From: Nicholas Davies
To: Plan Commission Comments
Cc: Martinez-Rutherford, Dina Nina; jillian@stonehousedevelopment.com
Subject: 84994 - Let"s finally ditch the thru traffic
Date: Sunday, October 6, 2024 6:00:19 PM

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Dear Plan Commission,

I hope to be present for your meeting, but just in case...

Like many in the Eastmorland neighborhood, I'm supportive of the redevelopment of Voit Farm. But like many in the Eastmorland neighborhood, I'm also concerned about the proposed extension of Chicago Ave across Starkweather Creek.

While I'd be supportive of adding a bike/ped bridge across Starkweather Creek, a vehicular connection here would create an opportunity for cut-through traffic. Commuters would be able to avoid the traffic light at Fair Oaks & Milwaukee, and speed through this new neighborhood instead, speeding being just one type of crime that such a route would bring to the neighborhood.

This would create further need for traffic calming / Vision Zero interventions, at the city's additional expense. This would also add opportunistic VMT during a climate crisis, and additional pollution to the Starkweather Creek ecosystem. The planned street extension would also require destruction of housing on the Fair Oaks side.

Many people have already spoken on this at Plan Commission and Common Council, but consideration of the final plat represents *another* opportunity to remove this street connection from the city's plans for the area and from the city's expectations of this project's development team.

If the street connection across the creek is removed...

Planning Division staff have called out that the alignment of Chicago Ave in the final plat does not match up with the planned street extension across the creek. If the planned street extension goes away, that becomes no longer a concern.

The street labeled as Chicago Ave in the plat can continue to be called Chicago Ave, even if the street is discontiguous for motor vehicle traffic. That is already the case with nearby Hermina St today, where the city is presently installing a bike/ped bridge over the creek. Alternatively, this separate street could have its own name, in remembrance of a local leader.

Visitors to the planned park will still be able to arrive there by car, they will simply have to drive about 4 blocks further to get there. This will add about 1 minute of travel time.

Visitors to the planned park not arriving by car will be able to reach the park without contending with added cut-through traffic--more safely, and with less stress. In fact, a pedestrian bridge over the creek would make an ideal gateway to the new park.

The past plans that included the Chicago Ave extension proposed continuing it all the way across to Stoughton Rd, creating further opportunity for cut-through traffic. Let's put a stop to this sooner rather than later. These past plans represent a car-centric status quo that doesn't align with Madison's adopted modal hierarchy.

While I support what Stonehouse has included in their plans already, I want to see what *more* they can do, when they no longer have to work around the unnecessary constraint of this street extension. Without that in the mix, is there an opportunity to add more housing? More neighborhood amenities? We deserve to find out.

Thank you,

Nick Davies
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