

From: [Nino Amato](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Cc: [Mayor](#)
Subject: Madison Board of Parks Commissioners Chair Gave Incorrect Informing to members & Need to Reconsider their Votes on West Area Pan Agenda Item.
Date: Tuesday, August 20, 2024 6:08:25 PM
Attachments: [AiorK4zLhw5eTa2RRMwAZeuJsC0KOCwwDZYVL7R712RyvvP4KoYID0klbEn09sY6VArbn2oY-o7OswC6zv2-.png](#)
[cidf_m02lv7uh1.pdf](#)
[cidf_m02lxvfo0.pdf](#)

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

Dear Plan Commission and staff,

The Board Parks Commissioners made an error by voting to not amend or comment on the Walnut Grove Park Bike Path in the West Area Plan because of a misunderstanding about whether the path was adjacent or the same as the road that would go through Sycamore Park. Because the board's recommendation on the West Area Plan will soon come before the Plan Commission, the Friends of Sauk Creek wanted to alert you to this error and the failure of staff to advise the parks commission board in a timely way.

The Walnut Grove Park Bike Path **cannot be adjacent** to the park, as Chair Harrington advised the board members before their votes, because land on either side of the park is private and not owned by the city. I have attached maps that planners have shared for more than a year and they show the bike path would go directly into the park. She said that due to the fact that the bike path would be adjacent and not go through the park, the Sauk Creek Greenway bike path was not an issue for parks to consider.

Staff from the parks board, city planning, engineering and the city attorney's office should have alerted the board that this path was going through park land and the fact that city staff did not disclose that this is grounds for removing the Sauk Creek Greenway East West bike path from the West Area Plan before the Plan Commission considers it.

The East West Bike Path emerged in 2023 after Transportation Commissioner Robbie Webber surprised us with the suggestion that the planners include it in the West Area Plan despite significant opposition from environmentalists and area voters.

The Transportation Commission forwarded the plan to the Plan Commission July 31 but it was not a unanimous vote with two of the six commissioners voting to not approve the plan with the bike path inside the park. The opponents to the motion were Commissioner Denise Jess, CEO and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Council for the Blind, and Ald. Barbara Harrington-McKinney.

I and the Friends of Sauk Creek, the area environmental organization, strongly suggest that the members of the Board of Park Commissioners reconsider their votes given this new information and give the Walnut Grove Park supporters the same treatment as they gave those those who live near Sycamore Park at the board's most recent meeting. The board voted to approve the West Area Plan for the Plan Commission consideration with a note that members did not support a road that would run through Sycamore Park. The bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway has the same effect as the road through Sycamore Park.

I have attached three snapshots that show the planners' intent to put a bike path through Walnut Grove Park and not adjacent to it on private land.

- The original map from July 2023
- A more detailed map from August 2023 showing the starting points for possible East West paths
- The most recent map in the Final Draft of the West Area plan, which you saw at your last meeting

The attachments show that city planners intended the bike path to go into the park when they introduced the path in July 2023 and they have kept that plan as evidenced by their most recent West Area Plan draft.

Thank you,

Ellen Foley and the Friends of Sauk Creek

--



Ellen Foley

President

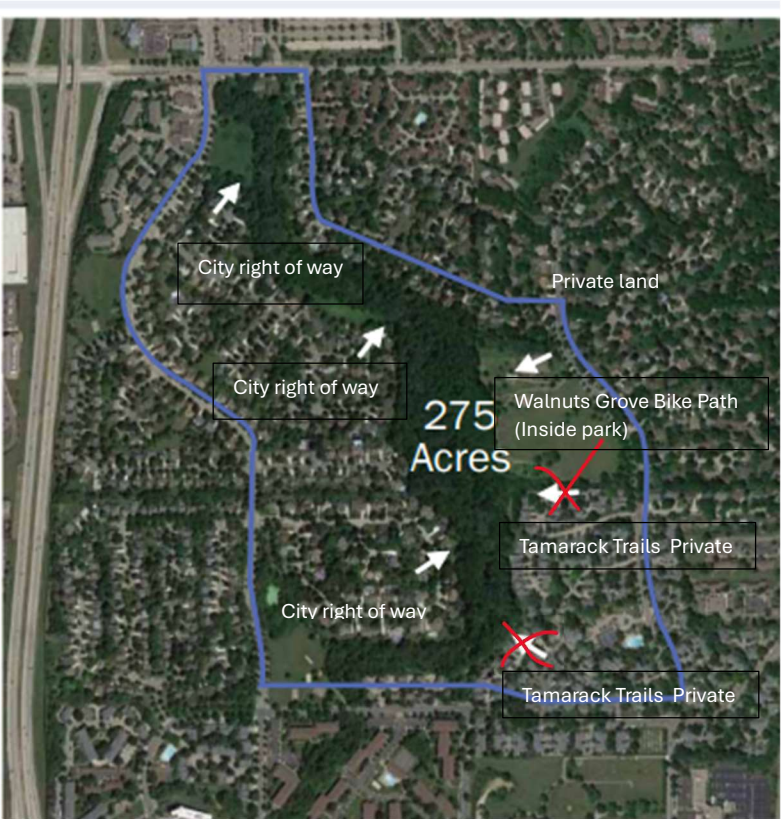
Ellen Foley Ink

608-444-7065

<http://www.ellenfoleyink.com>

Sent from my iPhone

Planners' Map for Walnut Grove With Bike Path Inside Park August 2023



Planners' First Map of the Walnut Grove Bike Path from July 18, 2023



Agenda Item 84383 West Area Plan

I am writing to request that prior to adoption of the West Area Plan, amendments to the West Area Plan be considered and adopted at the September 10 Common Council meeting respective to the Sauk Creek Greenway. The residents in Sauk Creek and Tamarack neighborhoods have been overwhelmingly opposed to a bike path and have been seeking true engagement on this process for the past several years. It has been a constant struggle to overcome the influence Madison bikes has had on city officials and this process. As quoted in an article in the CAP TIMES today, "Craig Weinhold, a member of the board of directors at Madison Bikes, said he worries city leaders may cave to the most vocal opponents of proposed bike paths in the West Area Plan. The residents in Madison don't call that caving in, we call it representation, and that is how government is supposed to work. Represent the citizens and engage them in what they would like to see occur in their neighborhoods, and in their city, and do so in a collaborative and constructive way. I propose the following amendments when adopting the West Area Plan.

The amendment states the following:

1. No bike path will be included in the Sauk Creek Greenway and associated drainage project.
2. Prior to the Sauk Creek Greenway drainage project commencing, an environmental impact study will be undertaken for this project.
3. A collaborative design by the city and the Sauk Creek and Tamarack neighborhoods will be developed and used for the bids of this project.
4. A fiscal note, as per city ordinance, will be developed to provide the total cost of the project, including the cost to construct and the ongoing annual maintenance cost of the project, and the revenue sources that will fund it.

I believe these amendments are necessary because the meetings on this project have been orchestrated to provide controlled amounts of information at each meeting, and have limited open discussion. The lack of transparency in this whole process, including the lack of meaningful community engagement, has left residents without a clear picture of what will occur in their neighborhoods. Implementing the amendments mentioned above would show the residents that the city is serious about being fully transparent and would go a long way toward reestablishing the city's credibility that has been eroded by this project over the last several years.

Randy R. Bruegman

313 Sauk Creek Drive

Madison, WI.

From: [Patricia Filas-Mortensen](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: West Plan
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 9:01:14 AM

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

Dear City Alders,

I wish to register opposition to Item 11 on page 27 of the draft West Area Plan, that proposes to convert the sidewalk on Regent Street along the south side of Rennebohm Park to a shared bike/pedestrian path. The disadvantages of this plan, such as danger to pedestrians and negative climate change considerations, far outweigh the very limited benefits for bicyclists. The people in the Hill Farms have been trying to get the city planners to listen to us regarding this path but unfortunately we have been overshadowed by the Sauk Creek neighbors who planners listened to once they hired a lawyer. Please tell planners to start considering the requests of the people who actually live in the area rather than the bikers who occasionally ride through it.

This plan does little to improve bike safety or connectivity because it does not extend to Segoe Road, Midvale Blvd or Whitney Way. If the shared path is only on the north side of Regent along the park, it does not help bicyclists at the most dangerous time - the morning eastbound rush even if it is a two way path because bikes will use Regent St going east.. The current bike lanes on Regent street are used very infrequently because these are **redundant** bike lanes as there are already lanes thru Rennebohm Park & on Sheboygan Ave leading to Segoe Road and eventually Midvale Blvd and along Old Middleton Road leading to the Shorewood path. A shared bike lane along Rennebohm Park would stop and start without followthru necessitating riders to discover novel ways to navigate to another route. This is especially dangerous for inexperienced riders.

The proposed path would not be wide enough to safely separate pedestrians and commuter bicyclists, many of which are racing to work or even using fast ebikes. This park is becoming busier every day because of numerous elderly care facilities and apartments with families and small children increasing due to the BRT overlay. Pedestrians including many mobility challenged individuals using walkers, canes or wheelchairs, young children on bikes and trikes, parents and caregivers with strollers and toddlers running about, dog walkers and joggers/runners use this sidewalk. As ebikes, electric scooters and electric skateboards become more common the city needs to develop plans that provide safe routes for **pedestrians** all over the city and especially in the city parks. E-bikes and electric scooters need to be mindful of pedestrians and eventually will need speed limits. Racing bikes do not belong on city streets, bike paths or parks any more than racing cars belong on city streets! Speeders, bike and auto, are only getting from point A to B as fast as possible, they don't care about the scenery.

Another major flaw in this proposal is that it requires removal of a large number of mature (>30 years old) trees. To quote a PhD in Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin Extension "It takes more than three decades to achieve the same level of carbon sequestration and stormwater capture that a mature tree provides. To cut down **a single** mature tree right now, especially if it is non-invasive (and most urban plantings are) and in the midst of climate change, is the absolute worst thing a city can do. A (stupid) bike path will never offset the climate and stormwater management services a mature tree provides." The University Extension is currently trying to **educate** all Wisconsin cities on the beneficial aspects of urban forestry. It is my understanding that in the past Madison has been honored as a "Tree City" and has a 40% canopy goal but is currently at a 17% canopy. We have a long way to go and cutting down these trees would not help that goal. And yes the extension person did use the word "stupid" in the original comment. Additionally, her argument doesn't mention the 10 to 15 degree temperature decrease

a mature tree's shade provides by blocking the sun's radiation. Please reconsider the location of this and any bike path or city project that necessitates the destruction of mature trees. As heat becomes more of a challenge due to climate change we do not have 30 years to replace/"grow" all the mature trees the city continues to destroy as it makes way for more infrequently used bike paths (path along Garner Park and Mineral Point Road a case in point)

Thank you,

Patricia Filas-Mortensen RN MSN
209 Green Lake Pass
Madison WI 53705-4756
608-335-2440 (cell)

--

From: [Mark Elsdon](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: expressing support for higher density in West Area Plan
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 4:52:04 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mark@elsdonstrategy.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Greetings Madison Common Council,

I am writing to express my **support** for the increased density in the future land use proposals in the West Area plan, particularly on parcels that are currently occupied by churches. As you vote on the plan on Sept 10th I urge you to retain as much flexibility in future density in as many locations as possible in the West Area Plan.

There are some very vocal people in the West Area who oppose height and density. But there are also many of us, usually more quiet, who support greater density in the area.

Please do not support any amendments that reduce future land use density from what is currently proposed in the plan (for example, changing church parcels marked in the plan as MR or NMU back down to LR). Church parcels in the West Area and elsewhere in the city are excellent locations to look at for future higher density housing, ideally to take place alongside other community orientated spaces and services.

We have a massive housing shortage in Madison. The benefits of our neighborhoods should be available to new people moving in, not just to those of us who already live here. As a parent of young-adult children who cannot afford to live in west Madison, I'm very interested in seeing us build up, build more, and build quickly. The only way Madison will continue to grow and be a good place for all to live is if we increase density everywhere in the city. **Please support the increased density where it exists in the West Area Plan as you vote on Sept 10.**

Thank you,
Mark

Mark Elsdon, MBA, M.Div
www.melsdon.com | [LinkedIn](#)
608.469.9513

My new book, ["Gone for Good? Negotiating the Coming Wave of Church Property Transition,"](#) is now [available](#).



From: [Steve Eriksen](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: West plan
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 8:19:33 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from steveeriksen80@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Stop trying to railroad density into areas that already have housing. You forced through a suspect BoRT system that won't be revenue neutral, much less profitable with the clear intention of eliminating SFH in the near west area. Look at unused land along your bus route and leave existing housing alone.

From: [Fun to Build](#)
To: [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: West Area Plan, Item 17, Common Council Meeting 9/10/24
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 9:45:34 AM

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

Please Post As Public Comment For Legistar Item #84343

Dear All Alders,

If you approve the West Area Plan on 9/10/24, as I assume you will, we would like to make you aware of or remind you that you will be allowing the approval of property development that will end up having ZERO input by neighboring residents and landowners.

We watched in disbelief this past year when the property at 6610-6706 Old Sauk Rd. had been pre-approved for urban style rezoning development in a residential area by the Plan Commission prior to any public awareness or input. When the development was finally publicly announced there was enormous public opposition, then we found it unbelievable that the Plan Commission ultimately approved a developer's proposal unanimously and without any discussion. We had been told that these actions were all possible because the location had been designated in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan as LMR versus the surrounding property designation of LR.

By approving the West Area Plan you are continuing to give the green light and authority to the Plan Commission to pre-approve development before any public knowledge and input. The Plan Commission will surely continue to approve proposals with ZERO consideration for the neighboring residents and landowners. As you vote on Agenda Item 17, #84383 we ask that you keep in mind your expressed objective of: "Consider: Who does not have a voice at the table?".

Sincerely,

Gary and Barb Foster
6506 Old Sauk Rd.

From: the-greens31@charter.net
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#); [All Alders](#)
Subject: West Area Plan - Comments to PC Mtg of 26 August 2024
Date: Monday, August 26, 2024 3:27:18 PM
Attachments: [20240826 West Area Plan Comments to PC Mtg.pdf](#)

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

Please file under Legistar Numbers 84377 and 84388

Although made in the context of the West Area Plan, and of a resident in the West Area, the attached comments are quite general and could be more broadly interpreted and applied, as for example, to the Comprehensive Plan.

I sincerely apologize that these comments are not more complete and better written but available time for writing them down was most limited.

Based on personal experience over most of the last year, there is not the slightest illusion that these comments will see a positive outcome in the present environment of City governance. But, in the fullness of time, and hopefully future changes in governance, they should be written down and submitted.

Michael A. Green
Madison 53705

Housing and Development
General Comments
West Area Plan of 8 July 2024
Coming Before the Plan Commission Meeting of 26 August 2024

The West Area Plan (WAP), like all City plans, has glorious and appealing wording that invites and welcomes new comers to Madison. But, as regards development, a number of central tenets seem to defy reality and reason:

- The Centralized Hub-and-Spoke Transportation Model – Everyone does not want to go downtown. Given Madison’s Isthmus, bottleneck geometry, better is a decentralized, more local/district oriented model in which resources are closer by and require less travel. This also better favors neighborhood micro-economics.
- Bus Travel Has Scant Ridership – On the far west side, on average, buses are mostly to entirely empty. It requires non-rider subsidy to operate. The BRT model, taking away driving lanes from automobiles, appears coercive to encourage/force bus usage.
- No Owner-Occupied Development – The City’s grand words to the contrary, new development is almost entirely rental which gives developers an endless income stream and deprives new residents of ownership. The City’s primary (verging on sole) consideration is accommodating the demand for new housing but with no meaningful, tangible, timely response to the “demand” for new comers to have an ownership option. New residents are destined to long-term “servitude” to the developers. And, yet, the number of apartments keeps growing unabated. This is a boon for developers and a shrug and loss to would-be residents.
- Green Space – Like it or not, residents, perhaps especially children, need and deserve outdoor time and space that are very close at hand. The City may decry the inefficiency of land usage by single-family houses that is immediately contiguous to a home. But, apartment complexes drastically reduce per family green space by simultaneously increasing the percentage of impermeable surfacing while substantially increasing the du/acre. Instead of going for maximum density and per family green space reduction, why not, for example, consider development of the massive “under utilized” golf courses with zero du/acre, that are maintenance intensive, and serve only a very small part of the population?
- Outcome – Between the centralized model, BRT “encouragement”, no ownership development, and per family green space reduction, it is scant wonder the City’s plan is resulting in development outside of Madison. Any new resident coming to Madison, desiring residential ownership, is turned away by the City. And all this in the name of “saving the farmland”! There is no apparent restraint or sense of saturation in the City’s determination to densify Madison with near apartment-only development and developer ownership, return on investment, and, ultimately control of the housing crisis.
- Global Warming – While progress is certainly being made on reducing the carbon footprint of transportation, yet, there is much that needs to be done with respect to extant and new housing. A major obstacle is how we are to heat homes in the upper Midwest. Presently (in the city) that is mostly by natural gas. But, eventually, this has to become all-electric ... How is that to be accomplished? Is that the case for new development (a small part of the whole)? Focus on the installed base of housing – minimally, that will require changing out the furnace, besides minimizing heat losses. Where is that initiative? Where is the net-zero effort to not just improve but strive toward the elimination of carbon fueled dependency?

From: [William Houlihan](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: #73, West Area Plan
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 2:27:02 PM

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from w.houlihan@charter.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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

I wish to state my objection to the West Area plan. My reaction to the plan is that it promotes the construction of large scale apartment buildings in neighborhoods where they do not fit. The plan envisions rezoning to attract large apartment buildings in residential neighborhoods where they do not fit, and where they will be disruptive. There buildings will be erected on sites that could otherwise be dedicated to owner occupied housing, which would be a far superior neighborhood fit. The loss of these parcels as potential owner occupied housing will contribute to the rising cost of home purchase. This plan undermines both the neighborhoods and the goal of home ownership.

Thank you for your consideration,
Bill Houlihan

From: [Benjamin Minkoff](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Approval of the West Area Plan
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 6:39:49 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from benjaminminkoff@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello,

As a resident of Midvale Heights, I am writing to ask you all to please vote yes to approve the West Area Draft Plan today.

I am particularly enthusiastic about all the incorporated safety measure to make our roads safer for bikers and pedestrians, the building of more off road bike transit (painted-on lanes and boulevards with shared use arrows are non ideal), and the park development plans and upgrades that will be made to our public parks in the coming years.

Please vote yes!

Thank you and best wishes,
Ben Minkoff

From: [Susan Mockert](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: West Area Plan
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 6:39:19 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mockerts@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello.

I am writing to request the elimination of the proposed linking of Yosemite Trail and Yosemite Court. This used to be a through street but was altered to address high speed traffic along the street. Connecting these roads would offer no benefits to landowners or car traffic in the area. There are two north/south direct paths through the neighborhood already, very close by. This change, while small on your plan, would be disruptive and potentially dangerous for residents of this neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Susan Mockert
402 Yosemite Trail, Madison, WI 53705,

From: [John Nguyen](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: West Area Plan Adoption - Item 84383
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 9:50:39 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from nguyenjohn99@proton.me. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello,

I am a city resident near the West side covered under the plan, and I am writing to express how disappointed I am at the removal of the all-ages-and-abilities path along the Sake Creek Greenway from the plan. That path would increase the connectivity of the nearby neighborhood, and *greatly* increase the ability of area children to safely reach their schools by walking or biking compared to current facilities. The proposed on-street facilities shared with cars are *not* an adequate replacement, and are far less safe and direct for those using active modes of transportation through the neighborhood.

I am also saddened at the ease with which shocking and uncivil behavior from opponents of the Greenway path allowed them to get their way; screaming at and threatening city staff should be unacceptable, but here we are poised to reward it with everything they asked for.

Thank you for your time.

Best,
John Nguyen

Aug. 26, 2024

Members of the Plan Commission and Common Council:

We own a home on the 4800 block of Marathon Drive with property adjacent to Covenant Presbyterian Church, 326 S. Segoe Road. Over the 17-plus years we have owned our home we estimate we have paid more than \$100,000 in property taxes to the City of Madison. We are among a handful of homeowners whose backyards abut the church property.

We are disappointed by the West Area Plan's proposed future use for the Covenant Presbyterian property. The proposal effectively asks a handful of homeowners – several of whom are retired while others are raising young children -- to surrender their privacy and quality of life for developer profit, high-end housing, and unnecessary retail.

The original plan draft proposed that future land use would change from the existing Single-Family Residential zoning to Medium Residential. That presented the prospect of a multi-story housing complex mere feet from our backyard. The revised West Area Plan may present an even worse option for future land use – Neighborhood Mixed Use. Neither option is compatible with the surrounding properties or the immediate neighborhood.

We prefer a future land use designation as Single-Family Residential. However, during an earlier comment period we expressed to city staff a willingness to support a designation that would allow for two-story townhomes on the Covenant Presbyterian property. Two-story townhomes would be more compatible with the neighborhood while meeting the city's goal of adding density. Further, it would promote home ownership at an entry-level price point of the market, helping lower-income buyers build wealth and establish roots in Madison. We believe this is an acceptable compromise. An NMU designation would simply encourage condominium ownership at the upper-end of the income spectrum.

We do not oppose increased density in and around Madison, and it's well established that the Hill Farm neighborhood has worked closely with city staff to add 2,000 high-density housing units to the area. The question, of course, is where density should be. The corner of Mineral Point and Segoe roads – about three-quarters of a mile from the nearest BRT stop -- is not equivalent to University Avenue or East Washington Avenue or even the western portion of Mineral Point Road. In the end, it sure feels like the city is subjecting just a handful of homeowners adjacent to the Covenant Presbyterian property to a carry a disproportionate burden in the quest for density.

Finally, we ask that you recognize the very significant Yes in Your Backyard movement in Madison, including some voices in the Hill Farm neighborhood. As far as we can tell, the YIYBYs are eager to argue for density adjacent to others' homes but face no direct impacts on their properties, privacy, or quality of life.

Thank you.

Mark Pitsch and Mary Skemp

From: [ERIKA LYNN SCHULTZ](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: I support West and Northeast Madison Plans
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 9:15:02 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from elschultz3@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello,

My name is Erika Schultz. I am a Madison resident (and student at UW Madison who plans to stay in Madison post-grad). I support the West and Northeast Area Plans. I believe the changes stated in these plans will positively impact their respective communities and help support Madison's growing population.

Thank you,
Erika Schultz

From: [Anna Shen](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Cc: [Kokpeng Yu](#); [Patricia Filas-Mortensen](#)
Subject: West Area Plan Agenda Items 84383 and 84377
Date: Sunday, September 8, 2024 9:55:06 AM
Attachments: [Public Comments 08-23 08-26-24.pdf](#)

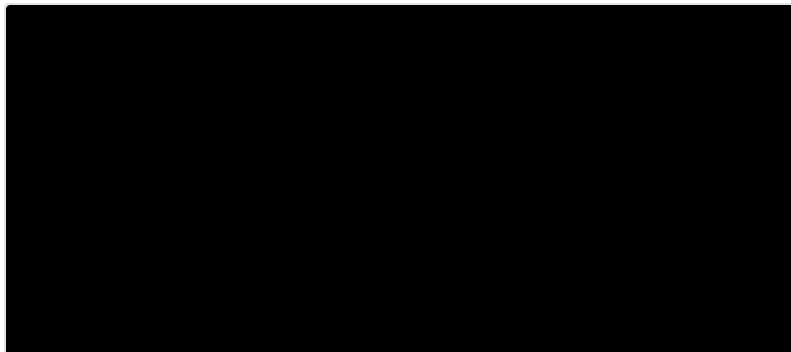
Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I have the following comments on the West Area Plan.

(1) There is an error in the GFLU map on page 13 of the draft that is included in Legistar 84383. The legend on page 13 does not indicate that LR and LMR designations can include, respectively, up to 3 or stories and 30 or 70 DU/acre. City planning staff has agreed that this is an omission but have not corrected it. I hope the Council is aware of the changes to the Comprehensive Plan that gave rise to this change in GFLU. It should also be noted that the Hill Farms Association Planning Committee has registered an objection to this GFLU change. This email and other comments about housing issues separate from the Sauk Creek greenway, that are not included in 84383, are attached here. In any case, the error on page 13 should be corrected.

(2) I wish to reiterate that height requirements for buildings on University Avenue are not appropriate for residential neighborhoods and UDD6 should not be expanded to include the areas south of Sheboygan Avenue, as well as others that abut residential neighborhoods.

(3) I wish to oppose the shared bike/pedestrian path on the south side of Rennebohm Park and urge consideration of alternatives. In general, I wish to urge separation of bicycles, particularly ebikes, from pedestrians across the city. Here is an editorial from the WSJ on the general problem of bike/pedestrian interactions. [OUR VIEW: E-bikes need speed limit on Madison's bike paths](#)



OUR VIEW: E-bikes need speed limit on Madison's bike paths

Wisconsin State Journal editorial board

Electric bikes are fun, good for environment and health. But surgeons fear more injuries, deaths

Thanks,
Anna Shen

From: [Diane Sorensen](#)
To: [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)
Cc: [The Greens](#); [Jeff Western](#); [Michael Onheiber](#); [William Houlihan](#); [Greg Keller](#); [Mary Umbeck](#); [Kimberly Santiago](#); [Joe Hanauer](#); [Fun to Build](#); [Ann MacGuidwin](#)
Subject: Fwd: West Area Plan Comments. Item 17, Legistar No.84383
Date: Monday, September 9, 2024 6:56:39 AM

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

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway and Common Council Alders;

We are forwarding comments that we sent to the Plan Commission regarding the West Area Plan. They detail our reasons for opposing elements of the West Area Plan.

We believe that you will amend the Comprehensive Plan to conform to the West Area Plan. This will be your legacy. It will be the legacy of our short term, unelected, city-appointed District 19 Alder, John Guequierre. In practical terms that legacy means a number of things. Contrary to the expectation created by the lofty language in the West Area Plan, future generations will not find housing that preserves neighborhood character and a sense of place. Future generations will also not find the affordable housing, entry level owner-occupied single family, condo or townhouse homes or missing middle rental groupings that the West Area Plan talks about. This mix of housing will not come about because, in fact, the West Area Plan's future land use designations do not support such development. What future generations will find is the high density, monotonous, impersonal, yet expensive, apartment complexes that the West Area Plan actually does incentivize. They will find the spot-rezoned former church grounds with 5 story, high density apartments and apartment corridors like Old Sauk Road filled with yet more spot-rezoned massive footprint apartment buildings. This is your legacy.

Please include these comments in Legistar File No. 84383.

Sincerely,
Diane Sorensen and Dan Stier

PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED COMMENTS TO THE PLAN COMMISSION
To: Chair Ledell Zellers and Plan Commission Members

We are writing to oppose the West Area Plan's steep increases in the land use density of parcels along Old Sauk Road. We ask that the Plan be amended to return those parcels to their current land use designations.

We support the development of housing with density ranging from that present level (7.9 du/ac) to that sufficient for what is generally referred to as Missing Middle type housing. A reasonable increase in density would benefit the city and the neighborhood. LMR and LR property can support small apartments, quads, duplexes, single family homes and condos. In select conditions, the LR maximum allows up to 2 story and 30 du/ac. Even in the absence of select conditions, the LMR maximum allows up to 3 story and 30 du/ac. It is not necessary to increase

density beyond the current level to provide for all of the above types of housing.

Nonetheless, as the attached maps show, the West Area Plan increases density on the circled parcels either from LR to LMR or from LR to MR, and others from LMR to MR. Those increases invite a single type of housing: high density apartments. High density apartments cannot be readily integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods. We're already stuck with one such apartment; three more would completely destroy the neighborhood.

While we believe that there is an added benefit to the city and to neighborhoods by the addition of owner-occupied housing that comes from homeowners having a long term investment in and commitment to the well-being of their neighborhood, we acknowledge having many good neighbors who are tenants. It's not about development versus no development; it's about reasonable development. Similarly it's not about homeownership versus tenancy; it's about how many people and how many units.

We ask the city to amend the West Area Plan to return the designated parcels to their existing land use categories.

BACKGROUND

APPROVAL OF THE STONE HOUSE DEVELOPMENT/NON-REPRESENTATION FOR HUNDREDS OF DISTRICT 19 RESIDENTS.

As lawyers we realize there are two sides to every story and there is often some merit on each side. We also believe that a full examination of both sides to a conflict is critical to a wise resolution. When District 19 Alder, John Guequierre, was appointed he made the following promise to District 19 residents: *"I'm dedicated to making your voices heard. Even when my priorities and values lead me in a different direction, **your positions and opinions deserve to be in front of department staff, committees and the full Common Council.**"* We and hundreds of District 19 residents who opposed the Stone House high density development were reassured by this commitment. However, with one last-minute exception, Alder Guequierre did not keep his promise to bring us, and our positions and opinions, in front of this committee and the full Common Council. Instead, he spent all of his time in front of this committee and the Common Council rooting for, justifying and advocating for Stone House owners and their design and engineering team and undermining our positions and opinions. We and the other hundreds of District 19 opponents of the project felt shut out and betrayed.

...

LAWSUITS. As a result of the flood threat they face if the massive-footprint Stone House development is built, two District 19 families, the Umbecks and the

Westerns, have filed lawsuits challenging the City's rezoning and the conditional use decisions. Sadly, a lawsuit is the only recourse these families have to protect their homes.

OLD SAUK ROAD AND THE WEST AREA PLAN

Our previous alder, Kristen Slack, who unfortunately had to resign due to family illness, forcefully addressed development along Old Sauk Road, saying [1] *"I personally don't want to see this street turned, over time, into a long row of tall apartment buildings."* That is exactly what will happen if the West Area Plan is adopted.

WEST AREA PLAN. The final West Area Plan (WAP; cf. www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/west-area-plan/3896/) draft invites more high density apartment buildings along Old Sauk Road. Below, we are embedding and attaching a copy of the WAP Map on which we have circled neighborhood locations where the city has increased parcel density. In addition to the city-approved Stone House development, two other neighborhood parcels on Old Sauk Road have steep density increases: the St. Thomas Aquinas Church parcel has been increased to MR or Medium Residential (up to 5 stories and 90 du/ac) and a new LMR parcel between Sauk Ridge and Cooper's Lane (up to 4 stories and 70 du/ac due to select conditions) has been drawn over LR property. If these properties are developed to the density allowed, there will be at least 3 urban high density apartment buildings within about a half mile of each other on Old Sauk Road.

In addition, the city planners have escalated the future land use density to MR for other churches in this area including a second one on Old Sauk Road, a third on Gammon Road, a fourth on Colony Drive and a 5th on Rosa Road.

The West Area Plan purports to be a plan that prioritizes Missing Middle housing, affordable housing while preserving neighborhood character and a "sense of place".

If that were the case, we would wholeheartedly endorse it. However, in light of the totality of the final draft, that language is nothing more than window dressing. None of these goals are served by the West Area Plan. The proposed increases in density along Old Sauk Road are not necessary to enable Missing Middle housing, which is possible on LMR and LR designated parcels. The truth is that the increased land use density in the West Area plan is intended to, and does, invite apartment building over other types of housing. No developer will build the smaller "Missing Middle" housing developments or work through the challenges presented by condo development when they can increase profits with high density apartments. Developers, and their "deep pocket" investors, with high-density intentions can and will outbid any other interested parties. Thus, the density

increases along Old Sauk Road work against Missing Middle (and condo and single family) development.

The West Area Plan will not bring Missing Middle housing, affordable housing, condo housing or single family housing to the West Area. It will add one kind of housing: high density apartments. If the planned uses come to fruition, the neighborhoods on both sides of Old Sauk will be forever changed by the creation of a new high density apartment corridor and other high density neighborhood housing. The property sellers will be happy with their windfall high sales prices. The developers will be happy with their high profits. The city will be happy with high property taxes. The new apartment dwellers will be happy with their convenient location. The only group who loses are the nearby residents, those who chose to live in this area for its slower pace, open space, healthy tree canopy, good schools and the friendly faces of long-time neighbors.

One of the best features of life in the neighborhoods surrounding Old Sauk Road is, well, it's neighborly. We know each other. We watch out for each other. We like each other. We welcome new neighbors. We particularly love it when younger folks move here. But we can't integrate a large number of people into the neighborhood at once. The Stone House apartments alone will add between 189 to 353 new residents. Two more high density apartments would add many more hundreds of people to the neighborhoods. That's too many people to connect with. Moreover, because this neighborhood has no amenities within a walkable distance, people won't hang out in communal spaces in the neighborhood - they will drive, or bus or pedal away. Indeed, that's exactly what the City intends: develop housing along transit lines so people can zoom away. All of these characteristics, the large number of people, the lack of amenities and the access to transit, work against the formation of a neighborhood community. An apartment corridor is just that - a corridor, not a neighborhood. We want to remain a neighborhood.

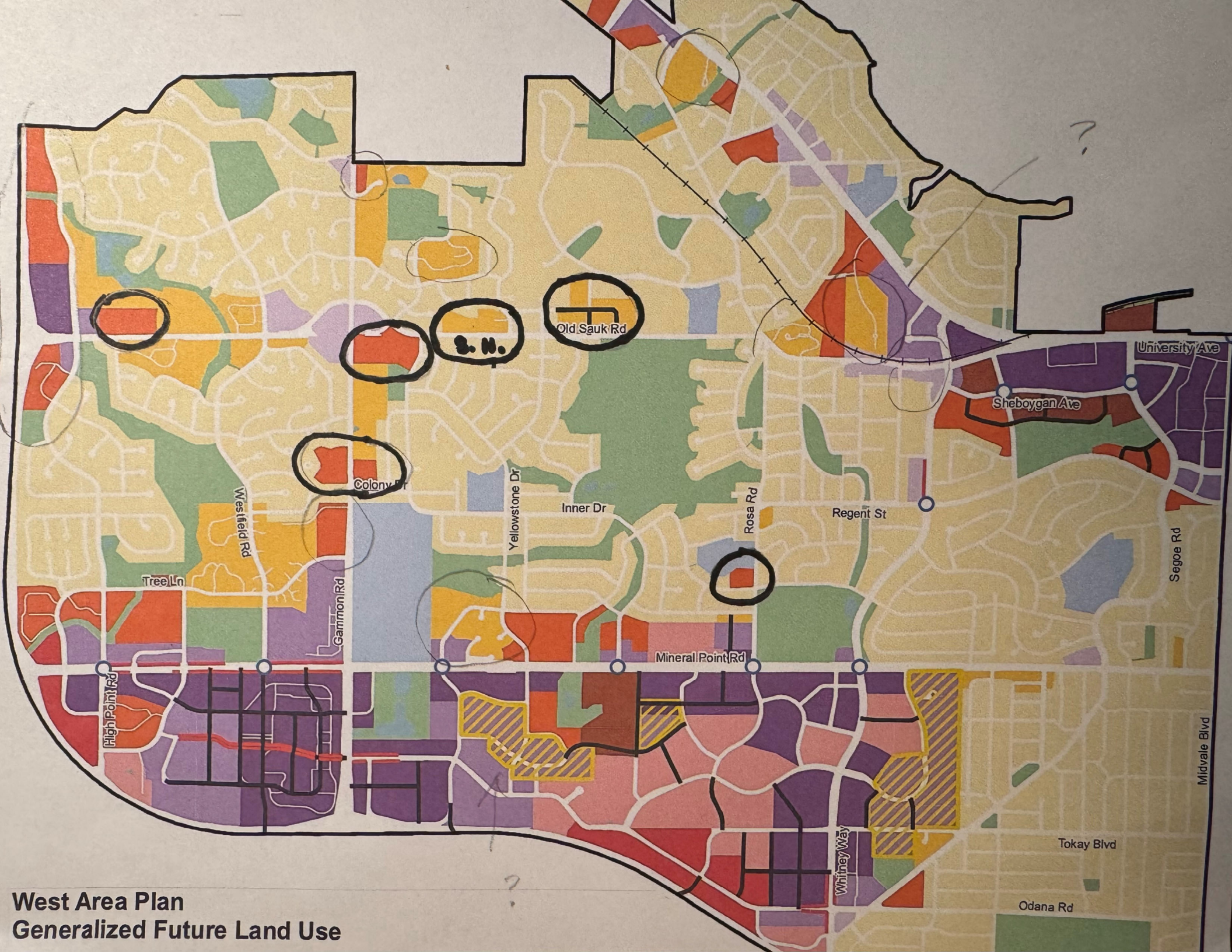
For all of the reasons stated above, we oppose the West Area's plan to increase land use density in the areas circled below.

Sincerely,

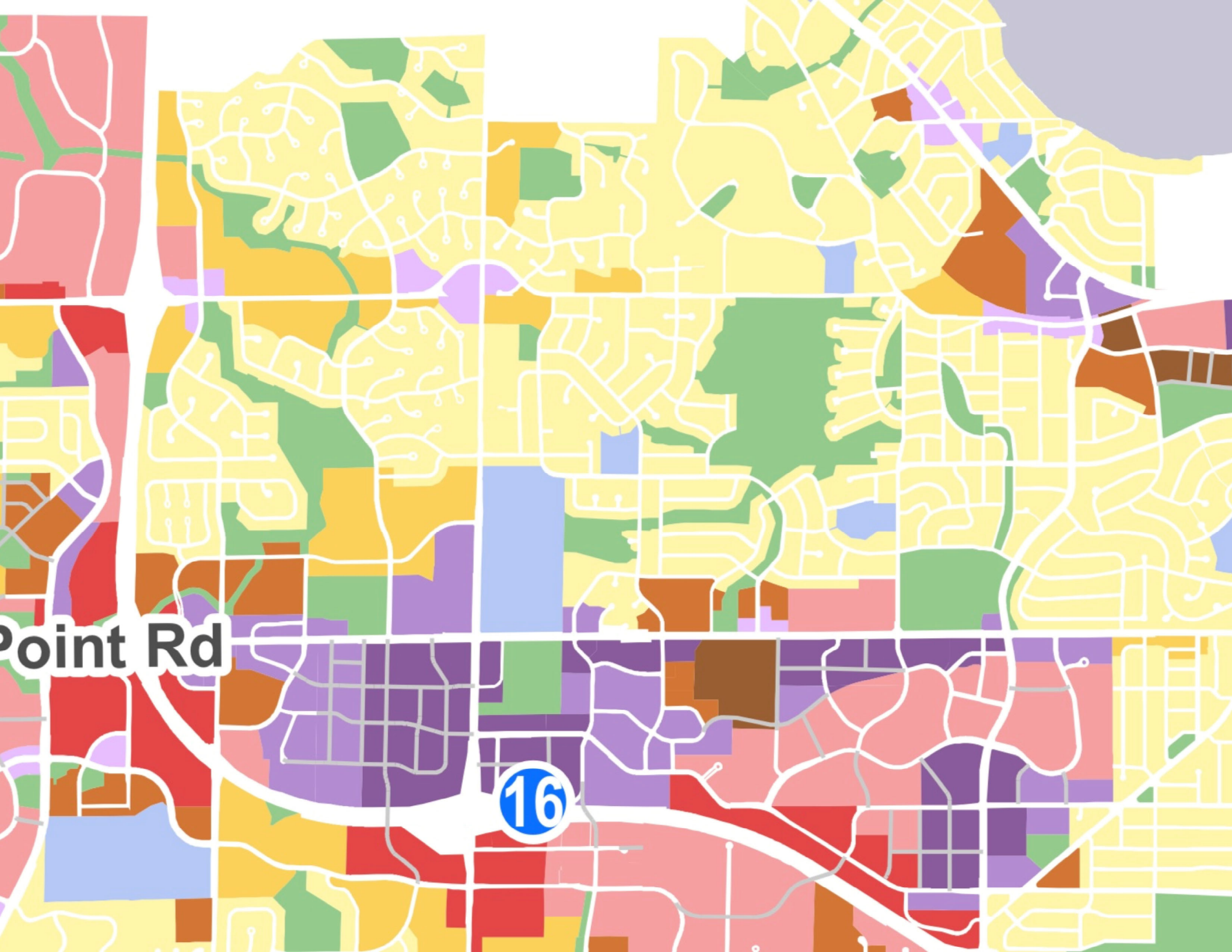
Diane Sorensen & Dan Stier
606 San Juan Trail
Madison, WI 53705

Ref [1] *A blog post on housing and a proposed development in District 19*, Kristen

Slack, 5 November 2023.



West Area Plan
Generalized Future Land Use



Point Rd

16

From: [Ed Walker](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Measuring the success of the Area Plans
Date: Thursday, September 5, 2024 8:41:19 AM

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

Measuring the Pay Off from Area Plans

The Common Council is about to approve the first two Areas Plans. How will you measure whether the Area Plans succeed in your district? In Madison as a whole?

Take increased density as one measure of success. The Comprehensive Plan argues that density must increase to improve housing costs, cope with population growth, and mitigate climate change, as well as to lower barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness. Unless there is a target for density in each Area and Sub-Area, progress toward these worthy policy goals in the Alder Districts and in Madison as a whole may be uneven and haphazard.

There is no free lunch. Increasing density requires more than increasing the number of dwelling units. Denser areas also require non-residential buildings for other uses and non-built space for streets, parks, or pathways. In a built environment like Madison, increasing density requires redeveloping sites with existing housing, other buildings, or open space. It may require new or reconfigured public services, and it may aggravate congestion, affordability, and climate change. A fair accounting of the benefits from increased density has to debit the value of uses that are lost, the cost of repurposing or creating new services, and possible negative impact on other targets.

In developing a scorecard for measuring success and your targets for outcomes, it would be foolish not to consider lessons learned (or being learned) by other cities, as well as those learned from past efforts to make Madison more compact. Comparing Madison with other cities that are responding to similar challenges will help set public expectations for the outcome of change. It also will reveal unintended consequences and white elephants, both of which Madison can ill afford.

Ed Walker
4717 Regent Street
Madison, WI 53705
edw@ectwalker.com
+1 978.223.3564 (mobile)

From: [Don Worel](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Agenda item 17
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 11:23:18 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dworel@chorus.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Madison Common Council Members,

The West Area Plan purports to be a plan that prioritizes Missing Middle housing, affordable housing, preservation of neighborhood character and a “sense of place”. If that were the case, we would wholeheartedly endorse it. However, in the final draft, that language is nothing more than window dressing. None of these goals are served by the West Area Plan. The proposed increases in density along Old Sauk Road are not necessary to enable Missing Middle housing, which is possible on LMR and LR designated parcels. The increased land use density in the West Area plan is intended to and does invite apartment building over other types of housing. No developer will build the smaller "Missing Middle" housing developments or work through the challenges presented by condo development, when they can increase profits with high density apartments. The increased-density developers and their "deep pocket" investors with high-density intentions can and will outbid any other interested parties. Thus, the density increases along Old Sauk Road work against Missing Middle (and condo and single family) development.

If the planned uses come to fruition, the neighborhoods on both sides of Old Sauk will be forever changed by their proximity to a new high density apartment corridor.

I strongly oppose increasing the density of parcels along Old Sauk Rd.

Sincerely,

Don Worel
717 Pebble Beach Dr.
Madison, WI 53717
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Jane Worel](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: West area plan
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 11:26:04 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jnelsonworel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Dear Madison Common Council Members,

The West Area Plan purports to be a plan that prioritizes Missing Middle housing, affordable housing, preservation of neighborhood character and a “sense of place”. If that were the case, we would wholeheartedly endorse it. However, in the final draft, that language is nothing more than window dressing. None of these goals are served by the West Area Plan. The proposed increases in density along Old Sauk Road are not necessary to enable Missing Middle housing, which is possible on LMR and LR designated parcels. The increased land use density in the West Area plan is intended to and does invite apartment building over other types of housing. No developer will build the smaller "Missing Middle" housing developments or work through the challenges presented by condo development, when they can increase profits with high density apartments. The increased-density developers and their "deep pocket" investors with high-density intentions can and will outbid any other interested parties. Thus, the density increases along Old Sauk Road work against Missing Middle (and condo and single family) development.

If the planned uses come to fruition, the neighborhoods on both sides of Old Sauk will be forever changed by their proximity to a new high density apartment corridor.

I strongly oppose increasing the density of parcels along Old Sauk Rd.

Sincerely,

Jane Nelson Worel
717 Pebble Beach Dr
Madison
Sent from my iPhone

From: [Nino Amato](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Cc: [Dylan Brogan Madison's Communications Mgr.](#)
Subject: EIS Amendment to the West Area Plan & Testimony at Tonight's City Council Meeting
Date: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 3:57:12 PM
Attachments: [AJA EIS Amendment Testimony West Area Plan for Sauk Creek Woods CC 9-10-24.pdf](#)

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

EIS Amendment to the West Area Plan for Sauk Creek Woods Testimony by - A.J. Nino Amato (608-514-3317)

*UW-System Adjunct Professor "Sustainability Policy & Practices"
Renewable Energy Resource Management Systems*

Madison City Council – Sept. 10, 2024 – West Area Plan

Requested Action: *Based on Madison's environmental values and the Urban Forestry Task Force Recommendation from 2019 - We are asking City Council members to amend the Draft West Area Plan to include an environmental impact study (EIS) by an independent third- party (UW-Madison Nelson Institute) which would assess the environmental impact of a bike-path in Sauk Creek Woods greenway on stormwater runoff, water pollution, CO2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions, carbon sequestration from tree and vegetation loss, impact on ecosystem health, racial equity, urban heat and climate change sustainability, resilience and adaptation.*

City of Madison URBAN FORESTRY TASK FORCE 2019

Marla Eddy, City Forester

Dan McAuliffe, City Planning Division

James Wolfe, City Engineering Division

Lisa Coleman, City Engineering Division

Katie Crawley Office of the Mayor 2019

Sheri Carter, Common Council, District 14 Alder

Keith Furman, Common Council, District 19 Alder

David Ahrens, Common Council, District 15 Alder

Task Force Value Statement on Urban Trees

Trees are a foundation for Madison's community and ecosystem health, sustainability, and resilience. Our urban trees and forests play a vital role

in stormwater management, protecting our drinking water, and reducing energy costs and human stress. With this in mind, our urban trees and forests must be managed holistically and urgently as a potentially fragile resource.

Recommendations

1. Write a biennial urban forest report. This would accomplish the same goals as a Forestry Master Plan (e.g., assessing the current state of Madison's urban trees and forests and evaluating the success of those goals).
2. Update and upgrade the process of inventorying street and greenway trees to include up-to-date information.
3. Inventory trees on all City-owned properties including parks and greenways, in order to maintain and add new trees. The inventory would be used to mitigate and respond to threats to the urban trees and forests as well as prioritize growth of the forest.
4. Forestry should work cooperatively with other City agencies to identify opportunities to enhance green space in areas with low canopy cover, like greenways and downtown.
5. Create a canopy and greenway tree planting program for city-owned bike path corridors and other city-owned transportation corridors.
6. Dedicate additional resources to Forestry for more frequent pruning and maintenance of new and existing street trees.
- 7. The Park Commission should prepare a policy of developing increased street canopy and greenway tree growth with the goal of planting 2,000 more trees above the replacement rate each year for the next five years.***
- 8. The City Forester and Engineering Division should work cooperatively to develop standards for maintaining trees, increase tree plantings in greenways and other stormwater management areas and identify strategies to minimize erosion that can result from tree removal while maintaining the inherent functions of the city greenways.***

Trees and Racial Equity and Social Justice

Low-income neighborhoods and residents may not experience the benefits that trees can provide including reduction of air pollution, moderation of temperatures (urban heat), improved neighborhood character, and public and mental health benefits. Trees are a public asset, and it is incumbent upon city

officials to determine if they are distributed equitably in neighborhoods, on streets, in city greenways, parks and public spaces.

**EIS Amendment to the West Area Plan for Sauk Creek Woods
Testimony by - A.J. Nino Amato (608-514-3317)**

*UW-System Adjunct Professor “Sustainability Policy & Practices”
Renewable Energy Resource Management Systems*

Madison City Council – Sept. 10, 2024 – West Area Plan

Requested Action: *Based on Madison’s environmental values and the Urban Forestry Task Force Recommendation from 2019 - We are asking City Council members to amend the Draft West Area Plan to include an environmental impact study (EIS) by an independent third- party (UW-Madison Nelson Institute) which would assess the environmental impact of a bike-path in Sauk Creek Woods greenway on stormwater runoff, water pollution, CO2 Greenhouse Gas Emissions, carbon sequestration from tree and vegetation loss, impact on ecosystem health, racial equity, urban heat and climate change sustainability, resilience and adaptation.*

**City of Madison
URBAN FORESTRY TASK FORCE 2019**

Marla Eddy, City Forester

Dan McAuliffe, City Planning Division

James Wolfe, City Engineering Division

Lisa Coleman, City Engineering Division

Katie Crawley Office of the Mayor 2019

Sheri Carter, Common Council, District 14 Alder

Keith Furman, Common Council, District 19 Alder

David Ahrens, Common Council, District 15 Alder

Task Force Value Statement on Urban Trees

Trees are a foundation for Madison’s community and ecosystem health, sustainability, and resilience. Our urban trees and forests play a vital role in stormwater management, protecting our drinking water, and reducing energy costs and human stress. With this in mind, our urban trees and forests must be managed holistically and urgently as a potentially fragile resource.

Recommendations

1. Write a biennial urban forest report. This would accomplish the same goals as a Forestry Master Plan (e.g., assessing the current state of Madison's urban trees and forests and evaluating the success of those goals).
2. Update and upgrade the process of inventorying street and greenway trees to include up-to-date information.
3. Inventory trees on all City-owned properties including parks and greenways, in order to maintain and add new trees. The inventory would be used to mitigate and respond to threats to the urban trees and forests as well as prioritize growth of the forest.
4. Forestry should work cooperatively with other City agencies to identify opportunities to enhance green space in areas with low canopy cover, like greenways and downtown.
5. Create a canopy and greenway tree planting program for city-owned bike path corridors and other city-owned transportation corridors.
6. Dedicate additional resources to Forestry for more frequent pruning and maintenance of new and existing street trees.
- 7. The Park Commission should prepare a policy of developing increase street canopy and greenway tree growth with the goal of planting 2,000 more trees above the replacement rate each year for the next five years.***
- 8. The City Forester and Engineering Division should work cooperatively to develop standards for maintaining trees, increase tree plantings in greenways and other stormwater management areas and identify strategies to minimize erosion that can result from tree removal while maintaining the inherent functions of the city greenways.***

Trees and Racial Equity and Social Justice

Low-income neighborhoods and residents may not experience the benefits that trees can provide including reduction of air pollution, moderation of temperatures (urban heat), improved neighborhood character, and public and mental health benefits. Trees are a public asset, and it is incumbent upon city officials to determine if they are distributed equitably in neighborhoods, on streets, in city greenways, parks and public spaces.