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**To:** [WestPlan](#)  
**Cc:** [Plan Commission Comments](#)  
**Subject:** WAP Final Comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 26, 2024 1:25:49 PM

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Final comments for the WAP were due by 10 June. Coincidentally, that was also the date of the Plan Commission meeting to pass judgement on the 4 Legistars related to the Stone House Proposal on Old Sauk Rd. That meeting, and the subsequent Common Council meeting on 18 June, completely removed any and all attention to the WAP. Sorry for that.

After suffering through the meetings referenced above, it only then becomes fully obvious how difficult neighborhood-centric citizen input can be in an overbearing top-down driven policy making environment. Both the “top” and “bottom” (aka neighborhood/community) perspectives have ideological viewpoints that, in the case of housing, may be quite opposed. In the top-down model, the City wins by fiat. But, you may say, we held these WAP reviews ... True ... But, our experience has been that a rigid City template is in place that filters/focuses/summarizes citizen input to fit that template. But, hope never dies, and I hope these comments on the WAP see more than simply being logged in and forgotten.

The WAP has these grievous omissions of consideration:

- The Comprehensive Plan has glorious words for development. Neighborhoods, west side in this case, value green space, even though to planners it is viewed as “under-utilized”. So here is the omission (WAP & CP): What does the Madison of the future want to look like? Not in the eyes of planners but for Madison residents as a whole? What would a rightly-worded general referendum have to say about top-down vs bottom-up policy making?
- In this futuresque view is this omission: The WAP (and CP) haven’t the slightest recognition of saturation, or over-development, or excessive loss of per capita green space. For some of us (a decrepit Boy Scout in my case) living with nature was the ideal over its subjugation; this is enjoying nature/wildlife where you are not somewhere else in the abstract. Skyline obscuration is just a different (vertical) form of sprawl and consumes under-utilized (aka undeveloped) land in the process; per capita green space diminishes. Density comes at a price! What is that price? At what point does the price become too high? These are not questions addressed by the WAP and (glorious) CP. In fact, these questions are not even being brought up in a very necessary discussion that (current) Madison residents need to have.

To avoid being stereotyped, pigeon-holed, and being filed away, there are previous correspondences of mine that object to the usual stamps of NIMBY, no-change/development, entitled, privileged, etc etc etc. The overall intent, here, is to identify what makes Madison unique, and gives it “charm”, without sacrificing that going forward. Consider not just your proxy for future residents but current residents as well.

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