

July 18, 2017

Common Council of the City of Madison  
Board of Public Works

Re: Chippewa Drive Sidewalk Assessment - Project No. 11571

To the Board of Public Works;

We support the need for an accessible route for students to and from Thoreau and Cherokee Schools on Chippewa Drive. We are writing to support a sidewalk solution that includes a 2' terrace on the north side of Chippewa Drive. Contrary to some recollections there was never a consensus reached in favor of a 4' terrace, only the conviction that 9' was patently unworkable.

We recognize standards used in new development and in subdivisions with fewer dramatic grade changes are largely irrelevant in hilly neighborhoods platted over 60 years ago and on streets unencumbered with sidewalks ever since.

On both sides of Chippewa we want to preserve and enhance the unique environment afforded by the running creek. We suspect, given the opportunity, residents of the south side of the street would be interested in a creative solution as well.

A wider terrace requires higher retaining walls and creates additional drainage problems. On the north side It reduces one resident's off-street parking on a street serving as a parking lot for Thoreau employees. The deeper cut will increase property owner's costs over and above their assessment and leave a less pleasing result for users and property owners.

Our understanding from two meetings with city engineers is the City's primary interest is to provide a safe accessible path for children and the disabled from Hiawatha to Cherokee via Chippewa. We were also told there is a public interest in snow storage and in the preservation of trees in public spaces.

We were made aware of other considerations, most notably engineering concerns to address ADA grade guidelines and site drainage. We weren't informed of any concerns

by the water utility or the fire and police departments that would argue against a 2' terrace.

We believe the solution we are proposing meets the city's primary criteria, is less costly to the city and produces a better result for all concerned.

We invite the committee to walk our streets and see how we have staked out our proposed solution. We are not hostile to the city's interest and think a sidewalk on Chippewa is an improvement in public safety and convenience. We only want that it be done thoughtfully and carefully.

Please reject the 4' terrace and instruct city engineering to work with residents to craft a solution that meets the city's interests while at the same time respects property owner's legitimate concerns.

Sincerely,

Jim Hirsch  
Laurie Laz  
837 Ottawa Trail.