



Dear Mayor and Common Council Alders,

Thank you for your consideration of the proposed rezoning and replat of the former site of Raemisch Farm into a mixed-use community with a variety of housing options available to residents with a range of incomes and complimentary commercial uses along Packers Avenue. The City set the stage by annexing the site in to spur on economic development and we are excited to take the next step. Before the issue goes before the Common Council on Tuesday night, I would like to point out a few facts and address issues that have been discussed by the Raemisch Farm Working Group and other opposition.

Early on, members of the Raemisch Farm Working Group expressed their desire to keep their unobstructed green views at their front doors, but we worked in good faith with them to change the original plan to meet their stated goals throughout the process. The plan before you reflects our combined efforts and is indeed superior to the original plan submitted by the previous developer in early 2021. Key changes from the original plan included...

- Moving all planned residential uses outside the 65db line, and prohibiting any residential uses inside the line until at least 2027;
- Preserving and expanding the Lake View Elementary outdoor classroom by removing 14 home lots and deeding 3.5 acres of the site to the school district and parks department;
- Reducing single family home lot sizes to accommodate smaller homes at more attainable price points;
- Maintaining, but moving the area planned for townhome/small multi-family development to the interior of the site from North Sherman Avenue to encourage a diversity of housing options;
- Adding additional green space in the center of the site accessible to the neighborhood; and
- Demonstrating a willingness to engage with those interested in maintaining open space and/or farmland preservation on the western portion of the site. We are very close to a final Letter of Intent with Groundswell to create an urban farm to promote food accessibility.

Thus, we were surprised and disappointed when they pivoted to oppose this version of the plan when it was presented to the council in August.

The plan before you...

- was unanimously approved by the P&Z board last fall and once again earlier this month
- meets the City's goals for annexation of the site
- is consistent with the City's comprehensive plan
- is consistent with the City's goals to increase the supply of housing with a variety of types and prices

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- will meet or exceed HUD guidelines for building in proximity to airports. We self-imposed this restriction on the plat so as to support the City's efforts for future best practices with other developers.
- is consistent with the findings and recommendations of Ald. Abbas' Environmental Justice Working Group. The committee did not recommend any changes to the plan that will be in front of you.
- is consistent with the 2009 neighborhood concept plan
- has addressed all of the concerns of the Raemisch Farms Working Group
 - Smaller lots
 - Removal of townhomes from Sherman, inclusion of townhomes within the site
 - No residential development inside the 65db line and sound mitigation
 - Preservation and expansion of the Lake View Elementary Forest classroom
 - Inclusion of an urban agriculture use to support food access

Further we have met with Madison Public Schools, the parks department and other interested parties in an effort to preserve ~3.5-acres in the southwest portion of the site at no cost (school and parks) and below market price (farmland preservation). As a result, we have removed 14 single family lots to support the school, and will remove an additional 20 lots to promote urban agriculture with Groundswell.

You will hear many claims from the opposition on Tuesday night. You will hear that the plan is being rushed through council, even though it has been in the works for many years, and that the same plan was voted down just a few months ago. Yet, the plan was voted down precisely to allow for patience and careful consideration by Ald. Abbas's Environmental Justice Working Group, which determined no additional restrictions or requirements were necessary beyond what had already been offered by Green Street.

You will hear about the impact of airport noise on the surrounding neighborhood. They will say that we cannot mitigate sound impacts on outdoor activities, yet the Raemisch Farm Working Group has negotiated passionately (and successfully) to preserve and expand the school's outdoor classroom, increase the amount of parkland and greenspace on the site, and include a farmland preservation area with outdoor farm workers.

They may say you should not locate lower income residents in noise impacted areas, but again negotiated successfully to reduce home lot sizes and include zoning for smaller townhome units in an effort to maintain income diversity and attainable housing options in the neighborhood.

They will tell you about the consequences of building homes near an airport with F-35 jets and may have residents of Burlington, Vermont tell you of their experiences and home

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buyouts. However, recent home sales next to Burlington International Airport indicate the market for homes just outside and even inside the 65db line remains robust. For example, a home sold just two weeks ago inside the 65db line that has increased over 20 percent in value since the F-35s arrived in Burlington in 2019. Over 100 other homes have been sold in that neighborhood over the past two years. Burlington Realtors indicate that homes in the area sell fast and with multiple offers.

Jets and jet noise are not hidden from potential homebuyers and renters. They are a very clear consideration for home buyers and renters when considering where to live. What the Raemisch Farm Working Group and other opponents of the plan are saying is that prospective homeowners and renters cannot be trusted on their own to value the quality of their residence and neighborhood over airport noise... yet it is something they do on a daily basis.

Everyday members of the Raemisch Farm Working Group and neighborhood residents choose to value their quality of life in the neighborhood over current and potential noise issues by not posting a for sale sign in their front yard. Some members of the working group have even chosen to move into this area since the potential arrival of F-35s was public knowledge. Yet, they would not allow others to make the same choice. Instead, they would deny new (and even existing) residents the option to live in a new, modern, and attainable housing in the neighborhood that they themselves have enjoyed for years.

We are confident no other developer or development plan in the future could do more to meet and achieve the stated goals of both the City and neighborhood.

Thank you again for your careful consideration of our plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joel', is placed below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Joel Oliver and the Green Street Development team

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