

**Planning Division Staff Response and Recommendation
to Comments Received on the
Draft Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Development Plan**

Madison Water Utility (10-23-07)

The Water Utility comment states that they have no objections to the recommendations in the draft plan regarding water service.

No revisions to the draft plan are required.

Madison Park Division (10-29-07)

The Park Division comments suggest a number of clarification revisions to the Parks and Open Space text narratives.

Planning Division staff recommend that all of the Park Division suggested changes be incorporated into the revised draft plan.

Madison City Engineering Division (10-30-07)

Recommended Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities:

The Engineering Division comments note that the proposed off-street bicycle path shown in the draft plan within the Hoepker Road right-of-way is not a desirable location. [Similar concerns regarding the safety of parallel off-street bicycle paths within street rights-of-way were noted by the Long-Range Transportation Planning Commission.]

Planning Division staff recommend eliminating the proposed Hoepker Road off-street bicycle path, and substituting an alternative route farther south that would utilize both local street segments and newly-constructed off-street paths where no direct street route exists, as suggested by City Engineering.

Planning staff note, however, that this route may be more difficult to implement since it proposes utilization of local streets that may not be built for some time, if ever, and proposes off-street segments across lands that have already been subdivided, which can make it more difficult to obtain necessary right-of-way or easements.

* { *The conceptual alternative route sketched by City Engineering includes several segments, particularly west of Portage Road, that should be further evaluated by the Plan Commission to determine which alignments to present in the revised draft.*

NOTE: Additional changes to the bicycle facilities recommended in the draft plan were also proposed by the LRTPC. After the Plan Commission makes its recommendations

regarding the alignments of the bicycle facilities that will be illustrated on the plan maps, the plan narrative will be revised as needed to describe the recommended routes and paths.

Stormwater management:

The Engineering Division requests that additional narrative be included in the plan regarding stormwater management and the Madison Stormwater Utility.

Planning Division staff recommend adding this narrative as a new paragraph following the introduction to the "Stormwater Management" recommendations section of the draft plan (near the top of Page 58.) Alternatively, it could be included as a new category in the Implementation chapter.

The Engineering Division raised a concern regarding the feasibility of implementing the potential requirements regarding stormwater infiltration that are described on Page 59. [Note that comments from the Friends of Starkweather Creek express support for these proposed requirements.]

Planning Division staff share the Engineering Division's concern---particularly in regard to proposals to require additional infiltration sufficient to replace supposed groundwater losses due to pumping from municipal wells to support new development. Planning Division staff recommend consideration of revising the narrative in this section slightly to acknowledge current discussions between Planning, City Engineering, the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission and others to determine specific infiltration needs and identify the most effective and appropriate implementation techniques.

Sanitary Sewer Service

The Engineering Division requests that additional narrative be included in the plan regarding sanitary sewer service and the Madison Sewer Utility.

Planning Division staff recommend adding this narrative as a new paragraph at the end of the "Sanitary Sewer Service" recommendations section of the draft plan (currently near the top of Page 57). Alternatively, it could be included as a new category in the Implementation chapter.

Madison Metro Transit (11-05-07)

Madison Metro proposes revised narrative to clarify and add additional information to both the "Transit Service" section of the Existing Conditions chapter and the "Future Transit Service" section of the Recommendations chapter of the draft plan.

Planning Division staff recommend that all of the suggested changes be incorporated into the revised draft. [Note that the LRTPC minutes include comments that might suggest additional revisions to this section.]

Madison Police Department (11-5-07)

The Police Department requests an editorial revision to delete a phrase within one sentence in the "Police Protection Services" section of the draft plan (Page 59).

Planning Division staff recommend that the suggested change be incorporated into the revised draft plan.

William F. White (for Park Towne Development 11-07-07)

Mr. White's letter reviews some of the issues that have been discussed with Planning staff regarding the future development of the Park Towne Development properties (the Hoepker Trust and JMJ Investments properties on Map 2 in the draft plan) located both north and south of Hoepker Road, west of Portage Road. No specific revisions to the draft plan are suggested.

The Planning Division staff responded to Mr. White in a letter dated November 12, 2007, (attached) clarifying the staff perspective on several of the points raised in his letter. The staff response notes that the neighborhood development plan is flexible in regard to the specific configuration of detailed land uses, but that general consistency with plan recommendations regarding the pattern of land uses and density is anticipated.

No revisions to the draft plan are required.

Friends of Starkweather Creek (11-16-07)

The Friends of Starkweather Creek (FSC) submitted general comments and specific text comments on the draft neighborhood development plan. These comments and the Planning Division staff recommendations are summarized below under the sub-headings used in the Friends' letter.

Starkweather Creek Section:

FSC noted that there is no Starkweather Creek section in the Parks and Open Space section of the Recommendations chapter in the draft plan, as there is for Token Creek.

Planning Division staff recommend that a new "Starkweather Creek" section be added to the Recommendations chapter of the revised draft plan, between the "Proposed Token Creek Conservation Area" section and the "Token Creek Park" section (near the top of Page 42.) A proposed draft narrative is shown below:

"Starkweather Creek"

"Starkweather Creek is a unique resource, representing one of the few streams located almost entirely within the highly-developed Madison urban area. But since the time of first settlement, multiple factors associated with development have significantly altered

the creek from its natural state. Over the years, degradation in both water quality and baseflow has occurred as the result activities such as stream rechannalization and dredging, draining and filling of supporting wetlands, contamination from industrial uses on adjoining lands, general urban and agricultural stormwater run-off, poor stream bank maintenance, and high-capacity well pumping.

There have always been concerned citizens interested in preserving and improving Starkweather Creek, but several major studies conducted in the 1980's and 1990's helped energize renewed efforts both to improve the water resource and enhance creekside amenities, such as bicycle paths, walking trails and adjacent parklands. The 1983 *Starkweather Creek Water Quality Plan* provides an excellent summary of background information specific to the creek and its history, and includes goals and specific recommendations for stream improvement. Subsequent other studies and plans also provided additional information and analysis particularly relevant to Starkweather Creek and the Yahara-Monona watershed; and these were used during the preparation of an update to the Starkweather Creek plan in 2005.

The *Starkweather Creek Master Plan 2005 Update* was initiated by City of Madison alderpersons and citizen groups representing areas affected by the watershed. The purpose of this project was to revise the earlier plan's goals and proposed improvements to reflect current regulatory changes, and to add new goals and recommended improvements that would address environmental concerns and recreational opportunities within the watershed. The 2005 update was prepared by City Engineering and Parks Division staff, working with City and Dane County elected officials, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Dane County Watershed Coordinator, Town government, the Friends of Starkweather Creek and other neighborhood and citizen groups. *Master Plan 2005* focuses on the area from the mouth of the creek at Lake Monona upstream along both branches to their junction with Interstate 39-90-94. Reaches of the creek beyond the Interstate were to be addressed as part of the neighborhood planning process and through application of the mandatory stormwater management plans required by state law.

The Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood planning area comprises the northernmost portion of the watershed of the west branch of Starkweather Creek, and visible stream features are limited to a wetland area south of Hoepker Road and west of Portage Road, which extends west to the Interstate Highway, and two intermittent streams. One of the intermittent streams flows westward through a wooded gully from a hilly area north of the American Center and under Portage Road to the Interstate. The other intermittent stream begins in the area north of Hoepker Road and east of Portage Road, and flows west under Portage and then south under Hoepker Road into the wetland area. This stream is considered navigable west of Portage Road, although it is dry most of the time. Two sets of culverts direct these streams under the Interstate Highway to a larger wetland, where Starkweather Creek surface water becomes a permanent feature.

Because Starkweather Creek is not a permanent surface water feature within the planning area, the recommendations in the Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Development Plan focus primarily on protection and improvement of creek water resources, rather than on

development of creekside recreational amenities. However, a segment of the recommended pedestrian-bicycle path south of Hoepker Road is located adjacent to the wetland area, a short path is proposed across the navigable stream north of Hoepker Road, and other proposed paths are located within the planned open greenways designed as part of the stormwater management system.

Several approaches are recommended in the neighborhood plan to protect and improve Starkweather Creek water resources:

Stream Improvements. Both of the designated intermittent streams are currently heavily overgrown and shaded by large trees, and there is relatively little groundcover to help stabilize their banks and prevent erosion. It is recommended that the southern stream, and the navigable portion of the northern stream west of Portage Road, be maintained in a relatively natural state; and that the banks of these streams be stabilized through selective tree pruning to increase sunlight, installation of appropriate native plants and grasses, and if indicated, limited use of natural boulders or similar materials. These improvements should occur at the time the adjacent land is developed or earlier.

Open Greenways. A major open stormwater greenway is recommended running north-south between Hoepker Road and Token Creek Park, generally following the current natural drainage course across agricultural fields. This greenway has a recommended minimum width of 150 feet, and will be wider where detention ponds are located. Another open greenway is recommended following the general alignment of the non-navigable segment of the northern intermittent stream located east of Portage Road and north of Hoepker Road. This greenway also may contain detention facilities, and is proposed to extend east to the proposed neighborhood park also illustrated on the Land Use and Street Plan (Map 6).

Detention Basins. Currently, dry detention basins are recommended to promote infiltration and collect sediment before stormwater is released to wet basins, wetlands, or streams. Preliminary locations for stormwater detention and retention basins are shown on the Land Use and Street Plan, but the ultimate locations may be different, as discussed in the Stormwater Management section of the plan.

Erosion Control during Development. City and State regulations on erosion control have been greatly strengthened in recent years, and now include a system of best management practices and specific staff assigned to review, approve and inspect erosion control plans. It is recommended that special emphasis be placed on inspection of construction sites adjacent to the intermittent streams and wetlands that feed Starkweather Creek due to the more immediate impact that uncontrolled erosion would have from those locations.

As noted elsewhere in this plan, development in the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood will also need to comply with all special regulations related to shoreland development adjacent to wetlands and waterways. These include development setback requirements and maximum building coverage restrictions.

Current stormwater drainage in the Starkweather Creek watershed takes place primarily via steep, heavily wooded gullies, open ravines and natural drainage courses across plowed agricultural fields, and there is little that prevent sediment and other contaminants from flowing toward the creek and its wetlands. The volume of stormwater runoff is also uncontrolled and contributes to erosion further downstream during heavy storm events. The recommended stream improvements, the stormwater management facilities that will be constructed as the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood develops, and enforcement of City and State regulations that apply to new development, should improve the quality of the water entering the creek compared to its current condition.”

Open Space Buffer

It is noted in the FSC comments that the proposed open space area between Madison and Sun Prairie was only partially implemented, and that this is no longer an objective of the two cities. It is suggested that generous open space and environmental corridors be included in the Pumpkin Hollow plan to partially offset this loss.

Planning Division staff consider the amount of open space recommended in the Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Development Plan to be quite extensive, and designed particularly to help preserve water resources. *Some specific recommended revisions to the open space corridors shown on the plan maps are covered below under the staff response to the FSC detailed comments.*

Buffers for Wetlands and Creeks:

The FSC comments note several “pinch points” where the environmental corridors or buffers around wetlands and creeks are considered to be too narrow.

As described below under the response to FSC detailed comments, Planning Division staff recommend revising the plan maps to widen the illustrated environmental corridors at several points.

Infiltration:

The FSC comments express concern with Starkweather Creek baseflow and water quality downstream in Lake Monona. They express concern regarding the City Engineering Division comments on potential new stormwater infiltration requirements.

Planning Division staff believe that well-designed stormwater management facilities, and strict adherence to existing regulations regarding erosion protection during construction will protect the water quality in Starkweather Creek and downstream. In fact, water quality should be improved over the current situation where erosion off of farm fields runs essentially unobstructed toward the creek and its associated wetlands. This is discussed in the new section on Starkweather Creek that is proposed to be added to the Recommendations section.

In regard to stormwater infiltration, Planning Division staff share some of City Engineering's concerns with the proposed stormwater infiltration requirements, as noted above. Planning staff recommend consideration of revising the narrative in this section slightly to acknowledge current discussions between Planning, City Engineering, the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission and others to determine specific infiltration needs and identify the most effective and appropriate implementation techniques.

Location and Design of Neighborhood Center:

The FSC comments support the concept of a neighborhood-scale mixed-use center incorporating traditional neighborhood design and transit-oriented development concepts. The comments express concern with the proposed location of the center (in the northwest corner of the Hoepker Road/Portage Road intersection) adjacent to Starkweather Creek.

Planning Division staff agree that development on sites near Starkweather Creek needs to be carefully planned and designed to ensure that the development has no negative impacts on the Creek or its associated wetlands and drainage corridors. However, staff do not agree that mixed-use or non-residential development is inherently more threatening to the Creek than purely residential development, for example. The site is sloped and this will require careful site design regardless of the land use, and all runoff from impervious surfaces will be detained, retained, or infiltrated rather than running directly into the creek, in any case. Development intensity on sites adjacent to the creek will be limited to some extent by the needed stormwater management and erosion control features, and in order to comply with shoreland zoning regulations to maintain a 75-foot setback from and limit building coverage within 300 feet of the ordinary high-water mark to not more than 30 percent of the lot. The suggested alternative sites for the mixed-use center are not considered to be as desirable as the locations proposed in the draft plan because the most central location with the best access to both principal roadways is near the Hoepker Road/Portage Road intersection. This location is also close to the potential limited employment district adjacent to the Interstate Highway.

Summary of Specific FSC Text Comments Keyed to Numbers on the FSC Map

1. Widen the buffer along the Starkweather branch between Hoepker and Anderson Roads.

This is not a branch of the Creek, but a natural drainage course across an agricultural field. A future stormwater greenway is proposed on this general alignment that will also include detention ponds, a bicycle path, and appropriate natural plantings. Note that this corridor is not intended to become a fully "naturalized" wild area, but a natural appearance and variety of appropriate planting is recommended rather than just mowing the entire swale. Note also that the location for this facility is somewhat general and might shift a bit as part of detailed site planning and engineering.

Planning Division staff recommend that the plan maps be revised to show an increased width for this corridor of at least 150 feet, and wider where stormwater management facilities, such as detention/retention ponds, are located.

Planning Division staff also recommend that the following additional sentences regarding greenway planting be added at the end of the first paragraph of the “Open Drainageways” section of the Stormwater Management recommendations section of the draft plan (currently on Page 58):

“To the extent compatible with stormwater management objectives and other intended uses of the corridor, more natural groundcovers are encouraged as an alternative to mowed swales. Groupings of larger trees or shrubs are also encouraged at appropriate locations along the corridor to provide additional aesthetic value and potential wildlife habitat.”

Planning Division staff also note that the green “corridors” shown on the plan maps conceptually illustrate a desired minimum width for the undeveloped area maintained along an intermittent stream or a stormwater greenway, but the full width of the illustrated corridor will not necessarily become public land---the edges of some corridors may remain as private greenspace, and sometimes may be incorporated into the adjacent lots.

Planning Division staff recommend that the following narrative be added to the draft plan at the end of the Open Drainageway section (Page 58) to clarify the relationship between the open space corridors mapped in the neighborhood plan, corridors that may be acquired by the public for stormwater management or other public purposes, and lands that may be governed by special regulations applicable to lands adjacent to wetlands and streams, for example:

“The open space corridors shown on the Land Use and Street Plan and other plan maps illustrate the recommended minimum width of the area along the corridor that should be maintained in a relatively natural, undeveloped state. In some cases, the corridor indicated on the maps may be wider than the corridor that will be acquired by the public for stormwater management or other purposes—typically as part of subdivision approvals. Portions of the corridors illustrated on the map may remain located on adjacent private property along the public greenways. Note also that lands adjacent to wetlands and streams may be subject to special regulations that are applicable to an area larger than the green corridors illustrated on the plan maps.”

2. Widen a narrow spot where a branch of Starkweather Creek crosses Portage Road.

This is a non-navigable intermittent stream. The current illustrated width of the corridor is about 130 feet at the narrowest point west of Portage Road.

Planning Division staff recommend that the stream corridor illustrated on the plan maps be widened to 150 feet at this point.

3. The buffer is too narrow along a coldwater tributary of Token Creek where it crosses a future subdivision [the conceptual conservation subdivision] west of Portage Road.

This is also a non-navigable intermittent stream, with a current illustrated corridor width of about 130 feet. The conservation subdivision is only conceptual, and the intent is that development be clustered on relatively small portions of the “developable” area, leaving multiple open connections to the adjacent greenspace. The westernmost connecting road illustrated on the plan map is also only conceptual and might not be included in an actual subdivision, in any case.

Planning Division staff recommend that the stream corridor illustrated on the plan maps be widened to a minimum 200 feet through the conceptual conservation subdivision, and wider at the western edge of the subdivision.

4. FSC disagree with the draft plan recommendation to allow one lot division on all existing Sommer Valley Circle residential lots. It is suggested instead that no lot divisions be allowed on the western and northern tiers of lots.

Planning Division staff do not agree, and consider the potential future division of the existing five-acre lots into two-and-one-half acre lots to be no threat to Token Creek Park or the Token Creek wetlands. In addition, the Town of Burke-Village of DeForest-City of Sun Prairie-City of Madison Cooperative Plan, adopted in January 2007, permits the division of five-acre parcels into two lots.

Planning Division staff recommend no change to the draft plan.

As noted by FSC, the word “not” is missing from the cited sentence on Page 31, and this typo will be corrected. Other typos found in the draft plan will also be corrected.

5. FSC suggest a possible pedestrian access to Token Creek Park from the southern end of Sommer Valley Circle, depending on where the park entrance is located. [Note that the LRTPC made a similar recommendation.]

Planning Division staff consider general public access to the park from Sommer Valley Circle to be of limited benefit, and it probably would be considered undesirable by Circle residents. A strictly “local” connection could be shown for benefit of the Circle residents only, but this raises issues of ownership, access control, and maintenance responsibility. County Parks staff have indicated that they would have no problem with providing limited access here if residents supported it.

* { *Planning Division staff recommend that if this connection is shown, it be presented as a potential connection that could be established if supported by Sommer Valley Circle residents, with related issues noted in the plan narrative. Alternatively, do not illustrate this connection on the plan maps at this time.*

6. FSC propose moving the neighborhood mixed-use center east along Hoepker Road, or to the corner of Hoepker Road and American Parkway. FSC also suggest splitting Hoepker Road into two paired one-way streets.

As noted above, Planning Division staff do not believe that mixed-use development is inherently more threatening to Starkweather Creek than alternative uses provided that the intensity of development is appropriate, given the constraints on the site, and that the site is carefully planned and care is taken during construction. The currently-proposed location for the mixed-use center is reasonably central to the neighborhood and has access to the two major streets serving the neighborhood. Other locations do not share these attributes (the Hoepker/American Parkway site is also not in the City and will not be) and are not recommended alternatives. Paired one-way streets are not considered a reasonable alternative at this location.

Planning Division staff recommend no changes to the draft plan.

7. FSC propose adding language to the plan to clarify that stormwater will not be allowed to flow directly into Starkweather Creek from streets and developed areas.

Planning Division staff recommend that the following additional narrative be added to the end of the introduction paragraph to the "Stormwater Management" section in the Recommendations chapter:

"In no case will stormwater be allowed to flow directly from streets or developed areas into Starkweather or Token Creek or their associated wetlands. All stormwater not retained on site will be directed to planned drainage swales, retention and detention facilities, or infiltration facilities designed to protect streams and wetlands from sediment or other pollutants and release water to these bodies at managed rates."

8. FSC suggest a possible connection between the two "loop" streets shown west of Portage Road and south of Hoepker Road.

While this connection could be shown, there are existing houses in the way between these two loops and future additional development between the loops is unlikely. In addition, one or both of the proposed loops might end up as private streets rather than public streets, depending on the design of future development. Potentially, a pedestrian-bicycle connection could be recommended rather than a street connection, but this would also be unlikely unless the intervening properties were redeveloped.

Planning Division staff recommend no change to the draft plan.

9. FSC suggest including a map in the plan showing connections between the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood and adjacent open space.

* { *Planning Division staff aren't convinced this is needed, but if the Plan Commission recommends including such a map, we recommend that a wider view of the Madison Comprehensive Plan Generalize Future Land Use Plan map be used to illustrate the broad context since it shows several types of open space, both existing and proposed.*

10. On Map 9, it would be helpful to show where bike paths would continue outside the neighborhood. [Note that the LRTPC made a similar recommendation.]

Bicycle path connections to paths outside the neighborhood currently are described in the draft plan narrative, and connections beyond the neighborhood are indicated by arrows at the ends of path segments crossing the planning area boundary.

Planning Division staff recommend that the bicycle path “arrows” illustrated on Map 9 be extended somewhat farther beyond the planning area boundary to help visualize the connecting links, and that notes be added to the map at these points describing the connection.

Judy Olson (11-20-07)

Plan Commissioner Judy Olson recommends that narrative be added to the plan specifically recommending that all utilities be installed underground; that street trees be full canopy trees (when mature); and that plantings in parks should include a mix of tree varieties, including full canopy and skyline trees.

City subdivision regulations currently require that utilities in new neighborhoods be underground. Planning Division staff support the use of full-canopy street trees, but note that tree selection must be coordinated with terrace widths and design. Renewed emphasis on solar access may also result in potentially conflicting recommendations regarding tree selection and tree trimming practices, although staff consider there to be good reasons to have full canopy street trees whenever possible.

Planning Division staff recommend the following addition to the draft plan narrative after the “Strong Orientation to the Street” section of the Traditional Neighborhood Development Design Principles section (on page 21 of the draft plan):

Street Trees and Trees in Public Parks

“Street trees are important elements in establishing the visual framework which defines the space along public rights-of-way, and proper tree selection can help to create a pleasing proportional relationship between height and street width. In many older neighborhoods, the overhead canopy of mature street trees is recognized as one of the most valued components of neighborhood character---although the trees are often compromised by pruning done for utility clearance. In new neighborhoods, utilities are required to be underground, and it is recommended that street trees in the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood be full-canopy trees to the extent compatible with other community objectives. The selection of street trees needs to be coordinated with the design width of street terraces and other street characteristics, and this should occur as part of detailed subdivision planning.

It is also recommended that the mix of tree varieties planted in neighborhood and area parks include large canopy trees as well as smaller varieties. Large trees can be shown to full advantage in the more-open spaces of public parklands, and can help create a dramatic setting for other park activities.”

T. Wall Properties (Distributed at LRTPC meeting 12-20-07)

T. Wall Properties does not support the recommendation that most of the lands south of Token Creek Park and west of Portage Road be developed as a residential neighborhood, as recommended in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Summary “bullet point” comments were submitted by T. Wall Properties at the December 20th LRTPC arguing that the land is unsuitable for residential development and should be developed instead primarily as a regional commercial/employment center.

On February 19, 2007, at the very beginning of the public planning process, the alternative commercial development concept favored by T. Wall Properties was discussed by the Plan Commission. Commission members’ discussion following the presentations included expressions of support for small, neighborhood-oriented business, but not large-scale retail development here (except perhaps for a larger grocery store); and a comment that some commercial development adjacent to the Interstate frontage would be appropriate, but not opposite Token Creek Park, where residential uses were preferable. The general conclusion from the discussion was that planning for this part of the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood be consistent with the general residential neighborhood/traditional neighborhood development recommendation in *Comprehensive Plan*. Subsequent status report meetings with the Plan Commission during the development of the neighborhood plan presented iterative alternatives consistent with their earlier discussion; and these were favorably received with no different recommendations being made by the Commission.

Response to specific bullet points presented in T. Wall Properties comments:

- We need a plan that respects existing topography.

Staff response: Staff do not understand how this concern supports the alternative of developing commercial land uses in this part of the neighborhood. The topography northwest of the Portage Road/Hoepker Road intersection is rolling and generally slopes downward from the roadways toward the intermittent stream which crosses the Hoepker property at the corner, and toward the natural drainageway running north and south between Token Creek Park and Hoepker Road. There are a few relatively small areas of steeper grade, but these should not prevent a residential neighborhood from being developed. In general, the slopes do not appear to Planning staff to be excessive compared to the topography in other parts of this neighborhood, or in many other neighborhoods.

An earthwork analysis and conceptual grading plan prepared for the CVH LLC property by Vierbicher Associates, Inc. on January 15, 2008 was submitted to the Planning Division by T. Wall Properties (The narrative summary of this analysis is attached). The Vierbicher analysis and related Concept Earthwork map was forwarded to the City Engineering Division for their evaluation, but this is not yet available. Further consideration of grading issues will be deferred until City Engineering provides a more-detailed analysis.

Typically, more-detailed engineering studies conducted by individual property owners, either during the neighborhood planning process or later during the subdivision platting process just prior to development, may result in adjustments to the specific street plan shown in the adopted neighborhood plan. These refinements are made for many reasons, including the developer's preferences regarding street alignment or lot sizes, decisions about where to locate stormwater management facilities, or how to relate to topographic conditions, for example. Preliminary plans prepared by the developer are also often modified based on input and recommendations from City staff. This is a normal part of the development process. In this case, however, T. Wall Properties has proposed only a very limited street pattern designed to serve an entirely different land development concept as an alternative to the street alignments shown in the draft neighborhood plan.

Development of a residential neighborhood almost always involves a certain amount of grading due to the many streets and relatively smaller parcels. Large-scale commercial development also requires grading for building sites, parking areas and access drives. The owner of this property, and the owners of other neighborhood land currently in the City, purchased the land for residential development. Staff believe that an experienced residential developer would have no problem dealing with the topography and incorporating it as a neighborhood amenity.

- Tiny employment district severely restricts possible tenants.

Staff response: Three alternative configurations for the employment district are shown in the draft plan illustrating different potential amounts of office development. Other configurations for the district would be possible, but all reflect the intent to create a limited employment area designed for small to medium-sized offices. Staff acknowledge that the possible tenants may be restricted by the district's limited size, although fewer, relatively larger office sites could be created within the district, as an alternative to having more, smaller sites as shown on the land use and street plan. It is not intended that this district become a major employment center, or be developed with large-scale uses. Nor is it intended that the employment district extend all the way north to Token Creek Park. These recommendations in the draft plan all support the underlying objective of developing Pumpkin Hollow primarily as a residential neighborhood, consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*, earlier comments by Plan Commission members, and the response of the Commission to iterations of the plan presented to them during the planning process.

- Residential uses on Interstate not appropriate.

Staff response: As noted in the draft plan, many desirable and very successful Madison neighborhoods are located adjacent to the Interstate Highway, and staff do not consider the location inappropriate for residential development. Note that much of the immediately adjacent land could be developed with alternative office uses, provided that the scale of the development and individual uses were consistent with plan objectives. To address specific sub-points:

- Noise pollution. As noted in the draft plan, noise mitigation will be required for residential development. This also is not unusual, and effectively reduces noise levels in the many neighborhoods where similar mitigation measures have been implemented.
- Visibility (houses looking at interstate). Views of the actual highway from uses located relatively near the Interstate will largely be blocked by the noise attenuation berm. Uses located farther up the slope may have a view over the Interstate toward uses on the far side. Street trees, private landscaping and other buildings will block much of the long view as the area matures. Detailed neighborhood design could reduce this view further if this was considered important.
- Health Impacts. This argument is apparently based on studies that have correlated the higher levels of vehicle emission pollution found closer to major roadways with increased incidence of some types of health problems, including respiratory health problems. Staff have discussed this concern with the Health Department. The results of the studies that do exist, predominantly conducted in major urban centers, in Europe and in California, vary widely and have not established a consistent definition for the factors being evaluated or a clear relationship between specific distances from a roadway and measurable health effects, or the significance of the effects.

It is intuitive that motor vehicle pollutants will be higher closer to the source, but staff are unaware of any data or studies based on local conditions that indicate there is a potential health concern in this regard in the Madison area, or to support a general recommendation that only non-residential uses should be located near major roadways. Air quality impacts from roads are strongly influenced by factors such as traffic volumes, traffic movement (flowing or stop-and-go), local climatic conditions, ambient air quality, topography, and prevailing wind direction, for example.

As noted elsewhere, Madison (and all urban communities) currently have many existing and planned residential areas located near the Interstate and near other high-traffic major arterial streets (such as the Beltline, University Avenue, Park Street, East Washington Avenue to name a few). At this time, there are no national, state, or regional standards for evaluating potential air quality impacts near highways or other major roadways, and no recommendations have been proposed at this level that address these potential impacts.

Staff do not consider this issue sufficiently defined at the present time to conclude that only non-residential uses should be located on lands near the Interstate or other major roadways.

- Marketability of houses. It should be noted that the neighborhood plan recommends a mix of housing types, and the recommended uses in this part of the

neighborhood are not limited to single-family houses. While the location may be considered less-desirable than some other residential locations, Planning staff do not believe there is anything inherently non-marketable about houses located near an interstate highway. The marketability of houses built in the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood will be primarily determined by the overall quality of the development generally, and the design, quality and features of the houses particularly. We believe that an experienced residential developer would be able to create attractive housing in an attractive residential environment. Presumably, the current property owner, a home builder, would not have purchased this land if he thought homes here would not be marketable. As noted elsewhere, many fine Madison neighborhoods are located near major highways.

- Loss of value to City and developer--land used for berms. On a property this size, the amount of land required to build noise attenuation berms is a relatively small portion. Uses adjacent to the Interstate must provide a minimum 30-foot landscaped buffer area in any case, and development would not be located right up to the right-of-way.
- T. Wall Properties supports the City's goal of higher density residential, as shown in our proposed plan.

Staff response. Density is only one of many planning goals the City has established for the development of residential neighborhoods---goals that include, for example, providing a mix of housing types, engaging public spaces, and an interconnected street system. Alternative versions of T. Wall Properties "proposed plan" have been offered since the concept that was submitted at the December meeting of the Long-Range Transportation Planning Commission, but all indicate only a few blocks of undefined medium density land use surrounding an unspecified commercial use district on Portage Road. Additional streets have been added since the original concept, but the plan appears characterized by segregation of uses and very limited street connectivity. Staff believe this proposed plan does not incorporate the neighborhood design concepts recommended in adopted City plans.

- More limited public streets limit long-term City costs (over 3 miles of road in this quadrant in the City plan).

Staff response. Creation of a complete, highly-interconnected local street network is one of the key principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood design. Staff consider T. Wall Properties' proposed alternative plan with very limited street connectivity to be inconsistent with new urbanist development. Nothing in the City's adopted plans or policies even hints at support for minimizing public street mileage in new neighborhoods as a way to limit long-term City costs.

- Interchange [at Hoepker Road and Interstate 39-90-94] should be considered.

Staff response. The draft plan does not specifically recommend either for or against providing interchange access to the Interstate Highway at Hoepker Road. The draft plan notes that the *2030 Regional Transportation Plan* recommends a study to evaluate this potential. Neighborhood support for an interchange was not expressed during the planning process. However in 2007, T. Wall Properties, UW Health, and another property owner sponsored a study to explore the planning requirements to further evaluate the potential feasibility of additional access to the Interstate near Hoepker Road. This study is referenced in the draft plan. As noted in the draft plan, Pumpkin Hollow already has convenient access to the Interstate, and an additional access at Hoepker Road would provide no additional benefits to the planned residential neighborhood, but would almost certainly have some negative impacts. An interchange would, however, provide great benefits to the alternative commercial development proposed by T. Wall Properties, and to the American Center if Hanson Road access to USH 51 were lost, as noted below. [Note that the LRTPC recommended that the plan not show an Interstate interchange at Hoepker Road.] To address specific sub-points:

- Connection to North Airport Entry. This is the potential benefit cited by some advocates of providing at least partial access at Hoepker Road. Currently, north access to the airport for southbound Interstate traffic is provided via the existing interchange at USH 51. Planned improvements to the Hoepker/USH 51 intersection and the proposed realignment of CTH CV with Hoepker Road at USH 51 will provide even better access. An interchange or partial interchange at Hoepker Road would provide more-direct access to the airport for northbound Interstate traffic coming from the south, but this does not necessarily support a conclusion that an interchange is needed.
- Better access especially with Hanson closing at USH 51. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has been evaluating a series of alternatives that could severely restrict Hanson Road access to USH 51 over time. City transportation planners consider the Hanson Road connection with USH 51 very important to efficient traffic circulation, particularly from The American Center and the Center for Industry and Commerce and other commercial developments west of the Interstate, and the draft plan strongly supports maintaining full access to USH 51 at Hanson Road. If Hanson Road access to USH 51 were eliminated or reduced, interchange access to the Interstate at Hoepker Road would benefit the American Center, but would also tend to divert traffic up Portage Road through the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood. This is another reason that maintaining full Hanson Road access to USH 51 is recommended in the draft plan. [Note that the LRTPC recommended maintaining full access to USH 51 at Hanson Road.]
- Connects to Sun Prairie. This is a reason that Sun Prairie might want an interchange at Hoepker Road. It is not apparent why Madison would want to encourage traffic headed for Sun Prairie's proposed large retail center at CTH C

and USH 151 to use Hoepker Road through the Pumpkin Hollow neighborhood, rather than using STH 19 and USH 151 to CTH C.

- Hoepker Road is already planned as a 4-lane arterial. True---and it is projected to have significant future traffic volumes as it is. The fact that a roadway is planned as a four-lane arterial doesn't automatically mean that it should have direct access to the Interstate Highway.

Planning Division staff recommend that no changes be made to the draft plan based on the comments submitted by T. Wall Properties, other than the possibility of including the additional discussion above in the plan..

Long-Range Transportation Planning Commission (Minutes from 1-17-08)

The LRTPC considered a number of transportation-related issues and made a number of specific recommendations, as described in the Minutes of the January 17, 2008 meeting. Those comments that consider potential revisions to the draft plan are summarized below, along with the Planning Division staff response.

Staff Note 1: Several of the proposed revisions to the bicycle facility recommendations in the draft plan suggest several alternative responses, or involve issues that may require additional consideration by the Plan Commission prior to a final recommendation. Maps illustrating the staff-recommended revisions, and/or alternative revisions, will be presented at the Plan Commission meeting. After the Plan Commission makes its recommendations regarding the alignments of the bicycle facilities that will be illustrated on the plan maps, the plan narrative will be revised as needed to describe the recommended routes and paths.

* { **Staff Note 2:** Planning Division staff are recommending that the future alignment of Anderson Road be changed from the alignment illustrated in the draft plan---which currently shows the eastern segment of Anderson potentially becoming a park entrance drive---to an alignment which shows Anderson Road as a continuation of the proposed new east-west connecting street between Rättman Road and Portage Road, which would continue west of Portage as a through street into the neighborhood. The relocated Token Creek Park entrance would be located somewhere along this segment. Several possible alternative treatments of this revised street configuration will be presented at the Plan Commission meeting for discussion. The exact alignment of on-street or off-street bicycle routes in this area will be affected by the street alignment selected.

The following LRTPC comments and staff responses follow the sequence of the paragraphs in the January 17, 2008 minutes:

- I.a. The bicycle path in the north-south greenway south of Token Creek Park shown on the Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities map (Map 9) should be more direct into the park and not have the "kink" at the northern end of the path.

Planning Division staff recommend that the map be revised to show a more-direct connection into Token Creek Park from the north-south greenway. Several alignments for this path are possible, and the preferred alternative will partly depend on the recommendations made regarding Anderson Road and the park entrance.

- 1.b. There should be a pedestrian-bicycle entrance to Token Creek Park from Sommer Valley Circle. [Note a similar suggestion from the Friends of Starkweather Creek.]

Planning Division staff recommend that if this connection is shown, it be presented as a potential connection that could be established if supported by Sommer Valley Circle residents, with related issues noted in the plan narrative. Alternatively, do not illustrate this connection on the plan maps at this time. (See additional discussion of this issue above with the FSC comments.)

2. Provide a grid-like street pattern south of Token Creek Park. Don't separate Anderson Road from neighborhood streets.

The proposed street pattern south of Token Creek Park is generally grid-like, although somewhat modified by the desire to limit crossings of the north-south greenway, and uncertainty regarding specific land uses west of the greenway. As noted above, staff is proposing an alternative treatment of Anderson Road also creates the potential to re-establish better potential connections to the neighborhood to the south. County Parks staff have indicated a preference that there be no or few intersecting streets on Anderson Road between Portage Road and the park entrance.

* { There are pros and cons to having residential uses along the south frontage of Anderson Road that take access from Anderson and face the county park. This issue will be considered as part of the general discussion regarding Anderson Road.

* { *Planning Division staff recommend changes to the recommended street plan to show Anderson Road remaining as a public street providing access into the western portion of the neighborhood, as described in Staff Note 2, above. Corresponding revisions to the street grid south of the park are also recommended as needed to create connections with Anderson Road. Several alternative alignments can be considered.*

3. The bicycle path generally parallel to Anderson Road between Portage Road and the proposed bicycle bridge over the Interstate should be a marked on-street bicycle lane on Anderson Road, rather than an off-street path as currently shown in the draft plan.

Since Planning Division staff are proposing that Anderson Road continue into the neighborhood as a public street, also continuing the on-street bicycle lanes west of Portage Road seems logical. There are several design issues that need to be considered related to several street and path intersections, whether or not street parking should be provided along Anderson Road, the potential very wide required pavement width, and how to handle the transitions where the marked on-street lanes end. Some of these may need to be worked out as part of future more-detailed development planning.

*



Planning Division staff recommend that the plan maps be revised to recommend on-street bicycle lanes along Anderson Road west of Portage Road. Several possibilities for this alignment are possible depending on the alignment of Anderson Road and intersecting streets. A combination of on- and off-street paths could also be considered for some segments.

- 4. There should be a bicycle path through the proposed area park north of the proposed school site to provide alternative access to the school.

Planning Division staff recommend that this off-street bicycle path segment be added to the Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities map.

- 5. An off-street bicycle path should be provided along the back lot line of the existing Town of Burke plats west of Rattman Road that will become the boundary between future City of Madison and future City of Sun Prairie.

Planning staff consider the proposed route for this path problematic, partly because of its adjacency to established residential uses in the Town of Burke subdivisions and possible concerns with public access, the potential impacts of path lighting, and other factors. This potential path was also not discussed with neighborhood residents during the planning process.

Planning Division staff recommend that this proposed path not be shown on the plan maps as a recommended future facility at this time, until the need for the path and the suitability of the suggested alignment can be further evaluated by the Transportation Division and appropriate policy bodies. This evaluation might result in reconsideration of the recommendation.

- 6. Madison Metro [peak hour] bus service to The American Center should run in both directions; transit service linkages should be provided to transfer points; good transit service and strong linkages to The American Center should be provided; and transit service should be provided early to attract transit-oriented households.

Planning staff (and Metro staff) would agree that it would be desirable to be able to provide higher levels of transit service, and to provide transit service to new neighborhoods early in their development. Funding limitations result in the need to set priorities based on costs and anticipated potential ridership, which usually makes service to newly-developing areas at the urban edge a relatively lower-priority service. Madison Metro staff consider the current level of service the best that can be justified at this time.

Planning Division staff recommend adding the following sentence to the end of the second paragraph (as revised by Madison Metro) in the "Future Transit Service" recommendations section of the draft plan (currently on Page 55):

“It is recommended that improved transit service to the Pumpkin Hollow area be implemented at the earliest feasible time to help attract transit-oriented residents to the neighborhood and encourage transit usage from the beginning as the neighborhood develops.”

7. Roundabouts should be constructed with a low-speed design, which is better for bicyclists.

Planning Division staff recommend incorporating this recommendation into the proposed new general recommendation to consider roundabouts wherever traffic signals are contemplated. (See Comment 9, below)

8. It was requested that the reference to Portage Road as an informal “escape route” be removed since Portage Road is a designated bicycle route in Dane County plans.

The word “informal” in the draft plan was meant to refer specifically to the term “escape route” (which staff did not think was used in adopted plans), and did not mean to imply that Portage Road wasn’t a designated bicycle route. The intended point was that although actively used, these routes are currently unimproved as bicycle facilities.

Planning Division staff recommend rewording the second sentence in the Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities paragraph (currently at the top of Page 14 in the draft plan) as follows:

? “Although Portage Road and ~~a segment of~~ Rattman Road are identified in the *Regional Transportation Plan 2030* as part of the recommended regional Bicycle Way System, no marked bicycle lanes are provided on any of the neighborhood roadways at this time. Portage Road is identified on the Dane County Bicycle Map as a recommended route to the countryside beyond the urban area.”

9. Roundabouts should be considered as an alternative wherever traffic signals are planned or may be planned in the future.

Planning Division staff recommend the addition of the following new section to the Transportation Recommendations section of the plan, after the “Local Streets” section (currently about the middle of Page 52 in the draft plan):

“Roundabouts”

? “Roundabouts provide a cost-effective, safer alternative to other methods of traffic control (such as traffic signals or four-way stop signs) ???? at many types of street intersection. Well-designed roundabouts can reduce traffic speeds while also improving traffic flow and increased safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Several roundabouts are conceptually illustrated on the plan maps at selected intersections, but other intersections may also be good locations. It is recommended that the

alternative of a roundabout be considered at all intersections where traffic signals are planned or may be planned in the future.”

10. The bicycle system should be paid for by the developer, similar to how streets are paid for.

This was assumed to be a general comment directed at City policymakers responsible for implementing recommended bicycle facility improvements.

No revisions to the draft plan are required.

11. Objection to having residential lots back up to Hoepker Road (the specific location discussed was the south frontage of Hoepker Road between Portage and Rattman Roads). Alleys were suggested as a way to have the houses facing Hoepker while providing driveway access from an interior alley.

This could be considered, but it isn't clear that alleys could be designed effectively here. There is also concern that houses facing the future four-lane arterial would be considered less desirable compared to facing an interior street, and that if street parking were provided (as probably would be beneficial if the fronts of the houses faced the street), the total pavement width might become excessive. Specific housing types and designs might be able to address some of these issues.

* { *Planning Division staff do not have a specific recommended alternative to the lot pattern shown in the draft plan at this time, but suggest that the Plan Commission may want to discuss this issue further. One approach might be to leave the plan maps unchanged, but note possible alternatives in the plan narrative for future consideration.*

12. Stressed the importance of Token Creek Park and urged preservation of the proposed conservation area.

Planning Division staff agree. No changes to the draft plan are required.

Additional LRTPC comments and recommendations summarized by Chairman Shahan:

13. LRTPC favors the alternative alignment proposed by City Engineering for the off-street bicycle path south of Hoepker Road.

Planning Division staff recommend that the alignment for this path be revised. (See more-detailed staff comments in the response to City Engineering comments, above.)

* {

14. LRTPC requests that a bicycle path underpass crossing of the Interstate south of Hoepker Road be shown as a recommended facility to provide better linkages to MATC.

As described in the response to City Engineering, Planning Division staff recommend that some segments of the proposed bicycle route west of Portage Road, including

* {

this proposed underpass, be further evaluated by the Plan Commission. Staff is concerned that the added convenience that might be provided by this path may be relatively low compared to its likely cost and potential impact on adjoining properties.

15. Stress the LRTPC recommendation that the plan not show an Interstate Highway interchange at Hoepker Road.

No changes to the draft plan are required.

16. Stress the LRTPC recommendation to maintain full access at the intersection of USH 51 and Hanson Road.

No changes to the draft plan are required.

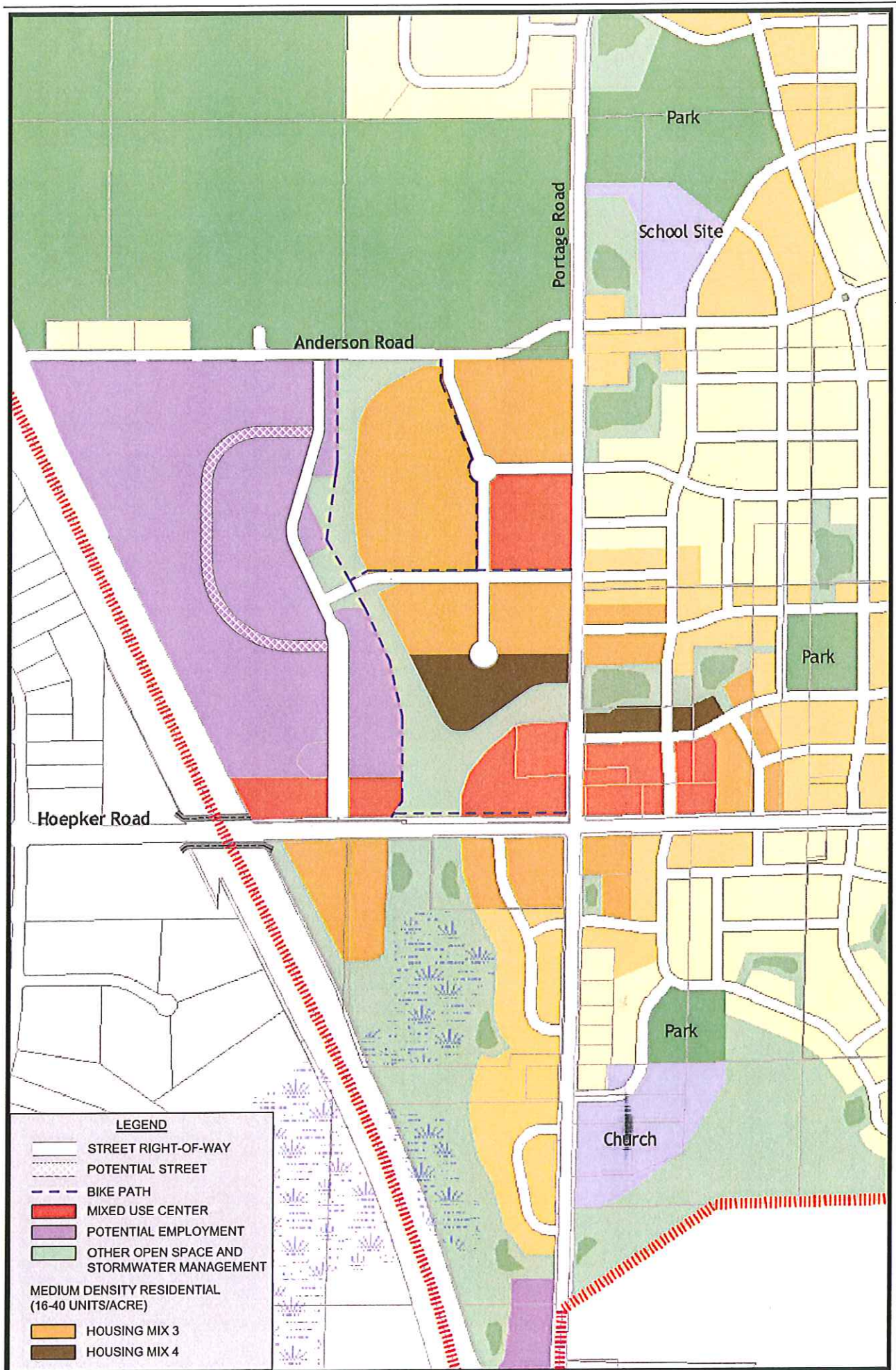
At the December 20, 2007 LRTPC meeting, several additional suggestions were offered during the discussion following a staff presentation on the draft Pumpkin Hollow Neighborhood Development Plan.

17. It was suggested that an additional local street running north-south through the neighborhood be identified as a bicycle connection that should be maintained even if the specific street pattern illustrated in the plan is modified as successive individual developments are approved.

Planning Division staff recommend that the easternmost north-south through street in the portion of the neighborhood that will eventually become part of the City of Madison be identified on the Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities map (Map 9) as a "Local Through Street for Bicyclists."

18. It was suggested that additional bicycle paths be shown connecting southward into The American Center.

Planning Division staff recommend that additional off-street paths be illustrated on Map 9 connecting The American Center with the proposed realigned east-west bicycle path south of Hoepker Road, and with the north-south street recommended to be designated as an additional Local Through Street for Bicyclists.



An Additional Development Concept from: T. Wall Properties



TERRENCE WALL

1950's planning – at its worst

If you own land in an area that a city has selected for a neighborhood plan, and you don't know what that means, I recommend finding out.

Since this column is supposed to be about my personal experiences at the intersection of business and politics, I'd like to describe my recent experience with the planning "process" on Madison's East Side.

Over a year ago, the City of Madison began the process of writing a neighborhood plan for the Pumpkin Hollow area – sandwiched between the Interstate and Sun Prairie, with Token Creek Park located on the north side. (I have 138 acres under contract in this area.)

Before any zoning or platting can be considered, a neighborhood plan must be completed, and so, a city staff planner was assigned to write one – which involves considering the land's attributes and liabilities, and holding public meetings.

Unfortunately, the process got off to a bad start with the city's selection of a planner whose experience is under the old zoning code. That code called for a separation of uses; i.e., keeping office and retail and residential uses separate from each other.

Such 1950's two-dimensional thinking is what created the suburbs and office parks where you have to get in your car every time you need something – and is now recognized by many alders and the Urban Land Institute as "bad planning."

In addition, the city planner ignored the natural assets and liabilities of the land. On his plan, he located low-density housing, including single family homes, near the Interstate system – which, under state law, would require a noise barrier wall (which will, of course, quickly will be graffitied).

Likewise, he planned these homes

directly under an airport runway. Years ago, the airport spent considerable money to purchase expensive noise easements from homeowners adjacent to the airport.

Added to that, the planner drew in three miles of roads on a mere 138-acre site. That's 23 acres of roads, and many of these roads (drawn on a two-dimensional piece of paper) crossed a steep (>20%) slope – in spite of a city ordinance prohibiting roads of greater than 10% grade. (In fact, the planner refused our repeated offers to take him on the site so that he could see the site's physical attributes firsthand and avoid such mistakes.)

Likewise, just when the city elected officials are saying they don't like dead-end roads, this planner deliberately cut in half an existing road simply to deny access to Token Creek Park.

This location on the Interstate is also recognized on approved city documents as a possible location for an interchange, but the planner took it upon himself to not recognize prior city approvals.

What's so frustrating is that the planner held the usual 'public input' meetings and then simply ignored the input he received. There truly was no 'process'; the planner just drew up a plan that he alone liked – which is a common complaint during the "neighborhood planning process."

Solving the Problem

Creating horizontal pockets of uses separated by artificial lines on paper is not what consumers want anymore. Instead, uses should be mixed; office above retail or multi-family above retail, or even senior housing mixed in with a medical center, for example, where the seniors can easily access medical care.

All the latest new urbanism planning calls for mixed-use, higher densities and

more pedestrian-oriented development.

In order to achieve that, larger tracts of land need to be maintained contiguous, instead of being sliced into 'vener' parcels like the city did with the Thompson Drive neighborhood, where crime is a result of design.

Likewise, the fundamental attributes of the land need to be considered, including its assets – such as the slopes and the creek, adjacency to a public park – and a site's liabilities, such as the noise from the Interstate and the airport.

At a time when Sun Prairie is putting in one million square feet of retail (almost equivalent to East Towne Mall) just down Hoepker Road, the city should be trying to maintain some contiguous land adjacent the Interstate for a major corporate headquarters – a place where the next TomoTherapy or Epic could be located.

Why are we letting old-school planning stand in the way of planning for Madison's next tech company success? The city continues to bleed technology companies because of the lack of prime sites available that could accommodate their rapid growth.

This is the city's last chance on the East Side; let's not blow it.

Stayed tuned next month – the city is starting new initiatives that may improve things.

Business Tip of the Month: *For new jobs, create a profile of the experience, education, skill set and personality type that is needed – and then use a personality test to match candidates against the profile. A good 'fit' means long-term success.*

All comments on this column will be posted on our website, www.inbusinessmagazine.com. Send your comments to ginnyh@magnapubs.com