

**From:** Sue Ellingson [<mailto:suellingson@sbcglobal.net>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 05, 2012 12:32 PM

**To:** Bay Creek Neib Assn; Dudgeon-Monroe Neib Assn; Greenbush Neib Assn; Monona Bay Neib Assn; Vilas Neib Assn

**Cc:** Ellingson, Susan

**Subject:** My thoughts on Ideal and 5 stories on Park

Here are the issues I'm thinking about regarding Ideal in particular and 5 stories on Park in general. I'm sorry I wasn't able to reply to emails earlier. My schedule this week is very heavy. I hope we can keep this conversation respectful. It is not helpful to demonize someone who simply has another opinion.

### **THE VISION FOR PARK ST**

My vision for Park St is to build a place that people come to, not just drive through. Do you share that vision?

Today, enormous numbers of people drive through: 65,000 cars a day on Park St at Drake. That's a \*huge\* amount of traffic. More than University or Campus Dr or John Nolen or Johnson. (<http://www.cityofmadison.com/trafficEngineering/documents/Flowmaps/Flowamps.htm>) Almost none stop.

The surest way to achieve the vision of a walkable, vibrant neighborhood is by increasing density. More people living in an area makes successful shops and restaurants possible. People who live close in are going to bike, bus, and walk more, and drive much less. We have seen this transformation on Monroe St. Empty stores to occupied, rundown buildings fixed up. More choices, more community. It can happen on Park St as well.

### **BUILDING HEIGHTS**

I don't believe the height of the Ideal proposal is out of character for the area. Many tall buildings are nearby. Meriter's south building - 7 stories. Meriter main building - 10+ stories. Parkside Apartments - 8 stories. Brittingham Apartments - 10 stories. St Mary's/Dean - 4 stories, but 70'-- about 10' \*taller\* than that proposed by Ideal and Lane's, plus their 2004 PUD allows them to add 2 stories.

Here is a genuine question and not intended to provoke anyone: Why are 5 stories more offensive than 4? I don't have this immediate reaction, and I'd like to understand it.

### **THE CHOICE**

These developers risk millions of dollars of their own money to put up these buildings; their return is that they make a profit. But we benefit, too. We get new buildings instead of rundown storefronts. We get people living there and supporting retail. We get increased taxes.

Our choice for Ideal may well be to accept the current proposal, or to have a shuttered and rundown body shop. Which do you choose? I think we already have too many empty, rundown buildings on Park St.

I don't know whether Gallina will walk away from the deal, but they've already been at this a long time. The city can't order any developer to build. They bring an idea, and we can only cajole them into tweaking it.

I have delayed in deciding whether to support the project because proposals improve as they go through the process. And this one has. Ideal now has two sections. The 5-story portion is 44' shorter along Drake. They have added underground parking. They have put apartments with entrances on Drake at the west end. These were significant concessions by the developer and have improved the project. Personally, I'd like to see the set-back on Park eliminated and the 5-story portion moved even closer to Park St, but they're following the design guidelines.

### **URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION TONIGHT**

Urban Design will hear Ideal Body tonight and will have an informational presentation on Lane's. 4:30p, LL110 Madison Municipal Bldg, 215 MLKing Jr Blvd. Agenda: <http://madison.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

Many people will be at the meeting to testify.

If you have comments but cannot attend the meeting, please send them to Al Martin, [amartin@cityofmadison.com](mailto:amartin@cityofmadison.com), and to me, [district13@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district13@cityofmadison.com).

Sue

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