

Statement of Alder Sue Ellingson
in support of the proposed development at 2620 Monroe St
July 8, 2013

For 20 years I lived near 65th and North in Wauwatosa. It was a 1920's urban neighborhood just like most of District 13. Then in 1997 my husband's job took us to suburban Chicago. We bought a house in Arlington Heights not far from where he worked, in 1970's-style suburbia.

There were no 3- or 4-story buildings near our Arlington Heights house. There was lots of green space and yards. Plenty of parking. No traffic. No risk if a kid were to run into the street.

But there were no people on the street either. Every shopping area was a strip mall. Every outing required a car. Two huge roads—with zero pedestrian crossings—blocked even a modest 2-mile walk to the library. In the 18 months we lived there, I never saw my next door neighbor, who drove straight into her garage every night after work.

As a neighborhood, the place was dead.

It took me a long time to understand why I hated it. I had no background in city planning. On my own I had to figure out the importance of people living close together and the lively hubbub, the activity, the opportunities that creates. Yes, there are annoyances. But the benefits are amazing.

I want a great city. I work very hard to make that a reality. It is nothing like Arlington Heights.

Issues to consider about the proposal for 2620 Monroe St:

- Demolishing the house at 665 Knickerbocker

I agree wholeheartedly that tearing down a house in a vibrant neighborhood is bad public policy. However, the house has been zoned commercial since 1923. It's too late to undo it.

- Traffic

Neighbors believe that the project will generate a dramatic increase in traffic on Knickerbocker St, endangering children. City staff has the opposite opinion and expects no negative impact on public safety. I agree with City staff.

- Parking

Neighbors compare the development to Parman Place, which has had difficult parking problems. However, the geography of the streets is not convoluted here, as it is on the streets behind Parman Place. Plus, Knickerbocker is often parked-up already. And the developer has agreed to forego residential parking permits for residents. I don't believe there will be a big impact on parking for neighbors.

- Size of the building

Nearby neighbors say the building is too big. The biggest reason for the height of the proposed building is because parking is at grade, rather than underground, in order to avoid pumping. Many environmentalists, including me, have worried about the impact of pumping on the flow of nearby springs. I am happy this project does not have underground parking.

Many buildings along Monroe St are three stories or more: Hotel Red, 4 stories, Clarendon Apartments, 4 stories; Trader Joe's, 5 stories; Empire Photo, 3 stories + lofts; Steve Brown Apartments, 4 stories; Monroe Building, 3 stories; Parman Place, 3 stories + lofts.

In my opinion, 3 stories + lofts is a very good fit for this location. It is also what is recommended for this block in the adopted Monroe Street Commercial District Plan.

- Zoning is a property right

The right to use 665 Knickerbocker and 2620 Monroe St for a commercial endeavor has been attached to those properties since 1923. Removing that right would reduce the value for the owners, probably substantially. I don't believe that the property rights of other nearby neighbors are infringed to such a degree that they trump the rights of Kathleen Madison and Tom Rice.

- Many benefits of density and new investment

There are many benefits to density and new investment in our city: increased tax revenue; greater support for local businesses; more residents who will bike, bus, or walk, rather than drive; more interactions, spurring creativity, between neighbors of all sorts.

I don't believe the proposal will destroy or even harm the Knickerbocker neighborhood. On the contrary. We've had an enormous amount of new development on Monroe St since Monroe Commons opened. *The surrounding neighborhoods are better than ever.* This is one of the few areas in the city where properties have held their value despite bad economic times.

This proposal isn't perfect, but it's very good. I support it. I urge you to support it, too.

From: Priscilla Arsove [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 27, 2013 2:36 PM
To: 'tparks@cityofmadison.com'; 'mayor@cityofmadison.com'; 'district13@cityofmadison.com'
Cc: 'councilmail@dmna.org'
Subject: COMMENTS ON FRED ROUSE DEVELOPMENT ON KNICKERBOCKER AND MONROE

To Madison Plan Commission, Mayor Paul Soglin and Alder Sue Ellingson:

I am writing to strongly oppose the development of a multi-use apartment building at the site of the Town and Country gas station and bungalow at 665 Knickerbocker Street.

I am a 20+ year resident of Knickerbocker who has been active in neighborhood planning issues as a past president of the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood Association and as a member of the city-wide R2 Zoning Committee some years ago. Literally and figuratively, our neighborhood landscape has changed significantly over this time, never at a more rapid pace than over the past few years. In scarcely more one year this narrow neighborhood has absorbed nearly 100 new dwelling units (including the second phase of Wingra Shores).

There are inevitable tensions as the City's rational drive to create higher-density development intersects with its equally important interest in preserving the character, livability and values of traditional neighborhoods. This is a difficult intersection, to be sure, making it all the more incumbent on City planners to take utmost care to avoid a collision. I believe the proposed development on Knickerbocker Street would cause exactly this kind of collision, resulting in significant casualties to our neighborhood.

- It would raze a charming bungalow that's been an integral part of the street for nearly 100 years, not as a student rental or any other kind of transient housing.
- At 3 ½ stories and more than 28,000 SF the building does not respect the existing neighborhood character and context, goals that are widely cited in the Monroe Street Commercial Plan. The building is stunningly out of scale with the residential street onto which it intrudes -- a far deeper intrusion onto a residential street than any Monroe Street development thus far.
- The building includes a 21-car parking garage that would enter/exit through a double-width driveway on Knickerbocker, a one-block street that is home to more than 20 children. Many children would regularly cross that driveway.
- The building includes multiple large balconies that would reduce the visual and acoustic privacy of those living nearby.
- The corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe Street is already fraught with dangerous traffic, parking and pedestrian issues that would only be compounded by a

development of this scale. Nearby small businesses, which are an important part of the vitality and character of our neighborhood, depend on the availability of nearby street parking and rightfully fear this development will diminish their business.

It is, of course, a fact that bungalow at 665 Knickerbocker Street is zoned commercial, an artifact of the City's first zoning code in 1923 that was developed before most homes on the street existed and that has simply been carried forward in each major zoning code rewrite since. This does not mean that this zoning reflects good public policy today. It is also a fact that the proposed Rouse development exceeds the new zoning code standards, even *with* the adjoining house lot, so you, our policymakers, now have a choice. That choice must consider the uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood, recommendations in adopted plans, the impact on surrounding properties, and the public interest in exceeding the height limits.

The above comments and attachments to this e-mail speak to a number of these considerations. With regard to public interest, what is most in the public interest is to ensure that development is accomplished in a way that does not adversely impact neighborhood properties and quality of life – in other words, to ensure that every development effectively navigates that difficult intersection with existing neighborhoods. Most notably in its destruction of a home, but in many other ways as well, the proposed Rouse development does diminish neighborhood properties and quality of life. It is not the right development to be sited deep within a neighborhood of one-block residential streets.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Arsove

Knickerbocker Street

Attachments:

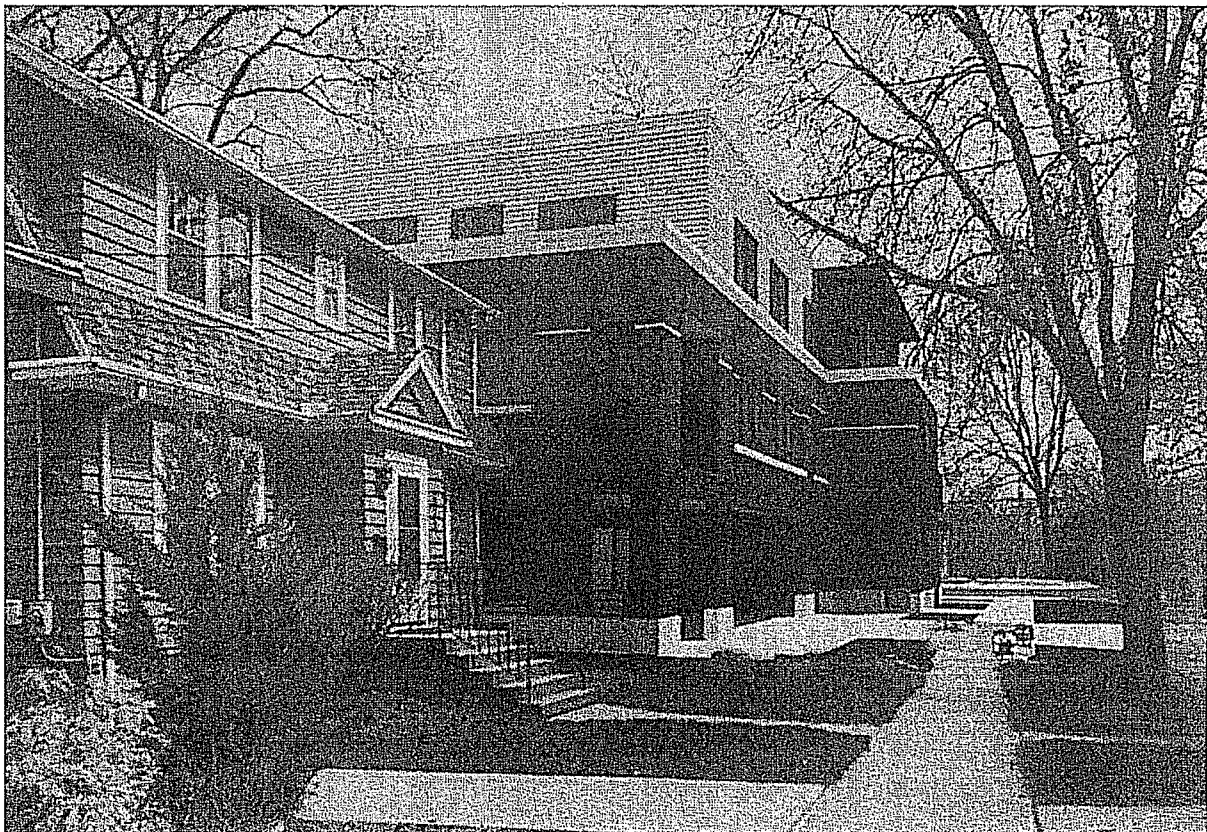
- 1) Neighborhood context: existing and proposed Knickerbocker streetscape
- 2) "Commonwealth Development zone" in the Monroe Street Commercial Plan, which *excludes* the first-in TSS-zoned homes on Knickerbocker and Sprague
- 3) Parking and related quality of life impacts of the Parman Place development

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

from this ...



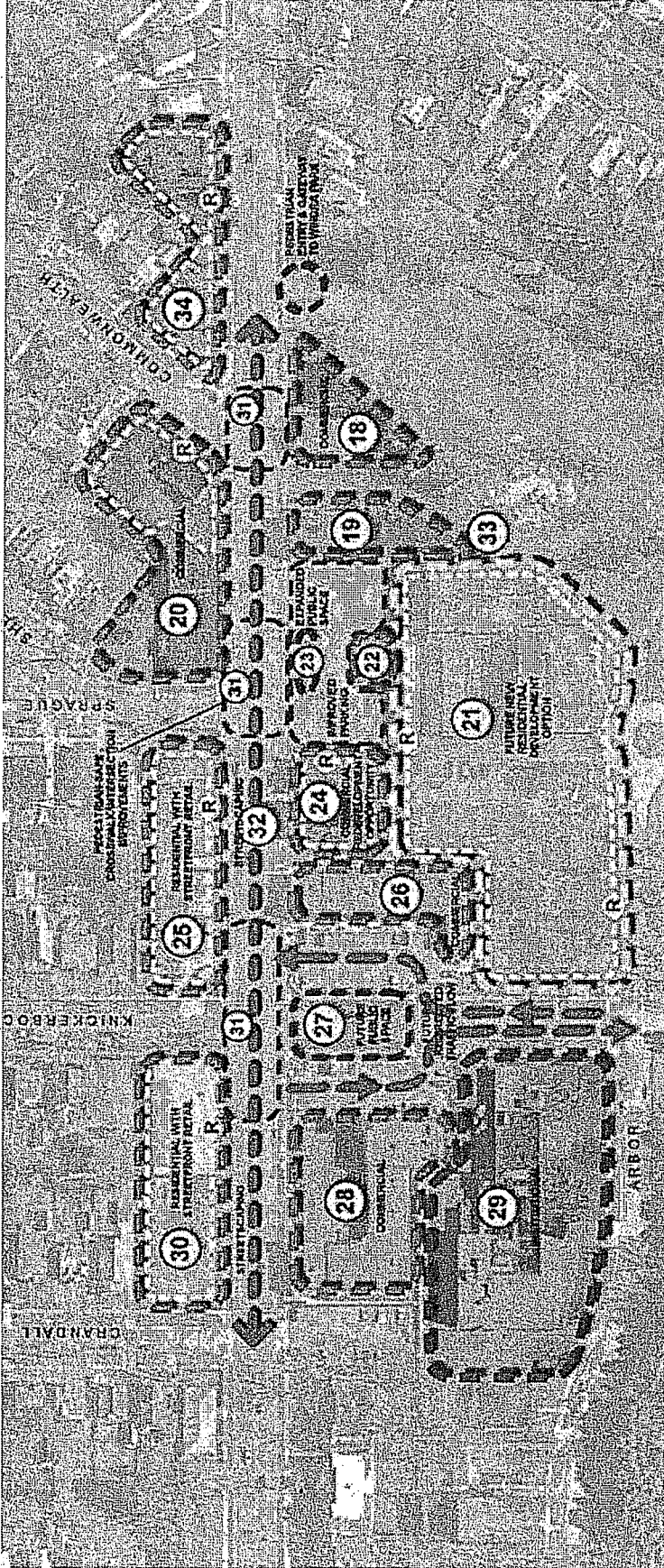
to this ?



FROM THE MONROE STREET COMMERCIAL PLAN. P. 17

Block 17

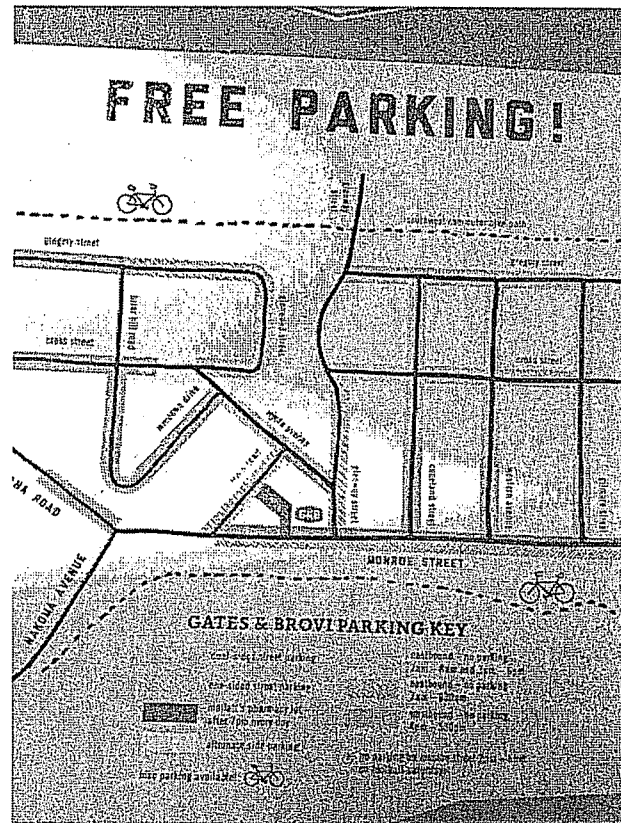
(S-M) This blue arrow suggests street and facade improvements along Monroe Street in this area. This includes coordinating streetscape, lighting, signage and facades.



NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACTS (PARMAN PLACE EXAMPLE)

FREE PARKING !

... on neighborhood streets . Sign posted at the entrance to Gates and Brovi Restaurant and Bar.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Comments from Holly Gibbs, resident on Wyota Avenue behind Parman Place:

My family and I live at 3602 Wyota Avenue, near Parman Place. We moved here 2 years ago and very specifically chose our home based on the quiet streets where we had hoped to raise our children. However, following the building of Parman Place the entire character of our neighborhood changed from a safe haven, to a crowded space that is stressful to return to whenever the restaurant is open. We went from a cozy, safe neighborhood with respectful drivers to one in the shadow of a large apartment complex. We used to walk with our young children several nights a week and chat with neighbors. It is no longer safe for us to walk in the streets near our home now because visitors to the restaurant drive aggressively, and at least occasionally are intoxicated. They park in our yards, or hurriedly park with their cars jutting out into the road. Gates and Brovi was pitched to our neighborhood as a restaurant, but is much more of a pub or bar than a restaurant.

We [...] wish you more success than we had in preventing this building that stripped our neighborhood of character and truly reduced our quality of life. We will now work to speed bumps or "slow down for children" signs in place before there is an accident.

From: Ingrid Swanberg [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Friday, July 05, 2013 2:48 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: Town & Country Proposal

Dear Tim Parks,

I am writing to communicate my opposition to the proposed mixed-use building at 2620 Monroe Street and 665 Knickerbocker.

While I support the general idea of city in-fill, the Rouse-Bruce proposal significantly exceeds the current zoning codes in both height and mass, and thus sets a very bad precedent. When I first read of the proposal I was shocked to learn that a residential home was to be torn down, and though I subsequently discovered that the house is technically zoned "commercial," I also learned that that code is some 100 years old and the house is not included in the plan for development in this portion of the Monroe St. corridor (Block 25). As a 36-year resident of the Dudgeon-Monroe neighborhood I can affirm that the demolition of the house and construction of this over-sized apartment complex and parking lot is NOT in the spirit of this neighborhood.

Despite the speed bumps on Gregory Street, traffic on the street is still very often going too fast for safety, particularly when Monroe Street is busy. Traffic would probably increase on Gregory as well as on Knickerbocker with the proposed 21-car parking lot with Knickerbocker access. Traffic and parking problems would probably increase further with a business in the building, depending on what sort. Though the developers originally said there were no plans for a restaurant in the proposed building, apparently that is still a possibility. A restaurant would further compound traffic and parking problems for neighborhood residents, as neighbors near the Gates & Brovi restaurant (located in a new building of similar size to this proposal) have learned to their dismay.

I hope the Plan Commission will deny the permit applications for this project, which violates both the letter and spirit of current zoning codes and is strongly opposed by a large number of neighborhood residents.

Sincerely,

Ingrid Swanberg Markhardt

[REDACTED] Gregory St.
Madison, WI 53711

From: Al & Aileen Nettleton [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 8:55 AM
To: Fruhling, William
Cc: Ellingson, Susan
Subject: File #30334, 2620 Monroe Street and 665 Knickerbocker Street;
13th Ald. Dist

To: Madison Plan Commission

From: Al Nettleton
Sheldon St
Madison WI 53711
aanett@sbcglobal.net

Date: July 5, 2013

Re: File #30334, Consideration of a demolition permit and conditional use to allow a single-family residence and auto repair shop to be demolished for the construction of a mixed-use building containing 2,300 square feet of retail and 21 apartments at 2620 Monroe Street and 665 Knickerbocker Street; 13th Ald. Dist.

I support the granting of a demolition permit and conditional use for the proposed development at the "Town and Country" auto repair garage.

The proposal is consistent with the Monroe Street Business Development plan and the newly enacted Zoning Code and will be an asset to the neighborhood.

I have lived for over forty years on Sheldon Street and our house is about 300 feet from the proposed development. We have been very active in the community all these years and I am now the treasurer of the Dudgeon Monroe Neighborhood Association. We love this neighborhood and are pleased to see the interest in development and the increased density along Monroe Street.

Neighbors have had a substantial amount of input on the proposed development and the developer has been very responsive. As a result the building is now proposed to be set back a distance from the Knickerbocker sidewalk and has additional upper story setbacks to the west and north. As a result of the upper setbacks, the developer has proposed the fourth floor lofts and these are well set back. The developer has also made improvements to the type of materials to be used on the exterior.

The presence of the new building will definitely be different from the current low density use of the property. But it is consistent with the nature of our neighborhood and will be a welcome addition.

Cc: Alder Sue Ellingson

From: kimberly strother [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 11:04 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: I DO NOT support the Town and Country project in it's current form

I feel this building will impact the quality of life for the residents who live in the homes right next to this new, tall apartment building. It will certainly impact the available natural light in their home. Natural light is a premium for a place that is cold and dark for a good 6 months sometimes more out of the year. It will certainly diminish their property value. No one wants to look at a big, unattractive building when they look outside of their windows.

The second point being, this building is not attractive. It does not meld nicely with the architecture of the homes and other store fronts on this street. I also worry about the increased traffic. Our street can't really handle the traffic that we have currently.

Rent is expensive on this street. The new buildings in the even more heavily traveled parts of monore st. have trouble staying in business. The Empire Photo retail space is STILL EMPTY. Why is it a good thing to have retail space that just sits around unused. The J. Lamore store was EMPTY for YEARS! Our economy is still barely past recession. How many small business owners are going to rush into this area, where parking is extremely limited to open stores? When Pasqual's moved, it really diminished the aesthetics of this area. Walking past a bunch of cardboard boxes in the window isn't very inspiring and makes this block feel dumpy now. Having a bunch of empty store fronts who's windows are covered in kraft paper will not help either.

The new Wingra Shores apartments are unattractive too. But at least they were not plopped down right next to single family homes. That area has always been an apartment ghetto. Further, the original plans for that area included opportunities for public spaces.. ie patios, outdoor patio seating on what is now Jac's. etc. when it was a condo project. The real project ended up excluding anything that would benefit the entire community, and serves only to benefit the developer.

We have an alder who LOVES developers, and cares nothing for her constituents. And why did we re-elect her? Elections have consequences.

Thank you for sharing this with the planning commission.

Kimberly Strother
[REDACTED] Terry Pl
Madison, WI 53711
[REDACTED]

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Kimberly Strother
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: 7/8/2013 3:28:56 P.M. Central Daylight Time

Subj: 2620 Monroe St proposal

To members of the planning commission,

I am unable to attend your meeting this evening, so am writing my comments for your consideration instead.

I live near this proposed building site on 2620 Monroe street and spend a lot of time along this stretch of Monroe Street—going to shops, eating out, and walking along the street. I do not support the proposed development plan as is. I would support it if it were set back from the street more and were lower. This proposed building would loom over nearby single family houses. This is essentially a 4 story 'blocky looking' building that does not fit in with the adjoining neighborhood homes, and, because it will take the place of one of the homes, the design brings the size right back into the neighborhood. The current autobody shop is not eye-candy, but at least it is not a looming presence.

There also appears to be no green space in the design. It is not pedestrian friendly. It looks like the horrid downtown canyons near University Ave and Lake St. or the Mullins development along old University. I would want more of a set-back from the street and sidewalks and more trees and shrubs to absorb rainwater, reduce runoff and to be more inviting and 'people-friendly'.

I would support this, or similar development if the building is lower and there is more set-back, with more green space and a clear plan for the increased parking demands (for the new commercial spaces as well as for the apartments) and increased traffic on Monroe and the nearby residential streets. As anyone from this neighborhood knows, you can hardly find parking here now when you want to patronize the current businesses. If you removed the commercial level (which could remain as empty as the commercial space in the Mullins building on Old University and Grand), then this building design fits better in the neighborhood. I know you cannot tell developers what to build. But you can prevent a bunch of empty storefronts and a big blocky building from being added to Monroe Street.

thank you for your consideration,
Barbara Streibel

From: Gil Jevne [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Monday, July 08, 2013 4:01 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Cc: Gil Jevne; giljevne@sbcglobal.net
Subject: RE: Plan Commission

To whom it may concern:

We have lived in the Dudgeon-Monroe neighborhood since 1981. Concerning the new development taking place on the corner of Knickerbocker and Monroe St., though we are not opposed to new development, we feel the current plan does not reflect the goals of the 2007 Monroe Street Commercial Plan. The development process needs to slow down, the developer needs to meet with the neighborhood, and the design needs to be altered to conform with the plan guidelines. The city should not provide a conditional use permit to allow the building to increase in height and mass. The current proposed building does not reflect the design standards listed below:

- #3. The uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for purposes already established will not be substantially impaired or diminished in any foreseeable manner.
- #12. When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in the district, the Plan Commission shall consider recommendations in adopted plans; the impact on surrounding properties, including height, mass, orientation, shadows and view; architectural quality and amenities; the relationship of the proposed building(s) with adjoining streets, alleys, and public rights of ways; and the public interest in exceeding the height limits.

For the record we are opposed to this development as currently planned and designed.

Thank you,

Gil Jevne
[REDACTED] Baltzell Street
Madison, WI 53711
(609) 238 0235

FROM THE MONROE STREET COMMERCIAL PLAN. P. 17

Block 17

(S-M) This blue arrow suggests street and facade improvements along Monroe Street in this area. This includes coordinating streetscape, lighting, signage and facades.

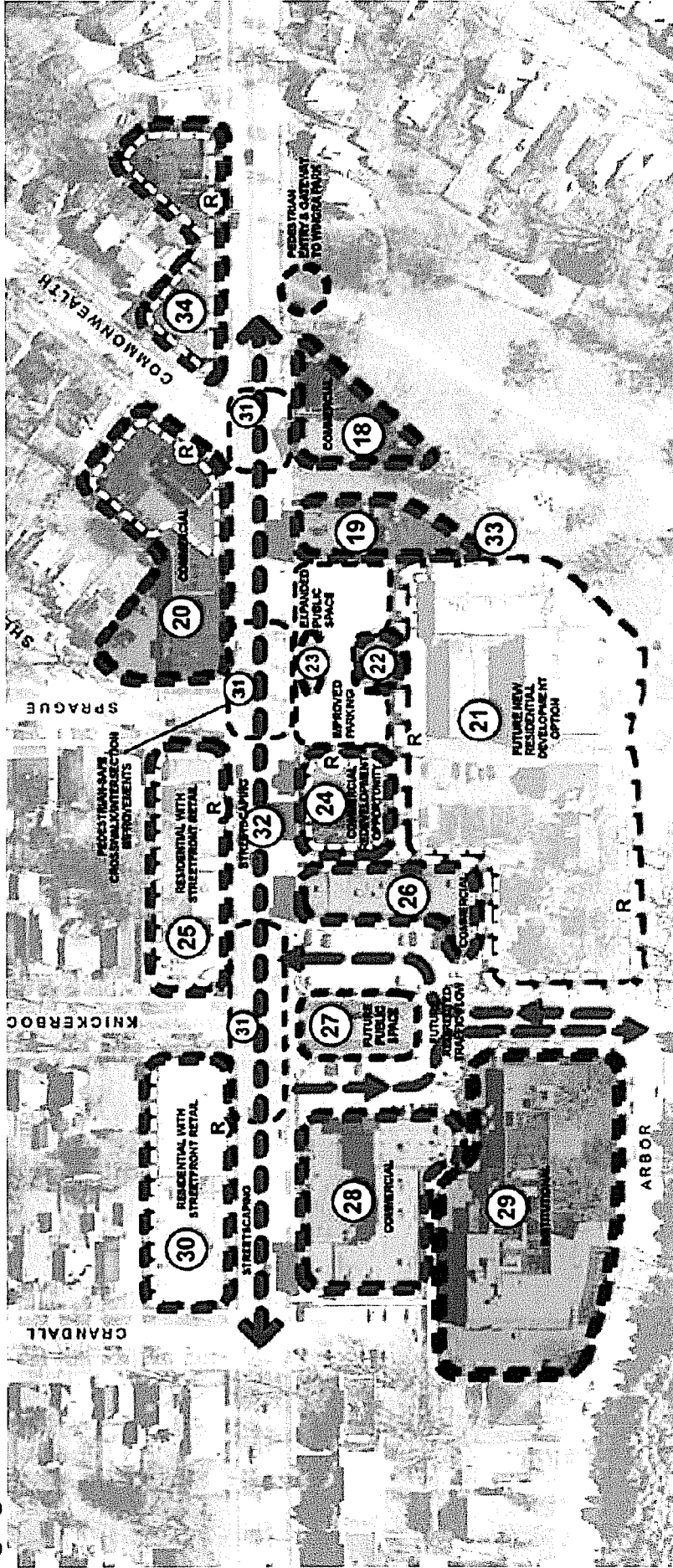


Figure K-9: Land Use, Development Strategies, and Target Projects for the Monroe-Commonwealth Node. Yellow depicts residential, red depicts commercial, and blue depicts institutional land uses. The dashed line surrounding the area depicts ground floor use and the fill depicts land use on upper floors. White dashed lines indicate potential redevelopment sites.

Block 22

(S-M) Michael's Frozen Custard is a neighborhood landmark and commercial use. It should remain as such, but the parking area around it could be reorganized to maximize parking. In the long term, this site could be considered to provide a public walkway or greenspace connection to Wingra Park. Please also see the page 69 for a note concerning green space in the Monroe-Commonwealth Node.

Block 23

(S-M) At location 23 there is an opportunity to create a small landscape area that will create a neighborhood gathering area, and a pedestrian safety area. Please also see the page 69 for a note concerning green space in the Monroe-Commonwealth Node.

Block 24

(M) There are opportunities to redevelop or improve the building on this block.

Block 24 has been identified as possessing potential medium-term redevelopment opportunities, and future development should adhere to the general development standards in Section J as well as the following site-specific development guidelines:

- **Build-To Line:** Building should be built up to the sidewalk edge along Monroe St.
- **Building Heights:** 2-4 stories with the 3rd and/or 4th levels set back from the front facade line.
- **Building Composition, Articulation, and Scale:** The building mass should respect the overall pattern of the street by emphasizing verticality rather than horizontality. A long building should be visually broken up into smaller subunits that replicate the sense of scale along the street. Facades along Monroe St. should have storefronts with architectural details to be attractive to pedestrians.
- **Entrances:** Principal entrances should be from Monroe St.
- **Service and Parking:** Service should be provided to the side, adjacent to the existing service access lane to the west of the property. Since the parcel is quite small, providing adequate parking on-site will be difficult. A shared parking facility (mentioned in the recommendation for Block 21) could provide parking for this small site. It may be more feasible for this parcel to be included in a larger effort which could combine sites 24 and 21 into one coordinated redevelopment project.

Block 25

(M) Block 25 is an opportunity to create a residential/commercial mixed use in the future.

Block 25 has been identified as possessing potential medium-term redevelopment opportunities, and future development should adhere to the general development standards in Section J as well as the following site-specific development guidelines:

- **Build-To Line:** Building(s) to be built up to the existing sidewalks as established by current patterns. Buildings on the corners of the block should be built out to the sidewalk along Knickerbocker and Sprague Streets.
- **Building Heights:** 2-4 stories, with the 3rd and/or 4th levels set back from the front facade line. Buildings should step down in height if possible toward the rear of the site in order to make a comfortable transition to the residential neighborhood behind.
- **Building Composition, Articulation, and Scale:** The building mass should respect the overall pattern of the street by emphasizing verticality rather than horizontality. A long building should be visually broken up into smaller subunits that replicate the sense of scale along the street. Facades along Monroe St. should have storefronts with architectural details to be attractive to pedestrians. Storefronts or windows are also

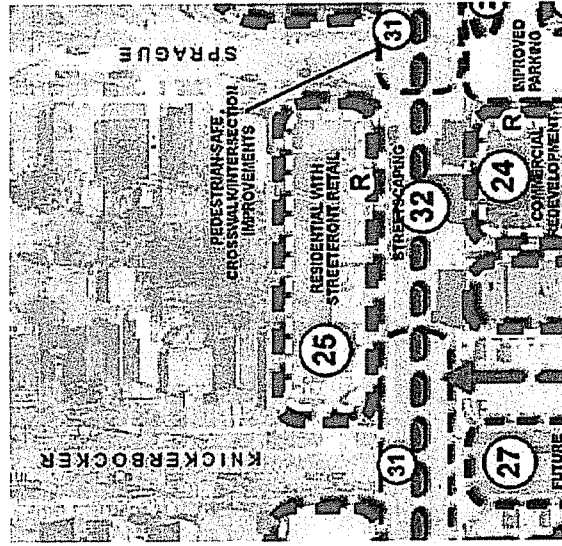


Figure K-12: Block 25

encouraged for facades along the side streets of Knickerbocker and Sprague Streets. Since the backs of the buildings directly abut residential properties, the back facade of the building should be a high quality material such as brick rather than concrete block and have window openings or other fenestration details. A landscape buffer should also be provided along this edge.

- **Special Features:** Buildings on the corners should have a special feature such as a projecting bay, recessed entrance, or porch at the corner of the structure.
- **Entrances:** Principal entrances should be off Monroe Street. Buildings at corners could have a corner entrance.
- **Service and Parking:** Since there is no alley in this block to act as a buffer between the residences and the redevelopment site, provision of parking and service access must be dealt with carefully. Parking and service should be to the rear of the site. All service areas should be visually screened by walls, fences, or landscape materials that are appropriate to the architectural character of the building.

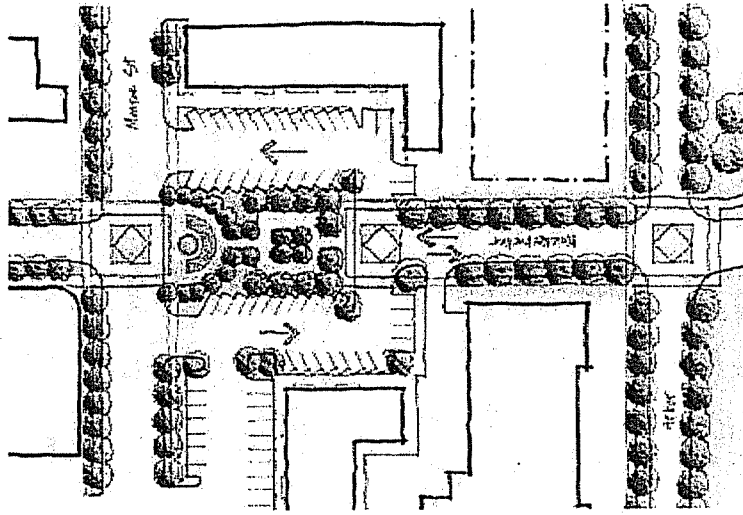


Figure K-13: Diagram of Potential Green Space Concept at Knickerbocker and Monroe.

Block 26
(S-L) Block 26 is an excellent example of effective retail development.

Block 27
(M-L) Block 27 is shown as a concept for how the neighborhood could create a neighborhood public green (Figure K-13) connecting Monroe Street to Wingra Park. This is an illustrative preliminary concept. Late in the development of the Monroe Corridor Plan, a preliminary infill development proposal was presented to neighborhood association officers and the district alder. This proposal, amongst many other options, presented a conceptual way for a pedestrian connection to be created in the area immediately east of the building next to Papa Phil's restaurant. The basic idea of the redevelopment would permit a 10' to 20' pedestrian and bicycle corridor with the possibility of outdoor eating amenities on either side to be created connecting that portion of Monroe Street, just on the western edge of Michael's Frozen Custard, with the cul-de-sac circle on Arbor Drive. While in a very preliminary stage, should this development proceed to some form of conclusion, this Plan strongly recommends that the City condition any development or redevelopment in this area to provide for this pedestrian and bicycle connection. Please also see the page 69 for a note concerning green space in the Monroe-Commonwealth Node.

Block 28
(S-L) Block 28 is to remain commercial.

Block 29
(S-L) Block 29 is currently an institutional use and is to remain.

Block 30
(M) Block 30 provides an opportunity for a future mixed use development.

Block 30 has been identified as possessing potential medium-term redevelopment opportunities, and future development should adhere to the general development standards in Section J as well as the following site-specific development guidelines:

- **Build-To Line:** Building(s) to be built up to the existing sidewalks as established by current patterns. Buildings on the corners of the block should be built out to the sidewalk along Knickerbocker and Crandall Streets.