

Heiser-Ertel, Lauren

Subject: FW: PC agenda 3. 77372 Planning Division staff update - 2023 Comprehensive Plan Interim Update

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Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 12:52 PM

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RE page 3: Other potential non-administrative text revisions staff would like guidance on 1. Consider revising map note #4 (Comp Plan page 18) which is applied to areas on the isthmus and near west side and says: "The "house-like" residential character of this Low Medium Residential (LMR) area should be retained, and any limited redevelopment should generally maintain the current single-family/ two-flat/three-flat development rhythm." a. Move away from the phrase "house-like" toward "missing middle" building forms, which are referenced elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. Consider changing the word "character," due to its exclusionary connotation.

Greetings Plan Commissioners-

Here are my initial thoughts on item in the report. I will not be able to attend the meeting. I look forward to the process to update the Comp Plan.

I've understood "house-like" to mean a single family or multi-unit building (two and three story houses with 2+ units) designed with pitched or gabled roofs vs flat roofs. Much of the built environment in the area covered by note 4 generally contains a mix of low rise/LMR density housing types and mixed use commercial buildings with both type of rooflines, the so-called missing middle.

I believe the intent of note #4 was that new development shall emphasize scale and height that are appropriate for these predominantly residential/transitional areas which are generally "house-like" but do offer a mix of building types.

If you search for the word "character" in the MGO you find references to physical attributes of the built environment such as setting, building form and placement, mass, proportion, architectural style/expression, rooflines, setbacks, construction methods, and materials.

I'm not convinced "character" necessarily results in exclusionary practices. The exclusionary practices noted in the staff memo historically have resulted from racially restrictive covenants, exclusive single family zoning, a built environment of street grid/highways that created barriers, lack of access to public transit, and "urban renewal" projects that displaced and segregated working class and black and brown residents from the white and wealthier sections of town rather than the "character" of the building form per se.

The work in the Historic Preservation Plan as well as the Underrepresented Communities Historic Resource Survey must be reviewed prior to any change to the Comp Plan. "House-like" character may be the only language in the Comp Plan protecting many of the resources included in the Wisconsin Historical Society's Madison Black History Walking Tour. These buildings and the ones in the Fourth Lake Ridge national register district are not protected by our historic district ordinance.

In addition, the area in District 6 covered by note 4 has other zoning regulations that allow more intensive uses and heights, such as UDD #8, the TOD overlay, and TSS zoning. The note does not limit development to 3 stories in these identified areas.

Thank you-
Marsha