

## Parks, Timothy

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**From:** David Williamson Shaffer [mailto:David.WilliamsonShaffer@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2013 5:24 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Mayor  
**Subject:** Comments on proposed Town and Country Development for July 8 Planning Commission Meeting

Mr. Parks:

I am writing on behalf of a committee of neighbors to the Town and Country property at 2620 Monroe Street and the house at 665 Knickerbocker Street.

We are writing to OPPOSE the proposal scheduled for discussion at the July 8th meeting of the Planning Commission from Fred Rouse to demolish those properties and build a multi-story, mixed use development.

The project was first announced at a community meeting on April 18, where we were told that "The building meets the zoning code, and if the land were vacant it could be built as proposed." After that meeting, it was determined that the plan does not meet the zoning code, and the developer's application reflects that in asking for conditional use permits for two aspects of the building.

We have met with Mr. Rouse three times since the project was announced.

At the first meeting on May 2, Mr. Rouse presented his plans with some initial changes based on the community meeting. On May 7, when we did not know that the proposed plans exceeded the zoning code, we raised some concerns about the project, and Mr. Rouse committed to showing us a revised plan based on those concerns before making a submission to the Planning Commission. We met again with Mr. Rouse on June 3.

Between May 7 and June 3, Mr. Rouse did make some changes to the original proposal, but did not show us the revised plans before making a submission to the Planning Commission as he had promised.

At the meeting on June 3, we said to Mr. Rouse that we would be prepared to support his proposal if our concerns about the project were met. We reiterated the concerns that had not been addressed in the revisions. We also raised additional concerns based on the fact that the building was not within zoning codes.

Our full set of concerns was sent in writing to the developer on June 4, and we agreed with the developer that we would work to resolve any remaining issues by June 15. We have not heard from Mr. Rouse since, and therefore have no choice but to conclude that he has decided not to discuss the proposal with us further.

We therefore write to register the OBJECTIONS listed below to the pending proposal in its current form.

To be clear: We believe that the proposed plan does not currently address these issues adequately. The developer has not agreed to any of them in writing.

Please feel free to write with questions about any of the issues below.

On behalf of the committee of neighbors to the Town and Country property at 2620 Monroe Street and the house at 665 Knickerbocker Street owned by Kathy Madison,

David Williamson Shaffer

### **Issues to Resolve for Conditional Use Permit**

#### **PARKING AND TRAFFIC**

Owner should agree that:

\* Tenants will not be eligible for Resident Parking Permits for on-street parking,

\* Parking spaces will be included in tenants' rent.

\* Service vehicles (including but not limited to) refuse collection, repair trucks, and delivery trucks will be permitted only within specific hours, except in case of emergency repairs.

\* Service vehicles will not stop or stand on Knickerbocker Street for more than 5 minutes but must pull into parking spaces or garage, or park on Monroe Street.

## **SIZE AND USE**

Owner should agree to:

\* Redraw building plans so as not to include any structure (roof, attic, loft) that extends beyond three (3) stories or 40 feet if shorter. OR Scale back rear depth of building so it does not extend beyond Town and Country property.

\* In either case, maintain building setback from Knickerbocker at 5 foot distance described in Land Use Application May 22, 2013, and the deeper 15 foot setback nearer the adjacent house at 659 Knickerbocker Street.

\* Not lease commercial space in property to any establishment serving food or beverage.

\* Restrictions on time when tenants are open, ideally not before 8 a.m. or past 6 p.m.

## **AESTHETICS AND NOISE**

Owner should agree that:

- \* Tenant leases will include language prohibiting undue noise inside or outside property that can be heard by neighbors from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. on weekends.
  
- \* Neighbors will be able to approve or reject plans for screening of roof terraces and balconies to address privacy concerns and noise reduction. Neighbors should reasonably consider cost as significant factor in choices.
  
- \* Garage door installed in building will have specifications that include noise threshold not to exceed decibel level mutually agreed upon by owner and neighbors after both parties have had a chance to research options.
  
- \* No transformers or other utilities will be situated at rear of project closest to the adjacent house at 659 Knickerbocker Street or Knickerbocker side.
  
- \* Compressors installed in building will have specifications that include noise threshold not to exceed decibel level mutually agreed upon by owner and neighbors after both parties have had a chance to research options. Compressors will not be situated at rear of project closest to the adjacent house at 659 Knickerbocker Street or Knickerbocker side.
  
- \* Fumes from enclosed parking will not be vented to rear of project closest to the adjacent house at 659 Knickerbocker Street or Knickerbocker side.
  
- \* Lighting on façade and street lighting will be shielded so as not to shine into neighboring properties. Light levels at rear of project closest to the adjacent house at 659 Knickerbocker Street and Knickerbocker side will be kept consistent with lighting levels elsewhere in back yards and streetfronts along Knickerbocker Street.
  
- \* All trees along border with the adjacent house at 659 Knickerbocker Street within 10 feet either side of that line, will be protected from damage, including damage to roots, during demolition of the house at 655 Knickerbocker Street relocation of utilities, and construction, and will not be removed during or after demolition or construction except by agreement of both the developer and the property owners of 659 Knickerbocker Street.
  
- \* Rear green space for project will be maintained as green space only, without tenant amenities.

\* No refuse, recycling, or other containers, deposits, or materials will be stored outside the parameters of building.

\* Neighbors will be consulted on materials and colors used on Monroe Street side of building and will be able to approve or reject materials and colors proposed for the side adjacent the house at 659 Knickerbocker Street and Knickerbocker side of building. Neighbors will reasonably consider cost as significant factor in choices.

**From:** jean bae [redacted]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 19, 2013 12:01 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Opposition to Proposed Development at Knickerbocker and Monroe Streets.

Dear Mr. Parks and members of the Madison Planning Commission,

I write to you as a resident of District 13 in Madison. My family (my husband and two children now ages 12 and 9) lived on Knickerbocker St. for 12 years, from 2001 to April of 2013 and only recently moved to Fox Ave. I am generally not one to exercise my right to voice an opinion in such matters, but I feel strongly about this issue. **I oppose the proposed development by Fred Rouse of a mixed use, multi story building on the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Streets for various reasons.**

I am concerned first and foremost about the safety of the residents on Knickerbocker St, many of whom are young children, due to the inevitability of increased traffic on the block with higher volume of residents, patrons of commercial business and therefore cars. Any plan for development on this block requires careful consideration of traffic flow and parking.

I am concerned about the intrusive nature of such a building in terms of noise, light and refuse. The Dudgeon-Monroe neighborhood is one of the most desirable places to live in Madison because people can enjoy peace and quiet in their homes, while still having access to all that an urban environment has to offer. The current plan for this development does not appear to address such issues specifically.

I am concerned that the proposal does not meet zoning standards in that the new zoning laws state that such buildings cannot be more than 25,000 sq ft and this project is listed at 27,500 sq ft. The development does not conform to the law.

There is no precedent for such a building, that encroaches upon so much of a residential block, on any other part of Monroe St. And the building plan, as it stands, is not a thoughtful one that respects the families that live in the area.

Sincerely yours,

Jean Bae  
[redacted] Fox Ave.  
Madison, WI 53711

**From:** Phil Olsen [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 19, 2013 9:31 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Proposed Monroe St. and KnickerBocker St development

Dear Mr. Parks,

As introduction, I am using the following italicized text sent to me by my neighbor, which basically encapsulates my view at this point. My address and phone number are listed below. I and my family are the current residents and owner of the third house behind Rice's garage.

*"Developer Fred Rouse is proposing a 3 1/2-story, mixed-use building at the site of Town & Country auto repair and an adjacent home on Knickerbocker Street. He and architect Randy Bruce first presented plans to the neighborhood on April 18, and in less than five weeks, moved quickly toward filing a conditional use application for project approval.*

*Initial assertions that the project met all city planning and zoning standards proved untrue, and our neighborhood is left with a project that is:*

*Too Big – The project is listed at 27,500 square feet, while the new zoning laws call for no more than 25,000 square feet.*

*Too Tall – The development rises 3 1/2 stories, out of place along a section of Monroe Street with two-story buildings. It looms more than a story above the adjacent homes on Knickerbocker Street.*

*Too Intrusive – This is the first project of its kind along the Monroe Street corridor that encroaches so far onto a residential block. A home currently located on the property will be demolished and replaced by a 21-car parking garage and driveway exiting onto the residential street.*

*We are not against development, but this is not smart development. It upsets the balance between the commercial corridor along Monroe Street and the residential blocks of our adjoining neighborhoods.*

*Developments of this scale don't belong in any neighborhood backyards. If approved, this project will set a precedent for similar developments to follow. It represents a tipping point in how we view our city, and what we value."*

I attended the April 18, 2013 meeting at the Wingra School, which introduced the proposed project. I also had the opportunity to sit down in a small meeting with Mr. Rouse, the developer, and Mr. Bruce, the architect. I was impressed with what seemed like a sincere desire to try to incorporate suggested changes reflecting concerns of many of my neighbors. However, the meeting also showed me how much we are at the "mercy" of the good graces of the developer since we neighbors have essentially no leverage in the current development process, especially if no zoning variance is needed. This is hardly a good starting point for a negotiation.

I am not opposed to change; change is continuous and occurring all the time. I favor smart development and very much appreciate the efforts that the city has planned with regard to increasing mass transit and bicycle commuting in the city, as well as a more pedestrian friendly environment. As it currently stands, the project as proposed by Mr. Rouse and his company seems out of character.

I understand the difficulty of establishing a balance between development and growth, and the desires of some residents to keep things exactly as they are. I think that efforts should never be spared in trying to achieve a balance between growth, change and stasis. I am not impressed with the new development process, which appears to cut the neighborhood out of the process unless zoning variances are required. Without zoning variances, residents have no substantial way of advocating their position. We are reliant on the good graces of developers, their architects, and members employed by and elected to the city government.

I oppose the project as it stands and I reiterate that the generalities of my views are consistent with the italicized text.

Thank you.

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Phil Olsen  
[REDACTED] Knickerbocker St  
Madison, WI 53711

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Jane Albert [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 19, 2013 8:35 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Subject:** Town and Country site development

Please delay a decision on the above site. There are too many questions and unresolved issues still on the table. We are concerned about protecting the integrity of our neighborhood. We are concerned about setting a precedent to demolish family homes already existing in a neighborhood for the sake of unknown retail businesses and large apartment complexes.

Jane Albert  
[REDACTED] West Lawn Ave.  
Madison 53711

-----Original Message-----

From: Linda Maraniss [redacted]  
Sent: Thursday, June 20, 2013 12:05 PM  
To: Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan  
Cc: [redacted]  
Subject: Proposed building with 21 Apartments on Knickerbocker and Monroe Street , minus typos.

Dear Mr. Parks and Alder Ellingson,

Thank you for your work to keep Madison the most wonderful and friendly city we know. I live at 659 Knickerbocker Street. As you might imagine I oppose the size of the building designed by architect Randy Bruce. The apartment building, with a first floor commercial rental space is now over three stories tall and exceeds the square feet for the space that Mr. Fred Rouse would like to buy. We have not heard back from Mr. Rouse this week about our written concerns about the size of the building.

At the June 4 meeting at Wingra School which I attended, one of the DMNA members asked Mr. Bruce how the exhaust from the 21 car garage would be handled. He replied that he had not thought about that. I fear that having a parking garage for 21 cars so close to my living room windows will create noise pollution. I worry about air pollution from the garage.

I hope you will understand the fact that the building will be built up a nice, kid friendly street, and that the 21 cars for the rental units and the five cars for the commercial space will be entering and exiting on our residential street, not from Monroe Street. Building an entrance for the parking garage on a residential street is not good city planning.

We do not need all those cars because they will be a danger to the many kids who play outside and who walk up and down Knickerbocker to go to Lake Wingra.

I grew up in Madison, rode my bike as a kid all summer, love the lakes, attended West High, got married in Madison and had both my children in Madison. I love this city for the smiles and kindness of people, and for the natural beauty of our trees, parks and lakes.

More car traffic and a super tall building on a small lot will not be good planning. We are a bike friendly, kid friendly street.

Thank you, Linda Maraniss

Sent from my iPad

Comments received regarding proposed Rouse redevelopment of 2620 Monroe Street and 665  
Knickerbocker Street through July 2, 2013:

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**From:** Julia Cattani Billingham [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2013 4:52 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Knickerbocker Street development

Dear Mr. Parks, Alderperson Ellingson, and Mayor Soglin,

My husband Stephen, two-year old daughter Grace, and I just bought the house at [REDACTED] Sprague Street off Monroe Street last fall. We love our house and we love the neighborhood. When we met thirteen year ago, Stephen was living with his two children at the three-story apartment building at the end of Arbor Drive at Wingra Park. This is a neighborhood that we have enjoyed for many years, eating at the restaurants, shopping the stores, walking the arboretum, picnicing in the park, and boating at Wingra Boats.

We recently became aware of the proposed building for the Town and Country gas station and have many valid concerns that I hope you can take deeply to heart. Our home is five houses down from Butler Plumbing. If you look from our back yard - a space that we immediately fell in love with when first viewing the house - you see a nice line of large trees behind Zip-Dang, Calabash Gifts, Monroe Street Shoe Repair, The Knitting Tree, Krakora Studio, and Town and Country gas. Being a stay-at-home mom, Grace and I spend a lot of time in our back yard playing in her playhouse, sandbox, climbing cube, the sprinkler, and playing every game of ball we can invent. We have a picnic almost every day, laying on a blanket in the shade. We talk with our neighbors over the small wire fences and pick flowers for our neighbor Cathy. It is an ideal place for a young Madisonian to grow up.

We now have begun to imagine the 3.5 story, 27,500 square foot building that is designed with a garden terrace that would tower over our little backyard, taking the place of the towering trees. The garden terrace, especially, would be much more intrusive and noisy than apartment windows. It allows for almost anyone to have extended visual access to our yard.

We have also learned that the building on Sprague next to Butler, a two-story brick apartment building that we can easily see from our back yard, is also zoned commercial and could easily follow in the path of this Knickerbocker building if the project is approved. We see the Knickerbocker building as a possible opening into a future that would drastically change this neighborhood of one-block streets.

I have read that this proposed building would require a conditional use permit for being over 25,000 square feet and a conditional use permit for being over three stories tall. Please help us by not allowing these permits to be granted and by working together to find a compromise, a building that is not too big, too tall, (and honestly, too ugly) and to preserve this section of Monroe Street that is a thriving residential and business cooperative.

I would like to see a building that is in harmony with the existing buildings. Two stories would most preserve the architecture of Monroe Street, but please absolutely no larger than three stories (still a story above almost all the homes and existing storefronts/apartments in the neighborhood), does not have a party garden terrace to have all apartment renters and their guests "backyard" towering above everyone else's and invading our quaint backyards, and larger apartments - NOT efficiencies and one bedrooms - but larger apartments that would invite more families into this family neighborhood rather than increasing the area of student housing.

We understand living in a city means not having complete privacy and that living anywhere always has change, but this proposed building seems to be bad for, not only the residents of the area, but for the businesses. Such an imposing structure, set up against such a narrow sidewalk will impede foot traffic and could lead to less success for our area businesses. The new Parman's Building at Monroe and Glenway that houses Gates & Brovi is a great example of this. It is such an imposing structure that

people are less comfortable walking next to the busy Monroe Street. (I know a Urban Planning professor.) Our current businesses would also have much less parking for their customers since the plan only allocates one parking space per apartment and our neighborhood is already very busy with Monroe Street parkers.

Please help us find a compromise.

Sincerely,

Julia Billingham

██████████ Sprague Street

Madison, WI ██████████  
██████████

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**From:** Kim Vergeront [mailto:██████████]

**Sent:** Thursday, June 20, 2013 6:24 PM

**To:** tparks@cityofmadison.com district13@cityofmadison.com mayor@cityofmadison.com

**Cc:** Clear, Mark

**Subject:** Rouse commercial development on a residential street

Dear Mr. Parks, Alders Ellingson and Clear, and Mayor Soglin,

We are aware of the plans for the Rouse Development at Monroe and Knickerbocker Streets. As long time Madison residents (Andy was born here; Kim has lived here since 1966) who have lived in both east side and west side neighborhoods, we have many concerns about it.

First of all, parking and traffic are already an issue in the neighborhood. Knickerbocker is a street that is home to many families with children who ride bikes, walk, and walk their dogs, and the increased flow of cars and people coming and going and looking for parking will be troublesome, noisy, and possibly dangerous.

Secondly, why is this structure allowed to be 3 1/2 stories, taller than the other buildings on this section of Monroe Street, not to mention taller than all of the homes on Knickerbocker Street? Certainly, things have changed since the 1920's when the home scheduled to be demolished was zoned TSS!

Most importantly, this project sets a very bad precedent for all residential neighborhoods in Madison. What is more important, maintaining a family friendly neighborhood where children are safe, homes have some privacy, and traffic and parking, if somewhat difficult, are at least not dangerous, or allowing a developer, with little or no concern for the neighbors, to make a bigger profit?

We feel that there are double standards operating. In 2009, we bought a dilapidated fishing shack in the Spring Harbor Neighborhood with the intent to tear it down and build a permanent home. We went through many steps, which included meeting with the neighborhood association and getting their approval. We also went door to door at the homes of five of the closest neighbors (on both sides of the lot and

behind), telling them of our intent and showing them the plans for our new house. They kindly approved, and we were able to go ahead with our plans.

BUT this has not been the case with the Rouse development project. He has provided conflicting information about the square footage of the proposed building and the use of the first floor commercial space. Obviously, residence in this and most neighborhoods would be negatively impacted by a business on their street opened late at night.

We sincerely hope that you will consider our thoughts and those of others who oppose commercial development on a residential street. If approved, this project would set a very bad precedent for all Madison neighborhoods.

Kind regards,  
Kim Vergeront and Andy Cohn

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**From:** marcia diamond [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2013 1:00 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Firchow, Kevin  
**Cc:** Mayor; Ellingson, Susan  
**Subject:** Proposed development at Monroe and Knickerbocker Streets

Mr Parks--

We, the undersigned, are members of the governing council of the Dudgeon Monroe Neighborhood Association (DMNA) and were present at the June 4, 2013 meeting where developer Fred Rouse and architect Randy Bruce presented their plans for constructing a mixed use building on properties located at the corner of Monroe St and Knickerbocker St (2620 Monroe) and on Knickerbocker (665 Knickerbocker) itself. The DMNA council did not take a formal vote either to support or oppose that project as presented, because we were told that negotiations were ongoing between a group of concerned neighbors and the developer. We are aware that other DMNA council members also had concerns and would like the plan commission to defer consideration of this development from the scheduled July 8 meeting to a later date so that the DMNA council could discuss and decide whether to officially support or oppose the development now that it appears negotiations between the neighbors and developer have broken down. This email, obviously, is a reflection of our concerns as individuals and does not reflect any official DMNA position. We feel it is important to share our concerns now rather than waiting to see if consideration is postponed.

There are multiple areas of concern about this project--these are highlights:

----The building is simply too big and too tall. Even though the new zoning code specifies a maximum size of 25,000 square feet, the developer acknowledges this to be 27,500...fully 10 percent above code. Maximum height is supposed to be no more than 3 stories or 40 feet, but the building as proposed also exceeds that. The project is not at all compatible with either the two story commercial buildings on Monroe St or the single family residences on Knickerbocker in terms of either bulk or height. It does not fit into the context of the neighborhood and is visually overwhelming and oppressive.

----Every structure on the other three corners of the intersection of Monroe and Knickerbocker has its primary vehicular entrance on Monroe St...NOT the side street, and it is a concern that the proposal to have the only entrance/egress for this development on Knickerbocker will generate significant issues with traffic on Knickerbocker and other neighborhood side streets as well as issues re parking in an area

where it is already very difficult to find street parking.

---The Monroe/Knickerbocker intersection is already known to Madison police as a particularly dangerous one for pedestrians. There is substantial concern in the neighborhood about the effect of additional traffic related to both the residential units and the commercial enterprise. It is already frequently difficult to access Monroe St from the side streets, and the development will generate additional traffic up Knickerbocker and other streets in the area as drivers seek to avoid that problem by taking side streets to get to a traffic light. Traffic problems may be further exacerbated depending on what type of enterprise occupies the commercial space in the building.

--The other 3 corners of the Monroe/Knickerbocker intersection are 'open' with open parking spaces and low buildings (one to two stories maximum) which serve as an inviting gateway to the neighborhood's main attraction-- Wingra Park. Putting up a 3.5 story building on the 4th corner is not compatible with the rest of the intersection or with the flavor of the neighborhood.

--The AT&T U-verse box currently located in the terrace on Knickerbocker is proposed to move next to the home that would be adjacent to the project. This (and other utilities) should remain on the terrace or be located within the structure rather than creating noise for the immediate neighbor. In addition, the plan as presented showed there would be eleven balconies/roof terraces overlooking the house that would be the immediate neighbor. That seems excessive even if there is a few feet of green space in between and raises additional noise issues.

--Instead of being confined to the commercial space on Monroe St, the project requires demolition of a single family residence on Knickerbocker and is an intrusion into the neighborhood. This is a very poor precedent to set for this neighborhood or for any neighborhood in the city. Dudgeon Monroe is a neighborhood where people want to live...and that is because of the great neighborhood feel of it. Taking out existing homes to facilitate construction of outsized commercial/multi-use buildings is damaging to that neighborhood feel and destructive to the kind of neighborhood life this city supports.

As individuals, we do not believe the plan as presented to the DMNA council is acceptable and therefore oppose the granting of any permits by the Plan Commission. We appreciate the consideration of Plan Commission members and hope the conditional use permits requested by the developer will NOT be granted until or unless major changes addressing the above issues are made.

Thank you--

Marcia Diamond, DMNA secretary, [REDACTED] Crandall St.  
Daryl Sherman, DMNA council member, [REDACTED] Gregory St.  
Jane Albert, DMNA council member, [REDACTED] West Lawn Ave.  
Sandy Stark, DMNA council member, [REDACTED] Gregory St.  
Linda McQuillen, DMNA council member, [REDACTED] West Lawn Ave.

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**From:** Robert Norton [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 21, 2013 11:04 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Subject:** Fred Rouse Development

Hello,

I would like to add my opinion that the proposed development on Monroe St. is too large, too tall, and not in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. With some reasonable adjustments the project would be a much better fit.

Best regards,  
Bob Norton  
[REDACTED] Copeland St.

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**From:** Ray Robey [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 22, 2013 2:57 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Proposed Rouse Development at Monroe & Knickerbocker

Mr. Parks,

Though I had previously read an item in the local paper, I just became aware of the size and scope of the proposed development at the corner of Monroe & Knickerbocker Streets and am very dismayed that the planning commission would even entertain this idea as presently configured. The sketches I have seen show a building that is disproportionately too large for its location and will mar the esthetics of our neighborhood. Of more concern, however, is the fact that the proposed development will take down a house on Knickerbocker, starting an encroachment into our residential neighborhoods that is simply not acceptable.

I am all for development along Monroe Street itself, but I want to see a separation of commercial properties and residential neighborhoods.

I hope this officially records my opposition to the proposed development as presently configured. I understand there is a hearing scheduled for July 8th and will make an effort to attend.

Regards,

Ray Robey  
[REDACTED] West Lawn Avenue  
Madison, WI [REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Matt Powers [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 23, 2013 8:59 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** district13@citofmadison.com; Mayor  
**Subject:** Letter in support of urban development along Monroe street

Dear Mr. Parks, Alder Ellingson, and Hon. Mayor Soglin

Judging by the flyer on my door when I got home from work this morning, instructing me to email you, you are about to get a flurry of emails on this subject. For that I don't envy you, but thanks for your time anyway.

I've lived in Madison for 13 years, in the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood for 11 of those. I've owned 3 homes in this neighborhood, including a little bungalow on Monroe St., right behind where the proposed Town & Country development will go. From my layman's view point, it seems that many neighborhood's reaction to urban development is to reject all proposals first, ask questions later.

I believe that historic sites like Ken Copp's, Parman's, and the Town and Country filling stations have a place in our community--up to a point. But Madison is not a small town anymore. And I for one, as an environmentalist and believer in the preservation of prairie and farmland, see each urban development as sustainable and neighborhood-revitalizing, as well as representing Farmland in Fitchburg that isn't being paved over.

Furthermore, I would be willing to be that the people listed as opponents of the Town and Country Development at Monroe and Knickerbocker have patronized Gates and Brovi in Parman Place--as it has been a welcome addition to the neighborhood.

Best of luck to you all in deciding what's best for this great city that we all love, it's a tough job, and I thank you for the work that you all do.

Sincerely,

Matt Powers  
[REDACTED] Gregory Street  
Madison, WI

Former Homeowner:  
[REDACTED] Gregory  
[REDACTED] Crandall

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**From:** Judith Walton [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 8:45 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Knickerbocker development opposition

Hello.

I would like to express my sincere opposition to the proposed Knickerbocker development. There is no reason that it needs to be any larger than the already generous size requirements. If anything, I would like buildings right next to single-family homes be required to be smaller.

I oppose the proposed garden terrace as it invites too much noise and severely invades the privacy of the block's single-family homes. The garden terrace would directly overlook backyards and all the homes in the area. I would want the plans to not include a party location for the apartments.

The parking and traffic increases would greatly matter to these one-block residential streets where Monroe Street parking is already congesting these narrow streets. There are many children in this family neighborhood and having renters and guests of studio and one-bedroom



apartments swing through the streets and sidewalks is worrisome. I know that there has been a push to keep Monroe Street as the artery and not allow cut-through traffic, but putting the entrance on Knickerbocker goes against this philosophy.

I also worry about the businesses that might reside in the new development. Having Madison-based Victor Allen's *directly* across the street, I am very upset to hear that a coffee shop is proposed as a desired new business within. I do not support this and would like to have regulations placed on the business types allowed. There seem to not be too much demand, anyway, for new business as the mall across the street at Knickerbocker and Monroe always seems to have empty storefronts, and Pascals makes tortillas in their old restaurant location.

My biggest opposition is the destruction of a over-100-year-old home and invasion into an existing neighborhood. I understand that there are several other homes that are zoned commercial in the area (such as on Spaight St). I strongly support rezoning these homes to strictly residential to keep the neighborhood in tact.

Thank you for listening to this concerned citizen.

Sincerely,  
Judith Ann Walton  
[REDACTED] Hammersley Ave  
Madison, WI [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Judi K-Turkel [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 4:46 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Opposition to Monroe-Knickerbocker proposal

We cannot testify at the Plan Commission hearing at 5:30 pm on Monday July 8<sup>th</sup> so we are putting our testimony in writing below and hope it can be read aloud during the time in which neighbors get a chance to speak on the proposal:

We are opposed to the Proposal put by developer Fred Rouse to build a large 3-and-a-half story building on that site. It seems that only greed can inspire him to pack into the lots he has purchased as high and as wide (in all directions) a building as he can get away with. Specifically, our concerns are:

First of all, the square footage Rouse proposes to develop is larger than even the combined lot dimensions he would legally be allowed if the two lots he now owns were BOTH zoned commercial to begin with.

Second, the height Rouse proposes is greater than any home in the residential block of Knickerbocker St. on which it stands and while we understand and support the decision that Madison must begin to grow upward if it is not to sprawl indefinitely, as it grows upward it must not be permitted to destroy or even impinge on the light, air and property values of the homes in its shadow on the residential street. (Perhaps if the plans were adjusted to put considerably more green space between the building and the home next door, that could be accomplished. Perhaps

some tapering or set-back in the ½ attic floor could help. But that's for an architect to solve, not us.)

Third, it seems to us that if a residential lot is purchased on a residential street, there must be illegality in converting that lot to commercial use without a showing of hardship or community-agreed great benefit to the community. If the mere fact of adjacency were to permit a developer to get a variance on residential land, it would not take many years to have all of our residential neighborhood swallowed by commercial development. We hope our neighbors will join with us to take a stand here.

Cordially,  
Judi K-Turkel and Franklynn Peterson

Gregory St

Madison WI

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**From:** Arthur Emery [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 5:16 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Opposition to Monroe-Knickerbocker Development

Dear Members of the Planning Committee,

As residents of the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood at 649 Crandall Street, we oppose the development of the proposed mixed-use building at the site of the Town & Country auto repair and an adjacent home on Knickerbocker Street. We were agreeable to building and have followed the communications between DM neighborhood representatives, hoping that enough of the concerns about this development would be worked out. As this has not happened, we have changed our position and now stand in opposition to this development.

1. The developer has not dealt in good faith with the neighborhood representatives as he has stated in the Land Use Application (\*page 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph). The neighborhood agreed not to block the project, and formed a group of representatives to see if some reasonable concerns and modifications to the plan could be addressed.

*\*"The developer has had several meetings with the neighborhood representatives and has made serious efforts and changes to the initial proposal in an effort to improve the proposal from the neighborhood's perspective. The Rouse Management is planning to develop, own and manage this property for the long term and looks forward to positive relationships with the adjoining property owners, the Monroe Street Commercial District and the neighborhood at large"*

Only minor changes to address concerns were made, with the developer agreeing to meet and communicate further after the initial meeting, as well as submit a final plan to the neighborhood representatives, which he did not do, nor does it appear he intends to do. His misleading claim in the Application is of concern if he feels he has indeed made a serious effort, future concerns as the development and occupation of the apartment takes place, are likely to be ignored.

2. The project is listed at 27,500 square feet, while the new zoning laws call for no more than 25,000 square feet.

3. With 21 apartments and 21 parking spaces, there are several traffic and pedestrian concerns for the neighborhood area:

- Knickerbocker is a neighborhood street with children playing and walking on the sidewalk. Having 21 cars, plus the 6 commercial spaces potentially entering and exiting on the street, will make it more dangerous for a neighborhood setting/street.
- Since it is difficult to make a left hand turn onto Monroe, cars will exit the garage, proceed up Knickerbocker and Gregory to the lights on Commonwealth. This is a large increase in traffic for streets that are not equipped for a heavy flow of vehicles.
- Crossing on Monroe. We continue to be shocked at the difficulty of crossing Monroe at the crosswalks even with a waving flag. This will only increase the problem and the danger for us.
- One parking space per unit assumes that most tenants will have only one car which will most likely necessitate parking the second car on neighborhood streets at night. People are already parking on Crandall Street for work, to take the bus, etc. making it difficult for us as residents often to find a place on the street to park if needed. During the winter, cars often park overnight, making it difficult for plows, causing them to navigate around them. When the cars do move, they leave huge mounds of frozen snow behind making it difficult for us to back out of our driveway. We are astonished that after the opening of Gates and Brovi and the parking issues that arose, that the city would not be more sensitive to the toll a lack of parking takes on residential neighbors.

4. Apart from the safety and developer issues, the building will change the character of Monroe Street (quaint and small), and feel that the height (3 ½ stories) of the building is too intrusive not only from Monroe Street, but also from the Knickerbocker neighborhood on which it encroaches. We agree with the neighborhood assessment that it is not smart development and it upsets the balance between commercial corridor along Monroe Street and the residential blocks of our adjoining neighborhoods – our backyard! The approval of this development's plans will irreversibly change the character of the neighborhood and will set a bad precedent for similar future developments.

Arthur and Karen Emery  
Crandall Street  
Madison, WI 53711

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**From:** Karen Julian [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 5:54 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Mayor; Ellingson, Susan; Clear, Mark  
**Subject:** Fred Rouse proposal for Knickerbocker and Monroe Streets

I am writing to express my concern about the proposal developer Fred Rouse has made for the property at the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Streets, and my opposition to his application for a conditional use permit for the project. I no longer live in the Monroe Street area, but I did so for 20 years, and I am well aware of the charm that neighborhood holds, and the difficult balance we need to maintain for the residential area/s and commercial development. In my view, the proposal as now submitted by Fred Rouse is too large for the space, and it encroaches too far into the residential area behind it. He proposes a building of 3 ½ stories in an area of Monroe Street which has only two-story buildings. As now designed, I believe the building is too intrusive for the neighboring homes, and approving it will set a bad precedent for commercial development in our residential community. I ask that you deny the conditional use permit for the project as currently designed and submitted.

Karen D. Julian

Attorney Karen D. Julian  
Karen D. Julian Law Offices, S.C.  
[REDACTED] Triverton Pike Drive, [REDACTED]  
Madison, WI 53711



Member: Collaborative Family Law Council of Wisconsin; International Association of Collaborative Professionals.

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**From:** Dave Waterman [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 9:26 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; [REDACTED]@mna.org  
**Subject:** Development proposed for Monroe at Knickerbocker

To the Madison Plan Commission:

As residents of Knickerbocker Street, we are writing to comment on the proposal by Fred Rouse to build on the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe. While we support infill development and the application of "new urbanism" planning ideas to our neighborhood, we object to this particular development. This project is simply too big for its setting. We feel it is a mistake to have the second lot on any of these short streets off Monroe zoned commercial. For these lots the zoning should be residential to maintain the neighborhood balance of commercial and residential that we see in the pockets of Monroe street that are currently commercial. For the

most part, commercial strips on Monroe Street relate directly to Monroe and have not spread into residential lots. They are generally only one lot deep, and in many places are bound by an alley or another street. This is the model that new urbanism at Monroe and Knickerbocker should follow, at least on the even side of the street.

A project that is too big for its location, as this one is, alters the feel and culture of a very short street in unwelcome and unavoidable ways. We enjoy a neighborhood feel that is borne of connection to neighbors and a shared sense of place. Change is inevitable, but we can direct it so that the neighborhood feel is not overwhelmed by a commercial approach to development. It may not be possible for Mr. Rouse to construct a smaller development that is profitable, but if that is the case the answer is not to impose unwelcome development on neighbors for the sake of profitability. Rather, the answer is to recognize that the prices of land and construction must be scaled appropriately to the more important and enduring values that make our neighborhood a nice place to call home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dave Waterman and Teri Casady  
[REDACTED] Knickerbocker Street

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**From:** Steven and Victoria [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2013 7:47 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Subject:** FW: Knickerbocker Street Development

To: Madison Plan Commission  
From: Steven Post and Victoria Storck, [REDACTED] Knickerbocker Street  
Re: Knickerbocker Street Development Project

Dear friends,

When we first heard about the proposed development at the end of our street – an apartment building with commercial space in the ground floor – we were told that we were fortunate that the developer was Fred Rouse. He was “one of the good ones” and would be likely to work with the neighbors to submit a project that we could support. When the first public plans were unveiled at a neighborhood meeting we didn’t hear anything about the project that alarmed us, although there were clearly some concerns that we would want addressed.

A committee of our neighbors met with the architect and the developer in May and initially it appeared that they would work towards a resolution of the concerns which would make it possible to support the project. After a meeting on June 3 there was agreement that Mr. Rouse and the committee would work towards resolving the remaining issues by June 15. However Mr. Rouse appeared to stop

communicating or responding to our committee's efforts to contact him to finish negotiations and now there is almost no time left before the July 8 planning commission meeting.


Fred Rouse's actions give at least the appearance of bad faith negotiation. We believe the unaddressed concerns are legitimate and should be addressable. We ask the planning commission NOT to grant the conditional use permit at the July 8 meeting. Doing so would send a message to developers that the way to move projects is to string people along and stall for time while conducting (or maybe *not* conducting) conversations which are "negotiations" in name only.

It's possible that if the developer and the citizens of the neighborhood negotiate with all the good will in the world and do their best to compromise with each other that the planning commission will still have to make a decision that will leave one party disappointed. But we're not at that point yet and we ask you to postpone a decision and encourage the developer to continue working with us. Thank you.

*Steven Post and Victoria Storck*

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-----Original Message-----

From: Eleanor Nelsen [mailto:  
Sent: Tuesday, June 25, 2013 2:45 PM  
To: Parks, Timothy  
Cc: Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
Subject: Monroe-Knickerbocker proposed development

Mr. Parks:

My name is Eleanor Nelsen; I am a resident of the Dudgeon-Monroe neighborhood, and I am writing to express my concern about the proposed development at the corner of Monroe and Knickerbocker streets.

My husband and I have fallen in love with this neighborhood over the three years we've lived there. We walk around in the evenings and admire the prewar architecture, the mix of larger and more modest homes, and the beautiful gardens in which our neighbors take obvious pride; we enjoy the sense of community among the area's diverse residents, and the small businesses within walking distance that help create a vibrant, self-sustaining neighborhood. The unique combination of these elements is what keeps us eating dinner and buying frozen custard and shopping for Christmas gifts in our own neighborhood rather than driving farther away to a commercial district.

We imagine that many of these features were compelling to Mr. Rouse, as well. We feel strongly, however, that a 3 1/2-story, 27,500-square-foot development with a driveway exiting on what is now a quiet residential street is starkly inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood. (Which is, we assume, why zoning laws prohibit a development of this scale.)

So many old neighborhoods are being slowly encroached upon by commercial development; in the process, many of them lose the charm and sense of community that made them so attractive to developers in the first place. We love our neighborhood too much to allow this development to move forward without comment. At the very least, we insist that Mr. Rouse follow the zoning laws.

But we ask that he also consider the effects of his proposed development, at its current scale, on the quality of the neighborhood. Our lives are enriched by the neighborhood we live in; those benefits are incalculable but very real to many people. Please don't endanger that by allowing this development to go forward with its current specifications.

Yours,  
Eleanor Nelsen  
[REDACTED] Copeland Street

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**From:** Sharon Rault [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2013 4:12 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; [REDACTED]mna.org  
**Subject:** RE THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PROPOSAL

Mr. Parks:

I bought a home on Crandall Street in the Dudgeon Monroe neighborhood in the fall of 2005. I quickly became aware of the heavy traffic volume on Monroe Street and the large number of pedestrians injured and/or killed while in the crosswalks on this street. Also, parking for residents and service providers is near to impossible due to the fact that people working at the Knickerbocker shops as well as those catching the Metro buses on Monroe Street use the residential streets for their parking needs.

The currently proposed development on the corner of Monroe and Knickerbocker Streets will certainly add to the already critical problems of noise, traffic and parking for residents of the Dudgeon Monroe neighborhood. The proposed building is intrusive and will most definitely change the charming ambiance of our unique neighborhood.

In addition, the proposed structure is too big and too tall, and it's my understanding that it exceeds the new zoning laws. I do not find the architecture particularly attractive—perhaps due to its being so unnecessarily huge. It doesn't "fit in" with the surrounding commercial buildings which are no taller than two stories.

My other concern is the proposed demolition of the bungalow next door to meet the requirements of Fred Rouse's development. I am opposed to the destruction of any historic property in the city of Madison and, in particular, in my own neighborhood.

I would hope that in light of the many real and mostly negative issues by neighbors that Mr. Rouse has already confronted with his other developments along the Monroe Street corridor that he would listen to and respect our concerns for this neighborhood. I'm not opposed to the development of the Town and Country site. My fervent hope is that Mr. Rouse will decide to develop a smaller and more attractive building that will be worthy of our neighborhood (even if it won't be the financial boom that he would hope to achieve with this particular development).

My intention in sending this email to the Planning Division is that you and the other members will take our legitimate concerns seriously and work with all concerned to reach a compromise regarding the Town and Country proposal.

Sincerely,

Sharon Rault  
[REDACTED] Crandall Street  
Madison, WI 53711  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** David Maraniss [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2013 7:25 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** PLAN COMMISSION LETTER FROM DAVID MARANISS

June 25, 2013  
To: Madison Plan Commission  
From: David Maraniss

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed development of a three-and-a-half story, 21-unit mixed use apartment complex at the corner of Monroe and Knickerbocker, which goes by the (misleading) title 2620 Monroe. My wife and I, who both grew up in Madison, own the house at [REDACTED] Knickerbocker, and as the neighbors most directly effected by the apartment building, which would loom over our house from fewer than seven yards away, we consider ourselves part of the collateral damage. I dare say that not a single one of you - not any commisioner, not the mayor, not the 13th district Alder, would be overjoyed by the prospect of this building going up smack next to your house, with eleven decks hovering over your back yard and a 21-car garage adjacent to your living room. But that sensibility is a given and not the point of my letter of opposition.

Whenever a dispute of this sort arises, there is a tendency on the part of those who support the project to dismiss the opposition as being motivated by Not-In-My-Back-Yard self-interest. Of course that is true, undeniably. But such dismissiveness can lead to a form of fallacious logic and intellectual bullying. It implies that self-interest negates the legitimacy of neighborhood opposition. No, it does not. If it did, then the arguments of the developer should be equally dismissed, for they arise out of another form of self-interest - the profit motive.



Self-interest is not the issue. I urge you to look beyond the condescending notion that "this is just NIMBY" and listen to what we have to say. These are complex issues, and should be considered with reason, subtlety, and an open mind. If the test is what's best for the larger neighborhood and the city as a whole, I'm eager and ready to carry the debate at that level.

Here is our case:

I do not oppose development along the Monroe Street Corridor, nor does anyone I have talked to. I fully understand the concept of density and infill, even though as a writer I abhor the latter word and consider it Orwellian and dehumanizing. And I appreciate the benefits of our city life. The beauty of the Monroe-Dudgeon neighborhood is the harmonious balance it offers: the natural environment of nearby Lake Wingra, the commercial offerings of Monroe Street, and the pleasant comfort of residential blocks, with their shade trees and quiet nights, all coexisting in peaceful proximity. If this development melded into the commercial aesthetic of Monroe Street and kept within the footprint of Rice's auto shop property, we would not object. We want the best for Tom Rice and know that that property is destined to be developed. But this proposal does so much more than that. As now proposed, the Rouse project upsets the delicate balance that makes Madison special. It serves as a tipping point for density and raises the question: at what cost to our neighborhoods?

How does it upset the balance? This is how:

This project demolishes a residential house and extends up a residential side street (in this case Knickerbocker) further than any similar commercial enterprise along Monroe Street. It thus sets a precedent of having the desirable goal of density and infill transform into an unnecessary intrusion into a residential block. The enclosed 21-car garage section of this proposed project extends to within 20 feet of our property line and takes the square footage of the development well over the 25,000 square foot standard, thus requiring a conditional use variance.

Why did the developer and architect need to acquire the house, tear it down, put a driveway and garage on our residential street, and design a building that exceeds the square footage standards? BECAUSE, THEY TOLD ME, AT A MEETING WITH NEIGHBORS, THEY COULD NOT REASONABLY AND PROFITABLY BUILD THE DEVELOPMENT AT THE STANDARD 25,000 SQUARE FEET.

As you know better than I, the zoning laws were reformed recently to make it easier for developers to work along commercial thoroughfares like Monroe. If they met certain standards, they could develop without need for Plan Commission review, and without citizen recourse. If you make it easier for developers who adhere to certain standards, should you not also now correspondingly place more of the burden on them to prove why you should allow them to go beyond your standards? Is economic necessity, as acknowledged by the developer, a strong enough reason to allow this conditional use? The ethical response is no. If the developer paid so much for the properties that he has to exceed the mass and height standards to turn a profit, that is by definition an unhealthy development process.

Let me now anticipate a few mitigating circumstances, as articulated by both developer Rouse and Alder Ellingson. They have said that exceeding the 25,000 square foot standard was an innocent mistake, that the architect did not realize that the mass of his parking garage should be counted in the total. Is ignorance an excuse? Does it excuse me from not knowing that the residential house next to mine was zoned TSS commercial because of an anachronism from the

early part of this century, and that a developer could take advantage of that zoning to build a 21-unit apartment yards from my house? I don't think ignorance is an excuse for me, and nor for him. We should all play by the same rules. The proposal exceeds the standard in mass by at least a few thousand feet, and the developer claims that he cannot profitably reduce it to meet the standard. Those are the facts.

It is also said that the only reason the proposal exceeds the three-story height standard and needs a Conditional Use variance for that is because the architect added lofts to satisfy a request from the neighbors that the developer provide the least bit of setback from the sidewalk on Knickerbocker. The architect gave us a five-foot setback, and did so by merely reshaping the project upward, like squeezing clay. Our setback request was part of a larger request that they scale back the project slightly. Their response, motivated again by economic need, was not to cut it back but to reshape it. It is disingenuous of them to blame us for the new height.

Now to the largest issue of all. What is best for the neighborhood and for the city of Madison? This is a subjective question, not an objective one, and transcends the narrow issues of how large and how high and how intrusive this project is. We have been counseled to stick only to facts, that the Plan Commission has no interest in anything but the factual situation before it. And yet this advice presents a Catch-22 for citizens because the very wording of your Conditional Use regulations is subjective, basing all of the specifics on an amorphous phrase - the public interest.

I think density along commercial corridors is in the public interest, but not at any price. It is in the public interest to limit sprawl, to promote mass transit, to keep the commerce of this city buzzing and thriving. It is not in the public interest to worship at the shrine of new urbanism without rational and subtle applications of it.

Knickerbocker, like many of the one-block streets running from Sprague to Glenway between Monroe and Gregory, is an absolute model of urban life. Four teachers on that block walk to the university or take the bus. Several others ride their bikes to work. When it comes to green transportation, no block could do better. How will the 21 unit apartment fit into the mix? One could argue that it will keep more people in town, and thus cut back on auto pollution in the larger sense, except for one glaring fact, the elephant in the room. Many of the new tenants along Monroe Street work at Epic in Verona, and commute back and forth. The developer of this project said he hoped he would find tenants who worked at Epic. They would add to the transportation problem rather than help solve it.

The garage driveway for this project is located on Knickerbocker. The developer has said many times that traffic will be negligible. If that is so, then why not locate the driveway into the garage on Monroe Street? Because traffic will NOT be negligible and will only add to the congestion on Monroe Street. We understand that, and are not arguing for the driveway and garage to be relocated, but the reality reveals the contradiction. There will be additional traffic, and much of it will be coming and going on Knickerbocker, because it is so difficult to make a left turn onto Monroe and easier to sweep up to Gregory and over to Commonwealth, not only clogging those streets but in the process making it that much more hazardous for the scores of children who live along that route. How is any of that in the public interest?

The largest question of all is how developments like this change Madison. I go back again to the delicate balance. If done at the appropriate scale, with solid neighborhood participation, they will help Madison grow and prosper. If done with no regard to neighborhoods, just in the name of development and growth, exceeding building standards out of economic necessity,

then they very well could provoke a series of unintended consequences, slowly denigrating, bit by bit, the very neighborhoods that provide the most to the city's tax base and keep the schools alive and bubbling with curious and wondrous children.

Thank you for your consideration,  
David Maraniss

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**From:** Margaret Guthneck [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 25, 2013 9:16 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** mayor@cityofmadiso.com; Ellingson, Susan; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Mixed use building at corner of Monroe St. and Knickerbocker St.

Dear Mr. Parks, Mayor Soglin and Alder Sue Ellingson,

My name is Margaret Guthneck of [REDACTED] Knickerbocker St. and I am writing regarding developer Fred Rouse's proposed mixed-use building at the site of Town & Country auto repair on Monroe St. and the adjacent home on Knickerbocker St. (which is proposed to be demolished). I have lived in my home on Knickerbocker St. since August 1975 and have a very good feel for the one block neighborhood street. This is truly a small neighborhood in every sense of the word and a great neighborhood.

I have concerns that this proposed project is too big for the street, too tall for the street and too intrusive. I am well aware that there should be development on this corner and am not against that as long as it is done in good taste and fits the small neighborhood street.

What also concerns me is that the project is larger than the new zoning laws that recently went into effect. The fact that this request exceeds the new laws just floors me. Why then have new laws if they are not going to be followed? I do not feel that the excuse that the developer needs to make a profit should come into play in such a small neighborhood as ours.

I also am concerned about the traffic and parking issues a large project like this will cause on this narrow street of one sided parking. We already have parking and snow removal problems.

I request that this proposal be thoroughly reviewed and meet all city standards before being allowed to continue. Please come visit our neighborhood and see what the impact will be as proposed.

Sincerely,

Margaret Guthneck  
[REDACTED] Knickerbocker St.  
Madison, WI. 53711

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**From:** Rob Williamson [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 8:55 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Objection to granting of permit for mixed-use development at Knickerbocker and Monroe

Tim, Alder Ellingson, Mayor Soglin,

I am simply writing to register my objection to the permitting of the large development at the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe. The proposed building is both too tall and too large for the proposed location. Such a tall building, immediately adjacent to a community of single-family residential homes is out of place and damages the character and quality of the neighborhood. Approval as-is sets a potentially dangerous precedent as well, as this will be the largest building of its kind on the north side of Monroe Street, an entirely residential area with no other buildings exceeding 2 stories anywhere along that proposed area.

While I do agree that there are many ways to improve the current unused Town & Country lot, my opinion is that the developer's proposal is simply not appropriate for that location.

At a minimum, a reduction in the height (number of stories) and in the overall square footage of the proposed development would be more appropriate to blending the extant residential neighborhood with the residential/commercial/mixed-use nature of Monroe Street. Ideally a building of only 2 or 2-1/2 stories with a more significant gap between the building and the surrounding residences would be a better fit with the neighborhood while still addressing the developer's requirements and goals.

Thank you for listening to my concerns,

Rob

Rob Williamson  
[REDACTED] Gregory Street  
Madison

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-----Original Message-----  
From: JJ Wright [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2013 6:14 AM  
To: Parks, Timothy  
Cc: district13@scityofmadison.com; Mayor  
Subject: development on Knickerbocker Street

To: Tim Parks, Planning Commission

Good Morning Mr. Parks,

I'd just like to voice my concern about the proposed development on Knickerbocker Street. The proposed development seems too large, out of scale with the surrounding area. I just around the corner on Gregory Street and am concerned about the effect the development will have on traffic and parking on our street too. I'm hoping the neighborhood and the developers can agree on a more scaled-down version of the current proposal, something that would fit better with the neighborhood.

Thanks,

Jessica Wright  
[REDACTED] Gregory Street  
Madison, WI 53711

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**From:** JZawacki@foley.com [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 11:59 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Knickerbocker Street corner development (current Town and Country site)

Dear Mr. Parks, Ms. Ellingson and Mayor Soglin:

I am writing because I live at 628 Knickerbocker Street and have since the spring of 1996. I returned to my hometown of Madison in 1996 after living away in Illinois and then Minneapolis for 12.5 years. Having attended Edgewood Grade School and High School, I was again quickly charmed by the ambiance of the neighborhood and the poetry of Knickerbocker Street -- happy to be living where I felt immediately connected and not too far from where I grew up (Vilas Park neighborhood). But recently, I have come to learn that a big, tall and intrusive development is planned for the corner of our residential street. I write to let you know that I am alarmed and dismayed by the size and scope of the proposed 3.5 story apartment complex planned for the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Streets. Taking out a residential property to do it, this building will stand out like a sore thumb on the corner. I understand the importance and the need for developing the site, but to remove a home and then erect something aesthetically unattractive and far too big for the space is not the right choice. Can this building be scaled down (possibly 3 stories only) and backed up even further on Knickerbocker to coordinate more gracefully with the existing 2-story businesses already in line on Monroe Street and to be a better fit on our lovely Knickerbocker Street? I am also worried about the additional noise, traffic and parking issues. I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Janice Zawacki  
[REDACTED] Knickerbocker Street  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Charlie Smith [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 1:47 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan  
**Subject:** mayor@cityofmadison.com

Dear Mr Parks,

I am a concerned citizen, living on Baltzell St, in relation to the neighborhood development proposed on Knickerbocker St. I believe that the application for a conditional use permit by developer Fred Rouse should be denied. There is a reason that the zoning laws call for no more than 25 thousand square feet. There is a reason that anything exceeding three stories also requires a conditional use permit. I believe that this would be very intrusive, not only to people on Knickerbocker, but to our neighborhood as a whole. Please deny this conditional use permit.

Sincerely,

Charles and Rosemary Smith  
[REDACTED] Baltzell St.  
Madison, WI 53711

Phone 608 [REDACTED]

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**From:** Shawn Schey [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 4:44 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Proposed development at Town & Country site on Knickerbocker

Dear Plan Commission members, Alder Sue Ellingson, and Mayor Soglin:

I am a member of the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association Council where I serve as a representative to the Edgewood-Neighborhood Liaison Committee, a member of the Zoning Committee, and Chair of the Friends of the Park & Pleasure Drive Committee. I am writing in regard to the proposed development at the Town & Country site on Knickerbocker & Monroe streets that will be up for approval before the Plan Commission on July 8th.

I have some concerns about this development, and am hoping that the Plan Commission can postpone approval on July 8th so that outstanding issues can be addressed. My concerns are as follows:

1) The new zoning laws call for 25,000 sq. ft. projects on Monroe Street. As I understand it, this one exceeds the limit by nearly 4,000 sq. ft.

2) This is a building that will generate traffic. As efforts have been made to keep Monroe Street, the arterial, a smoothly-functioning street so as to deter traffic from resorting to use of the residential sidestreets, situating the ingress and egress to this building onto Knickerbocker is counter to that. It will undercut the quality of life for the residents of Knickerbocker and Gregory streets as drivers attempt to bypass re-entry to Monroe Street from Knickerbocker, and travel north up Knickerbocker instead.

3) As I understand, the developer has not acknowledged and/or addressed the following concerns of immediate neighbors:

- a) light levels at rear of building, in lobby and on Knickerbocker side
- b) placement of compressors and air conditioning units, and sound-baffling measures to control noisy droning

While I welcome in-fill development, and am a fan of architect Randy Bruce's work, this particular proposal is not ready for the green light. I hope all of you will take the above into account when considering granting approval on July 8th.

Thank you ---

Shawn Schey  
[REDACTED] Woodrow Street

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**From:** Jane Dymond [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 5:03 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** No on the huge development at Monroe and Knickerbocker

Dear Mr. Parks,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the proposal by Fred Rouse for a 3 1/2 story, mixed-use building at the site of Town & Country auto repair and an adjacent home on Knickerbocker Street.

Why is this moving forward so quickly with so little opportunity for feedback from the neighbors?

The building is too big, too tall, and certainly too intrusive.

Please let the wonderful Monroe Street neighborhoods continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

-Jane Dymond  
[REDACTED] East Wilson Street, # [REDACTED]  
Madison, WI 53703

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**From:** Funk, Brandi [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 5:44 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; Brandi Funk  
**Subject:** Madison Plan Commission: Monroe-Knickerbocker proposal

Hello Tim,

My name is Brandi Funk and I live at [REDACTED] Knickerbocker St. I'm a single mom with two young daughters, ages 8 and 11, and we have lived on Knickerbocker for just over 7 years. I'm writing you today because I believe that the proposed mixed-use building by developer Fred Rouse is NOT the right fit for our block/neighborhood. I am someone who believes that most change, when done positively and thoughtfully, is a good thing. The fact that this structure will encroach onto the actual residential area of the block and will only be able to happen profitably if a happily-occupied, cute bungalow home is demolished, seems unreasonable. The commercial lot of Town and Country is a fine space and many developers would be happy to put up a mixed-use building there, and I have no problem with that.

Part of why I enjoy living on Knickerbocker is the action/stores/restaurants/bustle on Monroe Street. BUT I DO NOT WANT THAT ON KNICKERBOCKER STREET. The fact that so many residents on and around Knickerbocker are upset about this proposal and are not supporting it says something, and bottom line, the proposed structure by Rouse/Bruce doesn't meet the new zoning code limits, it exceeds it. That is not ok nor does it make sense to me, especially when there are so many other spots for the same/similar building on the West side of Madison.

Mr. Rouse needs to make a profit, developing and managing properties is his career, I get that. But Knickerbocker Street is OUR HOME, our cozy community within a well-loved city that we all cherish, and his structure will challenge how we live EVERY DAY and will hinder the ways in which we raise our children. I love living in Madison for so many reasons, mostly because it is a town where fairness and equality are heard, where we teach respect/offer service/feel connected, where a safe and honored family-vibe strongly exists, where people's compassionate beliefs, values and priorities are welcomed and regarded. Madisonians are practical and proud, let's please keep it that way.

Thank you so much for your time.

Take care;

Brandi Funk

[REDACTED] Knickerbocker St.  
[REDACTED]

**Brandi Funk**

Coordinator, Major and Planned Giving

Wisconsin Public Radio  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[www.wpr.org](http://www.wpr.org)



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**From:** Patty Haeger [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 7:09 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; [REDACTED]@cityofmadison.org  
**Subject:** Proposed development: Knickerbocker and Monroe

Mr. Parks,

I am a resident of the Dudgeon Monroe neighborhood. I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed mixed-use building to be located at the corner of Monroe Street and Knickerbocker (2620 Monroe and 665 Knickerbocker).

I think the proposed building is *too big* (27,000 square feet – though the applicable zoning code specifies maximum square footage of 25,000), and *too tall* (again per the zoning code, maximum height is 3 stories; this building is to be 3½ stories). Its construction also requires *the demolition of a residential property*, which I think it is a dangerous and disturbing precedent for our neighborhood and for the City of Madison.

But, the thing that disturbs me most is the fact that residents of the proposed development will enter and exit on Knickerbocker, rather than on Monroe Street. I think this is unwise and dangerous. Knickerbocker is a residential street, a family neighborhood; children are always out and about. I do not know the mix of residents on Knickerbocker, but of the 28 homes on Crandall, five homes have children and five homes have grandparents (whose grandchildren visit frequently). I am concerned about the safety of the children on Knickerbocker.

Thank you very much,

Patricia A. Haeger, [REDACTED] Crandall Street

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**From:** Judy Sidran [mailto: [REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 8:22 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** district13@cityofmadison.com; Mayor  
**Subject:** Fwd: Maranis doc

June 26, 2013

Dear Officials,

We are writing in regard to the proposed development at the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Streets.

Please consider the impact – environmental, aesthetic and emotional – that this proposed development would have if allowed to go through as is.

The designs indicate the new apartment building is hugely out of proportion for the size of the lot, encroaching on the quiet residential neighborhood, cluttering up an already busy traffic area with more cars and noise, and showing little regard for the lifestyle of the community.

We are not opposed to development, but an oversized apartment building feels like an inappropriate use of this space.

Thank you for your consideration.

Judy Sidran

Ben Sidran

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**From:** Peppin Karras [redacted]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 9:41 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; [redacted]@mna.org  
**Subject:** in support of Monroe-Knickbocker proposal

Hello,

We are neighbors of the Parman building. After the parking issues were mostly resolved, we've been happy with the project. We are pleased to have more infill in the neighborhood, including a new restaurant. Also, apartments offer more affordable housing in our somewhat spendy neighborhood potentially increasing the diversity of our mostly white and upper middle class neighborhood. We love our neighborhood, and think more people should have the opportunity to live here. The Parman project has been mostly good for us, so we are writing in support of the new project on Monroe-Knickerbocker.

Sincerely,  
Peppin Karras & Maureen Donahoe  
[redacted] Cross Street

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**From:** Amanda Solberg [mailto:[redacted]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 10:54 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** PLAN COMMISSION LETTER RE: PROPOSED PROJECT AT 2620 MONROE ST. AND 665 KNICKERBOCKER ST

To: Madison Plan Commission

I live at [REDACTED] Knickerbocker St. As a neighbor who will be directly affected by the proposed mixed-use development on the corner of Monroe St. and Knickerbocker St, I submit the following concerns.

Let me begin by saying that I am not opposed to redevelopment of the Town and Country property (2620 Monroe St.) and would feel more comfortable if the footprint could be contained to that property alone. I have significant reservations about Mr. Rouse's proposed project. My two main concerns include the building size-extending across 2 separate properties, projecting almost 4 stories- and consequent parking complications. I am also disheartened by the thought of losing a residential home on our street.

I attended the April 18th public meeting at Wingra School and received information about the new zoning code. I understand the City desires to more clearly direct development by outlining very specific criteria for developers. However, the major drawback of this new code seems to be severe limitations, exclusions even, on neighborhood input. I left this meeting with the impression that Mr. Rouse's proposal met all zoning criteria, that a demolition permit would be easily granted, and the development would proceed regardless of neighborhood concerns.

The Monroe St. Neighborhood Plan does not include the home at 665 Knickerbocker as part of the redevelopment zone, regardless of its TSS designation. Despite learning about the One-House-In explanation, (the first house behind the commercial property is also designated commercial), I am troubled by this anomaly; only a handful of properties along the Monroe St. corridor follow this pattern. In fact, the property directly across the street at 664 Knickerbocker is zoned residential. Those of us at the April meeting were told that the Neighborhood Plan was merely a "suggestion" for redevelopment, having no legally binding influence on future development. Significant time and effort were invested in creating the Neighborhood Plan document. It's disturbing to think that the document would lack influence in actual decision-making situations. If, indeed, the Neighborhood Plan has such little bearing, why would Mr. Bruce reference that this project would "implement a portion of the Monroe Street Commercial District Plan" in his submission to the Plan Commission? Mr. Bruce applies the Neighborhood Plan rather liberally considering it distinguishes for redevelopment only one of the two properties involved in this project.

We live within an unique section of Monroe St. in that the commercial buildings are all 1-2 stories in height. Although the Wingra Shores development extends above the other existing structures, it is not situated directly on Monroe St. and is not surrounded by residential homes. At the April meeting, we were told we cannot expect Mr. Rouse's development to align with the setbacks and sizes of the current structures on the Monroe St./Knickerbocker St. corner because the existing buildings could be demolished and redeveloped into larger structures that "hold the corner". I simply cannot accept this as justification to disregard context by inserting a 3 1/2 story building that encroaches back into a residential street. Our reference point for building size AT THIS TIME is 1-2 floors in height.

The parking associated with this project remains problematic. I do not consider 21 parking spaces-enough for 1 spot per apartment-to be a generous number, especially when one considers 6 of the spaces will be designated for customers of the commercial space. In April we were told that the building's location will promote greater use of mass transit services and encourage biking on nearby paths; therefore reducing or eliminating car traffic. Although a wonderful theory, I find the idea to be unrealistic in practice. My husband bikes to work, but we still own 2 cars. Mr. Rouse indicated that he would be including a parking space with the rent for each apartment. Only 15 spaces are located within the enclosed parking area so the 6 commercial spaces will need to serve as dual purpose spots. There will most certainly be restrictions on when tenants can access those spaces (one of which will be designated for handicapped customers), which will almost certainly guarantee

spillover onto the street. Our street already serves as daily parking for employees of other nearby businesses.

I have been involved in the negotiations with Mr. Rouse and Mr. Bruce (architect) since a group of neighbors first met with them on May 2nd. Relying on the assumption that Mr. Rouse needed only a demolition permit to continue his project, I felt inclined to work with him to gain as many concessions as possible for our neighborhood. Mr. Bruce's revised plans increased Knickerbocker St. setback and reworked the layout of outdoor terraces. In the process of creating the 5-foot setback from Knickerbocker St., the redesign added a loft (essentially a 4th story) in the center of the building. Instead of eliminating a portion of square footage from the building, this new plan allowed Mr. Rouse to maintain and possibly even increase the overall building mass. The balcony redesign converted large roof terraces accessible to a limited number of tenants into personal balconies for each apartment. Mr. Bruce's emphasis that the loft will be unseen from Monroe St. provides little reassurance to me. The loft will surely be visible to my family (located 5 lots up the street on the opposite side) and each home further up the block. Since learning that Mr. Rouse and Mr. Bruce have submitted a request for 2 conditional use permits (for size and height), I have to question how the size overage could have initially been overlooked. It seems likely that Mr. Rouse had communicated with City officials prior to the public meeting on April 18; after all, we were led to believe the project fit perfectly within the zoning code at that time. It seems like someone should have been responsible for double-checking the square footage calculations. All of us in attendance at that public meeting were presented with inaccurate information and misled to believe we had no negotiating power in this proposed project.

Since negotiations with Mr. Rouse and Mr. Bruce have broken down, I am inclined to reiterate my initial viewpoint that the proposed development is too large for our neighborhood. I feel strongly that the Plan Commission should uphold the criteria of the zoning code and deny the conditional use permits for this project. If the City spent years creating this new zoning code with parameters for height and mass, why should the rules be disregarded simply because the developer overpaid for the property?

Thank you for your consideration,  
Amanda Solberg

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-----Original Message-----

From: Bret [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2013 10:59 PM  
To: Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
Subject: Conditional Use Permit - Town and Country

I am writing to express my opposition to the conditional use permit for the Town and Country redevelopment. The encroachment of the proposed development into the neighborhood concerns me the most with the Town and Country+665 Knickerbocker proposal. It not only rids the block of a single family home, it pushes the commercial/multi-use space further back into the neighborhood. Furthermore, the combination of these two parcels allow for a larger footprint.

In comparison to Parmen Place, this development will house more tenants with 21 units (vs 18). Geographically, Parmen Place has a road that runs behind the rear which provides some additional separation between it and the neighborhood. It also has a fair amount of open/undeveloped land which buffers it from the house

it sits next to, which helps ease the transition to the degree it can. The new development pretty much butts up against a house and will be a much tighter and dramatic fit given its size.

While I've not received a clear indication of what bearing the Monroe Street Business Plan holds, I see the developer use it to make his case, so I will as well. The Monroe Street Business Plan does not indicate utilizing the space of the house behind Town and Country as part of the effort for redevelopment. It defines an area from Knickerbocker to Sprague comprised of only the lots on Monroe St. Just as the plan defines a suggested maximum building height, the footprint also affects the size of a building and may be defined for a reason (e.g. to keep buildings in proportion).

I am not against development of the area. Had the proposal been contained to just Town and Country, the scale of the project would have been smaller, due to the land limiting factor, thus lowering the impact of factors like traffic, building intrusiveness, parking, etc., and a single family home would have remained part of the neighborhood. From my point of view as a neighbor, "a better fit". Adding roughly a third more land to develop upon makes it easier to build and exceed the 25,000 square foot building limit, without the need to build beyond the maximum story requirement. While a bigger building could stand in the space, which is what is currently being proposed, that does not mean it should. I think it's reasonable to cap it at the zoning code maximum limit of 25,000 square foot, as it still provides ample area, helps strike better balance with the surrounding neighborhood homes and small businesses, and still be, maybe not an excellent investment for the developer, but a great one. I understand infill is an important priority, with which I agree, and I hope that neighborhood preservation and the value of neighborhoods are equally important priorities as well.

Bret

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**From:** Asligul Gocmen [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 11:20 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Knickerbocker Development

Dear Mr. Parks, Alderperson Ellingson, and Mayor Soglin,

I am a concerned resident of Sprague Street. I am a planning professor, one who has practiced planning in a county planning department before pursuing an academic career. And, I am an urbanite, having grown up in a city of 3 million people and one who loves every aspect of urban life. I promote infill development and density with all my heart; yet, I believe the proposed Knickerbocker development is not the way to go.

I am sure you will hear different perspectives from other residents in the neighborhood, and I believe those living in closer proximity to the development will have a lot more to say than I do. Here, I want to highlight two issues.

First, the proposed development is going to increase the traffic on already-packed Monroe Street, but more importantly it will increase the safety concerns at the Monroe – Knickerbocker intersection as well as on Knickerbocker. It is essentially going to add almost as many housing units to the block as the block currently has; thus, the development will increase the block's traffic significantly. It is a quiet block with most households made of families with school-age kids. And the kids often play on the sidewalks. Locating the parking garage on this quiet block is certainly going to cause safety concerns. Similarly, it will create more chaos on the Knickerbocker-Monroe intersection. When eight months pregnant, I was almost run over by a speeding car that changed lanes behind couple stopped cars. Fortunately, another pedestrian saw the car speeding, came running behind me and pushed me to the sidewalk. I was saved at the last moment. As I am sure you are aware, there has been a recent accident involving a pedestrian (and I am told of other incidences). I understand that there is no plan to calm traffic with this proposal, and that would be a mistake.

Second, the proposed development is out of context. While I understand that its proposed height is within the Monroe Street commercial plan limits, it is going to be much taller than anything around it. It does not offer a good experience for the pedestrian, especially given that the sidewalk is rather a narrow sidewalk for such a tall structure and there is no setback. Consider State Street—a beloved place by Madisonians—where mixed use development (mostly 3 stories) are accompanied by wide sidewalks giving the pedestrian a much different experience than this proposed development would. Walk around the neighborhood and experience to what extent certain structures fit or don't fit in with the rest of the neighborhood and what experience they provide for the resident. The commercial property, housing a dentist office and others, directly across from the proposed development on Knickerbocker, does not provide a good experience for the pedestrian even though it is much more to the human scale than is the proposed development. Cross Monroe and walk the block between Michael's and Victor Allen's. The State Farm office, built very recently and diagonal from the proposed development, fits in with the rest of the block architecturally and height-wise. Would you be able to call all recent Monroe Street infill developments successful for the experience of the neighbors and pedestrians apart from all other factors? Perhaps the height of the proposed Knickerbocker development would not be as big of an issue if it was not architecturally unattractive as well.

Apart from these concerns, I am troubled how much the proposed structure imposes on the close-by properties and neighbors. From the plan, it looks like the immediate residents will lose all the openness around their property. I am also troubled to hear, at a neighborhood discussion, how unresponsive the developer has been to resident questions and concerns, and to find out that he has moved forward with some steps without addressing concerns and without getting back to the residents. Likewise, I am troubled to learn that the developer's square footage calculations are different from those of lawyers hired by immediate residents.

I am hopeful that you will consider resident as well as neighborhood business perspectives on this development and ask for revisions to the proposal, and that I and my UW planning colleagues will be able to point to this example and say that public participation in the planning process—an emphasis in our planning curriculum—does make a difference.

Sincerely,

Asli Gocmen

on behalf of Gocmen – LeBay family, [REDACTED] Sprague

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**From:** Kathryn Mittelstadt [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 11:57 PM  
**To:** Mayor; Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan  
**Cc:** David Williamson Shaffer  
**Subject:** Knickerbocker Development

Dear Mayor Soglin, Alder Sue Ellingson and Madison Plan Commission Members;

I am writing to express concern regarding the proposed 3 1/2-story, mixed-use building at the site of Town & Country auto repair and an adjacent home on Knickerbocker Street as proposed by Developer Fred Rouse.

As a homeowner at 644 Knickerbocker, I appreciate the unique balance that the Monroe Street corridor strikes as it incorporates residential and commercial properties with the recreational and environmental elements of Lake Wingra and the Arboretum.

Since Fred Rouse and architect Randy Bruce first presented plans to the neighborhood on April 18, my neighbors and myself have been committed to being informed and involved stakeholders in the concepts of this development. I have tremendous respect for the manner in which this neighborhood has looked inclusively at the impacts of this development on our own block and neighborhood as residents, and beyond that to the greater impacts on traffic, commerce, the environment and safety. Given the precedent that this proposal sets for the future of the Monroe Street corridor, I ask and expect that the Plan Commission and relevant stakeholders in the City of Madison also proceed with the same discretion and analysis.


In less than 5 weeks I have seen this project move from an initial presentation and invitation from the developer for discussion of a plan we were told was consistent with zoning to the filing of a conditional use application for project approval without final input from key neighborhood representatives. Given the timeline, and the fact that to my understanding this is the first proposal to come forward under new zoning, I find it hard to imagine that the impacts of granting a conditional use application for a project that is not consistent with the longstanding Dungeon Monroe Neighborhood Plan endorsed by the City of Madison and which exceeds the standards of the new zoning can be adequately considered. The potential consequences are too great for your Plan Commission to evaluate the application without full consideration of the greater context and impact of the approval of such a development.

I may be partial, but this neighborhood has a very special place in the landscape that makes Madison a great place to live. That was already being compromised with the plan to demolish a 100-year-old historical bungalow that is the type of home that defines this neighborhood. But, to allow that, and then replace it with a development of physical size that exceeds zoning and all adjacent structures, creates new parking, traffic and safety concerns, and does not adequately address environmental impacts, does not stand to improve this neighborhood. Rather, it would set a precedent for development that is detrimental to the long-term sustainability of this community and to the residents of Madison who live within it, travel through it for commuting purposes, wish to support its local businesses and who enjoy the natural resources that are part of it.

I ask you to decline the conditional use application before you at this time and challenge the Plan Commission as well as this or future developers and architects to envision development that better aligns with and protects the neighborhood values of Madison's residents.

Sincerely,

Kate Mittelstadt

 Knickerbocker

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**From:** Peter Patau [redacted]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2013 11:38 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; councilmail@cityofmadison.com  
**Subject:** Opposing Fred Rouse development at Monroe and Knickerbocker

I'm writing to oppose the conditional use application for this project as currently planned. It's too big and too tall for this stretch of Monroe Street with its 2-story neighborhood character. I also am concerned about the intrusion into the side street, Knickerbocker, with the planned demolition of an adjacent home.


Urban infilling, properly done, is a great idea. But this project is not properly done. It sets a precedent that threatens to permanently alter the nature of one of Madison's most livable neighborhoods.

Thank you,

Peter Patau

 Terry Place  
Madison, WI   


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**From:** Chris Carlson-Dakes [redacted]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2013 12:15 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor; mna.org  
**Subject:** Re: Monroe-Knickerbocker proposal

Hello,

I am writing to express my opposition to the development planned for Monroe-Knickerbocker. I have been a resident of this neighborhood for more than 20 years and have seen very thoughtful,



planned, and collaborative development. This proposal does not seem to be any of the above.

I'm not opposed to development - it's what keeps our city thriving. I am, however, opposed to development that has this level of significant concerns that do not seem to be fully considered.

Thank you,

Chris Carlson-Dakes

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**From:** Priscilla Arsove [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2013 2:36 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Mayor; Ellingson, Susan  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** COMMENTS ON FRED ROUSE DEVELOPMENT ON KNICKERBOCKER AND MONROE

To Madison Plan Commission, Mayor Paul Soglin and Alder Sue Ellingson:

I am writing to strongly oppose the development of a multi-use apartment building at the site of the Town and Country gas station and bungalow at 665 Knickerbocker Street.

I am a 20+ year resident of Knickerbocker who has been active in neighborhood planning issues as a past president of the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association and as a member of the city-wide R2 Zoning Committee some years ago. Literally and figuratively, our neighborhood landscape has changed significantly over this time, never at a more rapid pace than over the past few years. In scarcely more one year this narrow neighborhood has absorbed nearly 100 new dwelling units (including the second phase of Wingra Shores).

There are inevitable tensions as the City's rational drive to create higher-density development intersects with its equally important interest in preserving the character, livability and values of traditional neighborhoods. This is a difficult intersection, to be sure, making it all the more incumbent on City planners to take utmost care to avoid a collision. I believe the proposed development on Knickerbocker Street would cause exactly this kind of collision, resulting in significant casualties to our neighborhood.

- It would raze a charming bungalow that's been an integral part of the street for nearly 100 years, not as a student rental or any other kind of transient housing.
- At 3 ½ stories and more than 28,000 SF the building does not respect the existing neighborhood character and context, goals that are widely cited in the Monroe Street Commercial Plan. The building is stunningly out of scale with the residential street onto which it intrudes -- a far deeper intrusion onto a residential street than any Monroe Street development thus far.


- The building includes a 21-car parking garage that would enter/exit through a double-width driveway on Knickerbocker, a one-block street that is home to more than 20 children. Many children would regularly cross that driveway.
- The building includes multiple large balconies that would reduce the visual and acoustic privacy of those living nearby.
- The corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Street is already fraught with dangerous traffic, parking and pedestrian issues that would only be compounded by a development of this scale. Nearby small businesses, which are an important part of the vitality and character of our neighborhood, depend on the availability of nearby street parking and rightfully fear this development will diminish their business.

It is, of course, a fact that bungalow at 665 Knickerbocker Street is zoned commercial, an artifact of the City's first zoning code in 1923 that was developed before most homes on the street existed and that has simply been carried forward in each major zoning code rewrite since. This does not mean that this zoning reflects good public policy today. It is also a fact that the proposed Rouse development exceeds the new zoning code standards, even *with* the adjoining house lot, so you, our policymakers, now have a choice. That choice must consider the uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood, recommendations in adopted plans, the impact on surrounding properties, and the public interest in exceeding the height limits.

The above comments and attachments to this e-mail speak to a number of these considerations. With regard to public interest, what is most in the public interest is to ensure that development is accomplished in a way that does not adversely impact neighborhood properties and quality of life – in other words, to ensure that every development effectively navigates that difficult intersection with existing neighborhoods. Most notably in its destruction of a home, but in many other ways as well, the proposed Rouse development does diminish neighborhood properties and quality of life. It is not the right development to be sited deep within a neighborhood of one-block residential streets.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Arsove

 Knickerbocker Street

Attachments:

- 1) Neighborhood context: existing and proposed Knickerbocker streetscape
- 2) "Commonwealth Development zone" in the Monroe Street Commercial Plan, which *excludes* the first-in TSS-zoned homes on Knickerbocker and Sprague
- 3) Parking and related quality of life impacts of the Parman Place development

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----- Original Message -----

Subject: Conditional Use permit for Monroe/Knickerbocker Street Development

From: Amy Williamson <[REDACTED]>

To: "Fruhling, William" <WFruhling@cityofmadison.com>

CC:

Dear Mr. Fruhling:

I'm writing to declare my opposition to the proposed conditional use permit for the Rouse development at 2620 Monroe/665 Knickerbocker.

I have lived at [REDACTED] Knickerbocker Street for the last 13 years. While born and raised in Madison, I left at the age of 18. I returned in 2001 with my husband and growing family, and bought this house on Knickerbocker Street. We were attracted to this neighborhood by the family-friendly streets bordering the commercial/creative districts of Monroe Street. We have raised our two girls on this street, and are very close to our neighbors. We're also loyal customers of businesses up and down Monroe Street.

While sad to lose Tom Rice (owner of 2620 Monroe service station) as a neighbor, we support infill in that property. I support infill for its positive impact on livable cities, less traffic, and reduction in car traffic.

But what developer Fred Rouse has proposed for the space is too big, too tall and out of context with the rest of the neighborhood, and creates safety concerns.

My paramount concern is that the proposed development is listed at 27,500 square feet, while the new zoning laws call for no more than 25,000 square feet. Zoning codes are created with a vision and a plan consistent with neighborhood context. I can conceive of no argument for creating a larger building other than the developer's financial bottom line. The taxpayers and residents of Madison should not be asked to bear the costs of a larger building (in terms of scale, traffic, parking, safety) in to support a private business.

The development is 3 1/2 stories tall, much taller than the two-story buildings along this section of Monroe Street and the adjacent homes on Knickerbocker Street.

The development proposes demolition of lovely, century-old bungalow at 665 Knickerbocker. The project is the first of its kind on Monroe Street that reaches that far onto a residential block. The bungalow will be replaced by a 21-car parking garage and driveway exiting onto our residential street. The proposed development upsets the balance between the commercial corridor along Monroe Street and the residential blocks of our adjoining neighborhoods.

Finally, I am extremely concerned about safety. A 21-unit building with commercial space will bring a considerable increase in car traffic to our residential street. Only a few parking spaces are allotted for commercial use. Extra car traffic in and out of a parking garage on a residential street presents safety concerns for residents, especially the children who play outside on our block in all weather and in all seasons. This at an intersection (Monroe & Knickerbocker) where there have been increasing car vs. pedestrian incidents. A smaller building consistent with the neighborhood would create less traffic.

It is my hope that the neighborhood can work with the developer to design, build and welcome a project that is less big, less tall and more consistent with our neighborhood. I urge you not to grant the conditional use permit for this project.

Thank you -

Amy Williamson  
[REDACTED] Knickerbocker Street

Madison  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Paula Hartman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2013 10:36 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** PLAN COMMISSION LETTER RE: PROPOSED PROJECT AT 2620 MONROE ST. AND 665 KNICKERBOCKER ST

To the Madison Plan Commission:

We live at [REDACTED] Knickerbocker St. and own the lot at [REDACTED] Knickerbocker St. directly across the street from the proposed mixed-use development on the corner of Monroe St. and Knickerbocker St.

We are not opposed to redevelopment of the Town and Country property (2620 Monroe St.) and would feel more comfortable if the footprint could be contained to that property alone. We have significant concerns about Mr. Rouse's proposed project. They are as follows:

1. The greatest impact to our quality of life will be the noise that will come from the balconies, open air space, and parking that will come from the building. Not only will there be the noise from the people in the apartemnts and their guests being projected over the street and at our house, but the noise from the building itself (garage doors opening and closing, heating and cooling, trash pick up, etc.) will directly negatively impact our quality of life, and we anticipate numerous noise complaints as a result. As people who live in an older home, we rely on open windows to cool our home in the summer. Adding a business that may operate outside of business hours and adding numerous spaces for outdoor gatherings will impact our quality of life by impacting our ability to sleep. Eliminating balconies, the open air space, requiring tenants who operate within business hours, and reducing the footprint of the building would all lessen the noise impact on us and our neighbors.

2. We are concerned about parking. As it is, living by the Knickerbocker Place commercial buildings across the street, we have cars parked up the block most days, and the addition of 21 new apartments and a business (or two!) without adequate parking concerns us not just for the space left on the streets, but also for the often unsafe conditions that occur when cars park too close to driveways to allow residents to safely back out into the street. If even half of the 21 units have two vehicles, that introduces 10 more cars on our block and surrounding areas. This is not sustainable and these concerns have not been adequately addressed by the developer.

3. Additionally, the building will directly affect our quality of life by shading our house and yard from the morning sun. As avid gardeners, we depend on the sun and bought our

house specifically for the amount of sunlight it has. This development will directly impact our quality of life for the worse.

The proposed development is too big, too tall, contains space for too many people, and is incongruent with the character and pace of our neighborhood. Please do not allow this precedent to be set for the rest of Monroe Street.

Sincerely,  
James and Paula Bigham

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-----Original Message-----

From: Linda Maraniss [REDACTED]  
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2013 2:54 PM  
To: Parks, Timothy  
Cc: Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
Subject: Rouse idea for 21 unit apartments not compatible with this Neighborhood

Dear Mr. Parks, Alder Ellingson, and Mayor Soglin,

I am writing to oppose the idea of building a 21 unit apartment building with a 2,285 square foot commercial space at the corner of Monroe and Knickerbocker and into the block of a residential street of houses, including the tear down of a residential home at 665 Knickerbocker. Mr. Fred Rouse is a developer interested in this idea.

At a meeting with several neighbors on June 26, Mr. Rouse explained that he will need 20 or 21 apartments and a commercial space to make a profit, and he would like a place on the first floor "that serves wine and beer." He told us that this will be "an asset" to our neighborhood. I do not see this building as an asset at all due to the noise that will fill our neighborhood too early in the day and too late at night.

Just like a wrong call at a Brewers game, allowing this 28,800 square foot, three and one half floor building to creep up Knickerbocker Street is a wrong call not only for the city and its urban planning infill strategy, but a wrong call for the neighbors who live close to this area, and enjoy the quiet, tree filled residential streets.

I say quiet streets as a plus, because after talking with people who live near the new Gates and Brovi bar and restaurant on the first floor of the new PARMAN's apartment on Monroe Street we know that noise, increased traffic and late hours have disrupted the quiet neighborhood for many local home owners. Do not make the mistake again with our neighborhood and a commercial space that could end up serving wine and beer.

Please note that along a few blocks of Monroe Street we have beer and wine offered at the Laurel Tavern, and they have parking, beer and wine at Jac's and they have parking behind the building. We have wine and beer served at Bluephies, and they have parking. And Gates and Brovi is open to midnight most

nights and to one a.m Fridays and Saturdays, which has added to the misery for neighbors when noisy patrons leave the bar so late at night to get into their cars. Parking is difficult in this residential area now, and the restaurant has a map at the door of the building that shows local streets to suggest " free" places to park in front of private homes, where at night people are trying to sleep.

Please do not make a mistake again and see a family, kid friendly neighborhood harmed by a structure that is too big for the lot, and that does not meet the standards for approval for a conditional use permit.

Having so many studio apartments and one bedroom apartments will lead to frequent move in and move out activities. Moving trucks, cars for the commercial space, beer trucks, food trucks will have no place to park except on Knickerbocker and the only entrance and exit for the proposed building is on that residential street, not on the commercial street. Please do not make the wrong call on this idea to build such a large, tall building.

This over-sized building will have a negative impact on a very nice urban neighborhood . Thankfully, after a presentation by the architect and developer on June 4 at Wingra school before the Dudgeon Monroe Neighborhood Council, the plans were so out of character for this area that five members of the DMNA wrote to the Plan Commission asking that you oppose the granting of the conditional use permit.

Thank you for your time and study of this issue, Linda Maraniss, [REDACTED]  
Knickerbocker Street.

Sent from my [REDACTED]

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June 28, 2013

Please see attached in PDF and also copied below a letter for the Planning Commission regarding the proposal to redevelop the Town and Country property at 2620 Monroe Street and the house at 665 Knickerbocker Street that is pending before the Commission for the July 8 meeting.

I will be planning to speak at the meeting if I am allowed.

Thank you for your work on this proposal,

David Williamson Shaffer

**[Staff note: Mr. Williamson Shaffer's 8-page comments are attached]**

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**From:** Maria Yelle [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 28, 2013 7:46 PM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy  
**Subject:** district13@cityofmadison.com, mayor@cityofmadison.com

Dear Mr. Parks,

We are writing in regards to the proposed development of a 3 1/2 story mixed-use building to be built on the corner of Monroe Street and Knickerbocker Street. We are residents in the Knickerbocker neighborhood.

It is with great concern that we learned that this project was not within the zoning standards as we were told during a neighborhood meeting on April 18th. We have learned that the developer no longer continues to negotiate with the neighborhood committee with regards to concerns the neighborhood has, such as an increase in traffic, parking spaces, and the homes and families that will be immediately affected by this development.

All we are requesting from Mr. Rouse is that he considers a building that sets an example, that will respect both the commercial and the residential transition on this corner. This building will set the example of how commercial and residential communities can co-exist together in future developments on Monroe Street. The recent lack of negotiations with the neighborhood committee is of great concern, specifically in that this building is too big, too tall, and intrudes on the neighborhood where families of all ages, and our young children live and play. The neighborhood of Knickerbocker is our home. We request that Mr. Rouse hear the concerns and considers what will enhance the transition from residential to commercial as he plans this building. Please consider to work in partnership with the neighborhood committee.

We believe in Madison and the importance of increase commercial success on Monroe Street that will benefit all, but we just request that future developers work alongside with the residents, who are the families that live here. We thank you for your time and opportunity to voice our concerns.

Sincerely,

Maria & Daniel Yelle  
[REDACTED] Knickerbocker Street

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**From:** Bonnie Jevne [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 28, 2013 10:02 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]@dmna.org; Parks, Timothy; Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
**Subject:** Knickerbocker St at Monroe St. redevelopment plan

To whom it may concern:

We have lived in the Dudgeon-Monroe neighborhood since 1981. Concerning the new development taking place on the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe St., though we are not opposed to new development, we feel the current plan does not reflect the goals of the 2007 Monroe Street

Commercial Plan. The development process needs to slow down, the developer needs to meet with the neighborhood, and the design needs to be altered to conform with the plan guidelines. The city should not provide a conditional use permit to allow the building to increase in height and mass. The current proposed building does not reflect the design standards listed below:

#3. The uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for purposes already established will not be substantially impaired or diminished in any foreseeable manner.

#12. When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in the district, the Plan Commission shall consider recommendations in adopted plans; the impact on surrounding properties, including height, mass, orientation, shadows and view; architectural quality and amenities; the relationship of the proposed building(s) with adjoining streets, alleys, and public rights of way; and the public interest in exceeding the height limits.

For the record we are opposed to this development as currently planned and designed.

Thank you,

Bonnie Jevne  
[REDACTED] Baltzell Street  
Madison, WI [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Fiona McTavish [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 01, 2013 8:45 AM  
**To:** Parks, Timothy; [REDACTED]; Ellingson, Susan  
**Subject:** Rouse development on Town & Country Site

I am writing in opposition of the proposed development at the Town and Country Site (on Monroe St). As a long time resident on Woodrow St, I have experienced the development of this neighborhood. Some has been extremely beneficial to the health of the neighborhood, other development hasn't been. I am afraid I think this is in the not good for the neighborhood category.

What was a nice friendly neighborhood in now becoming a corridor of large 3 and 4 story buildings. The building proposed is out of proportion to feel of the neighborhood - not only for the homes that will be next to it, but for the entire feel of the street. The height and the size of the building -- butted against a neighborhood is simply too massive.

Lastly, Monroe St is already overly congested. In the mornings, evenings and anytime there is an event at Camp Randall - Monroe St comes to a standstill. The side streets (such as Woodrow - where I live) are almost impossible to get out of. The addition of the Gates and Brovi building on lower Monroe St has simply added more strain on the traffic situation on Monroe St. I can't believe that a building of the size proposed will do anything but add to the problem (especially with commercial space on the bottom).

I am strongly opposed to this development and hope the city will look out for the good of the neighborhood and not simply business interests!



Sincerely,

Fiona McTavish

Woodrow St

Madison, WI

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-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Erdman [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, July 02, 2013 10:54 AM  
To: Parks, Timothy  
Cc: Ellingson, Susan; Mayor  
Subject: Monroe-Knickerbocker apartment proposal

Tim Parks(Planning Commission):

I am very concerned about the proposed Fred Rouse mixed use building at the site of Town&Country and the home next door on Knickerbocker Street for the following reasons:

1. Traffic, size of building, traffic, size of building, traffic....
2. If approved, this sets a precedent for more of the same in the Monroe Street neighborhood. As a resident of Sheldon Street, I am fearful of what comes next perhaps at the Pasqual's/art center/Klinke's strip near me. Sheldon Street has long been a parking lot for businesses and a street large trucks seem to think is a good exit after deliveries even though they can sometimes not navigate through the parked cars and get stuck.
3. This neighborhood is attractive because of the charm of the little shops and that it is a residential neighborhood. Mr. Rouse's ginormous apartment building just does not fit or take into consideration the amount of traffic/parking issues it creates. When one buys a home in a residential neighborhood, the last thing expected is a huge building being built right alongside!

Thank you for your consideration,

Mary Erdman

Sheldon Street

Home owner since 1989

June 28, 2013

To the Madison Planning Commission:

I have written to you and the planning commission before on behalf of a committee of neighbors to the Town and Country property at 2620 Monroe Street and the house at 665 Knickerbocker Street.

I am now writing on my own as a citizen and resident of Madison to OPPOSE the proposal pending before the Planning Commission from Fred Rouse to demolish those properties and build a multi-story, mixed use development.

Let me start by saying briefly that neither I nor one single person whom I have talked with about this project is against development in general, or against the idea of a new mixed-use development at 2620 Monroe Street.

However, our whole neighborhood is concerned about this proposal, not only because we have specific concerns about this project. We are also concerned that as one of the first proposals to come before the Planning Commission asking for conditional use under the new Zoning Code, this project will set a terrible precedent for further development along Monroe Street and across the city. This is clearly not just a “not-in-my-back-yard” concern—unless what we mean by that is the very fabric of our city is everyone’s back yard.

*SPECIFIC REASONS FOR REJECTION OF THE CURRENT PROPOSAL*

To explain this larger concern, let me first explain why on its own specific merits **the proposed Project does not meet the standards for approval of a Conditional Use.**

In particular, Section 28.183 of the City Zoning Code says that The Plan Commission must find that ALL of the applicable standards (subsections 1 through 15 of Sec. 28.183(6)(a)) are present in the proposal, or it is supposed to deny the application.

I believe it is clear that the commission should find that at least TWO of the standards have not been met by the current proposal, but I will emphasize that the Zoning Code is clear: Failure to meet even ONE of these standards is sufficient grounds for denial of the Conditional Use application.

**STANDARD #3** states: “The uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for purposes already established will not be substantially impaired or diminished in any foreseeable manner.”

A project fails to meet this standard if there is ANY foreseeable impairment or diminishment of uses, values and enjoyment of other property.

Let me suggest several ways in which the project does not meet Standard #3:

1. Because the TSS district under which this property is zoned allows restaurants and other fairly traffic intensive uses, residents of the neighborhood—including Knickerbocker, Gregory, and other neighboring streets—residents are concerned that traffic and parking will disrupt their ability to use the street, including particularly endangering children in the neighborhood from increased traffic. This is a reasonably foreseeable impairment of the uses and enjoyment of property in the neighborhood.
2. Residents on Knickerbocker, Gregory and other neighboring streets are concerned about noise and other disruptions at hours that are potentially too early and too late for a residential district – even one that is adjacent to Monroe Street. Some of the allowed uses would include a coffee shop or a bar, which could mean increased traffic, parking, and noise very early in the morning or late into the night. This is a reasonably foreseeable diminishment of the enjoyment of property in the neighborhood.
3. The presence of a large, mixed use building will lower values of adjacent and near-adjacent properties.

Now, to be fair, Standard #3 also requires that these impairments or diminishments be “substantial”. For the current proposal there has been no traffic study conducted, nor any other impact study of which I or other residents have been made aware. We can only, then, look to similar examples and research to address whether these easily foreseeable impacts will be “substantial.”

Here I point to several pieces of evidence that are available.

First, I note that the proposed project is very similar to the recently completed Parman Place development, also build by Fred Rouse and Randy Bruce.

In terms of parking and traffic, the impact of this development on neighboring streets has been nothing short of devastating. One resident of the neighborhood wrote:

*My family and I live at 3602 Wyota Avenue, near Parman Place. We moved here 2 years ago and very specifically chose our home based on the quiet streets where we had hoped to raise our children. However, following the building of Parman Place the entire character of our neighborhood changed from a safe haven, to a crowded space that is stressful to return to whenever the restaurant is open. We went from a cozy, safe neighborhood with respectful drivers to one in the shadow of a large apartment complex. We used to walk with our young children several nights a week and chat with neighbors. It is no longer safe for us to walk in the streets near our home now because visitors to the restaurant drive aggressively, and at least occasionally are intoxicated. They park in our yards, or hurriedly park with their cars jutting out into the road. We are pulling for you and wish you more success than we had in preventing this building that stripped our neighborhood of character and truly reduced our quality of life.*

This view is far from unique. There have been a number of community meetings and efforts to mitigate the damage done to the quality of life in the surrounding neighborhood, as well as the additional traffic problems created on Monroe Street from customers of the commercial space who park cars. The proposal thus it clearly represents a substantial impact that we could reasonably foresee as a result of the current proposal.

One might suggest that the impact of this project could be different because unlike Parman Place, there are already restaurants and bars near the site on which this development is proposed. However:

1. None of the restaurants have similar proximity to existing residential property as the proposed project,
2. All of these commercial properties are located on the south side of Knickerbocker Street, so no traffic is diverted through the streets that would be impacted by the current proposal, and
3. All of these commercial properties have adequate parking for commercial tenants.

**In sum, Standard #3 has not been met because there is a clear and present danger of substantial impairment in the use and enjoyment of surrounding properties due to the proposed development.**

Additionally, there is a concern about the VALUE of adjacent properties. Specifically, consider the following street views of Knickerbocker, showing the current appearance of properties adjacent to the proposed development, and those same properties in a projected view after the development. (The projected view was prepared by the architect.)

Knickerbocker Street now:



With the proposed development:



Knothe & Bruce Architects

The views from the front yards of the houses on Knickerbocker Street are clearly diminished, which impacts both the enjoyment of these properties, and also their curb appeal.

But is this a substantial impact? For this we can turn to research. A study in 2012 by two applied economists (Elam and Stigarill, Landscape and House Appearance Impacts on the Price of Single-Family Houses) estimated what impact changes to the setting of the house had on the sale price of homes.

Their conclusion of this study was that changes in the setting of the house could account for 5-10% of the selling price, depending on the size of the change. Speaking for myself, a 5-10% change in the value of my home would be a significant diminishment of its value! Taking median house process and the number of homes potentially affected (assuming that homes closer to the development would see a larger impact), this could amount to a total \$250,000-350,000 loss of property value. This is an unreasonable subsidy for the city to require local residents to make to support a developer who is building on land currently valued at less than \$1,000,000.

**In sum, Standard #3 has ALSO not been met because there WILL BE a substantial impairment in the value of surrounding properties due to the proposed development.**

**STANDARD #12** states: "When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in the district, the Plan Commission shall consider recommendations in adopted plans; the impact on surrounding properties, including

height, mass, orientation, shadows and view; architectural quality and amenities; the relationship of the proposed building(s) with adjoining streets, alleys, and public rights of ways; and the public interest in exceeding the district height limits.”

In this Standard, the Planning Commission is directed to bring extra concern to questions of “the impact on surrounding properties, including height, mass, orientation, shadows and view; architectural quality and amenities; the relationship of the proposed building(s) with adjoining streets, alleys, and public rights of ways”—that is, the concerns raised by Standard #3 above. In other words, the Commission is supposed to pay particular attention to concerns of impairment of use, enjoyment and value to residential properties from projects such as this one.

**The evaluation of the whether impairments are “substantial” in regard to Standard #3 should err in this case on the side of protecting existing residents from diminishment of the use, enjoyment, and value of their properties.**

Under Standard #12 The Commission is further directed to consider “recommendations in adopted plans,” and in 28.183(6)(a) is enjoined from approving a conditional use “without due consideration of the recommendations in the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan and any applicable, neighborhood, neighborhood development, or special area plan, including design guidelines adopted as supplements to these plans.”

This clearly includes the Monroe Street Commercial District Plan, Adopted by the City of Madison, March 27, 2007. This Plan clearly supports the positives of infill and mixed-use projects, as do I.

However, despite the fact that the house at 665 Knickerbocker Street is zoned for commercial purposes, it is left out of the Commercial District Plan’s specific block by block suggestions in Part K. Nothing is said about the property at all, and the plan certainly does not recommend that it should be developed along with the property at 2620 Monroe Street. Pages 66 and 67 of the Plan talk specifically about 2620 Monroe Street. The house at 665 Knickerbocker Street is simply not part of the Commercial Plan.

**In sum, although the Developer is within his legal rights to build on the property at 665 Knickerbocker Street, his current request for Conditional Use fails to meet Standard #12 because it does not follow the recommendations of the applicable neighborhood development plan.**

Finally, I note that the Planning Council is also directed to consider: “The public interest in exceeding the district height limits.”

However, the Developer has not provided any evidence that there is something in particular about this project that warrants exceeding the current zoning requirements for this property. The Zoning Code was recently changed to make it easier for developers to undertake projects without obtaining special permissions from the city. Thus, projects

that do need conditional use approval should be viewed more critically. The burden should be heavy on the developer to show that this is a worthy project.

To date, the only justification the Developer has offered is that he needs to exceed the requirements for building mass and height because the project is not economically feasible otherwise. He has, however, offered no proof of this fact. If the project is not feasible, perhaps he simply paid too much for the properties he plans to develop. No business plan or projections have been offered to show that another developer, with a smarter business plan, would not be able to build a profitable development within the zoning restrictions.

Further, the Developer has offered no specific evidence that his building provides a public benefit or amenity that justifies exceeding the zoning code. There is no Trader Joe's here. The developer has said that the only way for his building to be profitable is to include a commercial space that serves food and beverage. But there are already 5 such places within 2 blocks of the property. How much value will an additional venue add? And if this location is so desperate for more commercial space, why is there currently a vacant storefront in the lot across the street—which has been true almost throughout the last 5-10 years.

Of course, any infill project adds value to the city. But we have been told that this project specifically targets Epic employees. Thus many of the services available from local business in the area will not see much benefit from the new residents: Epic provides onsite dry cleaning, shoe and clothing repair. So many of our local business would see no increased revenue from the new development.

**In sum, this request for Conditional Use fails to meet Standard #12 because it does not demonstrate any significant public interest in exceeding the current zoning restrictions.**

I thus conclude that the Planning Commission should REJECT the proposed conditional use because:

- a. It fails to meet the Standard set forth for conditional use under Sec. 28.283(6)(a)(3):** "The uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for purposes already established will not be substantially impaired or diminished in any foreseeable manner."
- i. There is a clear and present danger of substantial impairment in the use and enjoyment of surrounding properties due to the proposed development.**
  - ii. There WILL BE a substantial impairment in the value of surrounding properties due to the proposed development.**

- b. It fails to meet the Standard set forth for conditional use under Sec. 28.283(6)(a)(12):** “When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in the district, the Plan Commission shall consider recommendations in adopted plans; the impact on surrounding properties, including height, mass, orientation, shadows and view; architectural quality and amenities; the relationship of the proposed building(s) with adjoining streets, alleys, and public rights of ways; and the public interest in exceeding the district height limits.”
- i. The evaluation of the whether impairments are “substantial” in regard to Standard #3 should err in this case on the side of protecting existing residents from diminishment of the use, enjoyment, and value of their properties.**
  - ii. Although the Developer is within his legal rights to build on the property at 665 Knickerbocker Street, his current request for Conditional Use does not follow the recommendations of the applicable neighborhood development plan.**
  - iii. His current request for Conditional Use does not demonstrate any significant public interest in exceeding the current zoning restrictions.**

**LARGER CONCERNS THAT ARGUE FOR REJECTION OF THE PROPOSAL**

For the specific reasons above, I believe that the current proposal should be rejected. However, I also believe on more general grounds that his proposal should be turned down.

As you all well know, the zoning code was recently changed to streamline the process for review of development proposals. In particular, the zoning code now outlines in more detail a set of specifications for development, with the idea that projects that meet these specifications will not require a substantial review by neighborhood groups, the Urban Design Commission, and other oversight bodies.

I personally think this is a problematic approach to development. But it is the current law and thus what the Planning Commission must act under.

That having been said, under such a liberal system of regulating development, projects that do need approval for conditional use should, it seems to me, be viewed far more skeptically than in the past. The developer should be required to clearly demonstrate BOTH that the project has substantial public benefit BEYOND the ordinary benefits of infill development in a neighborhood, AND that significant steps have been taken to address foreseeable adverse impacts on existing properties.



Clearly whatever the positive merits of the current proposal are, it has not met this standard. The only justification the Developer has offered is that he needs to exceed the requirements for building mass and height because the project is not economically feasible otherwise. No business plan or projections have been offered to show that another developer, with a smarter business plan, would not be able to build a profitable development within the zoning restrictions. The Developer has offered no evidence that his building provides a unique public benefit or amenity. And the Developer has offered no means to assure that the negative impacts of his most recent project will not be repeated in a new neighborhood.

**Permitting this conditional use would send a signal to the whole city that the new Zoning Code is meaningless. If developers build to code, they can do so with basically no review or oversight. And if they want to exceed code, even in the face of glaring evidence of impairment of use, enjoyment and value, as well as significant community concerns, they can do that too.**

The Developer is asking the city and the neighborhood to follow the letter of the law in allowing him to build a mixed-use building on a lot where a house has stood for over 100 years, because one hundred years ago when there were 5 houses on the street, the lot was zoned commercial and that was never changed. He is within his rights to do so.

But with the same breath he is asking the Planning Commission to let him exceed the same Zoning Code and build a structure that is both too large and too high for the site, despite the clear and present danger of adverse consequences to the neighborhood and the lack of compelling advantage to the city in doing so.

The Planning Commission should not let this pass, on its own merits, and because of its implications for future development across our city. The new Zoning Code is less than 6 months old. Please don't dismantle it the first time it is tested.

Sincerely,



David Williamson Shaffer  
Knickerbocker Street  
Madison, WI 53711

TO: MADISON PLAN COMMISSION  
FROM: MIKE MURRAY AND KATHERINE SAMPLE, [REDACTED] KNICKERBOCKER ST.,  
MADISON, WI 53711  
RE: OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON 2620 MONROE ST.  
DATE: JULY 1, 2013

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We are writing to express our opposition to the proposed development on the corner of Monroe St. and Knickerbocker St. (officially 2620 Monroe St.). We moved to our house on Knickerbocker St. with our two children in 2011. We were drawn to this neighborhood because it offered an incredibly attractive setting for us to raise our children, commute to work, and a rare mix of quiet neighborhood streets adjacent to a busy commercial district populated with attractive small businesses. We both support smart development in Madison and believe that tastefully redeveloping the Town and Country property within the parameters of Madison's new and liberalized zoning ordinance would be a bonus to the neighborhood. However, because the proposed development does not meet the standards for approval of a Conditional Use, the Plan Commission should reject it.

Our two boys, ages 6 and 4, frequently ride their bikes and play with their neighborhood friends along the sidewalks on Knickerbocker St. While the street is currently reasonably safe for children, the addition of this development will add to the traffic flow on Knickerbocker St. and could potentially have a significant impact on how safe a block Knickerbocker St. will remain for children to play. This concern is also certainly applicable to the many other children who live on Knickerbocker and adjacent streets, not just our own.

It is currently difficult to determine the scale of traffic increase that will result from the development because the developer is unwilling to indicate what type of business with which he plans to fill the development's commercial space. He is also unwilling to limit his options in writing. When the proposal was first introduced to the neighborhood in April, the developer told us that the commercial space might be used for some type of medical office. After direct negotiations with some of our neighbors, the developer has indicated that he is seriously considering a coffee shop that would serve food, beer and wine. If the latter option is chosen, Knickerbocker St. will surely see a dramatic increase in traffic which it is currently incapable of safely absorbing.

Due to the developer's refusal to ensure that the commercial space will be used for a purpose which is suitable to our street's limited capacity to safely absorb more traffic, we believe that there is a significant possibility that this development will run afoul of the first subsection that the Plan Commission must consider under Sec. 28.183(6)(a) of the city zoning code when deciding whether to grant a conditional use proposal, specifically that "the establishment, maintenance or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare."

The most relevant data point to determine whether these safety concerns are valid is Parman Place, which is a nearby development that was recently designed by the same

architect for the same developer. We have heard many complaints regarding the traffic issues created by Parman Place from residents of that neighborhood, some of who have indicated that the neighborhood is no longer a safe place to walk with their young children. We certainly would be devastated if our neighborhood was no longer a place where we believed that our children could safely play outside with their friends, as this is one of the primary reasons that we moved to Knickerbocker St.

In addition, the pedestrian crossings at the intersection of Monroe St. and Knickerbocker St. are already very dangerous. At least one person was seriously injured there last year and we often have to pull our children back from traffic at the crosswalk, even when we are carrying the red pedestrian safety flags provided by the city, as cars will often race past another car that has stopped to let a pedestrian cross. The creation of a large development will only exacerbate this pedestrian safety issue unless the city take significant steps to mitigate these concerns.

These safety concerns converge with the considerations listed under subsection 3, which states that “the uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for purposes already established will not be substantially impaired or diminished in any foreseeable manner.”

Obviously if neighbors’ concerns about the physical safety of children on the street are realized, then our use and enjoyment of our properties will have been “substantially impaired or diminished.” In addition to the safety concerns, we are also concerned that the increased traffic and demand for parking will disrupt our use of an already narrow street with the combined demand of commercial patrons, residents and service/delivery vehicles that will supply the commercial business and service the property. Our quiet residential street will likely be a lot noisier, especially if a coffee shop that serves food and alcohol and opens early in the morning and closes late in the evening is established. One need only look to the aforementioned example of Parman Place to realize that this is a very real and reasonably foreseeable possibility.

We are unaware of any plans by the developer to mitigate these parking and traffic concerns. The developer has basically asked our neighborhood to trust his judgment regarding his plans for the commercial space and any collateral issues that could result from the business he chooses, but given the relevant example of Parman Place, we do not believe such trust is warranted.

Standard 12 directs the Commission to consider the “public interest in exceeding the district height limits.” Granted, determining whether a proposal is in the public interest can be rather subjective depending on one’s point of view and values. However, we believe that there is a strong argument that exceeding the height limits is not in the public interest, especially given the context of the new zoning code. The recently adopted zoning code represents a significant shift in favor of developers as compared to the previous code. City staff at the first community meeting in April made this fact crystal clear to us.

Proposed projects that do not meet this more liberal standard and require a conditional use should have to clearly demonstrate that the project truly offers some unique value-added features that would be of real benefit to the city and the surrounding neighborhoods. We are not aware of any such argument. In fact, the only argument proffered by the developer to support exceeding the height and mass requirements is that he paid so much for the two properties that the project is economically unfeasible otherwise. We are aware of no evidence that the same developer or a different developer could not propose an economically feasible development plan for the properties that conforms to the currently generous zoning code. Absent such proof, we find it hard to believe that it is in the public interest to exceed the height and mass limits because an experienced developer may have overpaid for a couple of properties.

Additionally, there is nothing about the plan that indicates that it will add anything exceptional to the well being of the city or the neighborhood. The city's apartment supply is not so inadequate that the Commission needs to habitually grant Conditional Use permits for any developers proposing to build apartments. Nor do any of the commercial uses currently under consideration provide any unique business offering to Monroe St. that is not already in adequate supply. There are no shortage of nearby coffee shops, restaurants or other businesses that serve wine and beer.

As neighbors who truly value this neighborhood and all that it has to offer, this might be the most salient point to us. Certainly the developer wants to piggyback his development on to the attractive qualities of our neighborhood: lovely residential streets, responsible neighbors, and a thriving commercial corridor that fits tastefully with the neighborhood. That is not unreasonable, but if the developer wants to exceed the already generous zoning standards so that he can use our neighborhood to attract residential and commercial tenants so that he can turn a profit, then he needs to be offering something to our neighborhood that would be especially attractive. At this time, he most certainly is not. I am sure this a point to which any of you could be sympathetic. It is just not a very good deal for us as a neighborhood to receive 21 residential apartment units and the possibility of yet another coffee shop in our area in exchange for more traffic, a more dangerous street, inevitable parking problems, decreased property values, and a building that is too large for the space and does not tastefully blend in with its surroundings.

Finally, we would like to bring up a public policy issue that we believe is related to whether this project is in the public interest. Approving conditional use applications such as this one will set a bad precedent for development in Madison and will inevitably lead to "backlash" from the public against development in general, regardless of the merits of a specific proposal.

We see no groundswell of support for this proposal in our neighborhood, despite the fact that literally everyone we have spoken to regarding this issue would very much like to see the Town and Country tastefully redeveloped. In fact, what we have heard almost unanimously are very real concerns that militate against approving the proposal based on the criteria that the Plan Commission must consider. It is not too much to ask to see if

another developer, or even the same developer, could create a plan that conforms with the current zoning code and better addresses the concerns of his potential neighbors.

However, if the precedent that is set early in our new zoning regime is that basically every conditional use permit is going to be granted, even if no compelling reason to do so exists, then there will be backlash from the greater community against development—even smart and justifiable development--because there will be a perception that developers can simply do whatever they want and do not even have to follow an already generous zoning code. This would be a wholly unnecessary result of the new zoning code and could eventually lead to far more stringent regulations on development in the future. As community members who in general support the concepts of infill and increased urban density, we would view this as a very disappointing, but understandable, development if projects like this gain approval.

Because this proposed plan does not meet the standards for the approval of a Conditional Use and because of the negative precedent that approving the project would set, we strongly urge the Plan Commission to reject this proposal.

Sincerely,

Mike Murray and Katherine Sample  
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