

From: [S Goss](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: housing density and conditional use thresholds
Date: Friday, March 19, 2021 3:44:46 PM

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To: Members of Plan Commission

From: Elderberry Neighborhood Association

The Board of Elderberry Neighborhood Association wishes to register its opposition to elements of the proposed Zoning Text Amendment on Housing Density and Conditional Use Thresholds. Most especially we object to precluding neighborhood input. We would also urge you to exercise caution in broadly eliminating Plan Commission review for "mid-scale" multifamily housing.

Some of the proposed changes put forth in the Planning Department document are significant. Chief among them are density increases in SR-V2 and TR-V zones, as well as increased density and by-right height in TR-U1.

The City of Madison has long valued the input of neighborhoods for new development. Neighborhoods can point to many instances where their input resulted in better construction projects. While we understand the need for more mid-scale housing, and the existing challenges to providing it, we would like to see the process continue to make room for residents' input and provide more safeguards against poor design decisions by developers.

Respectfully,
Sharon Goss
President, Elderberry Neighborhood Association



REALTORS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN

Realtors Association of South Central Wisconsin

Representing more than 3,400 members of the housing industry in South Central Wisconsin.

RASCW supports the housing industry through advocacy for its members and consumers.

Robert Procter

Government Affairs Director

rprocter@axley.com • 608.283.6762

Housing is a Human Right

City of Madison Resolution No. 23825—Adopted 11.29.2011

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that housing be recognized as a human right and that all people who desire a place of shelter and stable long-term housing be prioritized to have this basic need met both temporarily and permanently. In doing so, the City of Madison recommits to the goals in its Comprehensive Plan that call for the availability of safe, decent and sanitary and distinctive housing for all residents as well as the objectives and policies that accompany that goal. The City of Madison also recommits to the goals and objectives in the Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in Dane County.



Comprehensive Plan (2018)

b. Increase Permitted Uses

“By-right” multifamily residential development rarely occurs in Madison. Under Madison’s zoning code, almost every mixed-use building or significant multifamily residential development requires conditional use review by the Plan Commission due to building height, size, number of housing units, and other thresholds. Only two buildings with multifamily residential components totaling 12 dwelling units were approved as permitted uses between 2013 (when the city’s new zoning code was adopted) and 2016, out of approximately 7,800 total new multifamily units approved during this period. Adjusting conditional use thresholds may streamline the project review process, accelerate the addition of new units, and remove a barrier to adding multifamily housing units to the city.

--Part 2, Page 50

Opportunities for Public Input



- Comprehensive Plan (2018)
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (2019)
- Neighborhood Plans
- Special Area Plans
- Neighborhood Development Plans

Barriers to Fair Housing



- White households are 2.5 times more likely to own a house than Black and Latino households.
- Only 20% of Black households in Madison own their own homes.
- 54.6% of Madison renters are cost-burdened (spending 30% or more of income on housing).

From: [Jennifer Argelander](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#); [All Alders](#); [Stouder, Heather](#); [Mayor](#)
Subject: Legistar 630902 Proposed zoning changes
Date: Friday, March 19, 2021 10:17:34 AM

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I am writing to strongly oppose the new proposed zoning changes as currently written in Legistar 63902. This proposed changes to Madison's zoning ordinances will increase the number of multi-family development projects that do not require conditional use permits from Madison's Plan Commission which would then diminish or eliminate the neighborhoods' ability to have a voice in major changes that the City wishes to make in their neighborhood development.

The proposed transfer of decision making power from Madison's Plan Commission to Madison's Planning Department means that developers can propose a project and have it approved by City Planning staff without input from neighbors who actually own property next to these developments. Plan Department staff will then approve developments using a checklist one-size fits all approach to make decisions without consideration of the design and needs of the neighborhood.

In the proposed language, height and density limits are significantly raised for all zoned areas and usable open space requirements are lowered significantly. Raising limits on building heights, lot sizes, and dwelling units per acre and significantly lowering required usable open spaces would allow the construction of unreasonably large buildings and would foster overcrowded neighborhoods. This would be a sledge hammer approach to existing neighborhood design. And even more critical, reducing open space is detrimental to the environment and the mental health of those residing in those places. Open space must be protected.

All projects greater than 8 units must be approved with neighborhood input.

All projects greater than 48 units must go to the Plan commission for conditional use permit.

Open space requirements must be maintained at the current levels.

Advocates of the zoning code changes in Madison falsely claim that their changes would remedy segregation, by wealth and race, produced by past zoning requirements. The opposite is true. Crowding more multi-family buildings into areas already zoned for multi-family developments can only amplify current demographic patterns. If the City aggressively promotes new housing at densities much greater than what people want, people can and will move to surrounding communities where they can find neighborhoods in which they do want to live. Will businesses then follow their workers and customers to the suburbs?

Jennifer (Jeff) Argelander
1715 Erie Court
Madison, WI 53704



Plan Commission
City of Madison
215 MLKJ Blvd. #17
Madison, WI 53703

VIA Email: HStouder@cityofmadison.com

Dear Chair Zellers and Plan Commission Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments in support of the proposed changes to the conditional use thresholds – LEGISTAR # 63902. I am a licensed real estate broker, an owner of Lauer Realty Group with offices on 2229 Atwood and 2337 Monroe Street, Madison Wisconsin, and an active member of my community.

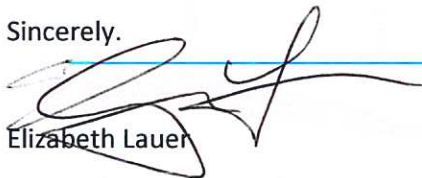
I am also an owner of Foundry Apartments, which owns and manages rental properties in the City of Madison. Foundry Apartments' apartments range from a 25-unit apartment building, smaller buildings with 1-bedroom and studio apartments, and multi-bedroom houses.

The apartment units I own are the small and medium density units – the missing middle of housing – the City is trying to promote. As someone that lives and invests in my community, I strongly support this proposal.

It is harder to make a small apartment building work financially than a larger apartment building due to the economy of scale. The fact that these smaller project face the same regulatory process as large scale commercial uses and high density apartment buildings make them even less attractive to developers and investors. It is very difficult for me or a potential investor I represent to spend the time and money to go through the unpredictable conditional use process for a small number of units. The proposed changes will allow people like me to identify properties that are properly zoned for small density projects, present the project to staff, and have the predictability that the project will come to fruition to allow me to invest in it.

No simple zoning change will miraculously solve the housing crises in Madison. However, common sense changes like this will overtime allow many of us to create more and more housing opportunities in our communities. Thank you for your efforts!

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Lauer

From: [Amie Heeter Yoga & Meditation](#)
To: [Rummel, Marsha](#); [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed Zoning Change
Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:52:21 PM

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Dear Alders, Plan Commissioners, and Mayor Rhodes-Conway,

As a resident of the east side and home owner in the Marquette Neighborhood, I do not support the zoning changes being proposed.

This change subtracts neighborhood and City review to streamline the approval for certain housing developments, which and I do not believe will serve Madison and solve this issues around increased growth. Neighborhoods are made of the people who live there, and their input- not just their property taxes - should be of equal value.

I am a large supporter of affordable housing, and could not have become a homeowner here on the Isthmus without the subsidies and support provided by Commonwealth Development. I have also lived in the Carbon apartment building and qualified for a lower income apartment my family needed at the time as we resettled into Madison and my husband was looking for work. Affordable housing is not something I just support, I've needed it and lived in it for most of my last 15 years in Madison.

But Madison is growing fast, and the increased density in the Isthmus corridor and the lack of affordability, plus the environmental challenge of increased density in a zone prone to flooding is a huge concern. We need to grow smarter, not just faster as these zoning changes would pave the way towards...

Thank you,
Amie Heeter of 229 Merry St

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Amie Heeter
Yoga and Meditation Instructor
photographer
www.amieheeter.com
608-957-3327

"Don't ask what the world needs, ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."

-Howard Thurman

From: [Susan Detering](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: regarding Legistar 63902
Date: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 11:51:53 PM

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Dear Plan Commission:

I am a homeowner, real estate investor, local business owner, parent, spouse, and Madison resident for 12 years.

PLEASE change the zoning code to allow for more mixed use, and density. Please also consider creating pathways to homeownership for those pushed out of the insane market we are currently experiencing. If you allow more density in neighborhoods, please make sure to include affordable housing.

Thank you!

Susan

Susan Detering
(928) 637-5220 cell

From: [Tabitha Hansen](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Citizen Comment for Meeting on 3/22
Date: Friday, March 12, 2021 10:14:07 AM

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Good Morning,

I live in Middleton but am a resident of Madison. I would like to urge you to keep the provision in for requiring neighborhood input into a development. The city and all of the people are not the ones living in the neighborhoods that the development will go into. The people that live around it should have a place to express their views and actually be heard. I moved away from a large city into a suburban housing development. I do not want to live next to a skyscraper. But with what you are proposing if a person wanted to put in one I would have no choice but to accept it. Please vote to keep neighborhood involvement. Thank you.

Regards,

Tabitha Hansen
949-466-4855

If you always look for little ways to help God will give them to you.

From: [Kevin Luecke](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Draft Housing Ordinance Changes
Date: Friday, March 12, 2021 9:50:50 AM

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Dear Plan Commission Members,

I write to you in strong support of the proposed changes to increase the allowable densities and adjust conditional use thresholds in many areas of the city in order to ease and expand the development of multifamily and denser housing. This is a much needed change, and although I do not believe it goes far enough, it is a good step for the city to take.

I have lived in Tenny Lapham for more than 15 years, and I live here because it is easy to walk and bike to destinations or all types. However, despite the recent boom in apartments in my neighborhood, there has not been enough smaller-scale development to keep pace with housing demand. The city should be actively taking steps to increase density throughout Madison, but particularly in the neighborhoods between Milwaukee Street and Midvale Boulevard - the true core of the city. This development can help us become a community that is more equitable, diverse, and respond to the climate crisis facing us.

This proposal is a step in the right direction, and I urge you to support it.

Thank you,
Kevin Luecke
121 N Ingersoll St

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Kevin Luecke
kluecke1@gmail.com

From: [Parks, Timothy](#)
To: [Ethington, Ruth](#)
Cc: [Cleveland, Julie](#)
Subject: RE: Neighborhood Input Needed on Draft Housing Ordinance Changes
Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 2:44:55 PM

This is a public comment for 63902. Thanks!

From: Ethington, Ruth <REthington@cityofmadison.com> **On Behalf Of** Planning
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 12:33 PM
To: Stouder, Heather <HStouder@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Parks, Timothy <TParks@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: FW: Neighborhood Input Needed on Draft Housing Ordinance Changes

From: The Mickelsons <mmickelson@charter.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 11:20 AM
To: Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>; Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Mollenhoff David <dmollenhoff@charter.net>; Leigh Leigh H. Mollenhoff <leighm@firstweber.com>; The Mickelsons <mmickelson@charter.net>
Subject: Re: Neighborhood Input Needed on Draft Housing Ordinance Changes

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

Thank you, Marsha, for getting a Zoom meeting together for this evening, March 17, 2021, to discuss proposed **Missing Middle Housing Ordinance** changes for our neighborhood.

We appreciate your diligence on so many issues affecting our neighborhood.

Regarding the issues related to the proposed zoning changes and the **Plan Commission Meeting on Monday, March 22, 2021**, we ask:

How were residents notified about this meeting to discuss something as important as housing ordinances?

When were neighborhood residents notified of this meeting?

What are the needs and purposes of increased density in our specific neighborhood and two adjoining neighborhoods?

What research documents such needs?

What are the potential impacts of increased density in our neighborhood? How will those be addressed and proposals shared with neighborhood residents?

What other city neighborhoods are being/have been considered for such increases in density? Why or why not?

We simply cannot believe that the City of Madison and its Plan Department would act on important ordinances proposing to increase allowable densities and decrease conditional use thresholds without broad neighborhood review and input.

As 30+ year residents of Morrison Street in the Marquette Neighborhood, we have participated in exploring and responding to many important neighborhood issues through clear notification and open meetings. Although there have been differences of opinion among a variety of groups, we have always felt that issues were informed by the input gathered at such meetings **before** official decisions were made.

Thus, we implore you to stop plans to make these changes until neighbors have been duly notified of the answers to the questions listed above and broad input from the neighborhood has been invited, heard and addressed.

Thank you for listening to our concerns.

We look forward to hearing from the Plan Commission staff through you about the answers to the questions listed above.

Respectfully Submitted,
Allan Mickelson
Michele Mickelson
1525 Morrison Street
Madison, WI 53703
608-255-4398

From: [IBEW Local 2304](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [David Poklinkoski](#); [Rummel, Marsha](#); [Evers, Tag](#); [Carter, Sheri](#)
Subject: Proposed Changes to Development
Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 12:32:05 PM

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Dear Plan Commission,

It is my understanding that the City is embracing the possibility of changing the rules for development on the Isthmus, in particular.

While I'm clearly no expert on these issues, I have been living in Madison since 1973 and in various locations on the "Near East Side" since 1978. I purchased a small house there in 1990 for \$69,000.

It would seem obvious, given the logic of capital accumulation, that giving the developer businesses a freer hand along the reduction of community and neighborhood input, we will see more development of market-based properties and not affordable working class housing. The class and racial divides within the Madison community would likely be exacerbated by these proposed changes, not lessened – although I know some who are proposing these changes are well-intended.

They should go back to the drawing board. To conclude, there is no guarantee that more affordable working class housing will be built in our neighborhood with these changes; in fact the opposite will occur to the detriment of our City – as folks of lesser financial means are pushed further to the periphery and accelerating the gentrification process on the isthmus.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these "two cents".

DAVE

David Poklinkoski
205 Ramsey Court
Madison, WI 53703

Email: ibew2304@att.net
Cell: 608-770-8896

From: annewalker@homelandgarden.com
To: [Rummel, Marsha](#); [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed Zoning Change
Date: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 9:25:21 AM
Attachments: :-

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

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway, Alders, and Plan Commissioners,

I do not support the zoning changes currently proposed by Planning.

The proposal removes neighborhood and City review in order to streamline the approval process for certain developments. Citizen participation isn't an impediment – it's an opportunity for the community and developers to create better projects by working together. In his introductory letter for the Planning Department's *Participating in the Development Process: A Best Practices Guide for Developers, Neighborhoods and Policymakers*, our former Mayor David Cieslewicz recognized this: "One of the reasons we have this vibrant mix of places is because of our tradition of a caring and involved citizenry and development community. The City understands the importance and benefit of having a healthy community dialogue about the future of our built environment."

Neighborhood input can be crucial to good development no matter its size. Neighbors can help ensure that infill relates well to the streetscape and surrounding uses of the space. This has been especially important, for example, when infill is situated next to a public resource such as a park and our public ROW's.

A second major concern I have is about balancing increased density with the environmental challenges we face in Madison, and how this relates to real affordability.

The proposed zoning changes support additional infill for areas in our City that are desirable places to live. These places – including my own near-east neighborhood – are on a strip of mostly flat land, in a former wetland, between lakes, with a high water table, and are prone to flooding. As Madison pursues the important goal of affordable, equitable housing, we need to keep the environmental needs of our isthmus equally in view. Long-term, we can't meet the first need without meeting the second.

I believe more ways to create affordable housing in Madison, and in my neighborhood, is important. I bought my home when the neighborhood was much more affordable. As a single woman (at least the second time I bought it), affordability was and continues to be a focus for me. I know there are many more who also need a chance to find and have a home. Many also want affordable options to age in place in our community.

Our neighborhood has been a focus of quite a bit of urban infill. Bill Fruhling with the City of Madison Planning Department is quoted in an article as saying, "...with major investment pouring into E. Washington and parts of the East Side, city staff have been anticipating where the next push might take place." The article specifically focused on the Yahara River Corridor, but the Corridor is a part of a bigger picture.

Part of the bigger picture is, with all that building, our neighborhood has become increasingly expensive. Also in the picture is the need to balance environmental concerns –

needs, really – with a desire to build more. It's easy to design Nature out of a built environment, especially in the isthmus where space is so tight. Many cities and downtowns face that dilemma, but an isthmus presents a special challenge.

I've been looking at all kinds of documents about building. I came across this comment in a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) publication regarding building and affordability: "Experience has shown that flat land creates many difficulties that are costly to overcome. Inadequate run-off of surface water often causes ground saturation which results in a high water table adversely affecting house foundations, basements, pavements and individuals' water-supply and sewage disposal systems." That's certainly a sentence that gets my attention. I, like so many in my neighborhood, have an older home (1890s) with a field stone foundation, and I value my water supply and sewage disposal system.

Affordability is about many things. Access to housing is one. But long-term affordability is also about sensible design for cities that considers environmental challenges alongside the need for infill. For example, cities need to meaningfully design for the urban heat island effect. Neighborhoods with a higher proportion of buildings and streets get warmer and stay warmer at night. As the climate changes, many cities are experiencing deadly heat waves. Stormwater is also warmed by traveling over roofs and pavement, before entering our lakes and the Yahara River, and warmer water makes them more prone to deadly blue-green algae. These are challenges that, if not addressed, come with a very real cost.

Likewise, the floods we experienced not too many years ago in our City should be a serious wake-up call that we need to balance infill with our environmental challenges. Thinking back to the quote from HUD, one of the reasons that Engineering often does not support larger infiltration strategies for stormwater in our isthmus neighborhood is because of our high water table. Sensible design should look at infiltration and retention as options. Many cities have moved forward with retention strategies, including ones that prioritize canopy trees: an affordable, beautiful, sensible strategy that enhances the built environment. A successful urban canopy needs us to plan for space for them to grow and thrive.

Across the country and here in Madison, serious environmental challenges are pushing a lot of people up against a pretty hard wall. As we look at how we use the space we have, the proposed zoning changes need to address these challenges and prioritize sensible design for our City and our neighborhood. We also need to encourage, not limit, neighborhood involvement to make every development the right fit.

Respectfully,

Anne Walker

From: [Matthew McGrady](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#); [Skidmore, Paul](#)
Subject: [D9] Zoning Change - Housing Density and Conditional Use
Date: Wednesday, March 10, 2021 3:50:37 PM

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Hello,

I am a resident living at 508 Burnt Sienna Drive. I am concerned about the new changes proposed to the conditional use permits that eliminates neighborhood input during the approval process. I am unable to find the link in order to officially register in opposition to these changes, as written. I am not against smart, multi family development in all areas of the city, however, I think it is vitally important to keep the public informed of upcoming proposals so that we can adequately assess impacts to the neighborhood and have a chance to support or oppose such development.

Sincerely,

Matt McGrady

--

Matt McGrady,
608-772-3640



Our Board of Directors

March 9, 2021

Rich Arnesen
Chair

City of Madison
Housing Strategy Committee
Plan Commission
Common Council

Vicki Bankston
Vice Chair

Mike Kollath
Treasurer

Re: Housing Density and Conditional Use Thresholds
Legistar File ID# 63902 – MDC’s Support of the Changes

Anne Neujahr Morrison
Secretary & Housing Chair

Dear Committee and Council members:

Ron Trachtenberg, Ex Officio
(Past Chair)

Madison Development Corporation is a non-profit affordable workforce housing provider in the City of Madison. We have 348 units of quality workforce housing in the area, including our recent 44-unit development “The Graaskamp” at 1946 E. Washington Avenue.

Stuart Levitan
Mary Strickland
Rob Bergenthal
Dante Viscarra
Julia Stone
Scott Resnick
John Gransee
Mallory Bell

I am writing to express our support for the proposed multi-family zoning ordinance changes for 3 reasons:

1) Small to mid-scale multi-family properties (the missing middle) would be more cost-effective and predictable if administrative approvals were allowed vs. going through the additional reviews by the Plan Commission.

2) The opportunity to increase density and height in allowable areas makes a project feasible. Our projects range from multiple townhomes to 50-unit multifamily affordable housing developments.

3) Land & building costs are escalating quickly. Lowering the required lot area per unit allows us to provide more housing units per acre. Having an administrative approval process would provide a timely decision, allowing us to lock in land purchases and interest rates.

Our Team

Lorrie Heinemann
Fred McConnell
Abbie Wallhaus
Harry Irwin
Cashton Laufenberg
Robin Kempfer
Scott Ndobegang
Karen Birrenkott
Vince Ventura
Jillian Schaefer
Taizo Murakami

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Lorrie Heinemann

Past MDC Presidents

Frank Staniszewski
Roger Ganser

MDC President & CEO
Lorrie@mdcorp.org
608.256.2799