

July 10, 2018

Dear Ms. Heinneman, City of Madison planning staff, and Alder Palm:

We are property owners who live directly across the street from Graaskamp Park and the Options office, where your agency is currently proposing to build 8 townhouse units as part of the redevelopment plan for the corner of East Washington Ave., 2nd St. and Mifflin St. While we are also part of an initiative by our neighborhood association (Emerson East) to have a voice in the impact of this development on our neighborhood as a whole, we are feeling the need to communicate our immediate concerns that the townhouses will have specifically on our homes. We are interested in the best possible outcome for ourselves, as well as your tenants.

Our concerns fall into three areas:

Traffic:

The 8 units of townhouses will each have 2 additional cars (16 total) that will use a driveway across the street from our properties. This is in addition to the driveway and parking lot that is already in place and creates 2 driveways within a few feet of one another. This will be up to 26 or 28 additional cars driving in and out on Mifflin St. day and night. This is an immense amount of added traffic volume for our little neighborhood that is already surrounded by 3 busy streets, and is already facing traffic issues. The current parking lot is mostly daytime use which is a huge contrast to residential parking. In your latest proposal with the driveway perpendicular and across from our houses, we would have headlights shining into our houses everytime someone left the driveway as well as added building and driveway lighting. Your units behind the proposed townhouses would also have this same issue.

Noise:

In addition to the noise from the increased traffic, we are concerned that an increase in the population will bring more general noise to our neighborhood. Our neighborhood is currently very quiet. The only exception to this is that at times there is loud music, loud discussions, and gatherings outside the current apartments owned by your agency. There have been numerous occasions when we have had to request that tenants lower the noise volume. We are very concerned that this kind of experience will increase as the number of units increase. In addition, the units will be much closer to our homes, so the noise will have a more direct impact on us.

Disruption to the character of our neighborhood:

Our street consists primarily of small 1-1/2 story bungalow and Cape Cod style homes. The 3-story townhouses in your current proposal will shadow our homes and not blend well with the current style and character of the neighborhood. In addition to our concern about the height of the townhouses, the land that will be used is quite small and it's very clear that the townhouse will be closely spaced and have a crowded appearance leaving little space between the building

and sidewalk. The spacing between the proposed 4 story, your existing 8-unit and the proposed townhouses will also be quite crowded.

We are attaching pictures of the current homes and appearance of our street. The only disruption to the character of the neighborhood are the current MDC buildings. The hospital is historical and fitting to the space. The brown apartments by the park also have a pleasing design and are well placed on the plot. The latest proposal changing the orientation to perpendicular is even less appealing aesthetically and in functionality.

In short, we are requesting that the development not just fall within the city's zoning requirements which will adversely affect our neighborhood, but instead be an enhancement to our neighborhood. We request that any new development stay within the footprint of the existing structures (i.e., the Options building) and that Graaskamp Park remain in its current location. The park functions very nicely where it sits, it just needs updating and maintenance. We love the park with its mature trees, unique slides and hillside. At our meeting back in early spring, you had presented a large 3-story square building abutted to the sidewalk and that is what drew strong opposition.

We would like to suggest that any new building have similar style and character to the historical hospital so that it looks like an extension of the original building. Placing a building in the footprint of the Options building allows for entrances on the Mifflin St. side utilizing the large front yard area that is already there. Potentially, no trees would have to be cut down. The new building could have parking beneath the units and could use the existing parking lot as the entrance. Grasskamp offers a beautiful front/back yard space to your existing units. It makes more sense to leave the park where it is for your own tenants and as a buffer to the other neighbors. Quality of living nurtures better tenants, fewer trees would need to be removed and existing green space areas would remain unchanged.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. We look forward to hearing from you and we welcome discussion for an optimal outcome.

Sincerely,

Pam Moran

Tess Camacho

Anne Gassere

Amy Ramesh

Linda Hock

Our homes





From: DAVID L TAYLOR [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2018 2:04 PM
To: Prusak, Sydney <SPrusak@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Re: Neighborhood Comments for 8/8 UDC Meeting

Sydney, first I want to make it clear that the letter you reference did not come from the Emerson East Neighborhood Association. It was drafted and sent by a small group of neighbors, and was not reviewed nor endorsed by EENA...

And the only other thing I have to share are the remarks I was going to make at the Wednesday meeting (attached)...

Thanks,
Dave Taylor

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The Emerson East Neighborhood Association has several serious concerns surrounding the proposed MDC Avenue/Graaskamp development. Because our information regarding the project has been limited to the conceptual site plan along with some generalized information provided by MDC we can only speak in very broad terms at this time. Some of those concerns are:

Increase in density caused by the near doubling of rental units on the property

Height and size of the proposed new buildings in relation to the immediate surrounding properties.

Traffic and parking issues caused by the increase in rental units and the limited number of parking spaces proposed for the site.

An increase in noise and light pollution.

Inadequate set-backs, and limited green space surrounding the development, and between buildings.

A history of poor property management with the likelihood that police calls and maintenance issues would worsen due to significant increase in rental units and tenants.

It's important to note that the Emerson East Neighborhood supports the mission of MDC, but the redevelopment of this property will affect our neighborhood well into the future.

For that reason, we believe that any further development of this property be done in conjunction with the intent and spirit of the 2016 Neighborhood Plan, and we look forward to working with MDC to ensure that happens.