

From: [Stephanie Otles](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Odana Rd Building Setback
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 10:12:28 PM

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Hello,

I am currently the parent of one child at Montessori Children's House. With another on the way, I am writing in the hope that we can ensure MCH is a safe environment for years to come.

The proposed building on Odana Rd is too close to the playground. The height of the building and its proximity to the playground will result in direct sightlines into the playground from both windows and balconies. Direct visual access from residential units compromises the safety and privacy of the children. Planting trees or adding screens is insufficient mitigation for a building of this height.

I urge the commission to require a greater setback for the Odana Rd building and to remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy for our children.

Thank you,
Stephanie Otles

From: [Diana W](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 3 re: File # 89886 Opposition
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 8:47:29 PM

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Dear Urban Design Commission,

My name is Diana Weng and I am a parent of one, soon to be a second, child attending Montessori Children's House (MCH). I am concerned about the redevelopment in agenda item 3 re: file #89886 and its impact on the future survival of the school.

We chose the school based on its location, but also ultimately the feel of the space and the staff. The building was cozy, warm, and inviting with the wood paneling, indoor plants, and wall of windows in every classroom space. The playground where the kids play most of the day is a constant source of entertainment for the kids, especially during the warm months when they spend almost the entire morning outside. The school surroundings feel like an isolated pocket of quiet with minimal traffic on a narrow street.

I'm afraid that the development with high floors, many small units that do not accommodate families, and strange footprint will impact the school feel and longevity of the school. Since the kids spend so much time on the playground, privacy for the young children must take priority. With so many units so close to the school, I'm concerned about the number of work from home people there will be with balconies or windows overlooking the school. There is only so much tree coverings can do especially as the trees are still growing. There is also a swimming pool in close proximity that will also have these same windows overlooking an open pool. With the height of the buildings, I'm also worried about the amount of sunlight coming into the school. Not to mention the increase in traffic on the aforementioned narrow streets with children crossing the street with the already limited parking for the school.

I urge the commission to reconsider the requirements for the development to protect the quiet feel of the area by setting back the development on Odana to match the existing Supreme Fitness footprint and removing any balconies on the top levels. For the development on Medical Circle, I request another design that would just include a commercial, not residential, component to preserve the small local businesses already existing in the area.

Thank you for your consideration,
Diana Weng

From: [John Porco](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Agenda item 3 Odana rd Medical Cir
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 8:29:12 PM

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I wanted to take a second to register my strong opposition to the plans for adding single bedroom apartments between Odana rd and medical circle. Simply put, this hasty plan introduces potential traffic issues as a cut through from Odana to Medical Circle. The planned parking is woefully inadequate for the massive number of units. This will create almost unsolvable parking problems. Unlike an office building downtown where lower parking numbers may induce the use of public transit, less parking where people will live will force people to park on the street and I. Other areas that will create safety and crowding concerns The fact that the plan is almost entirely comprised of single bedroom apartments instead of two and three bedroom units shows a lack of planning for young couples and small families. Madison's housing shortage demands two and three bedroom units not one bedrooms. The proposed design wit balconies overlooking the current pool and school property create serious security concerns. And finally, while the high density building A on Odana may make sense, building B on medical circle does not fit the character of the circle. The buildings are all smaller on that side and are architecturally significant. This would change the character of medical circle in irreparable ways. The city would be wise to ask for revisions to building A to increase the number of two and three Berlin units, and to restrict the redevelopment of the medical circle side to match the current character of the area one to two story buildings with adequate parking.

John

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Stephan Schmid](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Opposition to the planned construction on Medical circle
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 6:37:48 PM

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Dear Commission members,

I am writing to formally register my opposition to agenda item 3, file 89886, the construction proposal for the new apartment buildings near Montessori Children's House on Medical Circle.

I have several serious concerns regarding the impact of this project. The demolition and construction phases pose significant risks to the children at the preschool, specifically regarding dust, noise, and privacy. Additionally, the proposed height of the buildings would block natural sunlight to the school, which is an integral part of the building's design and the children's environment. The current plan has balconies and windows facing the children's playground without regard for children's privacy. Apartments would not be built like this near an elementary school.

Furthermore, I hope that the historical value of the Erdmann building on Medical Circle will be taken into consideration. The ongoing construction would likely impede the ability of local businesses to function as intended due to the consistent disruption.

Please take these points into serious consideration as you review the developers' request to move forward with this project.

Thank you for your time and for considering these concerns.

Best,

Stephan Schmid

From: [Erin riley](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: In opposition of 5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle February 18th agenda
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 5:27:40 PM

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To the Board of the Urban Design Commission

I am Erin Riley, a board member of the Montessori Children's House (MCH) and a parent of a child at that same school. I am registering against the proposed development on 5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle. I would, however, like to note that the developer has alleviated the concern of the pet relief area being located directly adjacent to the playground by moving the proposed location of the pet relief area.

As a long time Madison resident, I understand that change is a healthy part of a vibrant city. I love that Madison has continued to change in response to the needs of the community, and we need additional housing for the ever increasing number of people who want to live here. The Odana/medical circle neighborhood on paper is a wonderful place for high density apartment complexes, with stores, bars, and bus and bike commuter lines right outside of the door. However, I have some concerns about the development as it is proposed.

My first concern is that the increased building height and size near MCH will mean that highway noise is increased for both MCH and the apartments. The highway traffic noise will bounce off of the new hardscape of the apartment buildings, and echo back towards MCH. Additionally, the noise from the large heating and cooling systems required by such a building will add to the background noise. As constant, loud background noise is a stressor, it is not in the best interests of the students or the apartment dwellers to be in a place where it is uncomfortably loud while utilizing the outdoor spaces. I strongly urge the committee to consider noise mitigations as part of the development of this neighborhood. Part of this is already in place due to the developer's proposed landscaping and tree placement. However, it is possible that additional noise mitigation will need to be in place to keep noise at a manageable volume. In order to make this determination, I strongly urge the committee to consider a sound study, taking into consideration the effect of the new apartment building.

My second concern is that the proposed building on Odana Road is much closer than either the existing building or the adjacent apartment complex. As such, there is a privacy concern where the apartments are directly overlooking the playground. Again, some mitigation is already in place due to the proposed landscaping efforts in the trees, but we need to be mindful of the fact that trees take time to mature and in the meantime several

generations of students will have passed through the school. During that time, the school may struggle with enrollment due to justifiable privacy concerns from parents. I would ask that the committee consider a larger setback of the building on Odana road.

Thank you for your consideration of these and other concerns
Erin M Riley

Cleveland, Julie

From: Joan Rogers <rogersjoan2706@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 2:46 PM
To: Urban Design Comments
Subject: Design Meeting February 18,2026-Opposition Comments

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Dear Members of the Madison Urban Design Committee,

We are writing to formally express our strong opposition to the proposed demolition of one of the four buildings designed and built by renowned Architect Marshall Erdman, a **Frank Lloyd Wright** colleague.

Our concerns are twofold:

First, historic preservation.

The building slated for demolition is not an isolated structure; it is part of a rare and cohesive cluster of Wright-designed buildings that contribute meaningfully to the architectural and cultural identity of **Madison**. Removing even one of these buildings irreversibly compromises the integrity of the entire series. Madison has long been recognized for valuing thoughtful urban planning and architectural heritage. Allowing the destruction of a Frank Lloyd Wright–designed building contradicts those values and represents a permanent loss that cannot be undone.

Second, the impact on a neighboring Montessori children's school.

The proposed apartment building would be constructed immediately adjacent to a highly regarded Montessori school. This school is widely respected, and our daughter—who has carefully evaluated many educational options—considers it truly “the best of the best.” The current apartment design shows balconies that directly overlook the school's playground. We find this troubling.

Children deserve environments that prioritize safety, privacy, and emotional well-being. Balconies overlooking a playground raise serious concerns about privacy, security, and the overall appropriateness of placing residential observation points next to a space dedicated to young children at play. This aspect of the design feels fundamentally incompatible with the mission and needs of a children's educational setting.

We urge the Committee to not pursue the teardown of the historic building.

Respectfully,

Joan Rogers & Jeff Zenk

From: [Florentino Palmon](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: 89886
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 12:27:03 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose agenda item #3, 89886. My grandson attends the school next door and it would be unsafe to have this building next door to their play area. Thank you

Sincerely,

F. Rick Palmon, MD
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jim Lottridge](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Cc: [Montessori Childrens House](#)
Subject: Comments Agenda Item 3 re: File # 89886
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 12:49:42 PM

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Commenters: Jim Lottridge & Laura Kvalheim, Directors of Montessori Children's House, 5530 Medical Circle, Madison WI

Dear Urban Design Commission,

We are writing to express opposition to the demolition and redevelopment as proposed, of 5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle because of the potential impacts for our school during the construction process and beyond. We are writing in service to the children and families that are currently at our school and for all future families. We understand that there is a need for more housing in Madison, but this shouldn't come at the expense of children's safety and security.

Our non-profit school, 501(c)(3) has been in business since 1964, and located at 5530 Medical Circle since 1991, serving families with children ages 18 months through 6 years during the school year and 18 months through 10 years old during the summer. We are state licensed, City of Madison Accredited (one of the first programs to be accredited in the 1970s), and are a verified American Montessori Society school. We own our building and have done our part to maintain it and keep it as original as possible. We are located within the cluster of four Marshall Erdman designed buildings on Medical Circle. We love the Erdman aesthetic. It suits Montessori well! One of the key components of Montessori philosophy is the environment. Our building's airy lobby/gathering area, wood panelled, warm classrooms and large sunlit spaces, lend themselves to a "children's house." **It's a warm, comfortable space for children, staff, and families - not an institutional feel.** Our spacious playground, tucked in behind our building, adjacent to Supreme Health Club, is large, loved by the children and used three hours per day, for much of the year. When children look up, their eyes rest on clouds or migrating birds (we are on a flyway). Obviously, the proposed demolition and proposed construction will have a significant impact on our ability to use this space. And as most people know, outdoor play is a critical part of early childhood education. Throughout this process, it has seemed as if we have been invisible! **On behalf of today's and tomorrow's children, we urge the commission to require the developers to adjust their plans and build the proposed apartment building (5555 Odana Road) on the footprint of the current building, aligning with the apartment building to their west. We also urge the commission to require changes to the plans to limit/eliminate sight lines from the apartment building to our playground.**

Could this be done by strategically removing or walling certain balconies with sight lines to our playground?

We are also writing to express opposition to the demolition of 5534 Medical Circle because it will detract from the remaining beautiful Erdman buildings, which were built into the hill/landscape. This proposed development will tower over our building, 5530 Medical Circle, with a totally different architectural philosophy. Additionally, for our school, it will change the feeling of safety and security we've had since moving to Medical Circle in the 1990's. Even though we have an excellent reputation, being the only American Montessori Society verified school in the area and our extraordinarily long tenured staff (more than 160 years at our school), **prospective families typically choose us based upon how they felt when they toured. This starts when they drive down Medical Circle towards our school. Does the area look safe and secure?** To that end, MPA and other neighbors on Medical Circle have been wonderful. We've felt safe and secure in this location and the traffic has been reasonable. The proposed demolition of current buildings and proposed development of apartments will lead to significantly more traffic near us - near the children. Who knows what the commercial bottom floor will house - Kwik Trip? Increased traffic and people, plus balconies looking out over our playground will be concerning. This doesn't exude a safe feeling for families. In our 30 plus years of experience (20 plus in leadership of the school) no amount of trees, fencing and privacy screening will convince current and prospective families that our school is safe and private with this proposed development. **We wonder if this project would be approved next to a public school. If the demolition and development of 5534 Medical Circle goes forward, we urge the commission to require changes to the plan that limit the size/look/feel of the project to better align with the existing buildings on Medical Circle. Additionally, we urge the commission to eliminate any sight lines toward our property and specifically our playground.**

Again, we love our Erdman building and the architecture of the area and **considered 5530 Medical Circle our forever home.** If this demolition goes forward and the proposed apartments are built, as designed, the situation will likely become untenable for us and we will be **forced out.** And then, likely this last cluster of early Erdman buildings will be torn down. **Again, we urge the commission to consider the impacts of this proposed development on the children in our care now and for children in the future.**

We've attached a photo for reference. It shows the view from our playground towards 5555 Odana Road and views from our upstairs and downstairs classrooms towards 5534 Medical Circle (to our west).

Thank you for your time and consideration!
Jim Lottridge & Laura Kvalheim

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Montessori Children's House

Madison, Wisconsin
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608.273.8600
608.441.9686 (fax)
MadisonMontessori.org





From: [Michael Tappa](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Concern regarding proposed Odana Rd building
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 1:02:02 PM

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Hello,

I am writing to note my concern regarding the proposed demolition and development of the Odana Rd building apartment complex. I am a parent of two children that attend the absolutely wonderful Montessori Children's House (MCH) preschool. The development as currently proposed will absolutely negatively impact the school and that should be recognized. As a parent who has experienced the struggle to find high quality early childhood education in Madison I am extraordinarily grateful that we discovered MCH when we did and have had the opportunity to send both of my children to the preschool. MCH has existed for 60+ years as a parent run non-profit local leader in early childhood education. I can say it is an entirely different experience than corporate operated daycare centers. It is a treasured community asset that has had such a positive impact on so many children and families in our community that the consideration of what is best for the school should be paramount when considering neighboring developments.

As proposed the Odana Rd building would be directly overlooking the playground that is filled with children for large portions of the day, a clear safety/privacy issue for the children. Due to the proposed height of the building a tree lined barrier will not be sufficient to block the upper floors from having direct views of the playground from windows. This is in addition to having balconies that will overlook the playground. These are obvious design flaws which I can only imagine is an oversight based on failed recognition of what the school uses the space for which leads me to the question that I have for the Urban Design Commission...Would this development be permitted to be built this close to a public school playground?

Relatively simple design solutions exist to all of these issues while still permitting construction of the building. The setback from the playground could be increased to match the neighboring apartment complex. The balconies overlooking the playground can be removed. Demolition could be done in a way that won't negatively impact the children's ability to use their playground. Building adjacent to a school should require additional planning and I hope the Urban Design Commission recognizes those requirements need to be met before granting approval.

Thanks for your time,

Michael Tappa

From: [ML](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Concerned parent, Medical Circle Building and Odana Road Building
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 3:38:42 PM

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Hello,

I am a very concerned parent of children that attend Montessori Children's House (MCH). MCH has been around for 60 years and has been at this location since 1991.

There are two apartments being proposed to be built - one directly next door and the other behind the school

My children have thrived at this school. They start their day outside on a natural playground. I have dozens of stories that would bring tears to your eyes on their experiences on the playground and inside these warm, sunlit classrooms surrounded by the kindest teachers that emphasize empathy and life long learning.

I value the historical character of this neighborhood - of Medical Circle - and support our small local businesses.

Medical Circle Building:

I strongly urge the Commission to reconsider the demolition of the Medical Circle site entirely. I urge you *please* oppose the tear down of this building.

If you proceed with demolishing the building next door, it will negatively impact the strong knit MCH community, including me and my children. The construction is extremely concerning for children that spend every morning outside for hours. If built, the apartment complexes and balconies are extremely close to the playground and violate any child's privacy. But even more - it just ruins the beautiful experience of MCH and the overall Medical Circle ambiance and historical nature

It is difficult to say this, but it's important to understand the impact of a decision: Smart, talented, thriving children will leave MCH because of concerns from the building teardown and subsequent apartment building construction, which we are hearing will start as early as July 2026 if this is not reconsidered. Parents are concerned for their children's safety including long term effects of construction material and debris.

In 6 months, 5 years, 10 years, 20 years - this decision *will* matter. The blueprint of this area matters.

(As a side bar, yesterday, my 4 year old recited all 7 continents and spoke to me about the country Mexico. She also is counting by twos, doing yoga poses with her best friend, and showing empathy for a friend yesterday who got hurt. She does the binomial cube and other complex math. She spends hours outside exploring and playing. This Montessori school is exceptional, and this current location has been perfect for them.)

(Another thought, but since the moment this apartment building proposal has been brought up to us parents, this has been an exhausting and concerning time for the school and for families. There have been so many questions and concerns. This time and energy is being taken away from beautiful children 18 months to 6 six years that deserve their time and attention. If you were to vote to please not move forward, we can re-focus again on the children.)

Odana Road Building:

For the Odana Road Building, I urge the Commission to require an increased setback for the Odana Road building to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback, and remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy protection for our children.

In addition to the setback issue, the current design includes balconies with direct access into the playground - an additional layer of privacy invasion beyond the window concerns.

No preschool, especially one that honors the child's need for outside time, should have residential balconies looking down over its playground.

With that being said, if this proposal on Odana Road is also deferred or denied at this time, that also would be best.

From: [Malinda West](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Concerns with Odana Rd Development
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 2:14:56 PM

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Dear City of Madison Urban Design Commission,

I am a parent of 3 children who attended Montessori Children's House (MCH) located on Medical Circle. I am writing to express my concern with city plans for construction of a 6 story apartment complex on Odana Road. I am concerned the privacy and learning environment nurtured by MCH staff, an environment in which my children thrived, will be compromised negatively by the current apartment development plans. Specific concerns include: 1) Negative disruption of the current learning environment at MCH as an increase in the immediate local population will increase traffic/ noise/ and congestion, and 2) Loss of privacy- as apartment balconies and windows will overlook the school and compromise the privacy of the children.

In the outdoor spaces at MCH, my children experienced true nature-based exploration. Whether gardening or observing the natural world alongside Teacher Derek (and other Teachers too!), their learning was guided by curiosity and their own discoveries. They were encouraged to ask questions, form conclusions from what they saw, and develop confidence in their thinking. This learning environment was mirrored inside the classrooms too. Where a quiet, private environment to focus on lessons, reflect, or rest, fostered the calm and protected environment ideal for growth and learning.

Equally important was the emotional safety my children felt each day. They were free to express big feelings, test their independence, and develop autonomy without fear of being observed, judged, or recorded by people outside the MCH community. That freedom—to be fully themselves in a secure environment—is foundational to building resilience and self-confidence in early childhood.

Finally, MCH's remarkable continuity of teaching staff, with its long-standing educators and low turnover, reflects a culture of professional satisfaction and deep commitment. A large apartment complex immediately adjacent to the school, with the increased activity, noise, and visibility it would bring, risks disrupting the calm daily rhythm that supports both students and staff. Such changes could unintentionally erode the sense of stability and fulfillment that has allowed this exceptional team of educators to thrive for so many years.

For these reasons, protecting the privacy and peaceful character of MCH is not simply about preserving a boundary—it is about safeguarding the conditions that nurture confident, independent, and emotionally secure children.

I am unable to speak at the scheduled time of the meeting, but want to stress that I am willing to speak during another time. Additionally, my children who attended MCH feel strongly about the impact the apartment development plans can have on MCH and they are willing to speak formally.

In words shared among MCH families and that I agree fully with, "I urge the Commission to require an increased setback for the Odana Rd building to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback, and remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy protection for our children." I believe these changes protect the learning and privacy of the children. I also believe these changes will support the satisfaction of the MCH educators- whose commitment to the educational, social and emotional development of our children- represent the true heart of MCH.

Sincerely,

Malinda West, MD

Mother of Brooks (11 yo), Grier (9 yo), and Reed (6 yo)- all who attended MCH over various years.

Sent from Gmail Mobile

From: [Joan Rogers](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Design Meeting February 18,2026-Opposition Comments
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 3:38:51 PM

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From: clarestonerfeld@gmail.com
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Effect on Montessori Children's House of proposed building
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 2:24:59 PM

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Hi,

I am a parent of two children who went to Montessori Children's House. We are also members of West Side Swim Club and Supreme Fitness, both adjacent, so we have been heavily active in this small area for years.

MCH is such a special place and our children thrived there. We support any action the community can take to limit the impact of the proposed developments on MCH's playground and building. The school has been there for decades, and it doesn't seem fair to impinge on them or push them out in the name of development. Madison's expansion should be balanced with preserving community institutions that are already in place and doing great good in our community! Let's make sure the proposed development takes MCH's needs into account and makes sure that they can continue thriving there for generations to come!

Please strongly consider not going forward with the proposed demolition of the Marshall Erdman building on Medical Circle, and setting back the neighboring buildings – to provide space, privacy and neighborhood character to the MCH building.

Thanks,
Clare Stoner Fehsenfeld
815 Terry Pl
Madison WI 53711

From: [Margaret Porco](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Cc: [Guequierre, John](#)
Subject: Feb 18 UDC Meeting Agenda Item 3 Opposition Comments
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 12:32:17 PM
Attachments: [Site plan page with playground added from 03 5555 Odana 5534 Medical Presentation 2-18-26-2.pdf](#)
[playground sight lines from Pages from 03 5555 Odana 5534 Medical Presentation 2-18-26-2-3.pdf](#)

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Dear Members of the Urban Design Commission,

I am writing today as the President of the Board of Directors of Montessori Children's House (MCH), located at 5530 Medical Circle. Our school is next to the proposed development at 5534 Medical Cr and our playground backs up to the proposed development on Odana Road. (see visuals attached). Though we have been in discussion with the developer, we continue to have significant concerns about both the proposed building design (s), placement, and the direct impacts this will have on our ability to operate safely and effectively as an early childhood education facility and long term local small business.

Who We Are

Montessori Children's House has provided early childhood education in Madison for over 60 years. We serve children ages 18 months to 6 years. We are a local, small business institution — exactly the kind of long-standing community asset the City's Comprehensive Plan and development goals commits to protecting. We are not opposed to development. We are asking that it be designed responsibly with careful consideration to the assets that exist around it.

Concern 1: Child Privacy and Security — Building A

Building A (Odana Rd) as proposed sits much closer to the lot line than any existing adjacent building, and includes residential units, windows and balconies with direct sight lines into our children's outdoor playground. The children on that playground are between 18 months and 6 years old.

This creates serious, specific risks:

- Unknown adults in residential units and on balconies will have an unobstructed view of young children at play — creating real safety and privacy concerns that affect our licensing obligations and family trust.
- Our ability to maintain a secure, supervised outdoor environment will be compromised.
- Families reasonably expect that their children are not observable by a building full of strangers while at school.

We ask the Commission to require Building A be redesigned to address these concerns. Options include: matching the setback of existing adjacent buildings, reorienting balconies that face the playground, and restricting windows on elevations with direct sight lines to the play area.

Concern 2: Loss of Natural Light — Both Buildings

Two of our four classrooms face proposed Building B on Medical Circle. Our playground lies between the two proposed structures. We believe both buildings, at five and six stories,

will cast half of our classrooms and playground in significant shadow during school hours. No light and shadow study has been submitted or made available to us.

Natural light is not optional in early childhood education — it directly affects children's health, mood, and development, and it is central to our program's operation. Shadow impacts could affect our ability to function effectively in our current building.

We formally request that the Commission require a light and shadow study as a condition of further review. The study should model both buildings across seasons and school-day hours, specifically analyze impacts on our classrooms and playground, and be shared with us before any Commission vote.

Concern 3: Incompatible Design on Medical Circle

The buildings in this commercial park — including the Marshall Erdman buildings — were designed as a cohesive ensemble with consistent scale, setback, and character. The proposed Medical Circle building does not match that context in any of those dimensions. We ask the Commission to require a redesign that respects the architectural integrity of the existing commercial park.

In Summary: Requests

- Require Building A to be redesigned to eliminate direct sight lines into our playground, through setback adjustment, balcony relocation, and window placement changes.
- Require a professionally prepared light and shadow study for both buildings, with results provided to Montessori Children's House before any vote.
- Reconsider the Medical Circle development with regard to historical context -as part of an ensemble in a commercial park in which the buildings design relate to adjacent buildings uses/designs. This lower portion should be redesigned to reflect the scale and setback of the existing Marshall Erdman commercial park so as not to literally crowd out local small businesses.
- Give Montessori Children's House the opportunity to review revised plans and respond before final action.

We appreciate the Commission's consideration. Montessori Children's House has served this community for over six decades and intends to serve it for decades more. We ask only that development near our school be designed with care for its youngest neighbors.

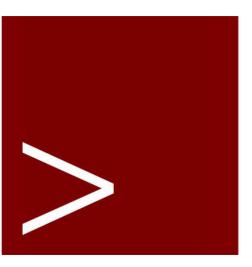
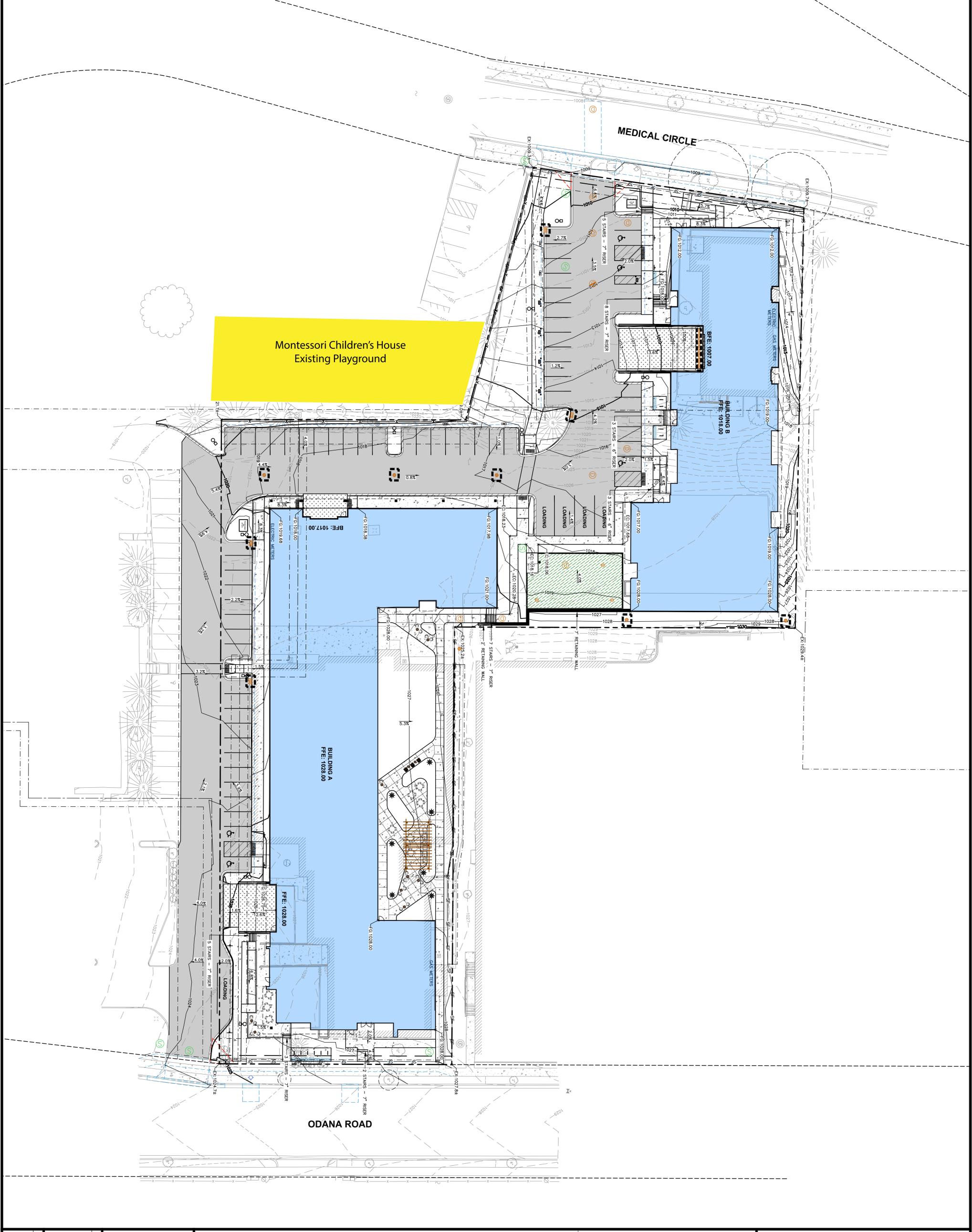
Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Porco

Board President, Montessori Children's House



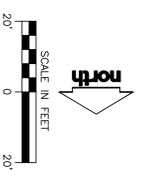
Note: The existing apartment complex (above labeled in red) is set back much further from the existing playground. The current development is not only closer to the lot line and playground, but a story taller. This poses safety and privacy concerns. The drawings do not depict our playground, or the angle of the hill which gives the building an even steeper vantage point into the playground. Due to proximity and scale, even with large tree plantings (which will take years to grow), the balconies on the top 3 stories in particular will still have views directly into the playground.



JLA PROJECT NUMBER: W25-0507-01

JJSD
CREATE THE VISION | TELL THE STORY
jsdinc.com
MADISON REGIONAL OFFICE
507 WEST KERNAN AVENUE, SUITE 800
MADISON, WI 53703
P. 608.848.8080

5555 ODANA ROAD



PROGRESS DOCUMENTS
These documents reflect progress and intent and should not be used for final bidding or construction-related purposes.

LAND USE/UDC INITIAL: FINAL
50% DD SUBMITTAL
01/05/2026
02/06/2026

SHEET TITLE
GRADING AND EROSION CONTROL
SHEET NUMBER
C400

From: [Lisa Kucek](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Increase setback
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 11:09:47 AM

You don't often get email from lisakucek@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

I am a parent of two students at Montessori Children's House. This school is a treasure of the city and the state of Wisconsin. Staff have decades of experience and are excellent teachers and nurturers. The atmosphere is so kind. Children are content, engaged, and happy. The school teaches children to be peace keepers - something that is urgently needed in our world. The proposal to build a 6-story apartment building very close to the school playground is a threat to this school, and the gifts that this school brings to the community. I urge the Commission to require an increased setback for the Odana Rd building to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback, and remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy protection for an effective learning environment.

Thank you,

Lisa Kissing Kucek
31 University Houses, Apt D
Madison, WI 53705
262-501-7257kucek@gmail.com

From: [Gillian CB Fink](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Montessori Children's House & neighbors
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 1:37:44 PM

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Dear Urban Design Commission,

I'm a former board member of Montessori Children's House. I'm writing to register my concerns for this item on the upcoming agenda,

"3. 89886 5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle - New Mixed-Use Building in Urban Design District (UDD) 3. (District 19)

Owner: BPH, LLC

Applicant: Nick Orthmann, Bear Development, LLC".

I urge the Commission to:

__reconsider the demolition of the Medical Circle site entirely, or if new construction proceeds, require that any replacement building fits within the scale, height, and character of the existing commercial park so it doesn't negatively impact the surrounding Marshall Erdman buildings and the local businesses (i.e. Montessori Children's Hosue) within them; and

__require an increased setback for the Odana Rd building to match the existing apartment complex standard in setback, and remove balconies facing the playground to ensure adequate distance and privacy protection for our children.

Sincerely ~ Gillian CB Fink

From: [Todd Dale](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Urban Design Commission comments (File #89886, Agenda Item 3) – MCH playground privacy, construction safety, and contingency relocation support
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 12:49:45 PM

You don't often get email from tdale9010@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Urban Design Commission,

My name is Todd Dale. I'm a parent of a child at Montessori Children's House (MCH), immediately adjacent to the proposed redevelopment (File #89886, Agenda Item 3). I support adding housing and neighborhood investment in Madison, but I'm asking the Commission to require specific design and construction protections so this project can be a good neighbor to a preschool serving children ages 18 months to 6 years.

Summary of my requests (4 items):

1. **Increase the setback of the Odana Road building from the MCH playground** to match the existing apartment complex setback standard behind/near the school;
2. **Remove/relocate any balconies that overlook the preschool playground** (including any on the Medical Circle building that face the playground);
3. Require a **school-adjacent construction protection plan** (secure fencing, safe access, dust controls, and clear communication) so the school can remain open and safe during demolition and earthwork; and
4. If the developer cannot demonstrate that construction can occur safely while MCH operates, require a **contingency plan** that includes **relocation support** (temporary site and associated costs) to avoid forced closure.

Why this matters (briefly):

- A six-story building placed too close to a preschool playground creates ongoing privacy and safety concerns. Even if balconies are adjusted, windows and upper-floor sightlines can still directly overlook young children at play.
- The construction period is also a major risk: demolition and excavation next to a preschool raises safety and health concerns (truck traffic, dust/air quality, noise), and could realistically lead to forced closures if not managed carefully.

What I'm asking the UDC to require:

- **A greater setback for the Odana Road building** along the school edge, consistent with the existing adjacent standard.
- **No balconies oriented toward or directly overlooking the playground.**
- A "school-edge plan" sheet with sections along the playground boundary showing:

setback dimensions, screening/landscape design, and balcony/window orientations.

- A **construction protection plan** specific to the school edge, including (at minimum): secure fencing and controlled access between the work site and the school, safe pedestrian/vehicle separation near family routes, and robust dust control (with a clear communication protocol if conditions become unsafe for outdoor time).
- A **relocation contingency**: if the developer's plan cannot maintain safe operations, the project should include a defined temporary relocation option for MCH so families are not left without childcare and the school is not financially harmed.

Thank you for considering conditions that allow this development to proceed while protecting a sensitive preschool environment.

Sincerely,
Todd Dale
Parent, Montessori Children's House

From: [Amanda Ryan](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Written comment for 2/18 meeting agenda item 3 (5555 Odana Rd & 5534 Medical Cir)
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 1:03:42 PM

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Dear Urban Design Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed project at 5555 Odana Rd / 5534 Medical Circle. My largest concern regards the privacy and security for the surrounding businesses; particularly because there is a preschool immediately adjacent to the proposed mixed-use buildings on Odana Road and Medical Circle. My second concern is for the potential loss of the 5534 Medical Circle building that has deep ties to Madison's unique architectural heritage.

As a parent of two children who attended Montessori Children's House (MCH) from fall 2014 through summer of 2021, I am concerned that both of the proposed buildings' heights and proximities to MCH will create a privacy and security issue for children and staff who use the preschool's outdoor playgrounds and garden areas on a daily basis year-round. The plan shows that the proposed building on Odana Rd will have a closer proximity to the preschool's playground and be an additional story taller than the current neighboring apartment complex. This creates direct sight-lines from the proposed building's windows/balconies into the playground, which cannot be adequately screened with natural tree plantings or constructed fences. No school, and particularly a preschool with young children, should have residential balconies overlooking its playground. At the very least, if the proposed 6 story building on Odana Rd moves forward, it should match the current height (5 story) and setback standard set by the existing apartment complex, and be modified to remove the rear balconies overlooking the preschool's playground to preserve children's privacy and security.

In addition, as a Madison resident and the spouse of an individual involved with the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation, I can't help but point out the demolition of the building at 5534 Medical Circle, designed by noted Madison architect Marshall Erdman, has both negative historical and architectural impacts. The building at 5534 is one of four medical buildings designed together in connection on Medical Circle. Together these 4 buildings are the second-best preserved cluster of Erdman-designed buildings in Madison. An out-of-scale 5 story mixed-use structure not only impacts the heritage and character of the surrounding area, it opens the door for further modern development of the area and potential loss of local architectural history as Marshall Erdman is deeply linked to Madison history. I urge the Commission to reconsider demolition of the Medical Circle site, or at the very least, require that any new construction fits the scale, height, and character of the existing Medical Circle buildings designed by Marshall Erdman. An example of this is the building at 5510 Medical Circle, which has been heavily altered and updated over the years, but continues to maintain the original look and feel of the neighboring Erdman medical buildings.

Thank you,
Amanda Ryan

From: [Suzie Zenk](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed Development Behind the Playground and Next door to Montessori School on Medical Circle.
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 8:22:09 AM

You don't often get email from suziezenk55@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Although I do not live in Madison, I have family members that do and I am writing to express my concern regarding the above subject. I have read the material on the proposed development and believe there are more reasons not to approve this development.

The Montessori School recently celebrated its 60th Anniversary. I have visited this school on several occasions. Maybe more people should visit this lovely school filled with cheerful children being nurtured in a special environment. A six story apartment building is not the neighbor this school should have.

When I hear the name Frank Lloyd Wright or name of someone who was a student of his or worked with him, I feel pride. All Wisconsinites should feel this and not forget the buildings they left behind for us to see, use, and enjoy. The legacy of Frank Lloyd Wright and his student, Erdman should be respected and his buildings preserved not destroyed. Let's find ways to do this! Removing one building only leads to removal of others and Marshall Erdman had a concept in his mind for the space in question.

Please consider the children at Montessori School, the history of these buildings and in particular one to be removed, take pride in Wisconsin architects and what they created. There must be another space for the apartment building that doesn't affect children nearby or Madison's historical builders.

Thank you.

From: [Jan Anderson](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Medical Circle development proposal
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 8:04:53 AM

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Concerning the proposal to tear down the buildings at 5534 Medical Circle and 5555 Odana Road:

I have two grandchildren enrolled in the Montessori Children's House. I'm also a former resident of Madison where I've had family since 1916. The houses my great-grandfather and grandfather built are both listed in the historic registry. I care about the essence of Madison, its history and its quality of life.

I ask you to preserve places such as the Erdman buildings in Medical Circle, places where the eye and the spirit can rest; spaces where the scale of the buildings is in tune with children and humans of all ages; areas of gentle beauty that distinguish Madison from the acres of close, oppressive high-rise residential developments outside the Beltline. Concerning Medical Circle, please be the conservator of Madison history and Madison quality of life.

As for the Montessori Children's House, If you preserve the Marshall Erdman buildings, you preserve the kind of environment in which children and their families thrive—one close to the ground, one in which not all traces of what is old have been erased, one which fosters a feeling of stability. I urge you to prioritize the value of this group of calm, integrated, modest buildings over any potential profits eyed by developers.

Sincerely,

Jan Anderson
5139 S. 9th St.
Sheboygan, WI 53081