

From: anitaweier@netscape.net
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 1 on June 25, 2020 agenda
Date: Saturday, June 20, 2020 4:52:31 PM

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Greetings:

I know that additional housing is needed in Madison. However, there is no need to plant 10-story apartment buildings on top of a wetland site, as envisaged in the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan.

Apartment buildings could be placed on the already paved site of the former Oscar Mayer plant, instead of placing them on the Hartmeyer greenspace.

The community is asking that all 30 acres of that Hartmeyer land continue to be used as a natural area where trees, other plants, birds and animals thrive.

If you believe it is necessary to put some housing on this precious resource, please use some less intrusive, more community-oriented cooperative housing, as has been done in other areas of Madison, and preserve most of the wetland site.

Thank you for considering my request.

Anita Weier

Northside resident and former Madison alder
608-320-5820

From: [Virginia Scholtz](#)
To: [Sustainable Madison Committee](#)
Cc: [Housing Strategy](#); [Mayor](#); [All Alders](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 4; File #59745 Adopting the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan as a Supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan.
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 8:00:49 PM
Attachments: [To the Sustainability Committee.pdf](#)

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Attached is my request that the Sustainability Committee, in keeping with its stated purpose, take steps to preserve ALL30 acres of Hartmeyer Natural Area. Thank you for considering my thoughts.

With best regards,

Virginia Scholtz, member, Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area

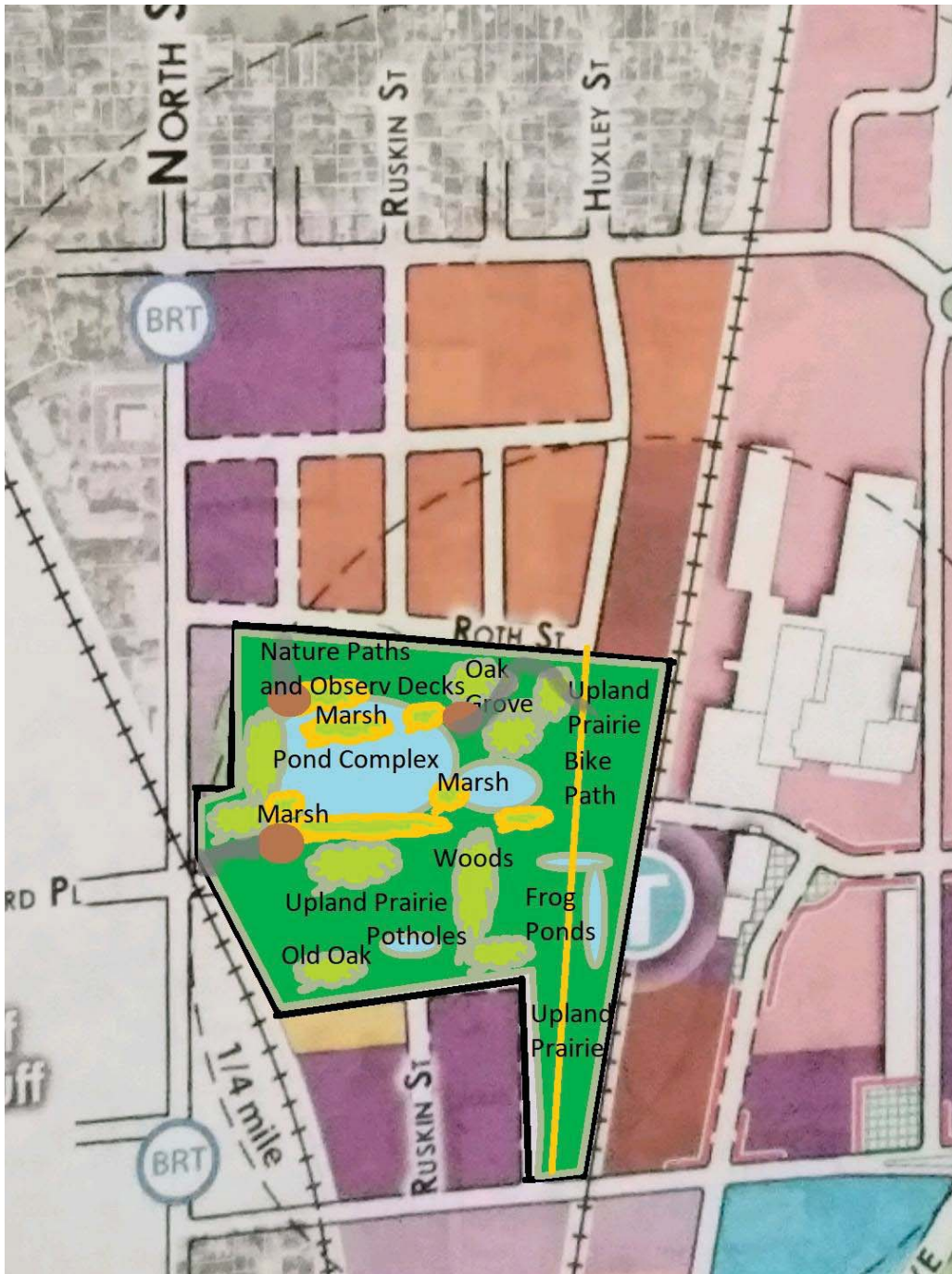
<https://www.facebook.com/hartmeyernaturalarea>

To: The City of Madison Sustainability Committee

From: Virginia Scholtz – 1110 N Sherman Avenue, Apt #316 - Madison, WI 53704

RE: Agenda Item 4; File #59745 Adopting the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan as a Supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan.

The Northside needs ALL30



The City of Madison Sustainability Plan as described in a document published in the spring of 2011 calls for Environmental, Economic and Social Resilience.

The document features a slide from “The Natural Step Canada” which states in part, “In a sustainable society, nature is not subject to systematically increasing *degradation by physical means and, in that society... people are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacity to meet their needs or the needs of future generations.*”

It is the job of the Sustainable Madison Committee to turn these noble sentiments into reality for all the residents of our community.

I appreciate that the goals of this committee require careful thought and complex planning. I know the issues before you this afternoon have been honed over many months of hard work. For that you have my awe-filled gratitude.

I would like you to consider how the **preservation of ALL30 acres** of the land currently known as Hartmeyer Marsh or Hartmeyer Natural Area would meet these goals.

The plan talks of **Natural Systems** ...of improved surface water quality . It calls for promoting projects that increase infiltration and aquifer replenishment. The wetland has begun a return to its original state. It would be easy and inexpensive to nurture this process and watch the natural wetland, native vegetation and multiple species of wildlife thrive as a vital part of our neighborhood.

The plan talks of **Planning & Design** with the goals of fostering holistic land use and promoting local food systems. There is a crumbling parking lot on the northeast corner of this property. Might it not be possible to remove the asphalt, amend the soil and provide community gardens in that area?

The plan talks of **Economic Development** with one of the goals being to promote consumption of local foods. Again – a prompt to consider community gardening.

The plan talks of **Affordable Housing** with hopes to implement a City-wide plan to encourage diversification within our neighborhoods, to build bridges between socioeconomic classes. Yes, the Northside needs more affordable housing. Yes, some of that housing will be multistory apartment buildings. But should affordable housing mean only four walls with central heat? Of course the basics come first, but shouldn't people of all economic means be **afforded** a bit of open space? Not far from the Hartmeyer area neighbors in large homes on large lots can walk out the back door and look at the lake with its ever-changing story of nature. People in affordable housing also appreciate the ever-changing story of nature. We deserve a chance to see a red-tail hawk, or newly hatched ducklings, too. We deserve a chance to see milkweed blossom and Monarchs migrate. We deserve bluebirds.

The plan talks of **Employment & Workforce Development** and cites the need for Green/Clean tech job training. Jobs in environmental care and restoration do not move overseas. Although some of the work of caring for a nature park might be considered “entry level”, the hands-on experience is a good basis for ownership and understanding of careers which can combine actual experience with virtual technology and provide a more certain path to a living wage.

The plan talks of **Education**. It promotes providing after school tutoring and clubs. The aspect of place-based education couldn't be better served than with a natural ecosystem just down the block from home or school. Indeed Sherman Middle School has had such a program in the past. And I hope it will be resumed after the Covid-19 epidemic.

The plan talks of **Health Goals**. This committee is charged to **Promote wellness activities, Promote healthy eating, Increase physical activity levels**. The preservation of ALL30 acres of Hartmeyer Natural Area will go a long way to enhance the health behaviors of the citizenry, for whom the Sustainability Plan was, after all, developed.

Finally the plan talks of **ARTS, Design and Culture**

The conservation plan, plan C, will provide opportunities for signage and illustration. The photographer's views are abundant. The setting calls for plein air sketching and painting.

And so I ask this committee. Please, take a closer look at preserving ALL30 of the precious acres at the Hartmeyer Natural Area. Save them for the betterment of our contemporary citizens and for the health and well-being of our grandchildren's grandchildren. **I request that one of you would put forth a motion to that effect at the June 23, 2020 meeting.**

With hope and trust that best judgment will prevail, I am



Virginia Scholtz member, Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area
<https://www.facebook.com/hartmeyernaturalarea>

From: [Erin Lemley](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Amend OMSAP to Save All 30 Acres
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2020 9:19:13 PM

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Dear Housing Strategy Committee Members,

I am a resident of Madison writing to ask you to amend the OMSAP (Agenda item 1) to include saving all 30 acres of the Hartmeyer Natural Area. Madison is a city built on wetlands, and this is one of our few remaining areas in the city that hasn't been filled. It supports a diverse ecosystem, and we should be working to protect and restore that. It is important to live in a city that has adequate green space to provide not only for the health of wildlife, but also of our residents. Study after study shows that increased green space has positive effects on the health and wellness of city dwellers, and this is a perfect opportunity to make that happen here in Madison.

I was frankly appalled to read this quote from a city memo on the project: "“Anecdotally, staff has heard persons of color often do not feel comfortable in urban natural areas because those spaces and users don't feel welcoming to them. Repeating this type of open space on the Hartmeyer property will not help create a space for all Madison's residents.” The statement that we should just accept that residents of color don't feel welcomed in green spaces so we shouldn't make them in neighborhoods of color, instead of figuring out WHY they don't feel welcome and solving that problem, is exactly the sort of structural problem that protestors are currently fighting against. We should be thinking "what can we do to make sure that BIPOC do feel comfortable in this green space in their own neighborhood?".

Please make and support a motion to include option C: Conservation Alternative to Save all 30 Acres.

Sincerely,

Erin Lemley
1703 Rowland Ave #1
Madison, WI 53704

From: [Anita Temple](#)
To: [Sustainable Madison Committee](#); [McGuigan, Patrick](#); [Housing Strategy](#); ledell.zellers@gmail.com; [Mayor](#); allalders@cutyofmadisin.com; fhna.ginny@gmail.com; [Eena Co-Chairs](#)
Subject: Amend OMSAP to Save Hartmeyer Natural Area
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 9:06:54 AM

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I am writing again today to encourage and ask that you make and support a motion to amend OMSAP to include Option C Conservation Alternative to save all 30 acres in the Hartmeyer property as a nature park and community open greenspace. Having a natural area in an urban area is an investment in the future of Madison as a progressive and environmental city. I'm sure you have heard all of the excellent ecological reasons (that I agree with) but also consider that this area is a few blocks from Demetrel Park, which would encourage use of both areas for many species.

Demetrel, on the east side of the park, has 20 years of active ecological restorations for prairie. In the future, there will be expansion into a wet meadow north of the large hill and expansion behind the gas station, into additional native habitat. The Park is already actively used by residents and students from Emerson East and East High schools for ecological studies. I am Emerson East Neighborhood Association (EENA) Greenspace Coordinator and represent such for EENA and I am in close contact with Parks Management and Planning.

I also want to mention that you consider that living next to natural areas is highly desirable by many, and increases the value of homes and apartments. The neighborhoods of Cherokee and Owen Parks are excellent examples for higher residential values due to proximity to natural areas.

If you must compromise, I will support Ader Syed Abbas' Option B. Please make and support this Option B which has fewer streets and more natural area/park space if Option C is off the table.

Thank you for your consideration,
Anita Temple
EENA Greenspace Coordinator

cc. EENA co-chairs

From: [Mary Jo Walters](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Amend OMSAP to Save Hartmeyer Natural Area"
Date: Sunday, June 21, 2020 7:14:01 AM

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My partner and I ride our bikes through the area and would like to see it preserved for there is a lot of wildlife there already. Madison needs more natural areas, what with all the development that has taken away all the wild areas throughout the city.

Please consider an amendment to the OMSAP as talked about in the Housing Strategies agenda item 1.

Thank You,

Mary Jo Walters
2313 Fremont Ave
Madison, WI 53704

From: [Janet Battista](#)
To: [Sustainable Madison Committee](#)
Cc: [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Hartmeyer Natural Area
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 2:37:55 PM

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To: Sustainable Madison Committee Members
Re: Agenda Item 4 No. 59745, June 23, 2020 SMC Meeting

By now it should be obvious that a rare, existing natural area in an urban setting needs preservation and protection. Iconic landscape architects Jens Jensen and Frederick Law Olmstead knew this and their efforts enhanced their cities tremendously. Madison, a great cultural and educational city, deserves all the remaining natural world it can capture. The redevelopment of the Oscar Meyer property can surely proceed apace without destroying what is so valuable to our future.

Please support Amendment C to protect all 30 acres.

Janet Battista

154 Kensington Drive
Madison, Wisconsin 53704

Sent from my iPad

From: [Kathleen Kelly](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Hartmeyer Wetlands
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 3:43:31 PM

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As a Northside resident for 50 years, I write in strong support of restoring the entire wetlands area near the Hartmeyer Arena. This would be beneficial in so many ways, for noise reduction, for wildlife, and for restoring our native ecology.

Dr. Kathleen A. Kelly

From: [Paul Noeldner](#)
To: [Sustainable Madison Committee](#); [McGuigan, Patrick](#); [Housing Strategy](#); [Park Commission](#); [Ledell Zellers - Plan Commission](#); [Mayor](#); allalders@cityofmadisin.com; [Virginia Scholtz](#); [Beth](#); anitaweier@aol.com; [Baumel, Christie](#)
Subject: RE: Amend OMSAP to Save Hartmeyer Natural Area with Affordable Housing on Surrounding Redeveloped Parcels.
Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 2:02:11 AM

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I would also recommend that Committee members read this Isthmus article that came out Monday June 22 about options and goals for the Hartmeyer area. It covers multiple perspectives and I believe overall supports Saving All 30 Acres.

<https://www.facebook.com/354973694635391/posts/1983954775070600>

Paul Noeldner
Madison FUN Volunteer Coordinator
Wisconsin Master Naturalist
136 Kensington Maple Bluff
paul_noeldner@hotmail.com
608 698 0104

Love of Public Ethics, Facts and Fairness Trumps our Love of our Personal, Family and Religious Values in Public Decisions in Civil Government, Laws and Institutions, and this Common Love of Fairness is what in turn Protects our Right to Enjoy Different Personal, Family and Religious Values in a Free Society

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(:>)

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----- Original message -----

From: Paul Noeldner <paul_noeldner@hotmail.com>
Date: 6/23/20 1:28 AM (GMT-06:00)
To: SMC@cityofmadison.com, pmcguigan@cityofmadison.com, HousingStrategy@cityofmadison.com, Parks Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>, Ledell Zellers - Plan Commission <ledell.zellers@gmail.com>, Satya Rhodes-Conway - Madison Mayor <mayor@cityofmadison.com>, allalders@cityofmadisin.com, Virginia Scholtz <fhna.ginny@gmail.com>, Beth <sluysb@aol.com>, anitaweier@aol.com, Christie Baumel - Deputy Mayor-Sustainability <cbaumel@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Amend OMSAP to Save Hartmeyer Natural Area with Affordable Housing on Surrounding Redeveloped Parcels.

My Public Comments for the upcoming June 23 4:30 Sustainability and June 25 Housing committee meetings are attached as a pdf file named Hartmeyer Natural Area Sustainability and Affordable Housing Comments - Paul Noeldner.pdf.

Please make the attached PDF file available to your Committees and related parties and for the

record.

Please bring this pdf file up for web meeting display during my Public Comments at your Committee Meeting. My comments will follow this document closely for purposes of turning the page.

Thank You!

Paul Noeldner

Master Naturalist Instructor

Volunteer Coordinator, Madison FUN Friends of Urban Nature

608-698-0104

paul_noeldner@hotmail.com

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Pristine is overrated

Advocates push to save an urban wetland as part of the Oscar Mayer redevelopment

BY LINDA FALKENSTEIN

JUNE 22, 2020

RSS



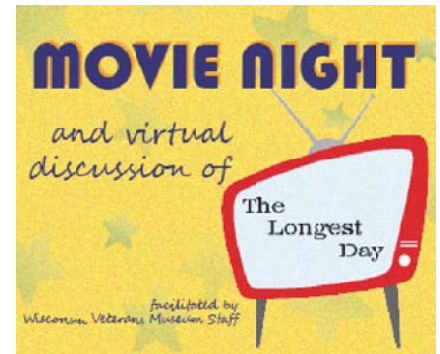
LINDA FALKENSTEIN

The Hartmeyer parcel includes several 200-year-old oak trees (left) as well as wetland that is a home for birds and other wildlife.

The pond, almost hidden behind a dentist's office and Kavanaugh's Esquire Club just off North Sherman Avenue, isn't the crown jewel of wetlands. It's full of invasive reed canary grass and cattails. Alongside it on Roth Street, people are parked and living out of their RVs.

But northside residents point to 200-year-old oak trees, and say that the area is a haven for wildlife, including fox, turtles, waterfowl, redwinged blackbirds and a nesting pair of sandhill cranes.

Both the pond and surrounding uplands and woods are part of a 30-acre parcel owned by the Hartmeyer family (of local ice arena fame) and leased for years by Oscar Mayer. The parcel is included in the [Oscar Mayer Strategic Area Plan](#) (OMSAP) and will likely be purchased and redeveloped going forward. The plan earmarks the area for economic development, living wage jobs and affordable housing.



TRENDING

Pristine is overrated

The need for affordable housing versus the need to preserve wetlands come head to head in the Oscar Mayer Strategic Area Plan. Is a proposed greenspace of 14 acres enough?

Reserve a seat at the Terrace?

Can you be cool at the Union in 2020? Yes, but you need a reservation. Plus, picnics at Breese Stevens and more re-openings.

"Less lethal" but still controversial

Campus Ald. Max Prestigiacomo wants to "demilitarize" the Madison police. He plans to start with blocking a \$50,000 budget reallocation request to eq every squad car with a projectile la...

As the city moves through the process of approving the strategic plan as a guideline for redevelopment, at issue is how many acres should be saved as greenspace.

The wettest part — the pond of three to four acres and adjacent marsh — will be preserved. But there's little agreement as to how much more of the surrounding land should be kept as greenspace.

An early draft of the plan preserved just eight acres, the pond and marsh. After feedback from the neighborhood, greenspace was increased to 14 acres, with eight acres as wetland and the additional six acres developed as a city park.



But the **Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area** have proposed to save all 30 acres of the Hartmeyer parcel as greenspace, with no development. A compromise brought forward by Ald. Syed Abbas maps out a 20-acre nature preserve that would still include some housing and mixed-use development.

“Parks are good,” says Dan McAuliffe, a city planner. “But the need isn’t there. The question is what we lose from housing.”

Friends of Hartmeyer disagrees. “If you have this kind of undeveloped tract right in the city,” says Friends group member Beth Sluys, “why would you not want to preserve it?”

Rich Beilfuss, a hydrologist and fellow with the UW-Madison Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, testified before the Parks Commission in favor of preserving 30 acres of greenspace.

“It’s a working wetland,” says Beilfuss, who is also president and CEO of the International Crane Foundation. Although there are invasives, he says it is “an impressive urban wetland in a surprisingly tight space,” with value for both wildlife and stormwater absorption.

Beilfuss characterizes Hartmeyer as a freshwater marsh. While topographic maps dating to the late 1800s show the entire area as wetland, the parcel was likely drained for farming some time in the early 20th century. Aerial photos from the 1930s through the 1980s show the area dry. At some point, several baseball fields were constructed there, outlines of which are still visible from aerial photography.

Wetland began to re-emerge in the late 1990s. One theory is that after Oscar Mayer stopped pumping from its own high capacity wells about that time, the wetland returned. Another theory is that increased rainfall due to climate change prompted the resurgence. “Wetlands have a way of reclaiming themselves,” Beilfuss says.

Paul Noeldner, chair of Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area, leads nature walks for kids on the site as part of Madison FUN (Friends of Urban Nature). He’s made a long list of wildlife observed on the site, including 56 bird species, and identified native cattail in the marsh, and large stands of milkweed — crucial to monarch butterflies — including Sullivant’s (Prairie Milkweed), a Wisconsin threatened species.

or shotgun capable of firing bean bags rounds.

Black fatherhood, police, war and the new Spike Lee joint

Just in time for Father’s Day: a Zoom chat with Kevin Willmott I, three-time collaborator with Spike Lee, and his son, Kevin Willmott II, Madison artist, activist and new father.

"Fire Matt Kenny"

City leaders say they are listening to the demands of protesters, who, among other things, want the officer who killed Tony Robinson booted from the force. But Chief Vic Wahl says “there is no basis under state law” for any disciplinary action.



“You don’t pave an urban natural area when you have one,” says Noeldner. “Once it’s gone, it’s gone.”



The Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area propose saving the entire 30-acre parcel as greenspace.



The 30-acre parcel is bounded by North Sherman Avenue to the west, Roth Street to the north, the railroad tracks to the east and extends all the way to Commercial Avenue only nearest the tracks. The compromise plan proposed by Abbas expands the 14-acre plan a block to the east.

Beilfuss believes preserving 30 acres instead of 14 as greenspace is important for wildlife, not because the additional 16 acres of land are high quality — much of it is currently a parking lot — but because the space is needed as a buffer between the wetland and the proposed housing and commercial development.

“The more buffer you have, the more opportunities there are for wildlife,” says Beilfuss. “If you develop right to the edge, the more sensitive species will leave, abandon the area.” It’s not clear, though, how much extra space wildlife needs as a buffer: “It’s hard to say an exact area that would make a difference.”

“Alone, it’s not vital to cranes, but it is part of a mosaic of sites that collectively are important,” Beilfuss notes. He doesn’t think it matters whether it’s a pristine example of a wetland: “It provides real value now.”

Dan McAuliffe of city planning describes the proposed housing on the Hartmeyer parcel as “fairly intense.” The plan to add 395 housing units on that 30 acres means it’s much denser than the surrounding neighborhoods, but is in line with the city’s comprehensive plan for the area, which is seeking to accommodate a projected growth in population of 70,000, or 40,000 new households, by 2040. “That’s a lot of people,” McAuliffe says.

The Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan includes more land than just the former Oscar Mayer plant and the Hartmeyer land. The area plan encompasses areas northeast of Aberg Avenue (including behind Pick ‘N Save) and along Pennsylvania Avenue and the railroad corridor as far south as First Street. Overall, the plan seeks to add 2,500 housing units to the area.

The Hartmeyer site is especially attractive because it is adjacent to a proposed transit hub. The parcel, when developed, would contain multi-family housing in several configurations, mostly low-medium (two to four stories) and medium residential



(three to six stories) along with some buildings as tall as 10 stories in the area closest to the railroad tracks. New streets would go through the area; some would extend Huxley and Ruskin Streets through from Aberg to Commercial.

McAuliffe notes that the planning process found that the area is not deficient in parks. While the planned residential density on the Hartmeyer parcel calls for a small neighborhood park, larger nearby parks like Demetral and even Warner Park and Cherokee Marsh check off boxes for larger open spaces for the area.

Sluys, of the Hartmeyer friends group, says members strongly support housing and development but doesn't see how that goal and preserving the wetland are mutually exclusive. She has suggested that housing units be shifted to other areas in the plan already slated for housing and mixed development — maintaining the overall density by making some taller.

But McAuliffe says that's not really feasible. The soil in the area is "hydric," meaning it is already wet and cannot absorb more water in big rains. That means that none of the multi-unit housing planned for the area can have underground parking — "no subterranean spaces," says McAuliffe. That, in turn, limits how high the housing can go (as does the site's proximity to the Dane County Regional Airport). To make every building as tall as regulations would allow would result in "an almost unbuildable density," says McAuliffe.

McAuliffe says that the hydric soil also means that keeping the area as greenspace won't help prevent flooding in the area during big rains, as proponents of the 30-acre natural area have argued.

The Oscar Mayer strategic plan will be before the Plan Commission June 29.

Discussion at the June 10 Board of Parks Commissioners meeting, held virtually via Zoom, centered on the area's need for affordable housing and jobs versus the need for greenspace. Equity consultant on the project, Annette Miller of Equity by Design, said that people in her focus groups were more interested in jobs and affordable housing than a park.

Funding a park larger than 14 acres is also problematic. The 14-acre park would be paid for through developer dedication fees. Any additional acreage would have to be paid for by the city.

The Parks commission voted 6-1 June 10 to approve the plan with 14 acres of park, although several members of the committee wanted a big asterisk on that approval, saying they would like to see other avenues investigated for funding a larger greenspace, and that they would like to see environmental testing.

Abbas is concerned about several aspects of the current plan. "The land is so wet," says Abbas, "and the water table is so high." He's walked problem areas in the nearby neighborhoods he represents: "The basements are like swimming pools." Yet the city does not seem to be heeding this problem. "Why would you put more housing on a wetland?" Abbas asks. He doubts that the additional six acres earmarked as city park will be usable for recreation.

Abbas feels the city is rushing the process, and not investigating partnerships with Dane County or other conservation agencies to buy the parcel outright. Noeldner, chair of the Friends group, thinks the group that is redeveloping the Oscar Mayer



The Hartmeyer parcel is outlined in red. The city's plan includes 14 acres of greenspace. Yellow and brown is housing; purple represents mixed-use development.



buildings into the multi-use OM Station should be approached for support: “It’s an amenity for them, too.”

Abbas notes there has been no soil or water testing at the site and “there is a lot of concern about contamination. We have no idea what is in the soil.”

The Hartmeyer estate is suing Kraft Heinz over a series of fuel spills there over the years.

A June 8 city planning memo to the parks commission states that “staff does not have concerns about the appropriateness of future development” because “redevelopment is often the most effective tool in remediating brownfield properties.” Staff also argued that “by obtaining a portion of the property through parkland dedication, the city would be insulated from financial responsibility of any needed remediation, as the developer would be responsible for remediation for the entire site.”

Maria Powell, executive director of the [Midwest Environmental Justice Organization](#), is very concerned about the Oscar Mayer site, which has never been fully evaluated for industrial contamination. “Any kind of digging will disturb what [contaminants] are in the soil,” Powell notes.

In 2016, then-Mayor Paul Soglin [told Isthmus](#) that “the [Oscar Mayer] parcel has a negative value of between \$10 and \$20 million,” figuring in the estimated cost of remediating contaminated soil at the plant.

McAuliffe says that although the state Department of Natural Resources has a “couple of open sites” on the Oscar Mayer property, “environmental engineers have not expressed concern.” However, the strategic plan itself acknowledges that “the management of contaminated soils is a factor that can potentially impact the financial viability of redevelopment and will need to be addressed prior to any redevelopment projects.”

The strategic plan is next before the Sustainable Madison committee on June 23 at 4:30 p.m.



LINDA FALKENSTEIN

The Hartmeyer wetland, looking toward North Sherman Avenue. The parcel is not pristine; remnants of an Oscar Mayer parking lot can be seen (far right).



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Oscar Mayer redevelopment - a win for climate, affordable housing

The Oscar Mayer redevelopment takes an urban site and proposes a mixed use, transit-oriented, climate friendly development. The redevelopment proposal is:

Consistent with the Madison Sustainability Plan (2011). The redevelopment of the Oscar Mayer site will be a tangible way for Madison as a community to affirm the goals of the Madison Sustainability Plan and their implementation. Many of the actions prescribed in the Sustainability Plan can be found in different elements of the proposed redevelopment.

Consistent with City's and County's climate goals/plans. Both the City of Madison and Dane Co have articulated sustainability and climate change goals that need to be addressed in all aspects of the community. In order to meet the City's climate goals of 100% renewable energy and zero net carbon emissions by 2030 that we need to focus on land use planning and how we grow and develop our area.

Meeting climate change goals means considering the project area as a whole and all the different ways that the redevelopment of the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan can reduce future emissions. We cannot meet our goals for the transportation sector, the second highest source of emissions in Dane County, by electrification alone. We need to shift to using public transit as well as active transportation modes which the Special Area Plan does. Addressing transportation in combination with energy efficiency, green infrastructure, proximity to jobs and essential services, access to open space and recreation sites, presents an opportunity to make even more gains in reducing future emissions.

The redevelopment proposal also commits to:

Affordability: There needs to be a conscious and deliberate effort to provide a mix of affordable and other housing that meets the needs of a wide variety of residents at different ages and stages of life. This should be an investment in the community and neighborhood that exits for the future.

Access: The City of Madison and Dane Co need to address the home-to-job public transit gap identified in the Arrive Together report released in October, 2018. This site is ideally located within the urban center. It lies within Zone 1 of the Sustainable Transportation Master Plan. And if done correctly, could show the way for creating jobs with housing including affordable housing and making car ownership less of a barrier to getting and keeping a job in the Madison area.

Finally, If not here, where? We know that Dane County and the City of Madison will continue to grow; the question is where and how. We need to start resisting if not reversing the trends to put or allow development further out in the county. This exacerbates the need to use single occupancy cars, the need to own a car (estimated to cost \$10,000 per year on average) and stymies efforts to reduce emissions from the transportation sector. All of this means we are going to have to be proactive about siting new development within the urban center.



"enough parks

Dan McAuliffe says that Demetral Park and the little league fields at Aberg and Packers meet the area's need for green space. Demetral Park is basically one large mown lawn. it is not a nature park. The ball fields are privately owned and used by a select section of the population. Warner Park is nearly 2 miles away and on the opposite side of what is becoming a very busy thoroughfare. To me these entities do not meet the need for green space in this area.

VIRGINIA SCHOLTZ 2 days ago | [REPLY](#)

Hartmeyer Wetland

Hello? We are going to build super-dense affordable housing right next to the place where intolerably noisy F-35 aircraft will be deployed within the next few years? How is that good stewardship of resources?

Mary Anglim 2 days ago | [REPLY](#)

hydric soils aren't always wet

The fact that an area has hydric soils does mean that "it is already wet and cannot absorb more water in big rains." It just means that those soils developed under wet conditions. One of the unique characteristics of wetlands is that sometimes they are wet and sometimes they are dry. Hydric soils are very good at holding on to water and are very helpful in absorbing floodwaters. Any amount of open space (that is, area that is not paved or roofed or otherwise hardscaped) will help absorb and filter water following storm events.

Katie B 2 days ago | [REPLY](#)

RELATED



LINDA FALKENSTEIN

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MAY 29, 2020



DAVID MICHAEL MILLER

Millennial magnet

Many come for the university of well-paid jobs in the health or tech sectors. Whatever their motivation, young adults are moving to Madison by the tens of thousands.

AUG 22, 2019



PHILIP ASHBY

Ranch-o-Rama

Madison was a great incubator for classic mid-century homes, including many Wright-influenced ranches. Once spurned, these homes are perfect for 21st century needs and ripe for renovations.

OCT 31, 2019



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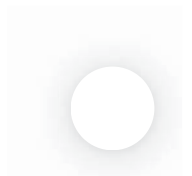
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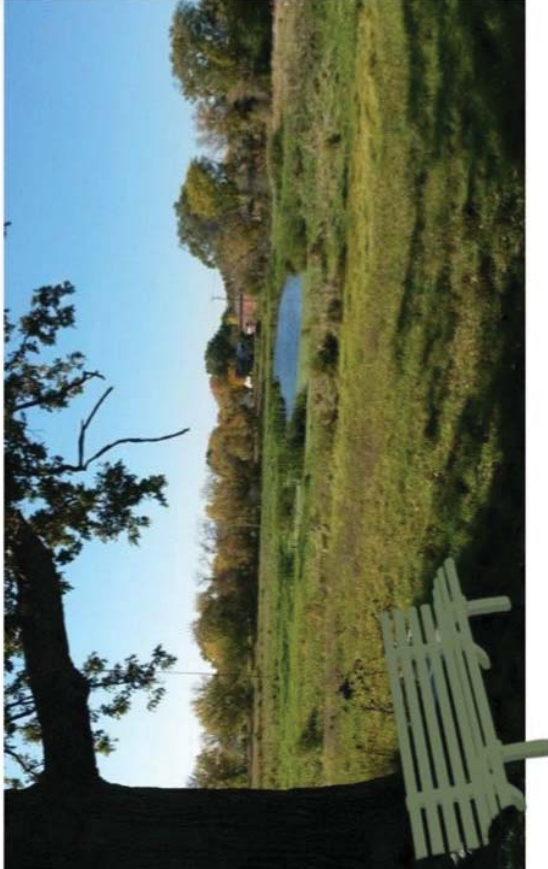
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Hartmeyer Natural Area Invites You!

***Nature Recreation along with the Sandhill
Sage, Fox, and other Wildlife at this Historic
Farmstead and Upland Ecosystem in the Heart of
Madison's North and East Side!***

Save All 30 Acres!

Paul Noeldner speaking on behalf of Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area and Madison FUN Friends of Urban Natural Areas in partnership with Madison Parks and Friends groups to Help Save the 30 Acre Hartmeyer Parcel. Madison Connect Families and Kids with Urban Nature.

The Sherman Neighborhood Association, Eken Park Neighborhood Association, Sierra Club, Madison Audubon Society, Madison Alders representing the OMSAP area All Support Saving the 30 Acre Hartmeyer Parcel as a Nature Park and Shared Community Green Space.

We need Affordable Housing but it should be done Su

Options A B and C are offered for Your Consideration of the 30 Acre Hartmeyer Parcel, each meeting City goals differ

Only Option A is currently in the OMSAP plan. This provides opportunities for Alders to vote for more Green Space in the plan you vote to amend it. We think you should do so.

Planning Option A – 14 Acres

OPTION A PUTS AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON A HISTORIC NATURAL AREA does not meet Sustainability and Community Open Space Goals.

OPTION A IS NOT A COMPROMISE! It only saves the legal minimum and, which is likely to grow with climate change.

OPTION A DOES NOT SAVE SUFFICIENT UPLAND HABITAT to sustain the system of Frogs, Cranes, Fox, Deer and 60+ Bird Species already there of invasive plants. Streets go right next to the wetland and impact near old Oaks. Green Bike Paths and Wildlife Corridors are Lost.

AREA IS NOT ALREADY WELL SERVED WITH PUBLIC PARKS. The Little e Fields and Demetrol are primarily single-purpose sports fields. bors say they go elsewhere for Natural Areas and Parks.

LOSS OF NATURAL SUSTAINABLE WATER INFILTRATION ARE LOST to various streets and infrastructure that will drain directly to lakes

PLANNERS ACKNOWLEDGE HYDRIC WETLAND SOIL AND POLLUTION EXIST that may preclude building high density Affordable Housing



Supported Option C – 30 Acres

Meet Sustainable Ecosystem, Community Open Space and Goals please support a *MOTION TO AMEND OMSAP TO DE OPTION C CONSERVATION*

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY by Preserving Ecological Habitat for pollinators, Birds and Wildlife, Infiltration, and Carbon Benefits

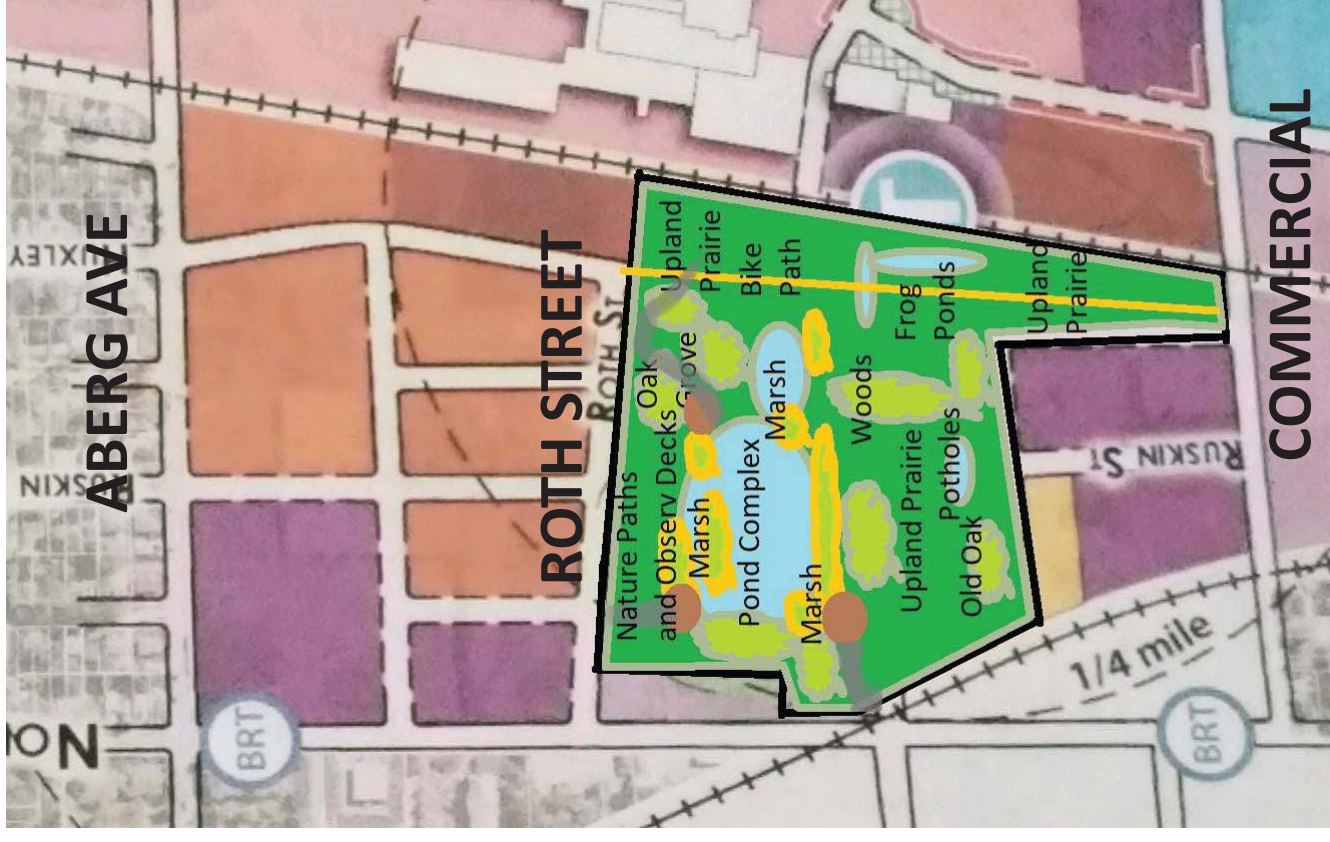
ADAPTIVE HOUSING on Redeveloped Parcels with Existing structures makes much more sense than sacrificing a Natural Area

ADAPTIVE NATURE RECREATION for Surrounding Neighborhoods, Families and Kids with fun nature paths and lookout platforms

ADAPTIVE EDUCATION opportunities for Nearby School Activities

ADAPTIVE SHARED COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE for Yoga in the Park, Art, Art and Sculpture, Community Gardens and Social Activities

ADAPTIVE TRANSPORT with City-Wide Bike Path Connections on Green Corridors critical to Sustaining Urban Ecosystems



Compromise Option B - 20 Acres

If you are looking for a compromise, please Support a **COMPROMISE OPTION TO AMEND OMSAP TO INCLUDE COMPROMISE OPTION B**

COMPROMISE OPTION B KEEPS A SUBSTANTIAL AREA FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING onsite that City Planning wants

COMPROMISE OPTION KEEPS THE COOLIDGE-ROTH CONNECTION that City Planning wants

COMPROMISE MINIMIZES STREETS going right next to the wetland and 100-year-old Oaks

COMPROMISE FOLLOWS FOR WETLAND INCREASE with climate change

COMPROMISE PROVIDES A SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEM for a Nature Park

COMPROMISE OFFERS MORE PARK SPACE for Community Activities

COMPROMISE PROVIDES BETTER CONNECTIONS for Bike Paths and Green Corridors



From: [Linda Szewczyk](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: The Precious Gift Possibly Lost In The Shuffle - Hartmeyer Wetland
Date: Monday, June 22, 2020 11:40:12 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I stand in disbelief that this city is ignoring something so precious and so easily lost in the shuffle! I realize we are on the verge of bettering our community, but in doing so, as with all projects, we have to consider all angles. There's plenty of opportunity on the North Side for development, but looking at the quality of the future, let's slow down and help Madison live up to its legacy! Imagine that! We can do better.

I can't say enough how vital it is to save this whole piece of land. Our next generations are already, as you know, going to be stuck with cleaning up our mistakes. Having this gift right before their eyes will help them realize NOW how important this is for the future of our environment and our planet as a whole - how important it is for THEIR future! Please let's start nourishing this spectacular planet given to us so freely - our home.

Thank You,

Linda Szewczyk

From: [Barbara Noeldner](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Thurs June 25 Agenda item 1, opposition to OMSAP
Date: Saturday, June 20, 2020 3:52:14 PM
Attachments: [HNA.docx](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I oppose OMSAP without saving all 30 acres of Hartmeyer Natural Area.
My comments are attached.
Thank you,
Barbara Noeldner

I support saving all 30 or as many acres as possible of the Hartmeyer Natural Area. Paving over natural landscape is not sustainable. Do we really want Madison to turn into a wall of concrete?

We need enough natural landscape to support species we share the planet with. We need natural landscape to absorb rains that are increasing with climate change. These 2 concepts work together—saving wetlands with their uplands for native species, natural lands to absorb water, native plants that help purify the water before it drains back to the lakes. Today is the 1st day of summer as I write this, and the 1st day that blue green algae blooms are reported in our lakes on the news. Blue green algae blooms are a sign that our lakes that are dying due to toxic runoff.

You may say “This piece does not matter, we will be fine without it.” But the truth is, it matters very much.

I am all for affordable housing. Let’s put affordable housing, or any housing, on land that is already paved with existing streets and in need of redevelopment.

Madison can help lead the way to a sustainable future for all. Start by not destroying what we have and ask, what are the possibilities to make a better Madison? Now is our time.

Thank you,

Barbara Noeldner

From: [Kopp Mueller, Torrie](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: FW: Support for the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP)
Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 10:23:38 AM

Hi-

The below email came to the Homeless Services Consortium, but I believe it was intended for the Housing Strategy Committee. Please see below.

Thanks, Torrie

From: Ann Freiwald <velocity1963@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2020 8:40 PM
To: All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>; Sustainable Madison Committee <SMC@cityofmadison.com>; Homeless Services Consortium <hsc@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Support for the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders and members of the SMC and the HSC:

In the interest of full disclosure, I work for City Parks. However, today I am writing as a resident of the north side who feels invested in my neighborhood and my city.

I support the plan as written. When Oscar Mayer closed a few years ago, it was heartbreaking to the north side to see the end of an era. The OMSAP presents us with an opportunity to begin a new era. The plan has everything we need on the north side: additional open space, new housing and new job opportunities, a chance to build a vibrant new neighborhood in a retired industrial area. The staff and the consultants have done an excellent job of balancing the many needs of the many demographics that make up the north side and Madison as a whole.

I wholeheartedly support the connection of Coolidge Street, as a person who often bikes and walks the north side, this connection to the Ekan neighborhood would be appreciated.

Thank you for your time and I hope you will support the plan.

From: [Becky Tradewell](#)
To: [McGuigan, Patrick](#); [Housing Strategy](#); ledell.zellers@gmail.com; fhna.ginny@gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: OMSAP and Hartmeyer Natural Area
Date: Tuesday, June 23, 2020 11:30:27 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Begin forwarded message:

From: beckytradewell@gmail.com
Date: June 23, 2020 at 10:58:38 AM CDT
To: SMC@cityofmadison.com
Cc: allalders@cityofmadison.com
Subject: OMSAP and Hartmeyer Natural Area

Members of the Sustainable Madison Committee,

My name is Rebecca Tradewell, 414 Marston Avenue. I ask that you recommend that the Plan Commission amend the Oscar Meyer Special Area Plan in order to preserve the entire Hartmeyer property (Hartmeyer Natural Area) as natural and park land.

I would like to first make a couple of observations based on responses from city staff (Planning and Parks) to requests to keep the entire HNA as open space.

Why preserve 13 acres?

Why did staff arrive at a recommendation for 13 acres of park on the Hartmeyer property? Primarily, it seems to be because the number of residential units expected to be built on the remainder of the approximately 30 acre property would result in a requirement for the developer to dedicate 13 acres of property for parkland. The city would receive the property at no cost. It apparently does not matter what is currently on the property as a whole (an ecosystem rich in wildlife plus a buffer To provide protection from intense development). This may be a smart approach generally, but there should be room for adjustment based on the nature of the property. There must be other funds for parks being generated by housing constructed in other parts of the planning area (I assume that not all developers will actually dedicate parkland). Also, this approach means that the public would not have access to the HNA until a company decides to develop the Hartmeyer property and, I suppose, that if fewer units are proposed, the size of the park might be reduced.

Parks and Open Space Plan

City staff also indicate that the presence of Demetral Park in the Oscar Meyer

Special Planning Area provides the larger community park amenities required by the Parks and Open Space Plan. I was shocked to learn that Demetral is considered to be the existing open space that provides more than adequate open space under the OMSAP, to be augmented by the small park on the Hartmeyer property. Demetral has very little biodiversity. It consists mainly of athletic fields and is across Packers from the areas to be developed as residential. The play area and shelter in Demetral are a significant walk south of Commercial — I would expect them to remain primarily attractive to residents of the Eken Park Neighborhood, toward which they are oriented.

The OMSAP aims to create a walkable neighborhood, but it is difficult to envision changes to the intersection at Packers and Commercial that would tempt many families to walk across six lanes of traffic to get to Demetral or to take the bus there, for that matter. More diverse park space should be provided for the many new residents of the Oscar Meyer planning area, in easy walking distance from their homes.

As to a neighborhood park, because of the increased density proposed within the planning area, the originally proposed small park on the Hartmeyer needed to be scaled up. However, staff concluded that a park larger than 13 acres would be inconsistent with the POSP and cannot be justified. Again, there should be room in park planning for flexibility based on the special nature of the property.

The OMSAP mentions that there is a strong Community desire for the Madison Little League Fields to continue functioning as baseball fields. It's hard to disagree with that. The land on which the fields are located is part of the Oscar Meyer property. City staff mention that the parkland dedication requirement for the Oscar Meyer property may be about the size of the baseball fields. I don't see any discussion of whether the turning the baseball fields into a public park would be consistent with the POSP. Perhaps it is. But if not, it should arguably be done anyway. The HNA should also be made a park (or call it something else, but preserve it).

Madison Sustainability Plan

Preserving and restoring the Hartmeyer property will promote several goals of the Madison Sustainability Plan. That plan calls for restoring and maintaining natural habitat, ensuring all youth have access to environmental stewardship programs and information, and improving stormwater management. Several experts have disagreed with city staff's recent statements that this area does not and cannot improve stormwater management and the Oscar Meyer Area Strategic Assessment Report (2/5/19) states that the wetland serves an important stormwater retention function. The Sustainability Plan also aims to promote healthy neighborhoods. Natural areas and parks promote both physical and mental health.

The planning area consists of many, many acres. Surely, creative planning can make room for a few more acres for wildlife and recreation on the Hartmeyer property. Please propose to amend the OMSAP to protect the entire 30 acres of

the Hartmeyer property.

Thank you.

From: [Janet Battista](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Cc: [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)
Subject: Hartmeyer Natural Area
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 5:51:48 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To: Housing Strategy Committee Members

> Re: Agenda Item 1 No. 59745, June 25, 2020 SMC Meeting

>

> By now it should be obvious that a rare, existing natural area In an urban setting needs preservation and protection. Iconic landscape architects Jens Jensen and Frederick Law Olmstead knew this and their efforts enhanced their cities tremendously. Madison, a great cultural and educational city, deserves all the remaining natural world it can capture. The redevelopment of the Oscar Meyer property can surely proceed apace without destroying what is so valuable to our future.

>

> Please support Amendment C to protect all 30 acres.

>

> Janet Battista

>

> 154 Kensington Drive

> Madison, Wisconsin 53704

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

From: gordian@nym.hush.com
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Population trends in the Oscar Mayer Special Area
Date: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 8:44:59 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Tue. June. 23, 2020

To the members of Madison's Housing Strategy Committee,

Re: Agenda item 59745, OMSAP adoption

Good recommendations for the types of housing needed in the Oscar Mayer Special Area must start with an accurate estimate of that particular area's population growth. If the estimate of population growth is wrong, the type of housing recommended will be wrong. The housing recommendations in the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan are premised on an implausibly large estimate of population growth in the Oscar Mayer Special Area.

The Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP) recommends building a large number of apartment towers in the areas on and around the former Oscar Mayer site. In most cases, the minimum height is three stories. The maximum height is generally five to eight stories, but in some areas buildings of 4 to 12 stories are recommended. Please see the attached file. These buildings are intended to house 4,000 new residents in the area over the next 20 years, but there are reasons to believe that far fewer than 4,000 people will live in the Sherman area 20 years from now.

The City did not estimate these additional 4,000 residents by projecting current population trends. The figure of 4,000 people is based on the "capacity" of the Oscar Mayer Area. The City Planning Department looked at factors such as the geographic area on which housing can be built and the zoning density allowed. After determining the maximum amount of housing the area could possibly hold, they estimated how many people could live there if all of that housing were built. In the Oscar Mayer Special Area that number of people is 4,000.

What happens if the expected 4,000 new residents do not show up? On one hand, developers will not build large apartment towers because they will not find renters to fill them. On the other hand, developers will not build apartment buildings of modest size because the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan prescribes large apartment buildings. If the estimate of population growth is wrong, the type of housing recommended will be wrong.

Adding 4,000 people to the Sherman area over 20 years requires increasing the current population by about 3% per year. This rate is 2 to 3 times the rate at which all of Madison is growing; that rate is 1.0% to 1.5% per year. In the period after 2000, the Northside actually lost 1% of its population while all of Madison gained 21%. Adding 4,000 people over the next 20 years would be a drastic reversal of current trends.

If the Sherman area were to grow for 20 years at the same rate as all of Madison, its population growth would end up somewhere between one-fourth and one-half of the 4,000 people on which the OMSAP bases its housing recommendations. With so many fewer people, the balance between apartment towers and buildings of modest

size could shift from the recommendations in the OMSAP towards the recommendations found in the current Sherman Neighborhood Plan.

In Madison the average household size is 2.21. Housing 4,000 people would therefore require creating about 1810 housing units, which is an average of 91 units per year for 20 years. If the Sherman area grows at 1.5% per year, only about 759 additional housing units would be required, which averages 38 units per year for 20 years. At the low end, if the Sherman area grows at 1.0% per year, only about 482 additional housing units would be required, which averages 24 units per year for 20 years. The 1.0% rate is closest to the area's recent population trend.

20 Year Population Projections and Housing Units Needed

Base Pop.	Annual CAGR	Population Growth	Additional Housing Units	Units per year
4834	0.0306	4000	1810	91
4834	0.0150	1677	759	38
4834	0.0100	1064	482	24

Where CAGR is Compound Annual Growth Rate

The Sherman Neighborhood Plan calls for new housing that preserves the character of the neighborhood. Housing 4,000 new people probably requires the apartment towers recommended by the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan. Using a more realistic estimate of population growth in the area allows greater latitude for constructing buildings of modest size similar to what the Sherman Neighborhood Plan recommends. The balance of housing types recommended in the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan could shift from apartment towers towards duplexes, row housing, and small apartment buildings.

Don Lindsay

Calculations and Citations

The types of housing recommended in the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan are based on the assumption that the Sherman area's population will grow by 4000 people in 20 years. That increase implies a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.060569% for 20 years. The annual growth rate for the city as a whole is 1% - 1.5%. See

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/cdbg/documents/2016CityBiennialHousingReport.pdf>

p. 54 of 190

Population growth in the Oscar Mayer Special Area of two to three times the rate of Madison as a whole is implausible. After 2000, the Northside actually lost 1% of its population total while the whole city gained 21%. See

https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/Oscar%20Mayer%20OMSAC%20Adopted%20Report_rs.pdf

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This lack of population growth partly explains why the 53704 zip code has the apartment highest apartment vacancy rate in Madison. See

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/cdbg/documents/2016CityBiennialHousingReport.pdf>

p. 42 of 190

If the Oscar Mayer area were to grow at the Madison wide rate of 1% - 1.5% per year, in 20 years its population would increase by 1064 - 1677 people. The difference between these numbers and 4000 has obvious implications for the quantity and types of housing needed. To house 1064 - 1677 more people, the area near Oscar Mayer would need to create an average of 24 - 38 housing units per year for 20 years. In contrast, housing 4000 more people would require creating on average 91 housing units per year for 20 years.

Citations and calculations supporting these lower numbers for population and housing units follow.

Estimate the Area's Current Population

The Neighborhood Indicators Project's web page shows that the Sherman Park Plan District had a population of 4165 in 2010. See

<https://madison.apl.wisc.edu/>

The Sherman Park Plan District roughly encompasses the area where the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan recommends new housing development. See

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/OMSAP%20Draft%20Document%20012320.pdf>

p. 25 of 58

If the Sherman area's population has grown at 1.5% for ten years, it would now have 4834 people

$$4165 * (1.015 ^ 10) = 4833.652536229743$$

Given the area's sluggish growth rate, this number is probably an overestimate.

Estimate the Compound Annual Growth Rate Needed to Add 4,000 People in 20 Years

The addition of 4000 people brings the population to 8834 in the next 20 years:

$$4000 + 4834 = 8834$$

The compound annual growth rate is 0.03060569 ~ 3.060569%

$$\left(\frac{8834}{4834} \right)^{\left(\frac{1}{20} \right)} - 1 = 0.030605693702152603$$

3.060569% is two to three times the population compound annual growth rate for Madison as a whole.

The formula for the compound annual growth rate is found at

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/cagr.asp>

Estimate the Sherman Area's Population Growth Using City Wide Averages

By how much would the Sherman area's population increase if it grew at the Madison wide annual rate? Below a range of population growth is calculated using compound annual growth rates of both 1% per year and 1.5% per year.

Estimate the Sherman Area's Future Population Using 1.0%/Year Growth for 20 Years

If the population grows at 1.0% per year for 20 years, it reaches 5898 people.

$$4834 * (1.01^{20}) = 5898.398653108473$$

In 20 years there would be 1064 more people in the Sherman area

$$5898.398653108473 - 4834 = 1064.398653108473$$

Estimate the Sherman Area's Future Population Using 1.5%/Year Growth for 20 Years

If the population grows at 1.5% per year for 20 years, it reaches 6511 people.

$$4834 * (1.015^{20}) = 6510.697101662952$$

In 20 years there would be 1677 more people in the Sherman area

$$6510.697101662952 - 4834 = 1676.6971016629523$$

Estimate the Number of Additional Housing Units Needed in 20 Years

How many housing units would these 1064 - 1677 people need?

In Madison, there are about 2.21 people per household. See

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/madisoncitywisconsin,US/PST045218>

How many housing units would be needed if the Sherman population area grew at 1% per year?

If there are 2.21 people per household, 1064 more people need 482 housing units.

$$1064 \text{ people} / 2.21 \text{ people per household} = 481.447963800905 \text{ housing units}$$

An average of 24 housing units per year created over 20 years would house 1064 people.

$$482 \text{ housing units} / 20 \text{ years} = 24.1 \text{ housing units per year}$$

How many housing units would be needed if the Sherman population area grew at 1.5% per year?

If there are 2.21 people per household, 1677 more people need 759 housing units.

$$1677 \text{ people} / 2.21 \text{ people per household} = 758.8235294117648 \text{ housing units}$$

An average of 38 housing units per year created over 20 years would house 1677 people.

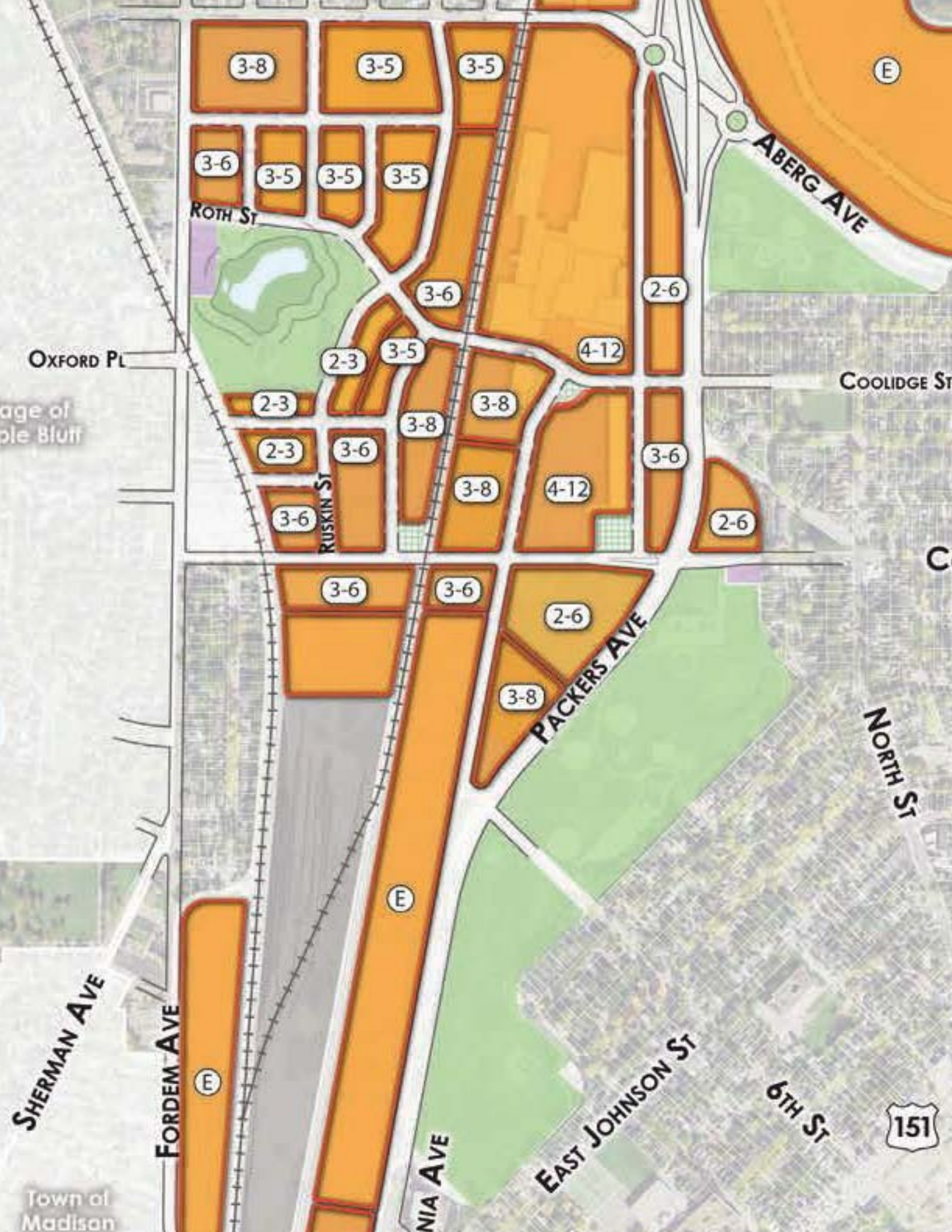
$$759 \text{ housing units} / 20 \text{ years} = 37.95 \text{ housing units per year}$$

How many housing units would be needed if the Sherman population grew by 4,000 people?

In contrast, to house 4,000 people in the Sherman area 1810 housing units would be needed, which is an average rate of 91 housing units per year for 20 years.

$$4000 \text{ people} / 2.21 \text{ people per household} = 1809.9547511312217 \text{ housing units}$$

$$1810 \text{ housing units} / 20 \text{ years} = 90.5 \text{ housing units per year}$$



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3-5

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3-5

ROTH ST

3-6

2-6

ABERG AVE

OXFORD PL

2-3

3-5

4-12

COOLIDGE ST

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ple Bluff

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3-8

3-8

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3-8

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3-6

2-6

C

3-6

3-6

3-8

PACKERS AVE

NORTH ST

SHERMAN AVE

FORDEM AVE

E

E

NIA AVE

EAST JOHNSON ST

6TH ST

151

Town of
Madison

From: [Jenny Kox](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Conservation of Oscar Mayer 30 acres
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 7:30:28 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Kox and I have made my home on the north side of Madison for most of my life. I ask that

You Please Make and Support a Motion to Amend OMSAP to include Option C Conservation Alternative to Save All 30 Acres as a Nature Park and Community Open Green Space to Best Meet Madison's Future Social and Ecological Needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jennifer Kox

Jennymkox@gmail.com

From: [Candi Diaz](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: A legacy moment
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 4:17:43 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello!

Thank you for your work on this committee and for taking time to read this information! I am so excited about this wonderful opportunity to see the plans that the city has been working so hard on spring off the paper and into action. How exciting to see this sparkling new development in the heart of one of the most urban blighted neighborhoods in the city! The plans are fantastic with a few exceptions which I'm writing about here.

My name is Candace Diaz and I am a Sherman neighborhood resident. I live 1000 feet from the Hartmeyer property. I would like to speak to the opportunities to build environmental and social justice for the kids in this neighborhood now and into the future with the new housing developments on the Oscar Mayer property.

Kids here play and ride their bikes in the streets. There are no parks in this neighborhood that parents will allow their younger kids to go to on their bikes. Most parents won't allow their kids to cross Packers Highway and the nearest "park" if you can call it that is Demetral. Which is really just a dog park and a stretch of mowed grass. Most kids here can't ride their bikes all the way to Warner park. Cherokee Marsh is a great area, but a sustainable park should be somewhere the residents can walk or bike too.

Keeping all 30 acres of the Hartmeyer property as a nature area and legacy park will transform this area for these kids, new housing development kids and older adults as well. They will have access to open green space to play in, ride their bikes in and to learn about the natural world right here in their community! By giving kids access to nature we are allowing them the opportunities that other kids get on a daily basis in the nicer neighborhoods. **Isn't this the social and environmental justice we are hearing so much about from the mayor?**

Kids of all races live here. They should be given the same opportunities for open green space and environmental education **as kids in the wealthier neighborhoods**. This is our chance!

The pandemic has proven to us the importance of green space especially in dense urban settings. People are getting outside now more than ever and it is a very important component of physical and mental health to have somewhere to escape the daily stresses of life.

This area is dense housing that is being built on an area of toxic waste that we are uncertain as to the nature and extent of the poisons. How equitable is it to place affordable housing here?

There will be 475 affordable "housing units" or as city planner, Dan Mcauliffe, so eloquently stated at the Parks commission meeting a month ago- **"these are "dwellings" not "storage boxes"** -on this property. Aside from the toxic waste under the land how healthy will that be for anyone without adequate access to open green space?

Now is the time – what are we waiting for. Are the city's plans just words on paper? This is a legacy moment. Preserve all 30 acres, do a real and comprehensive study of what type of poison is under this land and put the brakes on a minute here! More study needed!!

The city has taken a lot of time preparing and planning for a more just and green future. Since 2009 thousands of people have participated in the community planning process. Almost all agreed that green space is a must have for its residents. It's time to put into action all the words and ideas that are in these plans. It's time to please amend the **Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan to include this 30 acre natural area**.

Please NOTE!!

Annette Miller's (Equity by Design) "surveys" are **not representative** of the diverse population of people RIGHT HERE IN THIS NORTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD!! I never saw a survey? Look at the total number of people in those surveys? **34** people doesn't represent our neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and let's get this right! This is your legacy to the city.

Candace Diaz
2410 Superior St
Madison WI
920-222-3469



From: [Rhodes, Linette](#)
To: [McAuliffe, Daniel](#)
Cc: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: FW: Oscar Mayer Plan---comments for June 25 meeting
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 3:30:38 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Let's keep the entire 30 acres of HartMeyer. It would be an asset in this extremely dense development. It would be a Central Park for the residents to do a lot of outdoor activities in the land next to the actual wetland----and a way of creating a place where people actually want to live.

While getting the 14 acres paid for with the 395 acres of housing sounds very compelling, no one has explored ways to fund the entire 30 acre parcel without the 395 units. We don't have to solve all the City's need for affordable housing on one site. The maximum proposed density of 2500 units is huge, and I am in favor of reducing it. What seems like a tidy package of 395 units and 14 acres of park could end up costing the City more in social costs in the long run. And there is not enough park space within the development.

Regarding the equity lens: Were those who attended the focus groups led by Annette Miller aware that the proposed density is unlike anything they have experienced in Madison? And did they have a chance to express an opinion about 14 acres vs 30 acres?

In addition, we need a thorough evaluation of the soil and water on this industrial site for contamination. Were those in the racial equity focus groups informed of the contamination issues on this site?

Thank you

Marian Celesnik
1734 Sheridan Dr
Madison, WI

From: [Erich Eifler](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Hartmeyer
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 3:04:56 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

As an Eken Park resident, I am in support of maintaining the maximum green space available; in this case, all 30 acres of the Hartmeyer property. I support the drafting of an option C, for the Oscar development that preserves the whole property.

-Erich Eifler

From: [Paul Noeldner](#)
To: [Planning](#); [McGuigan, Patrick](#); [Housing Strategy](#); ledell.zellers@gmail.com; [Mayor; allalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:allalders@cityofmadison.com); [Virginia Scholtz](#); [Beth Sluys](#); [Baumel, Christie](#)
Subject: Amend OMSAP to include the option to Save All 30 Acres
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 2:56:00 PM
Attachments: [Paul Noeldner Slides - 0625 Housing Meeting.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

My Public Comments for the upcoming 6/25 4:30pm Housing Strategies meeting Agenda Item 1 are in the email below and attached.

Please share this email and the attached Paul Noeldner Slides - 0625 Housing Meeting pdf file with the committee and other parties.

Please bring up the attached Paul Noeldner Slides - 0625 Housing Meeting pdf file during my registered public speaking 3 minutes and follow along to turn pages as I read from it.

I am in Opposition to OMSAP and the current plan for the Hartmeyer property.

I am in Favor of Amending OMSAP to include the option to Save All 30 Acres as a Nature Park along with a Shared Community Green Space, as a 'Central Park' for a growing population.

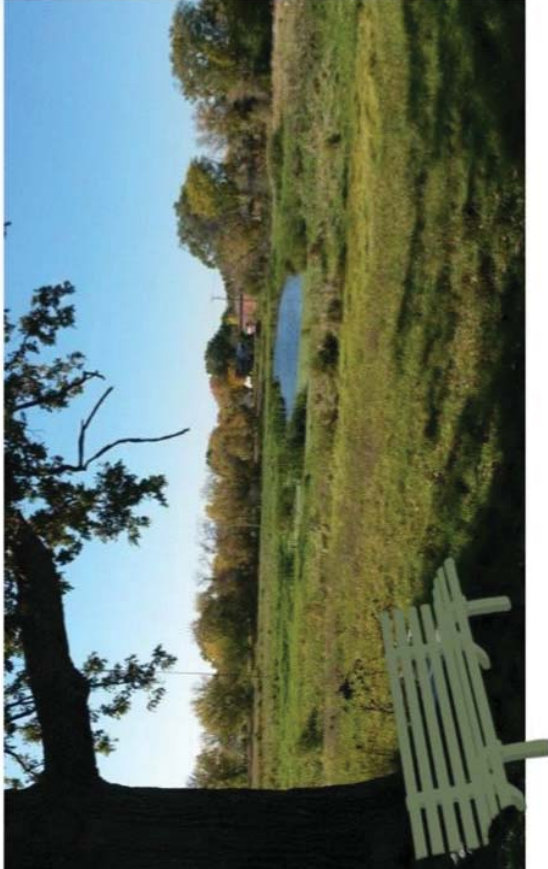
The current OMSAP plan which is not a compromise at all, because it only saves the mimimim legal wetland and 6 acres that would have to serve as both park area and habitat, making the wetland ecosystem unsustainable. It provides insufficient shared community open green space for dense housing and a growing population in surrounding areas.

Please Make and Support a Motion to Amend OMSAP to ASave All 30 Acres as a Nature Park and Community Open Space to Best Meet Madison's Future Social Justice and Ecological Needs, in recognition of strong Aler and Neighborhood support. This will permit City staff to look at opportunities for partnering with Dane County, Groundswell and other possible donor, grant, and funding sources.

If you are looking for a compromise, please Make and Support a Motion to Amend OMSAP to Save 20 Acres with Fewer Streets and More Natural Area and Park Space. While not as good as Saving All 30, this compromise would better serve Madison's future Social and Ecological Needs.

Thank you

Paul Noeldner
Master Naturalist Instructor
Volunteer Coordinator, Madison FUN Friends of Urban Nature
608-698-0104
paul_noeldner@hotmail.com
ethicalguidebook.com
Public Ethics Trumps Personal Values in Civil Society
/
\
(:~>)
/



Shmeyer Natural Area Invites You!
*Nature Recreation along with the Sandhill
S, Fox, and other Wildlife at this Historic
and Upland Ecosystem in the Heart of
Madison's North and East Side!*

Save All 30 Acres!

Paul Noeldner speaking on behalf of Friends of Hartme
Natural Area and Madison FUN Friends of Urban Natur
partnership of Madison Parks and Friends groups Help
Madison Connect Families and Kids with Urban Nature

Yesterday the Sandhill Crane family walked by and the
tailed Hawks circled overhead as the Friends of Hartme
Natural Area did a cleanup along Roth with owner per
This nature oasis in the heart of Madison is a gem wort

The Sherman Neighborhood Association, Eken Park
Neighborhood Association, Sierra Club, Madison Audub
Alders representing the OMSAP area All Support Saving
Acres as a Nature Park and Shared Community Green S

We need Affordable Housing, but it should be done Su
Out of the 2700 housing units proposed for OMSAP, the
can be done by building Sustainably on evolving oppor
redevelop, rather than precious remaining Urban Gree

OMSAP PLAN SAVES ONLY 14 ACRES AND IS NOT ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE. IT DOES NOT MEET WING COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE NEEDS

PUTS AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON A HISTORIC WETLAND as confirmed by 1906 maps and the remaining deep hydric soils. **THE PROPOSED 14 ACRES IS NOT A COMPROMISE!** The wetland was changed from 3 to 8 acres to meet the legal minimum wetland which is likely to grow with climate change increased rainfall. **THE PROPOSED 6 ACRE UPLAND IS NOT SUFFICIENT HABITAT** to sustain the rich ecosystem of Frogs, Cranes, Fox, Deer and 60+ Bird Species documented living there in spite of invasive plants.

TREES GO RIGHT NEXT TO THE WETLAND AND 200 YEAR OLD OAKS opportunities for Green Bike Paths and Wildlife Corridors are Lost. **THIS AREA IS NOT ALREADY WELL SERVED WITH PUBLIC PARKS.** Little League Fields and Demetrol are primarily single-purpose sports fields. **Neighbors say they have to go elsewhere for Natural Areas and Parks.** **RES OF NATURAL SUSTAINABLE WATER INFILTRATION ARE LOST** to pervious streets and infrastructure that will drain directly to lakes. **PLANNERS ACKNOWLEDGE HYDRIC WETLAND SOILS AND POLLUTION RISKS** EXIST that may preclude dense Affordable Housing



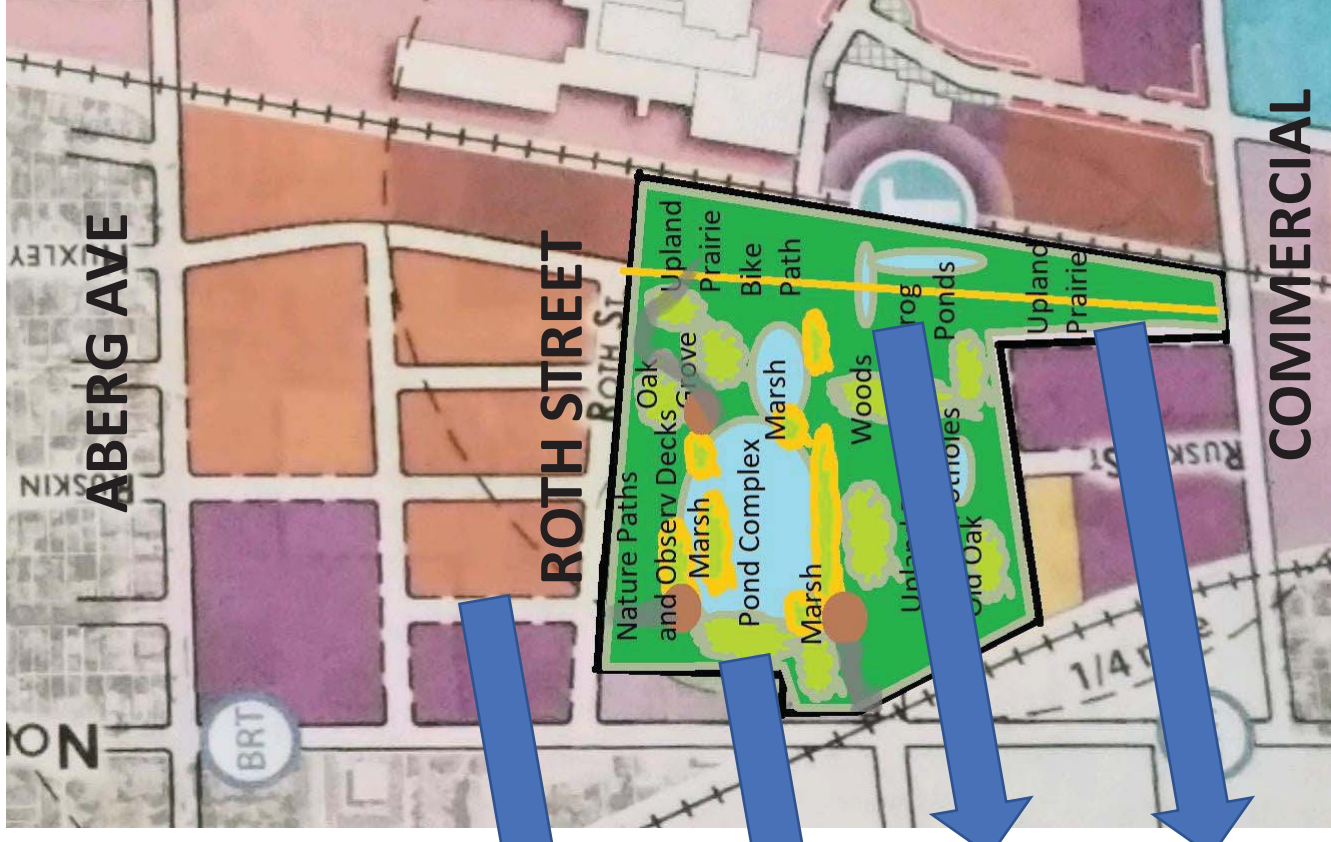
**POSSIBLE COMPROMISE OPTION TO SAVE
ACRES STILL FAILS TO PROVIDE
SUFFICIENT COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE FOR
GROWING POPULATION**

THIS COMPROMISE WOULD KEEP SOME HOUSING onsite
City Planning wants, but still build on historic wetlands.
**THIS COMPROMISE KEEPS THE COOLIDGE-ROTH STREET
CONNECTION** that City Planning wants, but a better
alternative using existing Right Of Way exists
IT DOES ELIMINATE SOME STREETS going right next to
the wetland and 200-year-old Oaks
IT DOES ALLOWS FOR SOME WETLAND INCREASE with
climate change increased rainfall
**IT SAVES 6 MORE ACRES FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE
ECOSYSTEM**, but only a small Neighborhood Park
**IT FAILS TO PROVIDE FREE SHARED COMMUNITY OPEN
SPACE FOR A VARIETY OF SOCIAL BONDING ACTIVITIES**
**IT FAILS TO PRESERVE GREEN BIKE PATH AND WILDLIFE
CORRIDOR CONNECTIONS**



CONVERTING ALL 30 ACRES AS A NATURE PARK AND SHARED COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE HELPS MEET CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GOALS WITH MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON SURROUNDING REDEVELOPMENTS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING on Redeveloped Parcels with Existing
Housing Units, while preserving a Beautiful Natural Area to Enjoy
and Support Ecological Sustainability by Preserving Ecological Habitat
for Pollinators, Birds and Wildlife, Infiltration, and Carbon Offset
Programs. **HEALTHY NATURE RECREATION AND NATURE EDUCATION** for
Surrounding Neighborhoods, Schools, Families and Kids
**OPPORTUNITIES FOR NATURE OBSERVATION PATHS AND LOOKOUT
POINTS** as well as parking and playground facilities
PROVIDE FREE PUBLIC SHARED COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE for a
Meditation Pad, Yoga in the Park, an Urban Ecology Center to Engage
Neighborhood Kids, Ecological and Cultural History Displays, Kids
Garden, a Sculpture Garden, Community Gardens, a Food Forest,
and other Social Bonding Activities
CONNECT TO GREEN TRANSIT with City-Wide Bike Path Connections on Green
Corridors critical to Sustaining Urban Ecosystems



**WE MAKE AND SUPPORT A MOTION TO AMEND OMSAP
TO INCLUDE SAVING ALL 30 ACRES TO ALLOW THE CITY TO
WORK AT PARTNERSHIP AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES!**



STAINABLE WETLAND ECOSYSTEM

LONG TERM WATER, CLIMATE AND CARBON BENEFITS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON SURROUNDING REDEVELOPMENT

AMAZING WALKING AND BIKING

AMAZING OPEN SPACE AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

**AMAZING COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE FOR A VARIETY OF
ACTIVITIES THAT ENHANCE SOCIAL BONDING AND HEALTH**



From: [Diane Farsetta](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Cc: [Christina Heaton](#); [sarahinkel](#); [Abbas, Syed](#)
Subject: Emerson East neighborhood feedback on OMSAP
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 2:54:47 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear members of the Housing Strategy Committee:

As the development subcommittee of the Emerson East Neighborhood Association (EENA), we facilitate neighborhood involvement in decisions that affect land use and development, multi-modal transportation, and housing. We have participated in many Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP) meetings, including the site walking tour, since part of our neighborhood is within the OMSAP boundary.

We support the OMSAP and appreciate all the work that's gone into the plan. We offer the following feedback to strengthen the OMSAP and ensure its realization benefits our communities.

We urge the City to prioritize affordable housing in the OMSAP, especially for households making less than 60% area median income. We encourage the City to work with local nonprofits to establish a community land trust in the OMSAP, which could provide permanently affordable residential and commercial space. Troy Co-housing is a successful community land trust development just north of the OMSAP.

We appreciate that the OMSAP preserves 13 acres of the Hartmeyer Natural Area site as undeveloped greenspace, an increase from the original plan. **However, we strongly support preserving the full 31 acres.** Doing so will formalize a wildlife corridor, maximize its stormwater management qualities, and realize the natural space's potential for the enjoyment, learning, and well-being of all city residents.

It is our lived experience that the surrounding area is deficient in greenspace, especially for neighbors who lack easy access to motor vehicles, or who are unable to or don't feel safe bicycling out to Warner Park or Cherokee Marsh. Keeping the full Hartmeyer Natural Area as greenspace would benefit nearby neighborhoods and the entire city, as new housing, amenities, and transportation options in the OMSAP are realized.

We understand that further increasing the size of the OMSAP greenspace would reduce the number of future housing units. We think that the reduction of 17 acres for housing (out of the 425 acre OMSAP region), or a possible drop in 395 residential units (out of more than 2,500 units planned for OMSAP) is justified.

On other topics, we strongly support the OMSAP's prioritization of multi-modal transport, which will further make the area welcoming and affordable to lower-income households. We encourage further bicycle / pedestrian path connections in the area, to allow bicyclists and pedestrians safe access to the Dane County airport and surrounding businesses and employers.

We also urge the City to be fully transparent and release the results of any environmental contamination testing and plans for remediation. In OMSAP boundaries and adjacent areas, there has been a long history of industry contamination and landfills. We live here and have a right to know about any contamination; where it is and how bad it is. We also ask that the City requires this same transparency from any business that wants to develop within the OMSAP boundaries.

Thank you for being part of the process to address our concerns. We look forward to your response and to the continuing evolution of the OMSAP.

Sincerely,

Chris Heaton and Diane Farsetta, Co-chairs, on behalf of the Emerson East Neighborhood Association - Development Subcommittee

The Development Committee was charged by the Emerson East Neighborhood Association to facilitate neighborhood involvement in decisions that affect land use and development, multi-modal transportation, and housing to further the neighborhood association's mission of improving the Emerson East neighborhood and surrounding areas as a place to live, work and recreate.

From: [Beth](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Agenda Item #1, File number 59745 and 58107
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 2:29:45 PM
Attachments: [HSC_June2020.docx](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Housing Strategy Committee,

Attached please find my related document for this evening's meeting.

I am also submitting these links for you to review the information provided by the Transparency Project that speaks to the contamination at the Oscar Mayer site:

[Report](#)

[Map](#)

Thank you.

Beth Sluys

**A healthy environment underpins economic and social well-being –
*Affordable housing needs to also be safe housing.***



**Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan
Housing Strategy Committee
June 25, 2020**

Beth Sluys

Agenda Item #1

Alder Rebecca Kemble, District 18

“A space where love flourishes because it is inclusive in decision-making activities, and everyone respects each other and is inclusive and welcoming to all.” (Focus group participant, 2018)

What participants appreciate most about living in Madison: “Green and Open Spaces” Key finding, focus group participants, 2018)

Our Placemaking Process

Inspired by these quotes from the Oscar Mayer Focus Group Session Report from 2018 and the hundreds of people I have met throughout this plan process, I continue to advocate for the preservation of ALL 30 acres of land at 2007 Roth Street, a re-emerging wetland that has been under industrial stress for over a century but showing its resilience, for over a hundred years. The ancient oak trees are well over 200 years old and have seen their share of changes and are bracing for future plans.

I moved to Madison late in 2016, I have been working to preserve the Hartmeyer land for future generations and to provide information to the overall plan process that reflects the wishes of the over 1,500 residents that have participated in the process since it began with the strategic assessment. I have been involved in this process for about 3 years. I joined the OSCAR Group in 2017 and helped with the focus group meetings and helped with the final report. I have been to most of the OMSAC meetings and all of the OMSAP public meetings as well as most of the 16 community meetings that were hosted by area neighborhoods, Alder Abbas, and area residents.

Hartmeyer Area

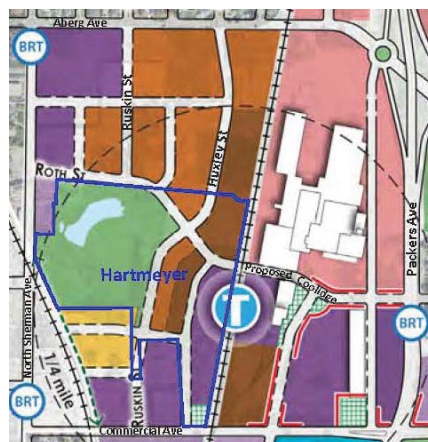
As high-density development occurs all around this parcel of land, let’s respect the unanimous vote of the Sustainable Madison Committee and keep ALL 30 acres for a legacy park. A great outcome in a time of climate change and a global pandemic, and in keeping with providing a public space for all of Madison’s residents – now and in the future. As one of the SMC members stated, “Let’s not pave paradise and put up a

parking lot.”

As infill redevelopment pushes every parcel of vacant land to development, it will become more and more important to not destroy our environment for the sake of high-density housing and roads. I ask that we continue to keep this parcel of historic wetland designated as a public shared space, a natural area within the midst of urban landscape for the good of present day residents and surely for the residents of the future. It represents the general sentiment of the residents of the north side that are considering this process as a place making process, rather than just where buildings and roads and paths could go and how many. It is with this keen eye towards including *all* voices, that I write this today.

The Hartmeyer Natural Area is a **unique resource** for Madison’s Northside and presents an extraordinary opportunity for the city to partner with the Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area, Groundswell, and Dane County, as well as private donors to create a **legacy park** unlike any other in the Sherman Neighborhood area. It is my request that we keep this remnant wetland ecosystem for public use and betterment as well as to preserve this natural area in its entirety as a place of respite from the hustle of everyday life and living in a high-density environment.

While it is true that there are little league baseball fields and the old Demetral landfill, now a public open space, they are really not easily accessible for area residents west of Packers Highway. According to the children and their families who live in the area neighborhoods along Sherman Avenue, Packers Highway creates an unsafe barrier and the children cannot go there unescorted by an adult and usually the families do not go over there. It is too dangerous to cross the highway. Seniors who live in the apartments in the area, do not like walking across Packers Highway, but do walk to the Hartmeyer area to watch birds and enjoy the natural space. When the Friends of Hartmeyer hosted a clean up event, a diverse and caring group of volunteers showed up and picked up trash together. **Let us not miss this legacy moment.**



In 2018, a public engagement process that reflected the “overall diverse constituency of Madison and the specific diverse community of the Northside” was held as part of Phase I of the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan process. The participants of the 2018 Oscar Mayer Focus Group Sessions (59 participants and 341 survey results) were asked about “what they appreciate about living in the City of Madison”, the Key Findings reported that **Green and Open space** was the number one response on the list. Phase II of this process did not address green space but rather housing, transportation and business development. Hundreds of people have taken the time to attend public meetings, town hall meetings, community roundtable meetings, and open houses. Letters, related contamination reports, and other documents are contained in File #58107 as well as file #59745.

It is in light of this key finding, the challenges we face with climate change, and a global pandemic and our failings to address racial equity, that I take this moment in Madison's history to create a legacy park that is open to all, where all of its people can find comfort, a slow and restful place in their lives. We have learned throughout this pandemic and in the midst of climate change, that green spaces, in particular wetlands, are of great value. A place with natural comforts and now, an open shared space during the pandemic, in an otherwise urban area, as well as an environmental resource for flood mitigation for area home basements as well as for carbon sequestration. As 285 diesel buses, F35 jets, a massive fleet of MG&E diesel service trucks and the addition of 2,500 cars arrive to Madison's north side, we need to address air pollution and increased carbon level concerns especially for those members of the community suffering with asthma and other respiratory disease. We all have connections to the land.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is important and there are currently at least three housing developments approved or in consideration already in the Sherman Neighborhood. This neighborhood covers 410 acres of the 425 acres of land within the OMSAP boundaries so it is critical that developers work closely with Alder Abbas and the Sherman Neighborhood Association as well as the Eken Park Neighborhood.

In a recent Fair Share Analysis presented by the city, results show that the Oscar Mayer plan area, Districts 12 and 18, are shown with an over-representation of assisted housing at more than 5% above city average, the highest ranking. Also within that summary, the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan area is rated in a range that is as high as 15% above the city average for assisted housing with Sherman Neighborhood and Eken Park neighborhood area. As with current housing in the neighborhood, a balanced approach makes sense in terms of incorporating affordable housing throughout the OMSAP area.

We have many mixed income neighborhoods as well as large concentrated areas of assisted income housing on the north side. The OMSAP area is well apportioned with low income housing which can make this area one that may be less able to absorb more subsidized housing units as the city has planned for upwards of 4,000 new residents moving to the north side by 2040. We welcome the concept of missing middle housing but often see high-rise apartments next to small homes. This does not reflect the missing middle housing gradual scaling in building size and height.

When considering housing in a post-industrial area, make sure that before any ground is broken, that we understand about the subsurface contamination and its impact on families and children. There are already issues at OM Station involving toxic gas vapors in buildings, large plumes of toxic chemicals in the soil and in the groundwater - Some of it possibly impacting homes located down gradient of the site in nearby neighborhoods with water in their basements on a regular basis.

It is an area known for its historic industrial use and also in need of thorough investigation and remediation. While Oscar Mayer is known its meat products, the site also was an area for plastic production, high use of pesticides related to the livestock on site, and many other industrial processes. All leaving their mark on the site.

We do not want to place the lives of families and children at risk due to poor planning and a lack of site investigations being completed as a key component of this plan. Truax residents suffer every day as they live near highly contaminated Starkweather Creek, their city well was turned off due to chemical contamination of the groundwater, and the fish from the creek that they may still eat as part of their regular diets, contains high levels of PFAs. The affordable apartments there are wonderful in their design and construction, but are not safe in terms of environmental risk to families and children. It also adds to the budgets of working poor families that no longer trust city water.

I have seen parents hauling large jugs of drinking water into an apartment at Truax.

No family needs to feel threatened by the ground under their feet, the water they consume or swim in, or the air they breathe. We are aware of the issues related to contamination at Oscar Mayer and indeed in many areas of the north side, and we are not willing to turn a blind eye to the risks of building on contaminated soil.

Affordable housing needs to also be safe housing.

From: [Kester, Dolores](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Cc: [Abbas, Sved](#)
Subject: Comment for Housing Strategy Agenda item # 1 plus presentation on affordable housing 6-25-20
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 2:14:15 PM
Attachments: [Myth of Concentrated Poverty - Steinberg.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Greetings to Members of the Housing Strategy Committee:

My family has lived on Winchester Street since 1982, a few blocks north of Aberg Avenue which is the northernmost street covered by the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP) at N Sherman Avenue. This is the Sherman Neighborhood, whose boundaries include most of the OMSAP area. We are a friendly and very mixed neighborhood—mathematicians and poets, multiracial, with diverse genders, some well off and some just getting by, dog friendly, pollinator friendly, multicultural, pragmatists and dreamers—all of which makes it a very interesting and neighborly place to live. We have been an “affordable” neighborhood for decades.

I personally have a little knowledge about education. I have taught at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and in West Bend, in addition to teaching courses in English as a Second Language in several contexts.

I write to you now about the fact that City Planning is encouraging extensive new development and rehabbing of primarily multistory housing in the OMSAP area—much of which is intended to be “affordable” for economically disadvantaged families, including many people of color. The city calls this “equity.” Is it equitable?

Our Sherman neighborhood, and the Northside of which we are a part, have recently been a target of many new proposals for affordable housing. New affordable housing projects are scheduled to break ground in the near future on Aberg Avenue and on Huxley Street in the OMSAP area.

A bit of history. From 1973-1979 in Paul Soglin’s first terms as Madison’s Mayor, numerous low income housing projects were built in a row all along Northport Drive on the Northside, as well as close to Northport. These include but are not limited to Packers Townhouses, Northport Packers Apartments, Vera Court, Kennedy Heights. At that time

urban planning concepts concentrated low-income housing in a small area.

Our Sherman neighborhood includes the Northport Packers Apartments, which is the southernmost tip of the Northport low income housing corridor in Madison. This low-income housing corridor stretches roughly 1 ½ miles from Northport Packers Apartments, the Packers Townhouses, to the Kennedy Heights Apartments at the northern tip of this corridor. Vera Court is off of School Road not far off Northport Drive. It is also approximately a mile from new low income housing proposed for Abert Avenue and Huxley Avenue within the OMSAP area. This entire housing corridor is within two miles of the new low income housing building at 1902 Tennyson Lane which was constructed in 2016.

The concentration of low income housing in small areas gave rise to a number of problems which negatively affected the education and well being of the residents of these projects and the Madison community. To work around the racial segregation fostered by concentrated low income housing projects, around 1980 the Madison schools tried school “pairing” (bussing) to move students around for better mixes of income and racial factors in the schools. Not known whether any bussing was done in Northside schools.

Most of this area consists of three contiguous low-income census tracts in the heart of the Northside (#002200, #002301, and #002402), arguably one of the most concentrated areas of low income residents in Madison, many of whom are also people of color.

The concentration of low-income housing noted above is reflected in the Northside elementary school populations. As of January of 2018, two of our four Northside elementary schools have 70-76 % low-income enrollment. The third had 65% low income enrollment. The fourth one had 56% low-income families. Half of the elementary schools in Madison have less than 50% low income families and would benefit

from mixed-income housing. Data from website of Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as of 1-2-18.

Mendota Elementary School, which children from our Sherman neighborhood attend, has the largest percentage of low-income students of all elementary schools on the Northside: 76%. Compare:

Lakeview: 70%

Sandburg: 65%

Gompers: 56%

Data from website of Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as of 1-2-18.

The total student population at Mendota Elementary School as of 1-2-18 was 325—247 low income (76%), and 78 not low income (24%). If many of the children in any “affordable” housing planned for the OMSAP area attend Mendota Elementary School and Sherman Middle School, this will bring the low income percentage of students much higher. This is not acceptable if we want children to do well in school.

Data from website of Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as of 1-2-18.

Teachers and administration at Sherman Middle School already have challenges and are struggling to meet the needs of the kids who attend. They have attended neighborhood meetings asking for volunteers to tutor the many, many kids who, in middle school, cannot read or do math adequately. Many Sherman neighborhood members have served as tutoring volunteers at this school and the Sherman Neighborhood Assn has been nominated for a United Way award for this work. Adding more high-need kids to an already strapped institution will exacerbate staffing and retention issues.

When there is a higher percentage of poor children in a classroom, all the children do worse. In a school where more than 70% of the kids are low-income, logically, most or all of

the classrooms will contain a high percentage of low-income children. See, <http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/public-schools-solution-percentage-low-income-students-test-scores/Content?oid=11526214/>.

Overall, concentrated poverty is tightly correlated with gaps in educational achievement. The Atlantic, February 29, 2016. See, <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/02/>.

Finally, the thoughtful article attached above cautions us to be wary of what “concentrated poverty” means and how the term may be used to serve political purposes of various kinds. See, [“The Myth of Concentrated Poverty”](#) by Stephen Steinberg, in *The Integration Debate: Competing Futures for American Cities*, Ed. by Chester Hartman and Gregory D. Squires (Routledge, 2010).

Bottom line: as you plan for “affordable housing” in the OMSAP area and on the Northside, please be cautious about “concentrated poverty.” In our neighborhood, the school situation is already unacceptable, and will be exacerbated by increasing concentrations of low income residents. Please, give careful attention to these concerns in planning for the quality of life and educational attainment of our future neighbors and friends who will live in the OMSAP housing now being planned for. True equity requires no less.

Respectfully,

Dolores Kester, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison
1818 Winchester Street
Madison, WI 53704
Email: dakester@sbcglobal.net
Tel. 608-249-1218
Aldermanic District 12
Member, Board of Directors, Wild Warner
Member, Board of Directors, Sherman Neighborhood
Association

From: [Shaya Schreiber](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Housing Strategy Committee in support of Affordable Housing Action Alliance Housing Priorities
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 1:49:06 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Shaya Schreiber, I am school social worker, board member of two Madison non-profits that support affordable housing initiatives, a land trust home owner and indigenious.

I would like to express my support of the Affordable Housing Action Alliance Housing Priorities. I hope these priorities are adopted during housing strategy committee decision making.

As a social worker I have worked with many families impacted by the lack of affordable housing, by eviction and by lack of affordable homeownership opportunities. It is very stressful for families when they need an 5-day eviction notice in order to receive eviction prevention support. This practice causes a huge amount of worry and stress and there is no guarantee that the individual will even receive eviction prevention funds. This practice also causes an incentive for landlords to give out these notices. I also see the value of enabling and encouraging the transfer of land and property to nonprofit ownership. There are many opportunities to support community needs as identified by the communities themselves at a community level through this method.

As a lower income single parent, I would not have been able to afford a home without the Madison Area Community Land Trust. I experienced housing discrimination when I was a renter. The stress and trauma of applying to housing led me to remain in a one bedroom apt with two children due to the challenges of trying to find affordable housing on a school social worker income. I am grateful for the opportunity of affordable homeownership and stability and peace of mind. Unfortunately there are many other individuals who face housing stress on a daily basis, who don't have the option of working with area non-profits and who can't find affordable healthy housing.

It is important for the city to identify, acknowledge and address the ways housing impacts communities of color and communities affected by poverty. It is imperative the city identify, acknowledge and address the systematic methods of oppression that are embedded in our society and city processes related to housing. This is an opportunity for Madison to show our black, indigenious and people of color that they are important, a priority and their livelihoods matter.

Thank you,
Shaya Schreiber
4261 Beverly Rd
Madison

Affordable Housing Action Alliance Housing Priorities:
Encourage development of single room occupancy units (SROs) and quality, affordable, pay-to-stay short term housing

Don't require an eviction notice in order to get rental assistance funds.

Don't allow Section 8 vouchers in 30 percent AMI units.

Enable and encourage the transfer of land/property to nonprofit ownership in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

Land banking

Zoning Changes

Linkage fees and affordable housing impact fees

Right to counsel

More funds for downpayment assistance

Work to preserve LIHTC/ Section 42 properties with expiring affordability to ensure that we retain affordable units.

Develop an Opportunity Zone Code of Conduct

Require certain qualifications of all parties involved in ownership and management of housing OR identify managers and owners (including for-profit) with a sort of ethical seal of approval so residents could look for them

Support non-profit capacity building and reduce costs

Funding for a homeless services position, as described below

From: [Karen Bassler](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Keep the 30 acres as greenspace
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 1:21:37 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Committee Members:

A wetland surrounded by hard pavement and buildings does not function as a wetland should, absorbing stormwater and filtering toxins. A buffer around the wetland is necessary to allow for the natural flows required.

Planner Dan McAuliffe misrepresents what the hydric soils at the site mean for wetland functioning - hydric soils are not incapable of taking in more water, they are just one indicator of a wetland's presence.

Opportunities to preserve intact functioning wetlands are rare, and having one in an urban area rarer still. Providing greenspace that can actually be accessed and enjoyed by the residents of the new housing makes that housing healthier for those residents.

Please adopt the Oscar Mayer plan with these 30 acres designated as greenspace. Missing this opportunity means it is lost forever.

Thank you,
Karen Bassler
222 Dixon St.

From: [Barbara Taylor](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Hartmeyer Area
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 1:09:16 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

The Hartmeyer Area is waiting to give a quiet, nature-oriented space to those of us (meaning all) who need a contemplative peaceful sanctuary.

Most sincerely,

Barbara Taylor
1110 North Sherman Avenue Apt.230
jbttaylor36@gmail.com

From: [Becky Leidner](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Oscar Mayer plan
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:50:35 PM

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I am a 30-year resident of the Sherman neighborhood as well as a life-long Madisonian who is strongly opposed to several elements of the Oscar Mayer redevelopment proposal in its current form. My greatest concern is for the preservation of the entire 30-acre Hartmayer Natural Area and its protection from human encroachment of any kind. This tiny remnant of the Starkweather ecosystem is a thriving refuge for a wide variety of plant, animal, and insect species, precisely because we have left it alone. To destroy it in order to build yet more streets, housing, and industry would be a tragedy. By now we should know better, and must do better. Please get the dollar signs out of your eyes and the happy sounds of yet more construction out of your ears, go down to the area, look at and listen to the sights and sounds of this wild, beautiful, special place, and then search your hearts.

I am also opposed to the addition of roundabouts at Aberg and Packers Avenues. My opposition is based on both a general distaste for roundabouts and a specific concern that they would create an even more continuous flow of traffic on Aberg Ave between Packers and N Sherman. It is already a challenge to enter or cross Aberg from Loftsgordon or Huxley at most times of day, even with stoplights at Packers and N Sherman, since Aberg is a heavily used connector street. The OM development would put yet more pressure on Huxley and Aberg and without stoplights at Packers it will be even more difficult for drivers to safely enter (or exit) the Aberg traffic flow. This situation may in turn create more traffic on Schlimgen Ave, already a racetrack, as drivers try to access N Sherman or Packers while avoiding Aberg.

Although I am not a resident of the Eken Park neighborhood, I support their wish to leave Coolidge Ave as a dead-end street. The proposal to open the street seems to me to be yet one more example of imposing poorly-thought-out and highly disruptive changes on neighbors who don't want or need them, just as with the myriad residents of the wildlife area whose homes are threatened, and Sherman residents who have no wish to further their difficulties with Aberg Ave traffic by dealing with unnecessary roundabouts and increased traffic.

Finally and overall, I feel the plan is vastly out of scale with the aesthetics of the North Side and out of touch with the "Northside vibe" that many of us know and love. It introduces a huge amount of dense housing, retail, traffic, and industry to our quiet, laid-back, working-class, ecologically special part of the city. The tiny remnant of wetland will quickly become degraded and useless as habitat. The noise and traffic will carry over far beyond the boundaries of the new development. We need more affordable single-family owner-occupied homes. We need safe neighborhoods and good schools. We need our precious wild areas respected, preserved and expanded. We do not need this dense, incongruous, and destructive development plopped down at the gateway to our neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Leidner
1915 Spohn Ave.
Madison WI 53704
(608) 320-4144

From: [Becky Leidner](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Oscar Mayer plans
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:42:52 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Housing Strategy Committee members,

I was born in Madison and have lived here all my life, the past 30 years in the Sherman neighborhood just north of Oscar Mayer. I'm excited to see so much thought going into the best use of this property for the benefit of the North Side and the City. But I'm not writing to advocate for jobs, housing, and prosperity, as these goals have plenty of advocates in the halls of power. I strongly support the Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area Plan C conservation proposal, and I'm writing on behalf of those that can't speak at a City meeting or write to their alder. You won't hear their voices in City Hall, but if you go down to the Hartmeyer pond on a spring evening, you'll hear them exuberantly peeping and croaking. If you sit quietly in the oak woods on a moonlit winter night, you'll hear them hooting. If you walk near the wetland on an autumn day, you'll hear them honking and clattering, excited to be on their way. And if I may presume to speak for them, I think what they would have me say is, our tiny refuge was once part of a vast beautiful ecosystem, tens of thousands of years old, teeming with life, that has come down to you like a treasure which generations before you have relentlessly and foolishly squandered until today you have only a few precious coins left in your hands. And in your wildest imaginations, your wisest deliberations, even knowing the existential threats our natural world is facing, the best way you can come up with to spend this inheritance is on yet more roads, housing, stores, and industry, and a few token acres of mowed grass with a swingset and a picnic table or two. They would say--the birds, the frogs, the foxes, coyotes, possums, muskrats, skunks, groundhogs, insects, trees, plants--that there are already homes, roads, stores, and industry here: our homes, our nests, our hives, our burrows, our lodges, our paths. We have nowhere else to go. Humans do. Our lives are in your hands. You hold the power to preserve or destroy them. You can't save the Amazon or the glaciers or the oceans, but you can save our world, simply by leaving it alone. Please do the right thing. Thank you.

Rebecca Leidner

1915 Spohn Ave.

Madison WI 53704

(608) 320-4144

From: [Carl Landsness](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Cc: [Planning](#); ledell.zellers@gmail.com
Subject: Re Agenda #1 of today's Housing Strategy Committee
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:30:38 PM

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Dear Housing Strategy Committee,

I grew up on the near east side of Madison when Oscar Mayer was thriving (50's and 60's)...
when most of us had little awareness of the need for stewarding natural areas (especially wetlands)...
and even polluted or abused them (as I played in wetlands near Starkweather Creek).

Now, as Co-Chair of Friends of Starkweather Creek (but not speaking for FSC)...
I realize the huge need for such areas...
and for stewarding them (including healing the abuse that people like me and my immigrant ancestors did).

And... I find major healing (mental/emotional/physical/spiritual) tromping in wetlands (with delicate discernment re when, where and how).

Plus... I've learned more about the very complex interdependence of all lifeforms and spaces...
including the need for uplands around wetlands...
to allow the movement and interdependence between both...
plus cleansing and balancing our overall eco-system.
I notice that this area of Madison has little left of what once was a **massive** and vibrant wetland (including the entire airport area).

I also question our values and forecasts re city growth...
and the need for endless housing, comforts and convenience.
Many of us believe that COVID-19 is a major wake-up call from the Universe...
forcing us to pause our frenzied pursuits of power & pleasure, fear of change & discomfort, blame of others & circumstances...
plus attachment to old beliefs & behaviors...
before we consume & control ourselves into extinction or misery.

I ask you to save (and steward) all 30 acres [Hartmeyer natural area](#)...
and willing to contribute money for this.

Carl Landsness
Madison native, invasive, wounder and healer

**WE HAVE MET
THE ENEMY
AND HE IS US.**



From: [Caroline Larson](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Hartmeyer Natural Area
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 11:15:53 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I support good quality housing for the northside, but only if it means that a wonderful green space can provide an open green natural area for the high density of housing being promoted in the plan. I support saving all 30 acres of the Hartmeyer Natural Area.

Regards,

Carrie Larson M.Ed. CCC-SLP/L
Doctoral Candidate
Communication Sciences and Disorders
University of Wisconsin-Madison

From: [Angrim, Mary](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Question on today's meeting
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 10:23:00 AM

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Hello,

I am not able to listen to this meeting this afternoon. Will it be recorded and available for listening later?

Thank you.

Mary Angrim
Madison, WI

From: [Beth](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: OMSAP and environmental justice
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 10:22:14 AM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Housing Strategy Committee,

I am sending this email that was sent to the SMC this week from Maria Powell. I found it to be a great summary of the many issues with which we are grappling, that are far outside of the issues of land use, affordable housing, bus routes, traffic lights, and roads that are not wanted...among the many.

I think it is important in helping you to understand the complexity of the issues we have been facing related to Oscar Mayer for almost 4 years now. Since the plant closed, the north side community has been working side by side in this place making endeavor.

Thank you,

Beth Sluys
Dist 18

Dear Sustainable Madison Committee:

Due to an important family event, I cannot participate in the SMC meeting tonight, so my comments about the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP, Item #4) are below.

About one hundred and seventy years ago, in 1851, my great-great grandparents arrived in Madison with their five children (and one on the way--my great grandfather) after a long journey from northern England. Madison was a small town at that time, not yet incorporated as a city. Most Ho-Chunk Indians who had lived here for thousands of years had already been violently removed by our government, though some managed to remain and marginally survived--badly treated by European American settlers--on the outskirts of town. This was Madison's first environmental justice issue.

When my ancestors arrived here, they could drink from Madison's spring-fed lakes and eat any of the abundant fish without any fears of ingesting toxic chemicals. Within a few decades, sadly, due to our societal ignorance and government inactions, the lakes were filled with sewage. The city repeatedly treated the lakes with toxic chemicals attempting to eliminate algae, but these attempts proved unsuccessful. Toxic pesticide compounds still remain in our lakes' sediments to this day, where they slowly make their way into fish people eat.

I

In 1919, the Oscar Mayer meat factory began operations on the outskirts north of Madison on part what was a large wetland area. Eventually most of these wetlands were filled in, often with coal ash and garbage. Animals were raised and slaughtered onsite and animal wastes buried nearby. Because operations required lots of water and produced enormous quantities of wastes, the company sank many deep wells and built its own wastewater treatment facility. An onsite power plant burned coal and an incinerator burned solid materials.

Many of these industrial operations required a plethora of very toxic chemicals. Chlorinated solvents were used to create flavorings for food products. The facility manufactured its own insecticides to treat pests, and its own plastics to wrap hotdogs. There were only few (if any) environmental regulations during much of this time--and when more stringent regulations were eventually developed, they were all too often only minimally followed or ignored.

Over the decades, petroleum compounds, chlorinated solvents, heavy metals, and countless other toxic chemicals were spilled, leaked, and discharged in other ways onto the soils and groundwater at Oscar Mayer. Chemicals eventually made it to the facility's own deep wells so they were shut down. After that, Oscar Mayer's hotdogs were plumped with water from Madison Water Utility's Well #7.

Oscar Mayer [sewage wastes](#) and ammonia spilled into Lake Monona repeatedly, sometimes [causing fish kills](#). Toxic chemicals from the site leached into the Yahara River, Starkweather Creek, and Lake Monona, building up in fish that many people, including low income minority anglers, eat regularly. In 2020, about 100 years after Oscar Mayer began operating here, plumes of vinyl chloride, trichloroethylene (TCE), and a toxic stew of other chemicals remains in soils and lurks in groundwater beneath the site--and likely a large area beyond it. These plumes have never been remediated. Nobody knows how far and wide they extend.

The groundwater in the whole area is shallow and comes up into neighborhood basements when it floods--possibly exposing people in homes to hazardous chemicals and vapors.

Now the City of Madison wants to develop affordable housing, businesses, and a bus barn on this poisoned industrial land. What does "sustainable development" mean in this context?

1. Preventing the creation of new environmental injustices. The current version of the OMSAP does not mention environmental justice. Locating affordable housing on a highly contaminated site without fully assessing and cleaning up the contamination first is *creating* an environmental injustice situation. Placing housing for already socioeconomically disadvantaged people (who have fewer choices about where to live) in locations where they will be exposed to toxic chemicals that cause serious health problems is one way cities create environmental justice situations.

2. Addressing #1 requires fully assessing and remediating all the toxic contaminants at the site, those that have migrated off the site, and how they might affect public and environmental health--before redevelopment.

Unfortunately, as we described in our [February 10, 2020 comments to the Plan Commission](#), the OMSAP includes only very sparse mention of the contamination at the OM site and surrounding sites. This [Midwest Environmental Advocates document](#) also describes and [maps](#) numerous areas where toxic contaminants remain in the Oscar Mayer and adjacent areas. At most of these sites, contaminants were never fully assessed and/or remediated. Unless fully remediated, these contaminants will be disrupted during redevelopment and will continue to migrate offsite in stormwater, floodwaters, surface waters and other pathways. People will be exposed to these contaminants in surface water, groundwater, and vapors. They will continue to build up in fish that many people, especially low income subsistence anglers, catch and eat.

3. Comprehensive and transparent public engagement about contamination on all parts of the site. The OMSAP process, though lacking thorough discussion and engagement about the contamination at the site, involved a fairly comprehensive public engagement process overall. However, the the City's planned Metro bus barn purchase did not, and is now being rushed through city approvals mostly behind closed doors, with no public engagement and no transparency about the serious contamination.

The city is proposing to purchase Buildings 43 and 50 of the Oscar Mayer site for bus barns. Building 50 is where Oscar Mayer formerly manufactured plastics, and a plume with significant levels of vinyl chloride was found near it many years ago. This plume was never remediated. Recently, extraordinarily high

levels of trichloroethylene (TCE) and other volatile organic compounds vapors have been found under Building 43, emanating from a shallow groundwater plume of VOCs there. This plume has very likely spread under a much wider area. The full horizontal and vertical extent of this plume needs to be defined to assess risks to Metro workers in this building, as well as risks to neighborhood homes and businesses. The Metro bus barn purchase should undergo the same public process as the OMSAP, including full transparency about the significant toxic contamination there and how it will be assessed and remediated.

4. Preservation of full 30 acre Hartmeyer wetland area. As we described in our [June 10, 2020 comments to the Parks Commission](#), MEJO strongly supports the recommendations of the Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area (FHNA) that the full 30 acres of the Hartmeyer property be preserved. We support the development of much-needed affordable housing in Madison, but it makes no sense whatsoever to pave over [any wetlands at all](#) in these times of increased climate change and flooding. The areas around Oscar Mayer have flooded numerous times, and contaminated floodwaters enter people's basements. Many middle to low income people are exposed to these contaminated waters and have to pay to remediate their homes--yet another environmental justice issue. Preserving as much wetland as possible is critical to mitigating future flooding. The Hartmeyer wetland also provides critical habitat for wildlife and includes 200 year old oak trees. These trees, here since before European settlement, are invaluable and irreplaceable. Madison has very few such trees left. We should take any and all steps to make sure these trees are not cut down for any reason. In sum, developing any part of this wetland area is not in line with sustainability.

If the above concerns are dismissed or ignored in the OMSAP, the Oscar Mayer redevelopment cannot be called sustainable--and it will only perpetuate the environmental injustices that began with the founding of this city and that continue today.

Madison can, and should, do better.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Maria Powell, PhD
Executive Director, Midwest Environmental Justice Organization
Madison, WI 53704

From: [ljmeister](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 8:28:09 PM

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hi

i have lived in my home in eken park for 15 years. i strongly support having all 30 acres of the hartmeyer wetland remain green space in the oscar mayer development

i am willing to answer any questions 608. 669. 1632

thankyou

laurie jean meister

2626 moland street

madison

From: [JEFF STEELE](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Save All 30 Hartmeyer
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 6:34:42 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi,

I support the proposal to save all 30 acres of Hartmeyer. This is extremely important to the community nearby as they do not have access to a park they can walk to. Please do not develop it.

Jeffery Steele, REHS
Environmental Health Specialist
608-262-0490

From: [Kathy Henchel](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Fwd: Hartmeyer Natural Area
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 6:07:44 PM

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Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kathy Henchel <katchel01@sbcglobal.net>
Date: May 14, 2020 at 12:14:58 PM CDT
To: "Abbas, Syed" <district12@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Re: Hartmeyer Natural Area

Honorable Alderman Abbas,

Thank you for your continued work on this project.

Sincerely,
Kathy Henchel

Sent from my iPad

On May 2, 2020, at 9:50 PM, Abbas, Syed
<district12@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

Thanks Kathy for sharing your feedback with the commission.

Best,
Syed

Alder Syed Abbas, City of Madison, District 12

District 12 Website Signup for District 12 emails

Contact: 608-572-6984

From: Kathy Henchel <katchel01@sbcglobal.net>

Sent: Saturday, May 2, 2020 5:16 PM

To: Schroeder, Ann; tlwilson1986@gmail.com; All Alders;
ledell.zellers@gmail.com; hstrouder@cityofmadison.com

Subject: Hartmeyer Natural Area

Please consider all the wildlife that call this place home. Enough critters have been displaced by urban sprawl. We do not need roads cutting through there, nor do we want them. Please keep this wetland as it is.

Thank you,

Kathy

Sent from my iPad

From: [Olivia Williams](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Thank you for having me! AHAA info attached
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 5:12:32 PM
Attachments: [AHAA proposals for City of Madison- June 25, 2020.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Housing Strategy Committee,

Thank you for having me today!

For the full list of recommendations from AHAA see the attached PDF.

The slides I used are [here](#).

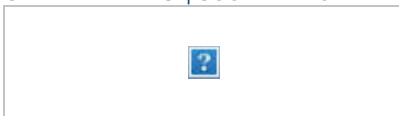
Many thanks for your depth of care for the residents of Madison. Please let me know if you would like to discuss these ideas further.

All the best,

Olivia R. Williams

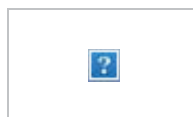
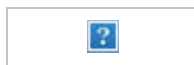
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OLIVIA WILLIAMS | COORDINATOR



2702 INTERNATIONAL LANE | SUITE 200 | MADISON, WI 53704 | (608) 285-2691

OLIVIA@MACLT.ORG | AFFORDABLEHOME.ORG



MACLT is a proud member of Community Shares of Wisconsin

From: [Susan S](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Cc: amorison@uli.com
Subject: Yes! to preserving Hartmeyer wetland
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 4:28:15 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

The city has a unique opportunity at this time to provide infill development while simultaneously preserving an ecologically complex wetland. While a patchwork approach to wetland preservation and stormwater runoff mitigation is technically legal, maintaining this entire parcel intact helps to manage pests (e.g. mosquitoes) by providing adequate wildlife habitat (e.g. birds) while only minimally affecting the housing and development opportunities adjacent.

Sincerely,
Susan Spangenberg

From: [Tom Running](#)
To: [Housing Strategy](#)
Subject: Yes to preserving all 30 acres of Hartmeyer wetland
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 4:22:03 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to preserve this infill wetland. It will provide benefit to the city forever, in particular storm water runoff. It will also save ecological diversity in the area. There will be minimal loss of housing.

Please preserve all 30 acres.

Tom Running
2634 E Johnson St
608-241-5575

From: [chet hermansen](#)
To: [Kester, Dolores](#); [Housing Strategy](#)
Cc: [Abbas, Syed](#)
Subject: Re: Comment for Housing Strategy Agenda item # 1 plus presentation on affordable housing 6-25-20
Date: Thursday, June 25, 2020 8:41:15 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

This needs to go Viral my Friend.
You are a wonder of info and a Gift from God to our neighborhood.
Thank you.

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: dakester@sbcglobal.net <dakester@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 2:12:47 PM
To: HousingStrategy@cityofmadison.com <HousingStrategy@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Syed Abbas <district12@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Comment for Housing Strategy Agenda item # 1 plus presentation on affordable housing 6-25-20

Greetings to Members of the Housing Strategy Committee:

My family has lived on Winchester Street since 1982, a few blocks north of Aberg Avenue which is the northernmost street covered by the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP) at N Sherman Avenue. This is the Sherman Neighborhood, whose boundaries include most of the OMSAP area. We are a friendly and very mixed neighborhood—mathematicians and poets, multiracial, with diverse genders, some well off and some just getting by, dog friendly, pollinator friendly, multicultural, pragmatists and dreamers—all of which makes it a very interesting and neighborly place to live. We have been an “affordable” neighborhood for decades.

I personally have a little knowledge about education. I have taught at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and in West Bend, in addition to teaching courses in English as a Second Language in several contexts.

I write to you now about the fact that City Planning is encouraging extensive new development and rehabbing of primarily multistory housing in the OMSAP area—much of which is intended to be “affordable” for economically disadvantaged families, including many people of color. The city calls this “equity.” Is it equitable?

Our Sherman neighborhood, and the Northside of which

we are a part, have recently been a target of many new proposals for affordable housing. New affordable housing projects are scheduled to break ground in the near future on Aberg Avenue and on Huxley Street in the OMSAP area.

A bit of history. From 1973-1979 in Paul Soglin's first terms as Madison's Mayor, numerous low income housing projects were built in a row all along Northport Drive on the Northside, as well as close to Northport. These include but are not limited to Packers Townhouses, Northport Packers Apartments, Vera Court, Kennedy Heights. At that time urban planning concepts concentrated low-income housing in a small area.

Our Sherman neighborhood includes the Northport Packers Apartments, which is the southernmost tip of the Northport low income housing corridor in Madison. This low-income housing corridor stretches roughly 1 ½ miles from Northport Packers Apartments, the Packers Townhouses, to the Kennedy Heights Apartments at the northern tip of this corridor. Vera Court is off of School Road not far off Northport Drive. It is also approximately a mile from new low income housing proposed for Aberg Avenue and Huxley Avenue within the OMSAP area. This entire housing corridor is within two miles of the new low income housing building at 1902 Tennyson Lane which was constructed in 2016.

- 1. The concentration of low income housing in small areas gave rise to a number of problems which negatively affected the education and well being of the residents of these projects and the Madison community. To work around the racial segregation fostered by concentrated low income housing projects, around 1980 the Madison schools tried school "pairing" (bussing) to move students around for better mixes of income and racial factors in the schools. Not known whether any bussing was done in Northside schools.**

Most of this area consists of three contiguous low-

income census tracts in the heart of the Northside (#002200, #002301, and #002402), arguably one of the most concentrated areas of low income residents in Madison, many of whom are also people of color.

The concentration of low-income housing noted above is reflected in the Northside elementary school populations. As of January of 2018, two of our four Northside elementary schools have 70-76 % low-income enrollment. The third had 65% low income enrollment. The fourth one had 56% low-income families. Half of the elementary schools in Madison have less than 50% low income families and would benefit from mixed-income housing. Data from website of Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as of 1-2-18.

Mendota Elementary School, which children from our Sherman neighborhood attend, has the largest percentage of low-income students of all elementary schools on the Northside: 76%. Compare:

Lakeview: 70%

Sandburg: 65%

Gompers: 56%

Data from website of Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as of 1-2-18.

The total student population at Mendota Elementary School as of 1-2-18 was 325—247 low income (76%), and 78 not low income (24%). If many of the children in any “affordable” housing planned for the OMSAP area attend Mendota Elementary School and Sherman Middle School, this will bring the low income percentage of students much higher. This is not acceptable if we want children to do well in school.

Data from website of Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) as of 1-2-18.

Teachers and administration at Sherman Middle School already have challenges and are struggling to meet the needs of the kids who attend. They have attended neighborhood meetings asking for volunteers to tutor the many, many kids

who, in middle school, cannot read or do math adequately. Many Sherman neighborhood members have served as tutoring volunteers at this school and the Sherman Neighborhood Assn has been nominated for a United Way award for this work. Adding more high-need kids to an already strapped institution will exacerbate staffing and retention issues.

When there is a higher percentage of poor children in a classroom, all the children do worse. In a school where more than 70% of the kids are low-income, logically, most or all of the classrooms will contain a high percentage of low-income children. See, <http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/public-schools-solution-percentage-low-income-students-test-scores/Content?oid=11526214/>.

Overall, concentrated poverty is tightly correlated with gaps in educational achievement. The Atlantic, February 29, 2016. See, <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/02/>.

Finally, the thoughtful article attached above cautions us to be wary of what “concentrated poverty” means and how the term may be used to serve political purposes of various kinds. See, [“The Myth of Concentrated Poverty”](#) by Stephen Steinberg, in *The Integration Debate: Competing Futures for American Cities*, Ed. by Chester Hartman and Gregory D. Squires (Routledge, 2010).

Bottom line: as you plan for “affordable housing” in the OMSAP area and on the Northside, please be cautious about “concentrated poverty.” In our neighborhood, the school situation is already unacceptable, and will be exacerbated by increasing concentrations of low income residents. Please, give careful attention to these concerns in planning for the quality of life and educational attainment of our future neighbors and friends who will live in the OMSAP housing now being planned for. True equity requires no less.

Respectfully,

Dolores Kester, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison

1818 Winchester Street

Madison, WI 53704

Email: dakester@sbcglobal.net

Tel. 608-249-1218

Aldermanic District 12

Member, Board of Directors, Wild Warner

Member, Board of Directors, Sherman Neighborhood

Association

CHAPTER 15

The Myth of Concentrated Poverty

STEPHEN STEINBERG

All of us have stories that shape our worldview and lurk behind our scholarship. In 1996, I went to Chicago with my son, who was applying for admission to the University of Chicago. We stayed in the Marriott Courtyard on the edge of the Loop and took a taxi to campus. The driver told us that Lakeshore Drive was congested with traffic, and he made a detour through city streets. Within minutes, the window of the cab framed Cabrini-Green, identifiable by a massive rectangular sign in the middle of an open plaza. There it was—Cabrini-Green—the “project” that had achieved iconic notoriety through sensational press reports of anarchy and violence. The realization that Cabrini-Green was situated on the edge of Chicago’s legendary Gold Coast provided an epiphanic moment: It was obvious why Cabrini-Green was slated for demolition. It occupied immensely valuable real estate that was in the way of the growth machine. As two geographers (Wyly and Hammel 1999, 711) put it, Cabrini was “an island of decay in seas of renewal.”

Let me say up front that I am no housing expert or policy wonk. Had I been immersed in the social science literature, I would have known that Cabrini-Green was a shameful relic of a discredited policy that segregated blacks in soulless high-rise “projects” where the problems of concentrated poverty metastasized and took on a life of their own. No public housing had been built since the Nixon administration, and under the Clinton administration, HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros instituted a policy with a seductive (and hypocritical) acronym: HOPE VI (short for Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere). The stated policy objective was to replace “severely

distressed” public housing with low-rise apartments that would be mixed-income and mixed-race. Architects and urban planners at the University of Chicago had advanced a “new urbanism,” whose architectural features would blend residents of public housing into the surrounding neighborhood. Against the specter of crime-ridden, high-rise buildings that “warehoused” the poor and exacerbated their problems, we had the promise of decorous row houses that would foster integration in terms of both race and class. A compelling imaginary, to be sure.

Then again, if I had known still more, I would have known that my first instinct was correct: that there were grassroots groups fighting the Cabrini-Green demolition as a blatant land grab that served the interests of developers and politicians; that trampled over the rights and interests of the residents; and that would leave the displaced families worse off as they gravitated to other densely poor neighborhoods, further away from jobs, transportation, and services they relied upon (Bennett and Reed 1999; Goetz 2000; Wright 2006). To these critics, it was clear: HOPE VI was another instance of “Negro Removal,” a term created by James Baldwin in the early 1960s and embraced by Malcolm X to express opposition to the urban renewal projects of that period. This same charge was leveled by a few scholars who argued vociferously that the demolition of Cabrini-Green was a calamity for the 14,000 African Americans who would be forcibly evicted from their homes (Wright 2006, 169). For these critics, the promise of building mixed-race and mixed-income housing was only a smokescreen to conceal what amounted to the cleansing of cities of the black underclass.

So let me throw down the gauntlet: Does HOPE VI amount to Negro Removal by another name, one that would rid the urban landscape of the black nemesis and clear the way for the developers? This raises another necessary question: Were scholars and policy wonks complicit in providing indispensable legitimacy for this policy?

Let me be clear: I do not impugn the motives of those who imagine that HOPE VI and other mobility projects advance the cause of integration. Nor is it merely a question of unintended consequences. Rather, the thrust of my critique is on *the political uses* of scholarship for ends that may be disavowed by the scholars themselves. And if we are to follow the maxim made famous by Watergate, we have to follow the trail of money, which leads to government agencies and foundations that bankrolled and promoted knowledge production that is politically useful. Then, too, there are the subtle and pernicious ways in which social scientists share the racial mindset and worldview that spawn victim-blaming discourses and retrograde policy.

Negro Removal is an apt term, because it calls to mind another historical case where the state was implicated in ethnic cleansing: *Indian Removal*. Some will dismiss this claim as political hyperbole, if only because Indians

were banished from white society, whereas the ostensible purpose of mobility projects is to enhance racial and class integration. Yet in the case of Cabrini-Green, the rule for one-to-one replacement of low-income housing was abrogated by Cisneros, the allotment of low-income housing was severely scaled back, and stringent tenant screening criteria, including strict work requirements, assured that only a handful of displaced residents would be allowed to return to the small allotment of public housing units in the new mixed-income development (Smith 2006; Wilen and Nayak 2006, 221). Cabrini-Green was relegated to oblivion, and the new development was refurbished with a new name: Parkside of Old Town. By September 2007, a local real estate blog offered this rhapsodic account of the neighborhood's transformation from slum to gold coast:

Parkside of Old Town Brings Development to Cabrini

Cabrini was once one of the most notorious neighborhoods in Chicago. When public housing was built in the neighborhood, many of the old homes were destroyed and families left the neighborhood.

During the 1980s and 1990s, crime and drugs levied a heavy cost on the neighborhood, making it one of the most dangerous in the city.

Today, Cabrini is the scene of one of the largest real estate redevelopment projects in all of Chicago. Most of the housing projects are gone now, replaced by cranes and new developments that offer a mix of luxury condominiums and affordable housing for former residents of public housing in the neighborhood.

One of the largest developments underway in Cabrini is Parkside of Old Town. Buyers can choose from condos and townhomes that start at \$300,000. The townhomes sell for as much as \$700,000.

This 18-acre development will offer park space with basketball courts and a playground. There are also several other new condo developments around the neighborhood that are attracting new families and bringing back the neighborhood feel that characterized Cabrini before the construction of public housing.

Many new residents choose Cabrini for the excellent location just minutes from downtown. Prices in the neighborhood are competitive when compared to other areas of north Chicago such as the Gold Coast and Streeterville.¹

Efforts of community activists and years of litigation had all come to naught, and according to one estimate, 97% of dislocated families moved into areas that did not meet either the "low poverty or racial integration requirements set out in the relocation rights contract" (Wilen and Nayak 2006, 220). Broken promises: another similarity to the nation's treatment of Native Americans.

Indian Removal is commonly remembered as an event involving the infamous Trail of Tears, the forced movement of the Cherokees from their cultivated farms and communities in Georgia to wasteland in Oklahoma in 1837. Actually, this was the last of a series of removals of tribes to Indian Country, and the removal policy was contested in legislatures, courts, and public venues for many years. Indeed, the 1830 Indian Removal Act was the subject of contentious public debate, and the Removal Act passed by a slim margin (28 to 19 in the Senate, 102 to 97 in the House). Why, one might ask, didn't President Jackson, famous for having massacred Indians in battle, simply send in the cavalry and make removal a fait accompli? According to a recent history of Indian Removal:

Jackson made certain that Indians knew he meant business, but he also wanted to avoid violent unrest. He had political worries as well. Realizing that many throughout the country would not approve unvarnished removal, he undertook to convince the public about the policy's wisdom. He recruited religious leaders and well-known proponents of Indian rights...to explain that removal was actually in the best interests of the Indians. In his first Annual Message he informed Congress of the pressing need for Indian removal and asked for money to accomplish it. As he habitually did in his public statements, Jackson framed his sentiments in humanitarian terms about the good effects removal would have on Indians. (Heidler and Heidler 2007, 23-4)

Thus, the first Moving to Opportunity program was born! As with today's HOPE VI demolitions and mobility programs, a façade was erected to maintain the pretense that this was a legal program and that the Cherokees went voluntarily. In *Race, Racism, and American Law*, Derrick Bell (2008, 688) provides quite another account:

The pressures from state and public officials created two factions among the Cherokee Nation: the Treaty Party, comprising the elite mixed bloods, and the Ross faction, supporters of Chief John Ross. Ross, who had the support of most of the Cherokee people, was incarcerated while the Treaty Party representatives negotiated the treaty. The treaty, ratified at New Echota, the capital of the Cherokee Nation, by only 20 persons, ceded all the tribal land in Georgia in exchange for 7 million acres of land in Indian Territory.

Some 16,000 of the 17,000 Cherokees signed a petition to Congress protesting the treaty, but to no avail. After gold was discovered in Georgia in 1829 (again inviting comparison to soaring real estate values in Chicago's postindustrial economy), pressures mounted to get rid of the Cherokees, the last of the so-called civilized tribes. With that ignominious act, the nation established a historical precedent for ethnic cleansing.

To my eye, HOPE VI looks like Negro Removal, and Negro Removal looks like Indian Removal, though dispossession and displacement are more ingeniously camouflaged today than in times past. Nobody accuses blacks of being “savages” incapable of being assimilated into white society. Well, that’s not entirely true. We speak euphemistically of “the urban jungle,” and social scientists who portray the inner city as a haven of pathology, disorder, and immorality, are only a word away from declaring its inhabitants “uncivilized.” Indeed, Dinesh D’Souza (1995, 554) made precisely this allegation in *The End of Racism*. According to D’Souza, racial disparities are due, not to racism, but rather to a “civilizational gap” between blacks and whites. It is precisely because the trope between “savage” and “civilized” endures that we have one African American “who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy” who inhabits the White House, at the same time that we have another 1.1 million African Americans who are in the slammer!

Like Indian Removal, Negro Removal, especially in the post-civil rights era, required intellectual and moral justification. Enter the social scientist, with a new arrow in the quiver: “concentrated poverty.” The concept of “concentrated poverty” has provided the crucial theoretical underpinning for HOPE VI and other mobility programs.² The hapless victims of these policies are not relocated west of the Mississippi, but they are removed from urban neighborhoods that are ripe for development. Dispossession and displacement are done in the name of deconcentrating poverty.

My purpose now is to subject the concept of “concentrated poverty” to critical scrutiny, and to examine the origins and evolution of this idea, its embedded assumptions, its consequences, and above all, its political uses.

Let us begin by distinguishing between concentrated poverty as fact and as theory. The fact of concentrated poverty—that poverty is spatially concentrated—is well known and easily documented. It is easy as well to chart trends, and to show that poverty, especially black poverty, has become more concentrated in recent decades (Jargowsky 1997; Massey and Denton 1993; Massey and Kanaiaupuni, 1993; Orfield 2002; Wilson 1987). But there is also a *theory* of concentrated poverty that postulates a causal relationship between concentrated poverty and a host of social ills. This is graphically portrayed in Edward Goetz’s *Clearing the Way* (2003, 160). As can be seen in Figure 15.1, concentrated poverty is conceptualized as an intermediary factor between the structures that engender inequality and the “tangle of pathology” that is associated with the underclass (Clark 1965). Thus, structural factors are acknowledged as primary causes of concentrated poverty: economic restructuring, suburban exclusionism, disinvestment in central-city neighborhoods, discrimination in housing markets, and government policies (e.g., public housing). On the other hand, concentrated poverty takes on causal significance all its own, leading to the familiar litany of pathologies: drug use, violent crime, high school dropout rates/poor school

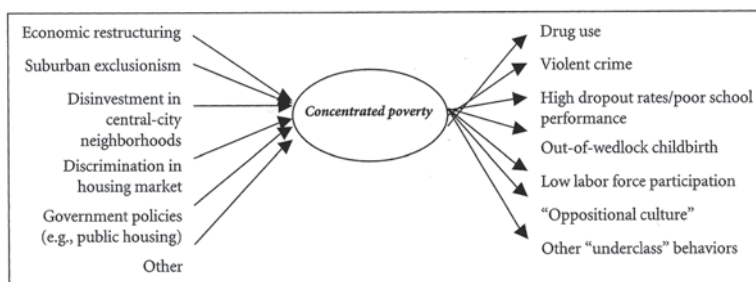


Figure 15.1 The cause and consequences of concentrated poverty. Source: Edward Goetz (2003, 22).

performance, out-of-wedlock childbirth, low labor force participation, and “oppositional culture.”

I submit to you that this theory is deeply flawed: simplistic, misleading, pregnant with false or unsubstantiated assumptions, and dangerous as a predicate for social policy. In the first place, “concentrated poverty” may be new to social science, but it plays on the familiar image of “the huddled masses,” generously portrayed as yearning to breathe free. It also plays on the trope of those “dangerous classes,” corrupted by the city, mired in pathology, and a menace to civil society. Marx provides yet another perspective on urban concentration: It was precisely the density of the factory and of urban life that provided the ecological prerequisite for class consciousness and political action. Thus, as two housing advocates have noted, “It is debatable whether integration efforts bestow on poor African-Americans economic or sociological benefits or, rather, destroy nonwhite political power, sense of community, culture, and neighborhood-based support systems” (Wilen and Stasell 2006, 249).

As a theoretical construct, concentrated poverty entered academic discourse with William Julius Wilson’s *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987), though I think that Wilson gets too much credit—or blame, depending on your point of view—for this mistaken idea.³ There are only three citations to “concentrated poverty” in the index of Wilson’s book, mostly alluding to increases in concentrated poverty, followed by some speculation—and it is sheer speculation, without a shred of evidence—about the adverse consequences of “social isolation” or the putative “concentration effects.” Moreover, in *The Truly Disadvantaged*, Wilson did not sever the relationship between concentrated poverty and the structural forces that engender it. His policy recommendations all pertain to addressing the root causes of concentrated poverty, through policies of full employment and a WPA-style jobs programs aimed for the ghetto poor. However, as concentrated poverty emerged as the

latest rage in poverty research, Wilson got on the bandwagon, embracing both the theory of concentrated poverty and the idea that removal of the poor from neighborhoods of concentrated poverty is a policy desideratum.⁴

The chief exponents of removal policy have been a new breed of Moving to Opportunity (MTO) advocates and social capital theorists who make the fatal mistake of treating concentrated poverty as a factor *sui generis*—one that is a determinant of all these “urban” pathologies, and therefore one that can be remedied through targeted social policy.⁵ Herein lies the epistemological fallacy. With a sleight of hand, all these powerful structural forces that involve major political and economic institutions are conflated into a single factor—concentrated poverty, which is now identified as *the* central problem in terms of analysis and social policy. As Goetz (2003, 160) shrewdly observed, “Over time, focus has shifted away from the causes of concentrated poverty toward the behavior of the poor in response to concentrated poverty.” Thus, instead of dealing with the root causes of concentrated poverty, as Wilson did in his initial intervention, we have one study after another treating concentrated poverty as though it were an independent and self-sustaining factor, and thus the theoretical underpinning for policies whose central purpose is to deconcentrate poverty.

But what evidence is there that *concentrated* poverty has explanatory significance above and beyond the effects of poverty itself? Do we know that concentration magnifies or exacerbates poverty? Studies that advance the theory of concentrated poverty (e.g., Jargowsky 1997; Massey and Kanaiaupuni 1993) devote pages proving that poverty has become more concentrated, especially for African Americans, but they utterly fail to prove that concentration *per se* has an additive effect.⁶ To demonstrate this, they would have to show that poor people who do not live in high-poverty census tracts—and who are not warehoused in soulless high-rise apartment buildings (like mine in New York City)—are far less prone to aberrant behavior than poor people who live in concentrated poverty. But we know from studies of rural poverty, whether in Appalachia or upstate New York or the farm belt, that all of these “urban” pathologies run rampant there. Alas, urbanists have fallen into the trap that Manuel Castells (1979) cautioned against long ago: of positing the reified “city” or aspects of urban ecology as the cause of “urban ills,” rather than a political economy that engenders deep and persistent inequalities. And before we dynamite housing projects, obliterating the homes of 100,000 families, shouldn’t there be convincing evidence that deconcentration will have the transformative effects that are presumed?

In short, the theory of concentrated poverty is based on a faulty theoretical premise—namely, that concentrated poverty can be severed from its root causes and projected as the focal point of social policy. It is rather like diagnosing a melanoma as a blemish and treating it with a palliative.

Therefore, it should not be surprising that follow-up studies of relocation programs have failed to provide convincing evidence that deconcentration has the expected outcomes. At least this was what Goetz (2003, 256) found, based on a rigorous and exhaustive review of the extensive body of MTO research. He concludes his book with a simple, categorical judgment: “The scattering of poor people, in itself, accomplishes little.”⁷

Yet the cheerleaders of deconcentration turn a blind eye to the wide body of research that goes against their pet idea. This point is made forcefully in a recent article in which David Imbroscio (2008) challenges “the Dispersal Consensus” (DC for short). Imbroscio levels three criticisms:

1. The DCers trample over what Chester Hartman has called “the right [or ability] to stay put” (quoted in Imbroscio 2008, 114). Although the mobility programs typically recruit people whose participation is “voluntary,” they can hardly be seen as exercising free choice when their only alternative is to live in neglected housing and underserved communities. Imbroscio writes (115): “Preferences for dispersal become nothing more than a desperate response to a set of desperate conditions, with little to do with any real notion of freedom of choice.” Of course, in the case of HOPE VI demolitions, “choice” is a moot issue.
2. The DCers are guilty of overselling evidence, based mainly on studies of the Gautreaux program in Chicago and the MTO demonstration. Critics (Crump 2002; Goetz 2003) insist that these studies are flawed methodologically since participants are self-selected and heavily screened, vitiating comparisons to the people left behind. To make matters worse, the MTO studies typically report small findings that are wildly overstated as corroborating the claim that deconcentration has beneficial effects.
3. The DCers ignore or slight the evidence that points to viable alternatives to HOPE VI and mobility programs, such as the work of thousands of Community Development Corporations in providing affordable housing for low-income people and contributing to the revitalization of inner-city neighborhoods. Instead of contemplating strategies for ameliorating social problems where the poor live, the DCers obstinately cling to the idea that “opportunity” entails moving the poor as far as possible from the temptations and pathologies of the inner city. For all of their methodological sophistication, DCers seem oblivious to the fact that the efforts of the Community Development Corporations impact on entire communities, whereas MTO programs, at their very best, impact on the lives of a paltry number of individuals, deliberately scattered across the urban landscape: See responses by Xavier de Souza Briggs (2008, 131–37), John Goering and Judith Feins (2008, 139–48), and rejoinder by David Imbroscio 2008, 149–54).

Not only do mobility programs fail to magically transform the lives of the small number of people who are delivered from “the hood,” but studies find that relocatees are often worse off than before. With or without a Section 8 voucher, most relocatees gravitate to other poor neighborhoods where rents are low, thus moving the poor from one neighborhood of concentrated poverty to another, ironically validating the fears of the NIMBYs (Rosin 2008). Nor do the suburbs provide the magic formula. Xavier de Souza Briggs (2005, 36), a leading advocate of mobility programs, concedes that “many minority families that moved to the suburbs in the 1990s, even if they became homeowners, did not escape the pattern that contains poverty, school failure, and job isolation in particular geographic areas.” In a study of a HOPE VI relocation program in Tampa, Florida, Susan Greenbaum and her collaborators (In press) found that even when relocatees acknowledged that their housing was improved, “many...expressed feelings of loss and nostalgia for the neighborly relations they had in the public housing complexes where they used to live. In addition to enjoyment, patterns of mutual assistance and exchange among the residents had made survival easier on their very low incomes and offered a sense of community” (16–17).

There is an addendum to the narrative I began with. When my son was enrolled at the University of Chicago, living on Kimbark Avenue, his back porch provided a telescopic view of a strip of low-rise, subsidized housing that had been built on 55th Street. Architecturally, the houses were a New Urbanist nightmare: fortified bunkers, walled off to the street, with a small, internal courtyard. My son observed that on Sunday mornings, women dressed in their Sunday best would stand on the corner for a long time, waiting for a bus that would transport them, alas, back to “the hood” where their church was located.⁸

All of this raises the question of whether HOPE VI and mobility programs are predicated on a demonized image of the poor within those “severely distressed” housing projects. Implicitly and often explicitly, theorists and planners have in mind aberrant individuals who are the source of violence and disorder. Obviously, one can compile statistics that present a bleak picture of gangs, drugs, violence, et cetera, et cetera. But another picture emerges from ethnographic studies: of ordinary people, desperately poor and struggling to “survive”; of networks of resourceful women and extended families engaged in mutual support; of neighborhoods and churches that provide people with a sense of belonging and access to services and resources; and of activists and advocacy groups who valiantly represent the poor against the powerful institutions that seek their expulsion.⁹ Why is it, one might ask, that social scientists valorize the solidarities of white ethnics as “Gemeinschaft,” whereas in the case of racial minorities, these same solidarities are disparaged as “hypersegregation” whose only remedy is “deconcentration by demolition”

(Crump 2002, 581)? These scholars forget that when white ethnics were poor (like the Italians who were the first occupants of Cabrini-Green), they produced the same litany of “pathologies” associated with today’s minorities. If these “pathologies” were not as prevalent or as enduring, this is because these white ethnics had the advantage of white privilege, were not encircled by discriminatory barriers, and consequently were not mired in poverty for generations (Marcuse 1997). As a result, they were able to fulfill the American Dream by moving to the very suburbs where the DCers want to place poor blacks who do not have the resources, and invariably encounter the bitter hostility of their neighbors (Moore 2008; Thompson 1998).

In short, a policy predicated on the claim that the demolition of their homes will advance the interests of the very people whose homes are being destroyed is a preposterous sham. And here we confront the cold reality: HOPE VI is not an antipoverty program, but on the contrary, one that stomps over the rights and interests of the poor and sacrifices them on the altar of political and economic power. This is how an agency whose historic mission was to provide housing of last resort for the poorest Americans is now responsible for the demolition of that very housing (Marcuse 1978). As with Indian Removal, this policy must be implemented in such a way as not to foment violent resistance or “political problems.” This is where the theory of deconcentrated poverty comes into play, which is trotted out in Congressional hearings and in Congressional Research Service reports, to paste over the patent injustices and to make a virtue of the unconscionable.¹⁰

It is not my contention that minus the theory of deconcentrated poverty, HOPE VI would not exist. Powerbrokers heed the sage advice of experts only when it is in their interest to do so. We have to be savvy about the political uses of the theory of concentrated poverty, which is invoked wherever the poor occupy valuable real estate that is coveted by developers, and which is part of the neoliberal agenda of reclaiming urban space that earlier was relinquished to the nation’s racial and class pariahs. Neil Smith (1996, 45–47) has aptly called this “the revanchist city.” Atlanta is in the process of demolishing most public housing, including housing occupied by stable families with regular employment.¹¹ And in New Orleans, even housing projects that escaped the ravages of Katrina were bulldozed despite the anguished protests of their residents.¹² While bodies were still being plucked from the floodwaters, William Julius Wilson and Bruce Katz (2005) appeared on the *News Hour*, declaring that Katrina presented a historic opportunity to break up concentrated poverty.¹³ And when Xavier de Souza Briggs posted a petition on an urban sociology listserv under the title “Moving to Opportunity in the Wake of Hurricane Katrina,” nearly 200 urban experts rushed to affix their signatures, oblivious to the political uses of their dogma.¹⁴

A final point. Let us concede for the sake of argument that deconcentration and mobility programs provide better housing and schools for some poor people, and advance the cause of racial integration. Even so, we have to ask whether the political appeal of such policies is that they divert attention away from the vastly greater problem: the plight of the millions of poor people who still inhabit ghettos and barrios, whose plight has been exacerbated by the dismantling of the welfare state, and who are now threatened with gentrification and other assaults of the neoliberal city. As Susan Greenbaum (2006, 111) has commented, “A poverty alleviation policy that excludes the majority cannot be judged a success.” Not only do mobility programs provide relief only for a select few, but they provide an ideological façade for the neoliberal war against the poor and for disinvestment in the inner city. As Goetz (2003, 252) writes: “When accepted as a political strategy, deconcentration justifies the redirection of community development efforts away from the declining housing stock of poor neighborhoods and/or away from poor residents.” Thus, instead of comprehensive policies that would revitalize these communities, provide jobs—the sine qua non of antipoverty policy—and include grassroots organizations in the reconstruction of their communities, we have demonstration projects that, at best, can help a select few. Furthermore, as I suggested above, the dispersal of the minority poor makes it all the more difficult for them to mobilize politically and to put pressure on political and economic elites to live up to their responsibility to address the problems in their own back yard. Instead, in the name of deconcentrating poverty, they use dynamite as a remedy and transfer the problem to somebody else’s back yard. And they do this with the indispensable sanction of urban experts who labor under the illusion that they are advancing the project of racial and economic justice.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Greg Squires and Chester Hartman for welcoming a genuine and vigorous debate of housing policy. I first heard about the ravages of HOPE VI from Adolph Reed, who has provided me with invaluable perspective from both the ivory tower and the trenches on Chicago’s extraordinary campaign to obliterate its public housing communities. Susan Greenbaum was immensely helpful as I delved into the literature on mobility programs. So too were Derrick Bell, Jane Collins, Mark Harvey, Micaela di Leonardo, Jeff Maskovsky, and Devah Pager. In writing this paper, I have profited from the incisive scholarship anthologized in *Where Are Poor People to Live? Transforming Public Housing Communities*, ed. Larry Bennett, Janet L. Smith, and Patricia Wright.

Notes

1. <http://www.chicagorealestateblog.com/parkside-of-old-town-brings-development-to-cabrini/>
2. Clearly, HOPE VI and the MTO programs are different policies. However, the logic, the embedded assumptions, and the overriding policy objective are the same: to deconcentrate poverty and to move people as far as possible (as Stefanie DeLuca and James Rosenbaum assert in their paper in this volume) from the dense urban neighborhoods that putatively spawn pathology and prevent the poor from developing the social capital that would help them escape poverty.
4. For an incisive account of the origins of Wilson's "spatial turn," and the adoption and elaboration of the notion of "concentrated poverty" among urban specialists, see Crump 2002.
5. Despite the fact that Wilson's claims were altogether speculative and unsubstantiated, he provided indispensable authority and legitimacy to Chicago's plans to dismantle public housing. As far as I know, Wilson never took a public position during the acrimonious debate that raged around the decision to demolish Cabrini-Green, the Henry Horner Homes, and the Robert Taylor Homes. Yet his name and scholarship were frequently invoked by advocates of demolition. According to one account, his concept of concentrated poverty was "the ironclad precept" for housing officials and developers in enacting plans for the demolition of public housing (Bennett, Hudspeth, and Wright 2006, 195).

In the debate over the 1999 Chicago Housing Authority's "Plan for Transformation," which contemplated the downsizing of public housing, Alexander Polikoff, the senior staff counsel of Business and Professional People for the Public Interest, made the following argument: "For me the case made by Harvard's William Julius Wilson is entirely persuasive.... Wilson speaks of the 'social pathologies' of ghetto communities and adds that, if he had to use one term to capture the differences in the experience of the ghetto poor from the poor who live outside, it would be 'concentration effect'—meaning social pathologies generated when a neighborhood is composed exclusively of ghetto poor.... [S]o persuaded am I of the life-blighting consequences of Wilson's concentrated poverty circumstances, that I do not view even homelessness as clearly a greater evil" (quoted in Wright 2006, 159–60). As far as I know, if Wilson objected to the use of his name and scholarship to justify the implosion of public housing in Chicago, he never made his dissent public.

6. There is a very large body of studies (extensively reviewed in Goetz 2003; Imbroscio 2008) that purport to evaluate the efficacy of mobility programs. By far, the most influential have been James Rosenbaum's studies of the Gautreaux program (for example, Rosenbaum and DeLuca (2000, 1–8); Rosenbaum, DeLuca, and Tuck (2005); coauthored article in this volume). Other recent interventions include Briggs (2005); Goering (2005); and a recent symposium in the *American Journal of Sociology*, including Clampet-Lundquist and Massey (2008); Ludwig et al. (2008); and Sampson (2008). From the standpoint of the politics of knowledge production, the sheer amount of research on this dubious policy initiative is itself worthy of examination, as are the massive institutional subsidies. Clampet-Lundquist and Massey acknowledge support from no fewer than twelve foundations, governmental agencies, and research centers (including two grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and two from the National Science Foundation). Clampet-Lundquist and Massey begin by acknowledging that studies of the MTO housing mobility experiment "heretofore has not provided strong evidence to support the hypothesis of neighborhood effects on economic self-sufficiency among adults," and assert that selective bias casts a shadow of doubt on all these studies (2008, 107). However, instead of questioning the logic and assumptions, not to speak of the ideology, that undergird the MTO project, Clampet-Lundquist and Massey, like others before them, assume that their measures must be defective, and launch into yet another hairsplitting and word-parsing exercise to redeem the MTO concept.

On the other hand, a number of studies have challenged the logic, methodology, and findings of the MTO canon. These include: Bennett and Reed (1999); Bennett, Smith, and Wright (2006); Crump (2002); Goetz (2003); Greenbaum (2006, 2008); Greenbaum, Spalding, and Ward (in press); Imbroscio (2008); Joseph, Chaskin, and Webber (2007); Reed and Steinberg (2006); Reingold, Van Ryzin, and Ronda (2001); Thompson (1998); and Tienda (1991).

7. See Tienda (1991) for a thoughtful analysis of the logic of "concentration effects." Tienda faults existing studies for failing to specify the mechanisms through which these putative effects



are enacted. She further argues that “if resource stock problems are the *root causes* of social dislocation observed in ghetto neighborhoods, then solutions focused on neighborhood revitalization might be more productive than those aimed at rehabilitation of individuals” (252, italics in original). Tienda concludes on a skeptical note: “Given the nature of available data, it is virtually impossible to determine with any degree of confidence the existence of neighborhood effects on poverty behaviors” (258).

8. The full passage reads: “A responsible antipoverty policy should not lead with the demolition of low-cost housing and the forced relocation of the poor. This nation’s history with the urban renewal program suggests that without complementary actions to reduce exclusionary barriers and incentives that foster and facilitate growing socioeconomic disparities—and the geographic expression of those disparities—the scattering of poor people, in itself, accomplishes little.”
9. Nor is this an anomalous event: see McRoberts (2005).
10. Early ethnographic studies that portray the poor or public housing in a more positive light are Liebow (1967); Stack (1974); Susser (1982; Williams and Kornblum (1985, 1994). For a review of recent ethnographic studies of poverty, see Morgen and Maskovsky (2003).
11. For example, Maggie McCarty (2007). “Reauthorization of the HOPE VI Program,” Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity (June 21, 2007): http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_house_hearings&docid=f:37561.wais
12. Springston (2007) and Pearlstein (2007).
13. For a glimpse of the protest before the New Orleans City Council, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMBWAXfGsc4>
14. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/weather/july-dec05/rebuild_9-16.html
15. The petition can be found at <http://www.newvisioninstitute.org/movingOppotunityScholarsPetition.pdf>.

For critical commentary, see Imbroscio (2008); Reed and Steinberg (2006). Also, see the Symposium on Hurricane Katrina, including Susan Greenbaum, Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, and Xavier de Souza Briggs (2006, 107–28), and Nicolai Ouroussoff’s column in the *New York Times* (September 14, 2008) on the failure of planning in the reconstruction of New Orleans. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/14/weekinreview/14ouroussoff.html?pagewanted=print>



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