

From: [Marsha Cannon](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: May 22, 2023 - Agenda Item #4 - Task Force on Farmland Preservation
Date: Monday, May 22, 2023 11:28:20 AM

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I urge you to vote YES to adopt the Final Report by the City of Madison Task Force on Farmland Preservation (Legistar ID #77441) introduced to the Common Council on May 2, 2023.

For two years, I advocated for farmland preservation at the 63-acre Raemisch Farm located west of the airport, adjacent to Lake View Elementary School on North Sherman Ave. The privately-owned property has been rented out as commercial commodity cropland for many years. At the same time, nearby low-income neighbors who need land to grow food for their families must travel 2 miles to Troy Community Gardens or 6 miles to the Groundswell Westport Farm.

Sadly, most of Raemisch Farm has been zoned for development with just 10 acres left in agriculture—much of which is unfarmable wetland. Another undeveloped 33-acre parcel—currently in commercial agriculture—at Wheeler Rd. and County CV/Packers Ave. faces a similar fate.

Growing food in the city can sustain a family, a neighborhood and a business. Examples range from small vacant lots in Milwaukee to the entrepreneurial Brooklyn Grange, the largest green rooftop soil farm in the world with more than 2.5 acres under cultivation in Brooklyn and Queens.

Yes, Madison's population is bulging at the seams. People need housing. But we also need food and a place to grow it. The Task Force on Farmland Preservation addresses both goals in their report. Yet achieving goals takes more than a written document.

I urge you to: (1) Recommend adoption of the Task Force on Farmland Preservation Final Report, and (2) Emphasize funding and filling the Food Policy Director position to coordinate implementation of food-related issues in the Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,

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