep concerns about the current proposal for the demolition of Vintage Spirits & Grill at 529 University Ave. As a resident deeply committed to the preservation of our community's identity, I implore you to consider voting "No" to the proposed demolitions during the upcoming meeting.

Vintage Spirits & Grill at 529 University Ave holds a significant historical and cultural value for our community. Their unique contributions to our neighborhood's character should be carefully considered before any irreversible decisions are made.

I respectfully request that the Planning Commission takes into consideration the following points:

1. **Historical and Cultural Significance:** 529 University has played an integral role in shaping the cultural landscape of our community. Preserving these structures ensures that the rich tapestry of our history is not lost.
2. **Architectural Importance:** The architectural features of 529 University Ave contribute to the visual identity of our community. Their preservation maintains the distinctive charm that defines our neighborhood.
3. **Community Input:** Throughout discussions about these proposals, numerous community members have voiced their concerns and objections. It is vital to recognize and consider the sentiments of those directly impacted by potential demolitions.
4. **Alternative Solutions:** I urge the Commission to explore alternative solutions that allow for the adaptive reuse or preservation of these structures. Collaboration between stakeholders can lead to compromise solutions that balance development goals with the community's desire to maintain its identity.

Preserving the cultural and historical fabric of our community is a shared responsibility. I trust that, as stewards of our city's future, you will carefully weigh the impact of your decision on our shared heritage.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I sincerely hope that the Planning Commission will vote against the proposed demolition of 529 University Ave.

Sincerely,

Rory Nienajadlo

Cleveland, Julie

From: Zachary Cicero <cicerozachary@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:12 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments
Subject: Demolition of a Madison Staple!

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Hello,

I am a local resident of the Madison area. Not often do I feel the need to reach out to speak my piece about something, but I absolutely must speak up for the beloved Vintage Spirits and Grill!

While I understand the continued housing development to help the city grow, I also feel as the charm that attracts people to Madison is being taken away for more and more high rise apartments. What makes Madison such a great destination for people to settle down is the sense of community as well as the small town vibe such a big city gives off! Unfortunately, the more the high rise apartments show up, the more bars, restaurants, or venues that have kept locals around for decades are disappearing.

Vintage is one of those spots that has become a second home to so many of the wonderful Madison locals, and where you can just walk in and feel the vibe of what Madison truly is! It is one of the few spots downtown that is welcoming to a person no matter their background and that isn't something that is easy to develop. Having been able to get to know the original owners of Vintage, it is clear that the values of their establishment came straight from their own beliefs; that no matter who you are or where you come from, you will always feel welcomed! I feel as these values align with what Madison strives to be for the people that call this city home, and I feel that the more community safe havens are being replaced for overpriced and overvalued housing, the more we will continue to lose pieces of the heart of Madison!

Please listen to the community! Please don't let Madison turn into one big apartment complex! I hope to see Vintage Spirits and Grill at 529 University Ave. for years to come!

Thank you,

Zachary Cicero
Madison Resident
cicerozachary@gmail.com

Cleveland, Julie

From: Kyra Coubal <kyracoubal@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:16 PM
To: Plan Commission Comments
Subject: Demolition of 529 University Ave

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Hi there,

I am reaching out to address the new development planned for 529 University Ave. I've become aware of how the developer plans to change the lot in the near future and have some concerns. I don't understand how small set of a "luxury, boutique apartments" is supposed to address the issue of Madison's housing crisis. There will be a limited number of apartments and at such unreasonably expensive rates that the people of Madison that need housing most will be unable to afford it.

Not only will this development exacerbate this issue, but by approving this project you would be taking away a vital source of the community that is Vintage Spirits and Grill. This location is not only a restaurant, but a huge gathering place for all in the Madison area. They are one of the few safe spaces left within the downtown area.

Please consider how this new development will be a hindrance on the community rather than an enhancement, and understand that the location is already providing a great resource to all of us.

Thank you for your time.

Best,
Kyra

From: [Planning](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [McNabola, Lisa](#)
Subject: FW: regarding 529.. please read
Date: Monday, December 4, 2023 10:13:30 AM

From: Brittany Kraemer <vintagemadison@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 7:57 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>; Bennett, Juliana <district2@cityofmadison.com>; Mikolajewski, Matthew <MMikolajewski@cityofmadison.com>; Stouder, Heather <HStouder@cityofmadison.com>; canamadison@gmail.com; Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: regarding 529.. please read

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good morning,

I wanted to take a moment to introduce ourselves.

I understand you know about the proposed redevelopment at 529 University but I wanted to take it a step further than just being a project on paper.

From 1998-2000 I worked at Schooners/ Lava Lounge at 461 Gilman and Trent worked at the Red Shed while he was a foreman with Tri-North. In 2002 our friends across the street at the Living Room were selling their business and we both knew right away we wanted to start a family business. In 2002 we opened Vintage Spirits and Grill and almost 22 years later couldn't be more proud of a place so many call home.

Our landlords sat us down in Dec 2022 and explained they received an offer they could not refuse, unfortunately, Trent and I could not compete with the amount of money the Carey Group was willing to pay. The lot is a 5000 sq foot property with only 3600 sq feet buildable.

The Carey Group offer was until Aug 2023 and unfortunately, the waiting game continued and our landlords felt they had to renew it until March 15, 2024, with no extension after that.

I believe the tight offer to purchase has this project moving forward without careful consideration.

Madison, as you are all aware is growing exponentially and we fully understand the housing issue.

in 2024 alone we have:

OLIV- W. Gorham/ 386 units

CORE- Johnson and Broom/ housing 1600

Johnson and Basset/ 232 units
VERVE- housing 536
CHAPTER- Park and Regent housing 172
ATMOPHERE- 363 units

Kevin Carey's proposed devolvement will house 33 boutique-style apartments.

The unfortunate path to make this small project happen is destroying a family business, one that employs over 40 people, a few of whom have been with us for 22, 21, 14, and 9 years.

What do we bring to the neighborhood:

We are part of the RCC Safer Bar initiative which the training involves bystander intervention to do our part in preventing sexual violence.

We have had training from the Madison Public Health Department on Narcan training and are getting our OAK boxes this month.

We work on initiatives throughout the year and raise money for:

-Dane County Mac (connecting survivors of gender-based violence to the correct help)

-WI Alliance for Women's Health

-Briarpatch- Teens like us (safe space for queer and questioning youth)

I want to put a face to the potential project that would eliminate a beautiful thriving community hub, a safe space for our students, and a family business that loves their staff as their own.

Once we hit March 15, 2024, our landlords will not renew their offer to purchase, from there we can continue to rent from the Goeden's and try to purchase the very loved corner lot ourselves.

I appreciate you for taking the time to read this,
Brittany and Trent Kraemer

On a personal note, our Daughter asked us to share her 2024 UW Madison submission essay:

The restaurant was a quaint establishment, a quiet oasis inside a bustling urban jungle. My parents opened the restaurant over 20 years ago on a whim; young adults with intentions to actualize a dream. The building had blue brick walls; eclectic lighting emitted from the inside, along with pin-up paintings and vintage beer signs. I grew up inside that business, with the dream of one day calling it mine.

As I grew, so did the businesses. The company expanded to huge locations outside of the city center, yet the tiny restaurant was still the lifeblood of the business. My parents knew that, statistically speaking, most restaurants do not see profit or success. They would need to make so many sacrifices and dedicate so much time,

effort, and love to see the restaurant thrive.

I began working at the restaurant when I turned 14. I was a freshman in high school with slouchy shoulders and a nervous disposition, and absolutely terrified to answer the phone. Through hosting I learned how to talk to people I didn't know, through serving I learned how to balance many things at once, through working I learned who I really was and grew the confidence I have with me today. Not only has the restaurant seen me grow, but helped me grow into the woman I am today. Working so hard over the course of these four years, that place has become my second home.

My parents broke the news to me shortly after they found out. The owners of the building had an offer on the property, millions more than what the land was worth. My parents couldn't afford to counter an offer like that, so we were stuck in a limbo of not knowing if the restaurant was getting sold or not. Boutique apartments, the developers said, fit for financially equipped university students, built right over the corpse of our restaurant. There would be no more Tuesday afternoon serving shifts, leaning up against the rails of the patio with the sun on my cheeks. There would be no more brunch Sundays working with my mom, dad and sister. There would be no more opportunities to get to know myself better. There would be no opportunity to own the place that means so much to me.

The whole situation seemed like a cruel game of Russian Roulette. Were the developers going to go through with the sale? Were they not going to bother with the tiny plot? No one should be able to make such a consequential decision about my life without my consultation, it just wasn't fair. I shared petitions, posted media, talked to my friends and community, trying to spread the word that we were being pushed out while also trying to have some guise of control. Hours I spent pondering the consequences of this on myself and my family, both financially and emotionally. Who will I become without the restaurant there to foster my growth?

We don't know when they are buying the land. Most likely, the company will only inform us of the demolition day. Make no mistake, I'll stand on the sidewalk, feel the sentimental spark within me flicker, watch the place that became my home get torn down. That day is not today, but someday soon. As I move onto the next phase of my life, the restaurant that made me will not. I am left with the memories I have made and the lessons I have learned, never to be forgotten or unlearned. Even when the building is dust and the business goes under, and I find other places that foster my growth, there is no forgetting what that restaurant has done for me. Eventually, I will be left with the rubble of a place that means so much, left with only its impact on me, with the concession that all good things must come to an end.