

Stouder, Heather

From: Stouder, Heather
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2011 10:35 AM
To: ALL ALDERS
Cc: Murphy, Brad; Cover, Steven
Subject: Agenda Item 4/#23691: 8301 Old Sauk Rd.
Attachments: Concerns for Today's Meeting on the Expansion of Attic Angel Place

Dear Alders:

After completion of the October 3 staff report for the proposed addition to the Attic Angels assisted living facility, a resident of the Junction Ridge Condominiums, located directly across Attic Angels Circle to the south, expressed concerns about the proposal to Planning staff. He and another condominium owner met with Brad Murphy and me on October 17 to further discuss their concerns, which focus primarily on three issues:

- The loss of existing greenspace and landscaping on the Attic Angels property, which their living rooms face from the back of the condominiums,
- The incorporation of a loading zone in this area near the entrance of the proposed addition, which they are concerned will be used frequently by emergency vehicles, and
- A lack of sufficient information about the proposal prior to the October 3 Plan Commission meeting.

He also pointed out an error in the October 3 staff report, which stated that the Junction Ridge Condominiums were for seniors. This was indeed an error. In fact, the condominiums have no age restrictions.

The concerned neighbor, who had received mailed notification of the proposal with the correct dates for the public hearings, noted on October 6 that the sign posted on the property had the wrong dates on it. Specifically, instead of the October 3 Plan Commission and October 18 Common Council meetings, the sign listed September 19 Plan Commission and October 3 Common Council dates. Staff determined that this was a staff error which occurred on the day the signs were prepared and given to the applicant. Staff contacted the applicant to let them know the dates would need to be changed. The applicant came to pick up a new sign with corrected dates, and posted it on the property a week in advance of the October 18 Common Council meeting.

Incorrect dates on the original sign were indeed an unfortunate and rare error. Fortunately, staff notes that no citizens arrived at the September 19 Plan Commission meeting to discuss the case. Further, the mailed notices and the notices in the newspaper were correct. At the request of the Alder, Planning staff reviewed this situation with staff in the City Attorney's Office, who confirmed the validity of the October 3 Plan Commission action.

The October 17 communication from the neighbor is attached.

Sincerely,

Heather Stouder, AICP

Planner, Planning Division
 City of Madison Department of Planning &
 Community & Economic Development
 P: 608-266-5974
 F: 608-267-8739
hstouder@cityofmadison.com

Madison Municipal Building, Ste. LL-100
 215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
 PO Box 2985
 Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2985

Stouder, Heather

From: Sanger Powers [powersb@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2011 9:30 AM
To: Stouder, Heather; Murphy, Brad
Cc: Skidmore, Paul
Subject: Concerns for Today's Meeting on the Expansion of Attic Angel Place

Ms. Stouder and Mr Murphy,

In an effort to save time at our meeting and to reduce my irritation and frustration, I am providing you with my concerns in writing this morning so that you can address them each at our meeting this afternoon. I certainly am not naive enough to believe that this will change anything in your process but I think you need and deserve the feedback. I also realize the train has left the station and there is no stopping it, but I want you to know your decision making has consequential impact on residents of this community. I believed that your role was to represent all interested parties in the community when changes and alterations are requested to a PUD. Unfortunately I appear to be badly mistaken.

Mrs. Irene Daniels, my neighbor, will be attending this meeting with me since she also has a strong interest in this matter.

1. Given my conversation with Heather on October 3, it appears there is a lack of understanding about this neighborhood. In addition, a comment in your recommendations to the Plan Commission affirms this thought. When we originally spoke, Heather suggested that I follow up with with Mary Ann Drescher on this matter. It is my impression that she did not realize that the Condominiums of Junction Ridge have no relationship whatsoever to Attic Angel Place. I clarified this with her at that time but there is a misstatement of fact in the Plan Commission recommendation which seem to affirm a lack of understanding of this neighborhood. The comment is that to the south of the proposed expansion are duplex condominiums for seniors. The Condominiums of Junction Ridge were never developed or marketed exclusively for seniors and indeed have many residents who do not fall into this category. I believe our development was confused with Prairie Point which is the the Attic Angel Community located further south of us. I would like clarification of these issues and am disturbed that misinformation was provided to the Plan Commission. We are in no way associated with Attic Angel Place and receive no benefit from them. In fact with this proposed expansion, we stand to lose a great deal not only in the value of our properties but also in the quality of our lives.

2. In this same conversation, I was provided a glowing description of how the applicant was preserving the courtyard for the benefits of the resident of Attic Angel Place. I guess that preserving this courtyard was at the expense of residents of the Condominiums of Junction Ridge who instead of having green space and a buffer will now stare directly at a loading zone, parking stalls and a large building. This doesn't seem to be the most thoughtful decision for all affected parties.

3. Also during this conversation, I was informed that Attic Angel Circle was a private street as if this made the expansion more palatable. I was well aware of this fact since all streets in the neighborhood are private and all residents use them including homeowners and residents of Attic Angel Place. In fact the residents of Prairie Point use "our" roads to get to Attic Angel Place on a daily basis. In fact we had to erect speed limit signs to avoid having them speed down our street when children are present.

4. The 3 buildings in our community most affected by this expansion are assessed at nearly two million dollars by the city and we indeed pay property taxes unlike the applicant. Our living areas now overlook a green space with many mature plantings including 20' plus

deciduous and evergreen trees. This was the buffer between our units and Attic Angel Place. We now will be losing our view of greenery and looking at a large 3 story building set practically on the street with a loading zone and additional parking stalls. What impact do you see this having on our property values and quality of life?

5. The loading zone is especially troublesome. I have no doubt that Attic Angels will use this area for emergency calls and we will now have ambulances and fire trucks parked directly in front of our building. Trust me when I say that Attic Angels does not have a good neighbor policy in place and they will do whatever is most expeditious for them. What consideration was given to this potential problem?

6. Your general information sharing process regarding these significant changes to a PUD is less than citizen friendly. A postcard mailed to residents with notification of hearings doesn't really effectively solicit input to you prior to recommendations being made to the Plan Commission. You should look for new innovative ways to reach out to residents in the neighborhood to actively solicit their input. Although additional information can be obtained on your website this information is not necessarily accessible to all and isn't particularly user friendly. I would suggest you consider sending a letter to affected residents soliciting their input with the name and phone number of the planner who is responsible for the project. In addition a short summary of the proposed plan should be provided I would think that this would provide you with much better response than the current method. It is also not helpful for the City of Madison to post erroneous signs for weeks around the applicant's property proving incorrect information on dates of hearings. It is incredible to meet that the applicant didn't notice this and notify you of the error. I am sure they were well aware of the correct dates. This in my eyes is just not acceptable practice even though you may have met the legal requirements in other ways.

7. What methods do you use to ensure that this process is fair and equitable to the neighborhoods affected by these sorts of changes. It appears to me that the review process in some regards is less than thorough and applicant focused. In addition, I noticed today the the Urban Design Commission was less than thrilled with the addition in a number of areas yet the only substantive recommendation I could garner in your analysis was to add bike parking.

8. I realize you may have met all the minimum legal requirements in this review and analysis but you need to know how your decision making and your process in general leaves citizens feeling out of the loop and disappointed in the City of Madison. One would think that you would want to be viewed as a customer focused department and your customers are all of us residing in the neighborhood and not just the applicant. This does not appear to be the focus in this particular case.

9. We would like you to go through the blueprints with us to show the proposed modifications of Attic Angel Circle as well as the placement of the loading zone and addition parking spaces. We would also like a review of the proposed landscape changes and new landscaping to be provided.

I wanted to share these issues with you in advance since I am sure you can tell that I am very disappointed with your process and didn't want to waste my energy at the meeting articulating these concerns. This process of providing feedback to the city has been made even more difficult and irritating by having an Alderperson who is generally not very accessible to his constituents.

Having been a civil servant for the State of Wisconsin my whole career, I know very well how entrenched a bureaucracy can be and I do not have high hopes of our meeting being the catalyst for any changes in the City of Madison bureaucratic process. However, it at least provides me with a venue to describe how frustrating and non-transparent your process can be

for citizens of the City of Madison and for the residents of the Condominiums of Junction Ridge.

Thank you,

Sanger Powers