

Murphy, Brad

Subject: RE: Monday's Comprehensive Plan Discussion

Lauren, and others on the email list.

This is just a follow up to the email I sent out yesterday, to reiterate what will happen at tonight's Plan Commission meeting. The Commission will not be taking action on any possible amendment to the Comprehensive Plan or discuss the substantive issues related to any possible amendment or even discuss whether any possible amendment should remain on the list for further discussion and evaluation. Staff will be presenting a possible list of amendments and the Plan Commission will discuss the process to finalize the list and consider them.

The reason the possible Grandview Commons amendment appears on the list is based on discussions Planning staff have had with Veridian's planners who have expressed an interest in the timing for consideration of the amendment and how it would relate to the need to also amend the neighborhood plan. In the case of the possible amendment of the Comp Plan it is important to understand that the Sprecher Neighborhood Development Plan would also need to be amended, and that both of the possible amendments may or may not be supported by staff and approved by the Plan Commission and Common Council. In the case of Grandview Commons, the neighborhood plan amendments will need to be discussed concurrently with the possible amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

We also understand that a possible Charrette is being planned. We would expect that this would precede the consideration of the possible amendment to the Neighborhood Development Plan and the Comprehensive Plan.

At tonight's meeting we expect this item to be fairly short since the Commission also has on its agenda, the continued discussion of the Zoning Code, which will take a considerable amount of time.

I would appreciate it if you could provide this email to anyone else who you know is interested in this matter.

Thank you. And I apologize for the obvious confusion that this has caused.

Brad Murphy
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Dept. of Planning & Community & Economic Development
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Madison, WI 53701
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CRANES

Capital Region Advocacy Network for Environmental Sustainability

On behalf of its member organizations and individuals, advocating collaboratively for the environment of the South Central Wisconsin region (eight counties: Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock and Sauk) toward a high quality of life; an ecologically sustainable and just culture; and, the celebration of the beauty of this place, both natural and built.

VISION

The Capital area's environment, including water, land, and air resources, will be conserved or restored to ensure the region's quality of life and the beauty of this special place, for all who live or visit here, now and in the future.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

*Earth/Art® Resources
Friends of Cherokee Marsh
Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy
League of Women Voters - Dane County
Madison Audubon Society
Sierra Club - Four Lakes Group
W. Dane Coalition for Smart Growth & Environment
West Waubesa Preservation Coalition*

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4 November 2010

City of Madison Common Council
ATTN: *President Mark Clear, Pres. Pro Tem Lauren Cnare, and Members*
City-County Building 210 MLK Jr. Blvd Rm 417
Madison WI 53703-3345

SUBJECT: *CDBG grant application by Independent Living*

Dear Pres. Clear, President Pro Tem Cnare, and Members:

On behalf of the *Capital Region Advocacy Network for Environmental Sustainability (CRANES)*, I am writing about the request from Independent Living for funding of an apartment facility adjacent to Cherokee Marsh.

We think there is good reason for Council members to deny this application outright, simply because it is counter to the City's adopted land use plan, especially given the sensitive ecology of the proposed site. Thus we urge you to deny the application on this basis.

We have shared with the Community Development Block Grant Committee and the Board of Estimates our general environmental concerns about the proposed site for the facility, which would leapfrog development north of hundreds of acres of undeveloped land to the south. Even when considering only land in the Cherokee Special Area Plan (SAP), this site counters the proper development phasing promised to the City for this area. Most importantly, the proposed facility when completed would have as much as four times the density foreseen in Comprehensive Plan, as the result of two years of public input and compromise.

Unfortunately, this facility is being proposed for a site within the last remaining unfragmented uplands adjacent to the southern portion of Cherokee Marsh. This award-winning wetlands area has already been much diminished by previous developments, some approved by prior City of Madison governments. Increased stormwater runoff will damage the ecology of the Marsh and destroy wildlife habitat.

That's why environmentalists, including the *Friends of Cherokee Marsh*, a CRANES Partner, urged protection of the proposed site for ecological reasons, which were well-documented in the public record for the Cherokee Special Area Plan process of 2006-07. Those reasons included a prominent ecologist's recommendation that the best and highest use of the land would be for restoration to oak savannah prairie, as upland habitat for nearby Cherokee Marsh's wetlands.

It is therefore both ironic and deeply troubling that the proposed facility for this ecologically important site has been given the moniker of *Cherokee Prairie*.

Members of the Common Council may feel that it is premature to share these environmental concerns. At the very least, we ask you to recognize the mismatch between the review of funding and the review of adopted land use plans: These reviews should run in parallel, informing each other.

If however the Council should choose to proceed without considering land use and environmental concerns, and should decide to approve the application, we ask you to condition final approval of the grant on Plan Commission land use approval.

We also have more general concerns about this application based on the impacts on the environment from poor land use.

A few years ago there was a market study for this facility, but for a different site several blocks to the south, where the development would have been good infill. This earlier study caused the applicant to withdraw the proposed project, reportedly for reasons related to viability.

(We understand that the applicant's most recent market study for this project was released only recently, following a request last week to the survey firm by the City Attorney's office, in turn following repeated public requests over the past several months. During a period of significant change in the economy and high vacancy rates in the real estate market that may be structural, and following the completion of the 2010 census, the updating of this March study may be necessary.)

If the need for this facility is confirmed, the infill location would be more suitable because it is:

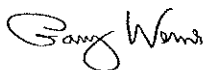
- closer to existing urban amenities and public facilities, and is better served by transit that would be needed by second and third shift workers at the proposed facility;
- where a neighborhood association and other Northsiders wanted this facility to be located, and would still welcome it; and,
- still on the market, now at a reduced price that also is much lower than the price of the applicant's proposed site adjacent to Cherokee Marsh.

It would seem a poor use of CDBG public funds, or the non-profit applicant's funds for that matter, to purchase a site that costs 2-3 times as much, in a location with fewer amenities, and where there is Northside opposition.

We would also like to share some information provided to CRANES by T. Wall Properties representatives last year, during the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission's consideration of the proposed Bishops Bay development. That development site is next to Gov. Nelson State Park and the Door Creek Natural Area. Market research led T. Wall to locate their senior living facilities not near these natural resources, but rather in the more dense, residential, retail, and commercial area to the east along County Q, where the nearby natural resource areas will not even be visible. According to that developer's market research, seniors are more likely to thrive when they live where they can see diverse human activity.

Thank you for your service on the Common Council, and your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,



Gary Werner
President
CRANES 2010-11 Board of Directors

Yahara River

Cherokee Park Inc

Cherokee Clubhouse

Proposed site

Cherokee Special Area Plan Subarea 1
(owned by Cherokee Park Inc)

SAP Subarea 2 (also
owned by CPI)

Alternative IL facility
site

BONA's Preferred Site #2

BONA's Preferred
Alternative Site #1

Lakeview ES

Lakeview Methodist
PreSchool & Church

Northside Town Center

WARNER PARK

© 2010 Europa Technologies
Image © 2010 DigitalGlobe
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43° 08' 16.09" N, 89° 21' 18.08" W elev. 892 ft

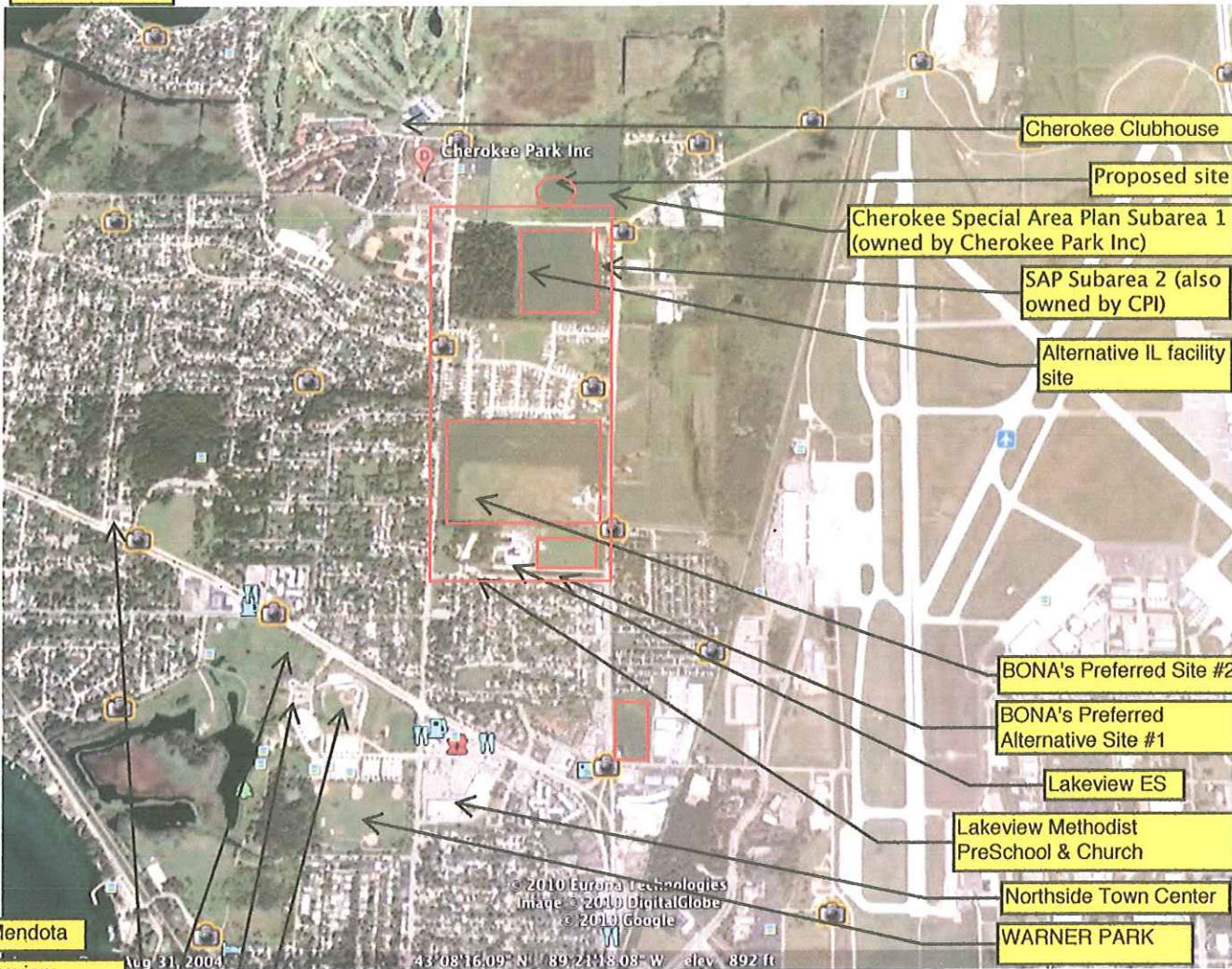
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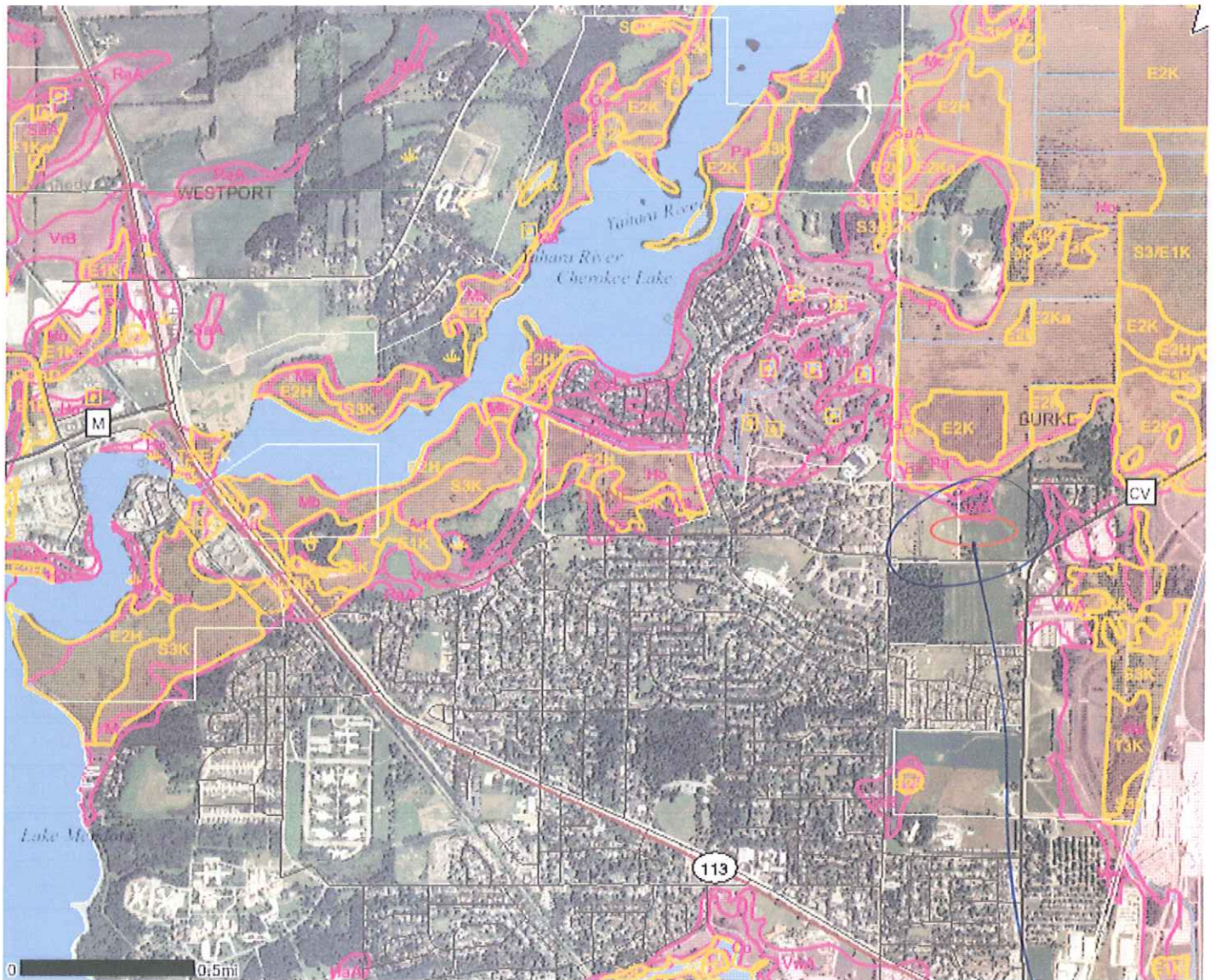
Lakeview
Lutheran Church

Likely
Municipal Pool

Warner Park Community
& Recreation Center

"Mallards Stadium"





ITEM 1