

Savoir Faire Cards & Gifts,

117 South Pinckney Street
Madison, WI 63703
608/294-8280 V 608/294-8281 F

February 14, 2005

Re: Board of Estimates Meeting
Subject: Parking on the Square

I have worked on the Square for over 28 years and always loved our Downtown. Eight years ago, I opened Savoir Faire on South Pinckney Street which is located about a half block off the Square.

In June of 2004, I opened a second Savoir Faire at Greenway Station in Middleton. I would like to share the comments from customers regarding parking Downtown Madison. It is difficult to hear them because I know that in many cases it is a perception, but very much a reality. The comments were as follows:

"We are so glad you located out here (Middleton) because parking is miserable Downtown;"

"I haven't shopped downtown in years, the parking situation is a real pain;"

"Yes, I realize I am missing a lot of fun activities, but, where can you park;"

"I hear the 'parking Nazis' (monitors) are ruthless and nail you every chance they get – who needs that?"

These remarks & more make it very difficult to have a thriving business downtown. 27 additional parking spots is a small start but will have a positive effect on our Madisonians who think the parking on the Square is only for the political and the privileged.

I am also of the opinion that Saturday parking should be absolutely *free*! Give the business people a strong positive break for a change. Free parking on Saturdays would have a huge impact on all of us and it would make great press, along with the addition of those 27 parking spaces.

Thank you, Kathleen M. Retelle, owner



February 14, 2005

Harvest Restaurant submits this letter in lieu of appearing at today's hearing.

Jeff Orr and Tami Lax, proprietors of Harvest Restaurant located at 21 N. Pinckney Street, Madison, WI, endorse the proposed parallel parking reconfiguration. As proprietors of Harvest for the past 4 plus years it is our studied belief that providing more street parking in and around the Capitol Square would benefit our business by providing greater opportunity and an increased incentive for people to come downtown.

Indeed, parking availability is the most asked question by our patrons when making a reservation. The additional parking spaces made possible by parallel parking would stimulate more commercial activity on the Square.

Many people avoid downtown for no reason other than the lack of parking. Operating a small restaurant is difficult enough without the stigma that it is impossible to park on the Square, a belief shared by many people living on both the east and west sides of town.

Thank you for considering our opinion and to voice it before you this evening.

Sincerely,

Jeff Orr and Tami Lax

Dear Mary,

00284

I am in California because my mother-in-law died. I would appreciate it if you could pass this on to the board of estimates.

February 13, 2005

Dear Members of the Board of Estimates,

I regret that I am unable to attend your meeting tomorrow evening. I am in California attending my mother-in-law's funeral.

I own Capitol Kids ltd at 8 South Carroll on the Capitol Square. I have owned the shop for five years. When I bought Capitol Kids, I hoped that I would be able to find a good spot on the Capitol Square. A little over three years ago, 8 South Carroll, owned by Home Savings Bank became available.

After some great preparations and assistance from Jim Bradley and the folks at Home Savings Bank and at a great personal expense, we remodeled the space and opened in the fall of 2002.

It has been a great joy to own and operate Capitol Kids. We have wonderful support from community members and almost everyday someone stops in to thank us for helping to put retail on the square.

Almost everything works well for us. Good support from DMI, our neighbors, our customers and the lively nature of the square make running a retail store a challenging but rewarding experience. I love Madison, and as I get to know more about retail (after running a non-profit for 23 years,) I am constantly amazed at how many challenges really exist in running a small locally owned business.

During many months of the year, a couple of sales can make the difference between a dismal and an great day. While our location is wonderful, we cannot exist unless we also capture the destination market. We cannot sell large items (eg: a train table or a doll house or rocking horse) unless we have a way to help our customers get them to a car. Many young parents need to use a car in order to get their children to a store. Challenges like walking up a hill with a stroller and a toddler on an icy day discourage customers from using the store.... a mall destination seems so much easier.

The phone call we get most often is the call about parking. While it may be a perception is that there is no parking downtown, it is often a reality. Too many potential customers have later told us about our lost sales because they drove around looking and never found a spot to park. Too many just never find one, and they just don't come back.

We do what we can to make downtown shopping and being downtown a memorable experience. We hand out balloons outside during farmer's markets, and other downtown events. We sponsor the Easter Hat parade. We conduct many charity shopping days. We donate items to auctions and raffles. We offer free activities and a great kid's bathroom stop for downtown visitors.

The hustle and bustle of downtown is a wonderful thing. The energy and festive environment that is

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created by having more people filling our downtown streets is a healthy thing and we need to do what we can to have a vibrant and exciting downtown.

Parking is critical. The proposal that you see today had been studied, and crafted by a lot of people willing to compromise to do the best thing for all who use our streets and sidewalks. I am personally grateful for all the hard work that has gone into this plan.

I hope that we can do a number of things to create better opportunities to support small locally owned businesses - ones that help give our downtown special character. Businesses that make Madison a different place to play, dine and shop.

I know that you will work diligently to find a way to make this happen too. Please feel free to contact the store should you have any questions.

I appreciate your commitment and concern and your hard work to make this city a wonderful place to live and work.

Sincerely,

Peg Scholtes
Proprietor, Capitol Kids