

DOWNTOWN *Plan*

Madison, Wisconsin

Review Comments by Richard Slayton, Commissioner UDC

Submitted 6 February 2012

General

1. Overall the document is impressive; appropriate; and serves as tribute to the dedication of its contributors.
2. As the downtown area becomes more desirable; do we need to be more proactive to make sure lower income housing remains part of the mix?
3. Have local commuter parking areas (in zones adjacent to the isthmus: 'near-Downtown' areas) been considered in controlling daytime traffic on the isthmus? Currently many commuters park their cars along West and South Shore Drives and walk to work on the isthmus. Perhaps B-Cycle stations can be located accordingly.
4. Better separation of pedestrian traffic from bicycle traffic must be incorporated on the proposed new or improved pathways.

Page 9

- Excellent graphic representation/comparison of the 1-Square Mile Downtown Planning Area.

Page 13 Recommendation 1:

- Extremely skeptical about any filling of the shoreline.
- Consider adding park space by creating a plaza/deck over John Nolan Drive, accessible from South Hancock and East Wilson Streets. There appears to be adequate elevation for clearance over John Nolen Drive.
- Please submit anticipated environmental impacts to 'limited' filling of the shoreline.
- Consider construction of a seasonal public pier or jetty instead of new land.

Page 13 Recommendation 2:

- Excellent recommendation. Consider separating bikes/skateboards from pedestrians. Pedestrians should be adjacent to the shore...there is much to enjoy along the lake at a leisurely pedestrian pace when not having to worry about bicycles.
- Consider views *to* the causeway from various locations (West/South Shore Drives; Brittingham Park; North Shore Drive; Monona Terrace; etc.) as well as *from* the causeway in proposed development.
- The Broom Street Gateway will likely require additional area to realize any significant improvements.

Page 13 Recommendation 5:

- Exercise caution with this proposal. Limited locations may be the most appropriate approach.

Page 13 Recommendation 6:

- Brittingham Park/Beach could greatly benefit from additional public use and activity. Control of refuse may need to extend beyond self-monitoring by users. Could vendors financially participate in maintenance and security of the park?

Page 25 Total Employment Graphic:

- Downtown has not had an increase in number of workers over the past 3 decades. Have economic incentives in surrounding cities created a greater 'reverse-commuting' pattern over this period?
- Are there statistics that track the number of people living and recreating Downtown but working elsewhere?

Page 26 Recommendations 13 and 14:

- See 'General' comment #2 above.

Page 42 Maximum Building Heights Map:

- Has consideration been given to mixed heights within a specific block/area? Specifically, in blocks with a 12-story height limit; what prevents adjacent land owners from constructing to the maximum height thus effectively blocking each other's views?

Page 45 Street Tree Plantings/Urban Forest

- Underground utilities; compacted soils; New Urbanism-reduced setbacks, all compete with sustaining and enhancing the Urban Forest. Preservation and replacement of existing trees may be the most effective tool available. City Forestry Department/Local Arborists must provide recommendations with respect to proposed developments.

Page 48 Neighborhood & Districts

- The Map must identify the 2-block section of West Washington Avenue from Bedford Street east to Broom Street as neither Mifflin nor Bassett Neighborhoods. This very specific area is unlike any other area in the city and should be treated as such.

Page 51 Mifflin Neighborhood:

- Success of the 'Urban Lane' will require careful determination of setbacks, parking regulations and building treatments. Review and critique of College Court and Fahrenbrook Court are prerequisites...

- Respect for the Neighborhood's history should guide development. Statues and plaques are not adequate.

Page 53 Bassett Neighborhood

- Perhaps among the most adaptable neighborhoods in the study area. As the report mentions; pedestrian connections to Lake Monona and Monona Bay are lacking. These would greatly improve the neighborhood.

Page 57 Recommendations 81 and 82:

- These are often difficult to quantify and result in much perceived abuse of the developer.

Page 66 Objective 5.4 and Recommendation 103:

- Extremely important to the success of Downtown. Prefer to have stronger wording of Recommendation 103 by changing the term 'encourage' to 'require' and deleting the qualifier 'where economically feasible'. There will be jobs for low and moderate income residents in Downtown Madison; there should be appropriate housing. Is there a way to provide nearby groceries with competitive pricing?

Pages 82 through 87 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities/Connections

- Simply; we need to take this opportunity to require better design for separation between bicyclists and pedestrians.