

July 2, 2013

Dear Members of the City of Madison Common Council

Two years ago our alder, Chris Schmidt, encouraged all concerned people in our area to develop a joint neighborhood plan that would knit together the hopes and visions of five neighborhoods adjoining Hoyt Park. Under the leadership of Jason Valerius and Jean McCubbin, many dozens of people over the past two years have worked diligently, and openly, sometimes expressing different views, to craft the Hoyt Joint Area Neighborhood Plan that will soon be considered by the Common Council.

We, who have participated in the process, fervently hope that the Council will adopt the Plan. It represents the visions, hard work, compromises, and majority votes of participants as well as the hopes of many others who have contributed their ideas along the way.

The Hoyt Neighborhood has been described by Vandewalle and Associates, which guided in crafting the plan, as “a neighborhood in a forest”. At the neighborhood’s northern boundary on University Avenue and its far northwestern boundary on Midvale Blvd, there is increasing multi-use development. Otherwise, the neighborhood consists almost entirely of quiet streets, pretty parks, churches, playgrounds, and single family homes.

When Vandewalle and Associates launched the planning process, it first surveyed the neighborhood for residents’ perspectives on the area’s current status and future directions. The Neighborhood Survey asked what people most like about the neighborhood, what its issues are, what is lacking, and what would improve it. Over 400 people completed and submitted their responses to these questions.

The things people most like about our neighborhood are

- its location (87%)
- its access to shopping and services (49%)
- its character (49%)

The issues identified are

- traffic and speed enforcement/ noise (38%)
- bike and pedestrian safety (30.5%)
- urban ecology (28%)

The desired amenities that neighbors would appreciate are

- a community garden (44%)
- a community center (28%)
- other (27%)

The most important things that people think would improve the neighborhood are

- better bike and pedestrian routes (34%)
- traffic enforcement (31%)
- street maintenance (26%)

The Survey reveals that residents of the Hoyt Joint Neighborhood are satisfied with access to services. Residents appreciate the area's character. They want better traffic control and safer places to walk. They are concerned about noise. The Survey also reveals that development is not valued in most areas of the neighborhood.

Of the 400 people who answered the survey questions

- **only 25 (6.5%) said they would like more housing options in the neighborhood.**
- **only 18% wanted more retail or services.**
- **only 16% responded that redevelopment of nearby shopping or business areas would improve the neighborhood**

The Hoyt Joint Neighborhood is a quiet, safe, undeveloped, and beautiful place to live. Most people want it to stay this way.

The Council may be aware that, nearly five years ago, Mount Olive Lutheran Church, in the Hoyt Joint Area, chose to move to a new property on Whitney Way before it first sold the old property on Mineral Point Road. The new church is not part of the Hoyt Neighborhood. At least one offer to purchase the old property on Mineral Point has been made, but was not accepted.

Neighbors proximate to the former Mt. Olive site, as well as throughout adjoining neighborhoods, circulated a petition in favor of keeping low-density zoning at the church's former site. **431 people signed this petition. 80% of the property owners within 200 feet of the church signed the petition.** Proximate neighbors would welcome another church, a school, a community center, or a pocket neighborhood but not development which would increase density, traffic, and noise.

It is clear that the wishes of the neighbors who live near the church's property are much the same as the wishes of the 400 people who completed the Neighborhood Survey. In fact, all data that could be tallied from the planning process support the fact that the vast majority of people in the new Hoyt Neighborhood like it as it is and want to maintain its character. As one example, Sunset Village Community Association approved the Hoyt Joint Neighborhood Plan by 94%. Development is sure to continue on University Avenue and parts of Midvale Blvd; but development in the low-density, residential areas of the neighborhood is unwelcome.

It is our collective hope that the vision presented in the Hoyt Park Area Joint Neighborhood Plan will be adopted by the Common Council. The Plan reflects the hard work, compromise, diligence, and, above all, the deep caring for and commitment to our neighborhood expressed by those of us who developed the Plan. Hoyt Neighborhood is a gem on the near west side of Madison. It should remain the single-family, low density, quiet, and safe place it currently is.

Sincerely yours,

Tony A. Klink  
General Manager  
Wisconsin Crop Improvement Association  
12-year resident

Anne Badey Raffa  
Reading Specialist, Midvale School  
Madison Area School District  
27-year resident

Ken Raffa  
President, Sunset Village Community  
Association  
27-year resident

Kit Becker  
Middleton School District Substitute  
Teacher  
60-year resident

Cheri Swenson  
Retired UW Research Administrator  
33-year resident

Barbara Gerloff  
Assistant Dean, School of Education  
UW-Madison

Daniel Beld  
Union Painter, Local 802  
26-year resident

Beverly Flanigan  
Clinical Professor of Social Work, Emerita  
21-year resident

Bill Swenson  
Retired Dane County Activity Therapist  
33-year resident

Nancy Beld  
Retired from Self-Employment  
26-year resident

Linda Newman  
Academic Advisor, retired  
UW-Madison

Cc: Mayor Paul Soglin