

Sent: Friday, April 13, 2018 9:27 AM

To: Skidmore, Paul ; Stouder, Heather ; jgregor@cityofmadison.com

Subject: Fw: Action needed: Impact of 5-story apartment and two schools next to Pope Farm

Dear Alder Skidmore and Madison planning staff:

I wanted to make you aware of a mass e-mail (see below) that was sent out by one of my neighbors yesterday to express concerns about increased housing density in the Elderberry neighborhood plan as well as the new schools proposed for the Pope Farm site by the Middleton-Cross Plains School District on land they have owned for well over a decade.

I have lived in the Blackhawk neighborhood since January 2008 and have owned my property since mid-2006. Before buying or moving into the neighborhood, I did research on the surrounding land uses, knowing that a developing area on the edge of the city has the potential to evolve gradually over time. Accordingly, I was well aware that the MCPASD owned the Pope Farm school site and in fact, I have always been strong supporter of new schools on this site. Nearly all available research that I have reviewed indicates that walking or biking proximity to neighborhood schools has a positive impact on property values, and I believe these schools would also provide nice park-like recreational amenities (playgrounds, ball fields, etc.) for the surrounding area. For that reason, I strongly dispute the contention in the e-mail below that the new schools would have a negative impact on the neighborhood ("Property value decrease. Crime rate increase"). I think you may want to actively work to dispute this contention with the local community since it is so clearly erroneous and misguided.

With respect to the changes to the Elderberry neighborhood plan, I have no objections to allowing medium density multifamily housing in the area, but there clearly needs to be limits on this density (both units per acre and building size/height restrictions). Allowing mid-rise buildings directly adjacent to low rise, large lot subdivisions and elementary schools on the far edges of the city seems totally out of scale with the surroundings from both a traffic and visual standpoint, and I strongly urge you to reconsider this. Portions of the Blackhawk neighborhood, including my own street, were developed 10-20 years ago now, and all of those homebuyers were making decisions based on what had been publicly proposed and approved as the neighborhood plan for the Elderberry Neighborhood area, namely, low-medium housing density similar to the subdivisions and apartment buildings that have gone up over that period of time. To make major changes to the Elderberry neighborhood plan at this point in time seems very unfair and likely opens the city up to expensive litigation and resident protests. Accordingly, I urge you to reconsider the proposed Elderberry Neighborhood Plan with respect to the proposed multifamily housing density and allowable building size and scale.