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To: Dryer, David; Ross, Arthur; Subeck, Lisa; Johnson, Jill; robbie@robbiewebber.org; cwstrawser@gmail.com; bobh@cs.wisc.edu; ron.prince@fammed.wisc.edu; mabaa@tds.net; aaron.crandall@yahoo.com; Verveer, Mike; Resnick, Scott; Maniaci, Bridget

Subject: 06/28/11 agenda item E.1. Legistar 22974

Hello!

I am unable to attend tonight's meeting but want to share my concerns about the discussion of solutions to lack of adequate bike parking downtown.

More and more of the wonderful, attractive and needed benches or chairs on State Street are disappearing. I understand some have been or will be removed to make room for more bike parking. In the discussions of street furniture which includes benches, chairs and bike racks it seems that decision makers forget that pedestrians are people too and that we also support the downtown economy. My feet are my major mode of transportation so I feel strongly about the placement and number of the benches, chairs and bike racks.

Between the homeless who commandeer the benches and chairs and those that have been removed it is often not possible for pedestrians who may have heavy packages or groceries to carry up/down State Street to find a bench or chair to sit on for a few minutes. Also those who have limiting physical conditions often need to stop, sit and rest for a short while.

As you discuss this issue please do not advocate for more bike racks at the expense of the benches and chairs. All are needed and there must be equal and appropriate placement of them in the entire downtown area. My friends that drive tell me that bike racks are in some city parking ramps. Perhaps more could be installed. With proper signage bikers could be made aware of the ramp bike stalls. It is not possible to install benches or chairs in the ramps.

It would be appreciated if pedestrians and their needs were taken as seriously as the bicycle community is by city decision makers, city committees and downtown business persons. The overt favoritism shown to the bicyclists is unfair to the pedestrians. Another key factor is that many pedestrians are visitors and tourists to Madison who enjoy walking down State Street. They patronize the restaurants, shops and entertainment venues which has a large and positive impact on our economic vitality.

I believe that any changes in placement/removal of benches, chairs or bike racks should be vetted by at least the State Street Oversight Committee, Ped/Bike/MV Commission, Arthur Ross and the district 4 and 8 alders. It would be good if Common Council had final decision but I realize that may not be practical.

Again, please do not endorse a solution to the bike rack placements that will eliminate more benches and chairs or make it more difficult to install new ones. It is important that room be allowed for all pedestrians and bicyclists our iconic State Street.

Thank You,
Rosemary

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