

**Northside Planning Council's  
Community Roundtable on the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan  
December 4, 2019**

On the evening of December 4, 2019, the Northside Planning Council hosted a community roundtable event to share the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan concepts and to discuss options, and to provide the community some time to discuss the information with the lead project planner, Mr. Dan McAuliffe. In addition, we asked the participants to review all of the the existing conditions, proposed redevelopment concepts, the same information and questions being put forth to city leadership (TPPB 11/4 meeting and Plan Commission 11/11 meeting) and to provide comments or suggestions related to the information presented. As with the city-hosted public open house, we offered attendees the opportunity to send informed responses via email, to allow time for reflection and discernment in the development of alternatives and other options for redevelopment. These comments are also included in this document.

35 people joined in active and engaged planning review and herein provide their input to this civic commission and to elected city leaders through the presentation of this document.

**The Transportation Policy and Planning Board members were asked on 11/4/19:**

**Connectivity – Roads, Bike Paths, Walkable Areas**

1. *Concept Alternative A* contains a new east-west street through the former Oscar Mayer site and Hartmeyer Property, linking it directly to Sherman Avenue, Packers Avenue and the Eken Park Neighborhood. *Concept Alternative B* provides somewhat less direct connections to these areas and crosses the rail corridor closer to Commercial Avenue. *What are your thoughts on the different versions of the connection for handling vehicular traffic, transit, bike and pedestrians? Note: both alternatives will need State approval for changing rail crossing and access to Packers Ave.*

2. Planning staff believes the extension of Oscar Ave (old Packers Ave) to Aberg Ave is critically necessary. One alternative investigates the feasibility of converting the ramp intersections to roundabouts and connecting Oscar Ave to the western roundabout. This will need additional traffic study and State approval but a brief examination of traffic volumes make it appear feasible. The other alternative shifts the connections away from the ramp and would not need State approval, and in doing so divides the northern half of the site Metro is considering for acquisition. *What are your thoughts on these alternatives?*

3. The draft plan discusses the potential to add several signals along Packers Avenue. Currently, signals average 1 mile spacing (First, Commercial and International) on the corridor, which limits pedestrian crossing (and by association transit stops) and does not aid maintaining speeds near the posted speed limit. *Are there certain locations new signals that should be prioritized for investigation?*

4. According to planning staff, the area is and will be well served by transit. The plan does recommend an eventual relocation of the transfer point either in conjunction with a future Bus Rapid Transit station or in a more active and visible location, but is flexible on the actual location. *Are there additional transit related factors that should be considered?*

5. The draft plan recommends shifting the planned off-street bike route to the east side of the rail yard on a utility corridor owned by MGE, then crossing to the west side of the tracks at Commercial Ave proceeding north to Aberg and using a mix of on and off-street routes to connect to the neighborhoods to the north and west. *Are there other bike connections that should be considered?*

**The Plan Commission members were asked on 11/11/19:**

1. *Does the residential/employment balance of the development concepts advance the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and the Redevelopment Objectives of the Oscar Mayer Strategic Assessment?*

2. *Are the scale and character of development depicted in the concepts appropriate, or should they be adjusted to a higher or lower density?*

Roads – Bringing Coolidge through to Sherman, increase traffic on Coolidge to 5,000 average daily trips; Two roundabouts proposed on Aberg Avenue, extending Oscar Ave through to Aberg

*3. Are certain street network arrangements more preferential, such as Coolidge extending directly to Sherman and the intersection configuration with Oscar Ave and Aberg?*

Parks and Open Spaces

*4. What is your perspective on preservation of the Hartmeyer property?*

## **Parks and Open Spaces**

Allow an opportunity for City Parks, the public, the Parks Foundation and partners to have a formal input on the option to preserve all 30 acres of the property for a natural area (Concept /Option C – Conservation)

Not asking for more money or for purchase, just plan earmark for Option 3 if approved.

Love parks and Madison's progressive vision

Madison has a commitment to urban nature: Bird City and one of seven cities nationwide that connects kids with nature

Social justice shared space where all are welcome; the awe of nature builds empathy

Save 30 acres - Hartmeyer Park should be saved for a natural park area

Save the Hartmeyer area, make it at least 30 acres

Please preserve the 30 acre Hartmeyer Nature area!

Through street should not go through the Hartmeyer wetland

Keep all undeveloped wetland area under preservation

Leave Hartmeyer Wild Life area and NOT put streets in there. It's wetland.

Preserve Hartmeyer wetlands; integrate into neighborhood without sacrificing any open space.

Need more parks and open space in plan: little pocket parks on corners, plazas etc. Make Commercial a walkable and bikeable street

I support the vision of protecting the 30 acre Hartmeyer property. We need to keep the nature corridor connections through our wild areas.

Maintaining the green space for water absorption

Preservation of Hartmeyer and restore , Please consider Option 3 seriously; not agreement about how large needs to be to preserve the wetlands, but the general sense is that current visions make wetland too small

Increase the number of pocket parks and small greenspaces throughout the area. Could there be at least small play/green/garden spaces mixed in?

What about community garden plots?

Preserve as much wetlands, green / open space as possible. Paul's plan (Option C for conservation)

Huge priority is to never destroy ecological systems that have been established. That space serves to reduce weather impact, connects by being a part of a corridor for wildlife. It needs to be preserved and should be considered a focal point of the whole development. Middleton has shown how powerful a wetland can increase quality of life and real estate value.

Connecting the whole new neighborhood (Hartmeyer property) only through walkways paralleling bike path – not doubling up for double usage. Cars should remain on the outer perimeter

Keep parks and open green spaces, but improve the “look” so not just a marsh with garbage in it. Add paths etc.

Preserve the Hartmeyer property in its entirety as a wetland nature preserve. Establish the legal wetland delineation, investigate and assess all surface and subsurface hazardous contamination on the property and determine all requisite remediation actions as well as developing a restoration plan.

### **Coolidge Street Extension**

Do not extend Coolidge Street to open out onto Packers Avenue. A bicycle/pedestrian bridge would be preferable and still connect the neighborhoods.

No outside traffic to turn from Packers onto Coolidge Street eastbound. All that traffic would go past the actual Eken Park playground area where children play. Open up Coolidge on the east side of Packers so bikes and pedestrians only. Perhaps install bollards to allow bike / ped access only

Don't like the opening of Coolidge Street. Eken Park is on that end of Coolidge Street where lots of kids play. People going to the little league park already fly down Coolidge as North and Myrtle have speed bumps. There is NO guarantee that the traffic will not pick up (increase) on Coolidge Street.

Questionable whether traffic should be routed through Eken Park neighborhood – connect East and West side in a less intrusive way

It is a bad idea to extend Coolidge across Packers Ave. to Sherman Ave. It is not needed and destroys the wetland ecosystem (Hartmeyer)

Coolidge should NOT be open to the East (not into Eken Park) but only to the West into Oscar Mayer. A three-way traffic light

In favor of extending Coolidge; integrating it into the rest of the neighborhood.

Any plans to put Coolidge through before more development? (seen as a positive to improve current isolation in the area)

Extension of Coolidge a good idea especially the addition of intersection (light) on Packers. Could the extension into Eken Park neighborhood be ped/bike only?

I support a through road through the Hartmeyer property.

I support the extension of Coolidge Street, but suggest that Kedzie Street be connected to Aberg Ave for cars.

### **Traffic**

I strongly oppose any roundabouts at Packers Avenue and Aberg Avenue!!!! There is way too much traffic for roundabouts. The current traffic lights work well!

Please- NO Roundabouts at Packers and Aberg. There's way too much traffic for those and no one uses them correctly

More traffic signals anywhere would help slow traffic adding sidewalks and terraces would make the avenue more pedestrian and bike friendly

Do everything possible to slow down traffic on Packers Ave.

Slowing traffic on Packers Ave. so drivers are meeting the 35 MPH speed limit

Closer lights similar to E. Washington isn't that appealing to me since I don't see E. Wash as Ped friendly so Packers won't be no matter how many stop lights, just grouping of strip malls not appealing

Calming traffic on Packers Ave to legal speeds (35 MPH) by installing traffic lights or traffic circles BOTH north and south of Commercial street (this will better support bike traffic east-west also)

No roundabout at Oscar Ave and Aberg Ave especially if the Metro facility is installed on the north side of the Oscar property

### **Metro - Transfer Station, BRT**

Definitely need a more visible transfer station

BRT would be good for people commuting for outer towns

### **Bike / Pedestrian Paths**

An alternative would be a path along Oscar Avenue similar to the new one at the new construction at Johnson and First Street. I like the off street idea but not that close to a railroad line.

Bike paths and walkable areas should be considered in a broader context of nature corridors. Combine the bike paths and walkable areas together

Bike and walk path can provide connection and access to the proposed 30 acre natural area

Bike trail into and out of Eken Park on Coolidge Street

Tie the Hartmeyer property into a new N-S bike / ped path

Set bike trails first, before car traffic

We need to connect bike paths throughout the area

Bike path

Walking and biking in that new neighborhood

Adding bike only paths better than finding roads to share

Like overpass for Ped/bike over Packers Ave versus making Packers "pedestrian friendly"

The E/W streets (ie Commercial) is good for developing to walkable business, not walkable business on Packers

Off street bike routes are great

Good bike paths though the new development BOTH east-west and AND paths southbound to 1st/North Street

Connect bike /ped path from the Demetral Park area through to the International Lane path into the MATC campus and connecting paths

Bike / ped paths that cross a major roundabout corridor is an unsafe design

## **Housing**

High density not appropriate / desirable

Focus on mixed use buildings, minimize high risk apartments (like on East Washington); strive for owner-occupied, affordable housing units and apartments that don't look like rentals

There need to be fewer medium/high density housing types to make space for lower/med density housing types including missing middle styles such as: Townhouses, duplexes, row houses, bungalows, tiny houses/villages and co-housing (Troy model) 2-3 stories and a variety of housing types and styles

Please do not simply add more large to medium density apartment style housing types. Missing middle housing needs to be integrated into the plan in order to connect people, increase safety and improve neighbor-to-neighbor cohesion. Improve neighborhood pride / ownership.

Integrate affordable home ownership opportunities into the plan- single family homes!

There needs to be a balance between managing density (increasing) and creating a functional healthy and person-focused neighborhood

Needs to be more lower-medium density housing opportunities

Only go 3-4 story apartments if enough local jobs support it. Don't care to see empty highrises.

## **Economic Development, Employment**

Employment is my biggest concern. Plenty of empty apartments on the North side (McKenzie and others) with vacant retail/restaurant space. Need viable jobs with and blue collar jobs. Jobs so people will want to spend money in the area. What are these possible 4,000 jobs?

I like increased access to Sherman. These plans need to take current Northside businesses into consideration. Bear and Bottle building still mostly vacant. Not connecting Oscar and Sherman very well.

An additional topic related to environmental contamination on the north side Brownfields redevelopment of the OM Station property and the extensive industrial contaminants in the soil and groundwater on the site and general area, the following concerns were shared:

### **OM Station Contamination and Site Assessment**

No matter what kinds of developments go forward, the entire site – and beyond- needs to be thoroughly investigated for contaminants, CVOCs, petroleum compounds, metals, etc. and thoroughly cleaned up before development. Vapor intrusion should be assessed

I suggest strongly to slow down the actual process of development. This whole area "Oscar Mayer" has been used industrially over an extensive period of time and has left hazardous materials in the soil. Any earth movements will effect the ground water and flow over waterways underground and push those toxins around. We need to first fully understand the impact of any development and how to safely prepare any changes to that environment.

## General Comments

The development is exciting but the railroad switchyard is detrimental to the entire project

F-35s must be addressed. Any common space would be ruined

All of our communities need to be first focused on the preservation of wild areas. Second, the creation of connecting bike paths, and third, making sure all areas are pedestrian friendly. Development of homes and businesses should follow this.

### Comments sent via email follow:

We support low and/or medium (not high) density housing and business development at the Oscar Mayer site. Developments planned there should be designed to require as little energy and water as possible and to produce minimal or no stormwater, sanitary, and other kinds of wastes into city waste streams and the surrounding environment.

In the above context, we also have these recommendations:

**1. It is imperative that the 30-acre Hartmeyer Natural Area not be developed.** This area provides critical habitat for a wide range of bird and other wildlife, as well as green space for the community's education and enjoyment. Further, given the challenges the city faces regarding flooding, which will worsen in coming years, it is more important than ever that any remaining wetlands be preserved to help mitigate flooding and also to filter runoff. It makes absolutely no sense to develop over this last remnant of wetland in this area, which was a large wetland area in the past and is therefore highly prone to flooding. It should be noted that the decades of Oscar Mayer's pumping of its own water supply wells led to this wetland being much smaller--but when the wells were turned off (due to contamination), water tables rose, wildlife increased and it became more noticeably a wetland. It would be travesty to lose this development for all time after the wetland, in essence, reclaimed itself.

**2. To protect public and environmental health, contamination at the Oscar Mayer site must be thoroughly investigated and cleaned up before developments go forward.** A plethora of very toxic chemicals have been found at the site in past investigations, including chlorinated solvents (including trichloroethylene (TCE) and breakdown products such as vinyl chloride), lead and other toxic metals, and many petroleum compounds. The site has not been thoroughly investigated or remediated, and significant levels of several of these chemicals remain in soils and groundwater at the site. Very high levels of TCE vapor were recently measured in the slab under Bldg 43, in the northeastern part of the site that the city is hoping to purchase for the bus barn.

This and previous data from the site strongly suggest that there is likely a large groundwater plume of contaminants beneath the entire site and beyond. Further, given that plastics and pesticides were produced at the site, along with a variety of food products, it is very likely that PFAS was used and released at the site. Many other types of contaminants associated with these processes (pesticides, compounds used in plastics production, etc.) have also not been adequately assessed at the site. These contaminants traveled off the OM site via stormdrains over the decades so these pathways should be included in investigations. For instance, storm drains travel from the contaminated northeast side of the Oscar Mayer site to the former Burke sewage plant site, which Oscar Mayer also used for years for pre-treatment of its wastes. PFAS was recently been found at significant levels in groundwater and soils at the Burke site.

As mentioned in our first point, the Oscar Mayer production wells drew contamination downward for decades, but now that they are off (and climate change is resulting in more rainfall) the groundwater has been rising at the site. This makes it even more imperative that before building housing and businesses, the vertical and horizontal extents of the toxic contaminants in soils and groundwater--and the potential for vapor intrusion of these chemicals--should be investigated to assure that people who will eventually live and work there are not exposed to these contaminants. Thorough investigation is also necessary to assure that these contaminants are not present in, or released into, the Hartmeyer wetlands.

Maria & Jim Powell  
1311 Lake View Ave.  
Madison, 53704

Hello Beth and Abha,

Thank you for putting together the community meeting about the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (OMSAP) that was held last Wednesday, December 4, 2019, at Lakeview Lutheran Church, and for your willingness to transmit additional community feedback to the Plan Commission and City Planning staff.

I have put together the following feedback related to issues raised at this meeting, which there was not sufficient time to discuss fully, and appreciate your good efforts in passing these comments along as you see fit.

Thank you,

Dolores Kester

1818 Winchester Street

Sherman Neighborhood Association

Aldermanic District 12

Tel. 608-249-1218

#### TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

1. Need for east-west corridors in the sector between Aberg Avenue and Commercial Avenue

Yes, there is a significant need for viable east-west corridors in the Oscar Mayer Area including avoidance of congestion on Aberg Avenue and Commercial Avenue, and possible need for a new corridor in the area of Coolidge Street. See, attached email to Transportation Board.

2. Roundabouts were great in England and Ireland in Roman Times but they are not well suited to urban traffic situations with a lot of traffic, particularly large trucks. They would be awful on Aberg Avenue at Packers and would negatively affect area businesses, and particularly Chet's Car Care. See, attached email to Transportation Board.
3. The bus transfer point on Huxley just off of Aberg, and the proposal for a "bus barn" to enhance Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), will in all likelihood cause major traffic congestion along Aberg Avenue. Every effort should be made to relocate the transfer point and to look elsewhere for BRT and Metro maintenance of its bus fleet.
4. The difficulty of getting permission from DOT to put more stoplights along Packers Avenue cannot be overestimated. Our Sherman Neighborhood has tried for years to get a stoplight to enhance pedestrian safety on Packers at Schlimgen, without success. City traffic engineers have taken the position that stoplights would hinder free flow of highway-like traffic along Packers, based on DOT's intended purpose for Packers as a major arterial for commuter traffic.
5. Bike path through and connecting with Oscar Mayer Area. A good bike path is greatly needed through this Oscar Mayer area to connect with the well-planned bike paths surrounding Madison in other quadrants of the city. Trying to run any such bike path down a residential street (such as Superior St) is a terrible idea. Nobody wants a major bike path on the street where their home is located.

6. This was a problem on Ruskin St a few years ago, and causes ongoing safety issues in the Spring Harbor neighborhood along Lake Mendota Drive and Baker Avenue.

#### BALANCE OF EMPLOYMENT AND RESIDENTIAL USES IN THE OSCAR MAYER AREA

1. Employment v. residential uses: it would be much better to limit the Oscar Mayer Area to employment/recreational uses and locate new residential uses in other locations on the Northside or elsewhere in Madison. This is an unparalleled opportunity to create employment/recreational uses that would enhance the entire Northside and the entire city that would enhance economic development and community health, and should not be thrown away on housing.
2. Major unresolved issues with underground contamination. Testing of underground contamination has not been done in the Oscar Mayer Area. Given the uses of this area over the last century it is highly likely that there are major issues in this arena that will affect any new buildability.
3. New high rise buildings in the Oscar Mayer Area will cause irreparable changes in the character of all the surrounding neighborhoods including the Sherman Neighborhood, within which the entire Oscar Mayer property is located in its entirety. It is not appropriate for the city to try to dump all of its high-density housing needs in this small area which would be better devoted to employment/recreational uses
4. The Hartmeyer Wetlands. I strongly support the study which Alder Syed Abbas has brought forward for this wetlands area. I strongly support preserving all 30-31 acres of wetlands here for several reasons including nature study and health needs for greenspace, and also for help mitigating flooding and storm water retention problems that continue to cause major problems in the Brentwood area and in some areas of the Sherman Neighborhood just north of Aberg Avenue.

#### IN CONCLUSION:

The above questions raised by City Planning staff about its specific proposals based on the Van de Walle consultant's report are just the tip of the iceberg of the issues raised by the future of the Oscar Mayer area.

There are many wider issues which have not yet been brought forward for discussion, including but not limited to major unresolved issues involving underground contamination, major unresolved issues involving how what is done in the Oscar Mayer area will affect the future of the entire Northside of Madison, questions of proper valuation of the Oscar Mayer property and how this relates to city negotiations in regard to any future projects in this area, and so on.

Among such issues that need to be considered is how changes in the Oscar Mayer Area mesh with the history, needs, and desires of surrounding neighborhoods including the Sherman Neighborhood of which this area forms a part.

City Planning staff are to be commended for commencing this dialogue, but it has only just begun.

#### **To the members of the Transportation Policy and Planning Board:**

I am unable to attend your meeting this evening but offer the following feedback to City Planning's proposals regarding street changes that will be affected by the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan (hereafter, OMSAP).



1. Our family has lived on Winchester Street about half a mile north of the former Oscar Mayer property in Madison, Wisconsin, in the Sherman Neighborhood, for over 37 years. Thus my family's and my neighbors' interests are directly affected by future changes at that location. During this time I have also been active in groups on the Northside and have served as co-chair of the Sherman Neighborhood Association, and thus have some familiarity with the needs of this community including the business community on the Northside of Madison.
2. Our Sherman Neighborhood along N Sherman Avenue is well served by north-south streets (N Sherman and Packers Avenue) which permit travel either north to Waunakee or south into the City of Madison. Years ago N Sherman Avenue was the main north-south highway through this area. However, since N Sherman Avenue was converted a few years ago from a four lane street to a two lane street with a center turn lane, most commuters elect to use Packers Avenue which totally bypasses most of the Northside businesses in and near my neighborhood.
3. Traffic along Packers Avenue from Commercial Ave to Northport Drive is posted for a 35 mph speed limit but many or most drivers drive much faster, up to 60 mph. This has resulted in major safety issues for pedestrians or bicyclists seeking to cross Packers Ave at Schlimgen Avenue or at any other cross street. It is not clear to what extent the state DOT will approve any changes in this traffic for the benefit of the neighborhood including the OMSAP area. So far there has been strong resistance to anything but minimal safety measures for pedestrians at the Packers/Schlimgen intersection.
4. I agree with Planning staff analysis that the need for good east-west streets between Packers Avenue and N Sherman Avenue is critical. The OMSAP proposal to extend Coolidge Street from the Eken Park neighborhood to N Sherman Avenue is a reasonable idea to help fill this need. In addition, it is critical to keep Aberg Avenue as a main E-W street and not clog it with excessive traffic, big buses, and semi trailers. The same is true of Commercial Avenue which should be developed as a four lane street with some kind of repair of the railroad tracks which are horribly bumpy and irregular in that location. Making Aberg Ave impassable with increasing numbers of large buses or trucks along with larger numbers of passenger cars will cause major problems for residents or business shoppers trying to enter or exit our neighborhood and will almost certainly have a very negative impact on our Northside business community in or near Aberg Ave or along N Sherman Avenue. Please pay close attention to the critical need to preserve E-W traffic corridors and particularly Aberg Avenue. Please consider routing increased traffic resulting from OMSAP changes to Commercial Avenue or the extended new Coolidge Street to avoid overloading Aberg Avenue.
5. In addition, our Sherman Neighborhood north and south of the Oscar Mayer property is primarily residential and includes a number of mobility challenged residents. Please note that single family houses are located all along most of the north side of Aberg Avenue. Chet's Car Care is also located on the north side of Aberg Avenue and has been a thriving business on the Northside for many years. Even at current rates of traffic, some families have been forced to leave their homes on Aberg because crossing the street was just too dangerous especially for families including members who use wheelchairs or are slow walkers. Too much traffic clogged up or zooming along this street is incompatible with the needs of residents who make their homes there and would also in all probability have a negative impact on the need for customers of Chet's Car Care to obtain access to that business. I am very familiar with this because our family's vehicles have relied on Chet's for our car care for many years. A clogged Aberg Avenue would also make it difficult for shoppers to obtain access to the Northgate Shopping Center including Noah's Ark Pet Center and the UPS Store (both longtime thriving businesses), as well as the new dog day care facility, the FEED kitchens, and all others in this center, and also probably have a negative impact on these businesses.
6. Roundabouts may be okay in rural areas or on two lane highways in Ireland, but they are not a good alternative in high-traffic situations particularly where very large commercial vehicles are frequent users of the roundabout, such as large trucks, commercial vehicles, and metro buses. The electric buses planned for the BRT initiative are 20 feet longer than normal buses. The roundabouts proposal for the Packers-Aberg intersection is a very bad idea. With

increasing density called for by the OMSAP document, traffic will inevitably increase exponentially. In addition, many trucks with semi trailers make deliveries on the Northside to restaurants and other businesses. MG&E's planned use of the NE corner of the Packers/Aberg Ave intersection will almost certainly bring large numbers of commercial trucks to that traffic interchange. Under these circumstances roundabouts at this location are a horrible idea in my opinion. For all the above reasons roundabouts should not be placed on Aberg Avenue at Packers.

In conclusion, as you help plan for implementation of the OMSAP please give priority to planning adequate E-W streets between N Packers and N Sherman Avenue. In particular, please do not dump huge amounts of traffic on Aberg Avenue that will clog the movement of traffic and make it difficult for mobility-challenged individuals to maintain their homes on that street or cross it when needed, or for business customers to obtain easy access to the one thriving business on the north side of Aberg, Chet's Car Care, and the other businesses in Northgate Shopping Center. In other words, as you consider the Big Ideas in the OMSAP and look at the fancy graphics, please remember that many of us have lived, shopped, worked, or carried on businesses in this area for many years. Whatever develops from OMSAP, all the rest of us will be directly affected by whatever changes take place as a result of this planning process. Please, give some consideration to our needs too.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Dolores A. Kester

Residing at 1818 Winchester Street

Madison, WI 53704

Aldermanic District 12

Tel. 608-249-1218

Thank you for this opportunity for city planners, elected officials and the public to discuss a Hartmeyer preservation planning vision for the city, potentially in partnership with Dane County and Groundswell.

I am Madison's Ambassador of FUN - Friends of Urban Nature, a partnership of Madison Parks and local Environmental and Friends groups. I was previously on the board with Madison Audubon and am now on the board of Friends groups at Cherokee Marsh, Warner Park, Starkweather Creek, the UW Lakeshore Preserve and Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area. Together with Parks and other partners we co-sponsor over 100 free family and kid friendly Bird and Nature Outings all year round in our parks and natural areas. We also help co-sponsor weekly Sherman Nature Explorer kids nature outings.

These free nature recreation and nature education activities have over the past 8 years successfully engaged thousands of people in year round enjoyment of Madison's urban nature, birds and wildlife. Participation in these outings is also helping meet Madison, partner group and neighborhood goals for community place making, social justice and public access goals by regularly engaging a broad demographic of ages, abilities, sexual orientations, minorities, students, families and kids in healthy nature recreation.

I am asking you to help support the preservation and restoration of the Hartmeyer property consisting of the 30 acre historic wetland and surrounding upland ecosystem between Roth, Oscar Mayer, Commercial and N Sherman, as a community open space natural area.

We are fortunate this large remaining open space has been left undeveloped the last 100 years. Past attempts at farming, ball fields and development have been abandoned because it was too wet. Water levels are still slowly rebounding through 200 feet of clay following shutting down of the Oscar Mayer wells. Climate change is giving this area wetter weather in the future. We need to save this last remaining 30 acre large natural open space on the near northside to help provide water infiltration and carbon sequestration to offset the large impervious development and redevelopment surrounding this area with almost no green space.

We should not rush to judgement by only considering planning visions that would replace the majority of this historic wetland with yet more impervious streets and infrastructure that can meet city growth goals by improving and building up - not out - on existing streets and nearby areas in need of redevelopment.

Major benefits include the ecological importance of saving this large vibrant living nature sanctuary and access to nature corridors along railroads and bike paths connecting with other east and northside open areas for the pollinators, amphibians, birds and other wildlife to help keep the beauty and ecological benefits of nature in our neighborhoods and avoid creating an urban desert devoid of all but a few hardy species.

Social justice, community placemaking and neighborhood value benefits by providing community access to nearby nature recreation opportunities for walking, biking, relaxation and contemplation, nature education opportunities for nearby schoolkids, and well documented physical and mental health benefits of access to nature. Preserving this 30 acre natural area will add to the community place making, property values, and quality of life for north side and east side neighborhoods and workers at nearby industry and business developments and for the greater Madison community.

And perhaps most importantly, preserving Hartmeyer Natural Area as an intact living ecosystem supports Madison's mission to connect neighborhoods and kids with nearby nature. Regular access to nature and the awe of seeing nature doing its thing is well documented to help create a sense of well being and build empathy for other people as well as for nature.

This a very real once in a lifetime opportunity for Madison and the north side that offers many potential benefits.

Please LIKE our Facebook page <http://facebook.com/hartmeyernaturalarea>... Email your name to [paul\\_noeldner@hotmail.com](mailto:paul_noeldner@hotmail.com) if you would like to be listed in support of having the city pursue this planning vision and once in a lifetime opportunity. Come to our Friends public meeting the 3rd Thursday of every month 6 pm at Lakeview Library. Contact the above email address or call 608-698-0104 if you have questions or want to get involved. Thanks!

## **Friends of Harmeyer Natural Area**

### **MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT**

Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area are sharing the following Mission and Vision Statement with the public, partners and decision makers promoting preservation this 30 acre historic wetland and surrounding upland ecosystem as a community open space Nature Park.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of The Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area (FHNA) is to preserve the entire thirty-acre historic wetlands along with its surrounding uplands and oak openings. This land is bounded by North Sherman Avenue, Roth Street, Commercial Avenue and the rail road track which abuts the former Oscar Meyer plant.

### **VISION**

Introduction:

The Hartmeyer Natural Area is the last remaining remnant of wetland and upland on the near north side of Madison. This often overlooked area of the city is vital to our north side community. Nestled in among industrial, commercial and residential use, the property contributes to the betterment of the area by providing important habitat for plants, birds and animals, natural water infiltration (both upland open space and low lying areas) to help reduce storm water runoff, and an open green space for area residents and passersby. The Hartmeyer Natural Area is an area of where people can connect with nature and enjoy this restorative and calming resource in its natural state. Sustainability most importantly includes sustaining healthy ecosystems for healthy citizens.

Rationale:

The preservation of this property as a natural area will contribute to the betterment of the area by providing:

- Important habitat for plants, birds and animals,
- A variety of bird and animal life include nesting Sandhill Cranes, Red Tail Hawk, Blue Birds, Wood Ducks, Mallard Ducks. Bees and butterflies frequent the area.
- Natural water infiltration (both upland open space and low lying areas) helps reduce storm water runoff.
- Open green space provides benefits for area residents and passersby.
- “. . . integrating natural environments into urban planning is a promising approach to improve mental health and reduce the rising global burden of psychiatric disorders.”<sup>1</sup>
- We have an opportunity for education and increased awareness of the role of wetlands and of the value of rain gardens throughout the area.
- Public input at recent Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area (FHNA) meetings shows a desire for green space that is accessible to the public, but kept in a natural state
- Many individuals we have met with do not want to see building on this fragile land.
- The value of the commercial properties along the western border would be enhanced by easy accessibility to this green space.

Vision:

The entire area, which now has the appearance of a vacant lot, would become a conservancy for native plant and animal life

This natural space should be available to community residents for quiet, non-invasive activities.

Signage would promote understanding of the area, its features and its inhabitants.

A viewing platform would provide observation of the waters which are now obscured by a mix of undesirable vegetation (thistles, garlic mustard, etc.) and native species (Prairie Grasses, Rushes, Joe Pye Weed and much more.)

Invasive species would be gradually removed and the return of native vegetation would be supported.

The eye sore of continual litter that now plagues the area would be significantly reduced by the designation of this land as a nature preserve.

Naming the area should involve a respectful understanding of the people who have come before us. This includes the Hartmeyer family and the Indigenous peoples of the Ho Chunk Nation who once lived in this area.

Through traffic should be limited to walking and bicycling pathways. No vehicular traffic should invade this space.

The Hartmeyer Natural Area is an area of where people can connect with nature and enjoy this restorative and calming resource in its natural state. Madison is a community that places high value on sustainability. Sustainability, most importantly, includes sustaining healthy ecosystems for healthy citizens.

1. Residential green space in childhood is associated with lower risk of psychiatric disorders from adolescence into adulthood

Kristine Engemann, Carsten Bøcker Pedersen, Lars Arge, Constantinos Tsirogiannis, Preben Bo Mortensen, and Jens-Christian Svenning

PNAS (Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America) March 12, 2019 116 (11) 5188-5193 <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/11/5188>;

Additional Ideas from Master Naturalist, Paul Noeldner

\* No more impervious surfaces - The city should avoid adding any more impervious streets and structures in the 30 acre largely undeveloped Hartmeyer property that can be preserved and restored as a shared community public open space natural area, and instead focus development on reuse and improvements along existing streets and the many opportunities for redevelopment, additional housing and transportation infrastructure using large existing areas that already have impervious surfaces, buildings and opportunities for reuse and improvement of transportation connections. There is plenty of land around this natural area that is suitable for development and redevelopment.

\* Keep remaining refugia - Refugia are important sanctuary habitat areas for pollinators, amphibians, and many species of birds and animals. Keeping remaining large refugia in urban areas is critical to sustaining viable healthy populations of bees, butterflies, turtles, frogs, birds, and other wildlife. Without refugia and connecting corridors between them a city becomes an ecological desert so to speak. This historic Hartmeyer area wetland and surrounding upland has been relatively undisturbed for the past 100 years and it has critical railroad right of way habitat connectors to other urban Madison natural areas. It needs to be preserved intact to retain this ecological asset to our natural world and to our community.

\* Preservation is a viable public vision - This vision for preserving the 30 acre Hartmeyer property as a natural area deserves opportunity for public review, comment and support. There is in fact feasible opportunity for purchase of the 30 acre Hartmeyer property by the City of Madison based on the landowner's invitation for the city to make an offer, the local alderperson who plans to offer a budget proposal that will allocate funds for purchase, and partnership offers to help with purchase if needed from Dane County Planning and Groundswell, with a vision and purchase goal of long term preservation and restoration as a shared community public space nature park with opportunity for compatible infrastructure developments such as a bike path, walking trails, parking for park access, nature lookouts and educational signage.

\* Social justice benefits - the City of Madison has a commitment to social justice and community place making. This 30 acre Hartmeyer natural area offers opportunity to preserve a large place making near north side community nature park, especially for surrounding economically challenged neighborhoods, to enjoy compatible nature recreation, nature education and natural health activities, and especially for families and kids who do not have resources or regular opportunities to visit outlying Madison nature parks and natural areas.

**PRESERVATION OPTION PLANNING MAP IS ATTACHED**

Paul Noeldner

Madison FUN Volunteer Coordinator

Wisconsin Master Naturalist

136 Kensington Maple Bluff

[paul\\_noeldner@hotmail.com](mailto:paul_noeldner@hotmail.com)

608 698 0104

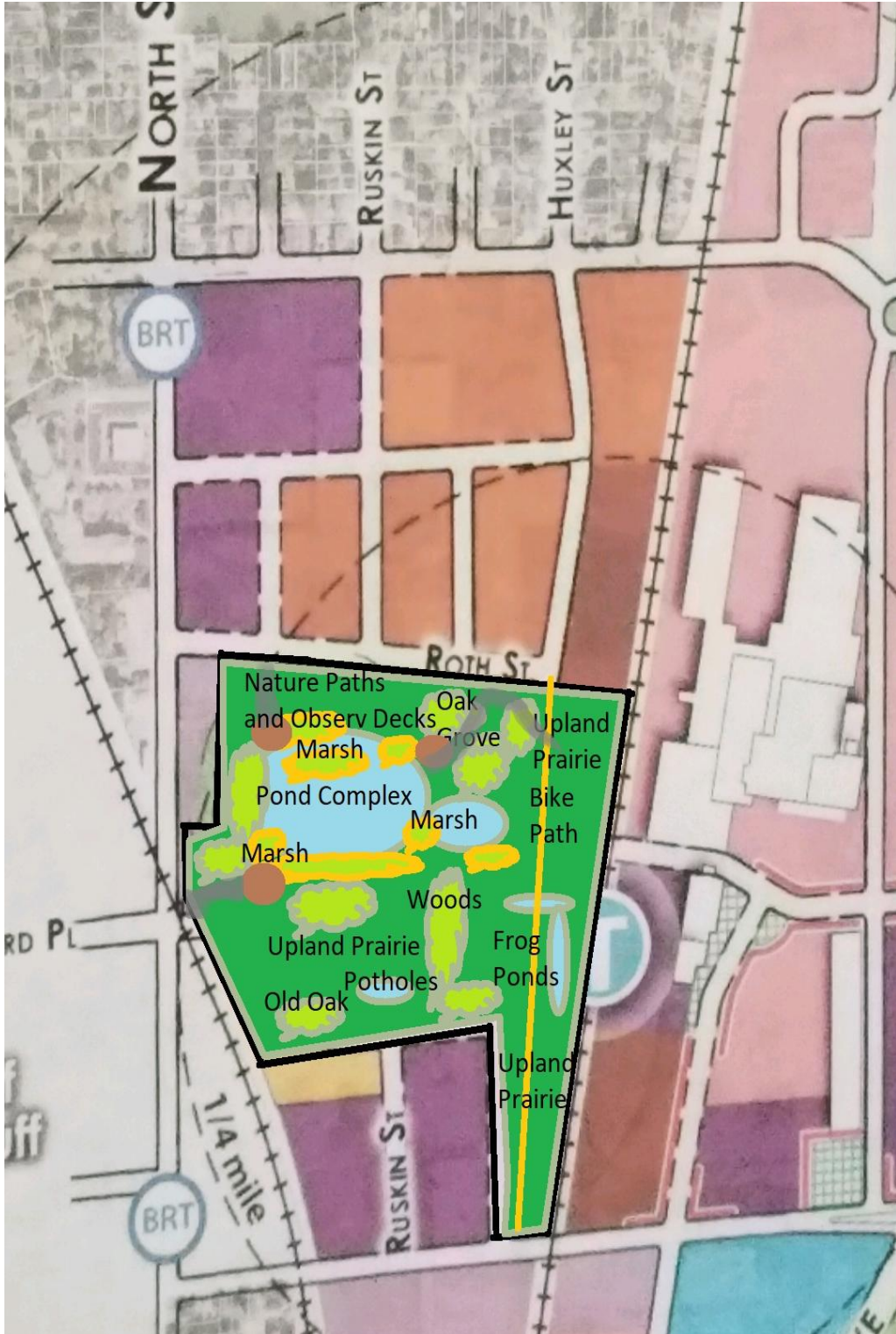
Love of Public Ethics, Facts and Fairness Trumps our Love of our Personal, Family and Religious Values in Public Decisions in Civil Government, Laws and Institutions, and this Common Love of Fairness is what in turn Protects our Right to Enjoy Different Personal, Family and Religious Values in a Free Society

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**Option / Concept C - Conservation**



Submitted by Paul Noeldner, Friends of Hartmeyer Natural Area

My MAIN concern, and my husband's, are proposed roundabouts at the Packers Avenue/Aberg Avenue intersections.

As you know, the proposal is to install roundabouts at the Packers Avenue/Aberg Avenue intersections, currently controlled with traffic lights. In my opinion (and a lot of others too), roundabouts would be disastrous at those intersections. There is way too much traffic both on Packers Avenue and on Aberg Avenue to make the roundabouts safe.

Drivers rarely use them correctly, i.e., yielding to traffic from the left. The roundabout at Thompson Rd. just past Hwy. 30 is bad for that reason as well as the ones put in over by East Towne mall. The roundabout at the Eastpark Blvd., Portage Road, Hanson Road intersection is a disaster as hardly anyone entering the roundabout from Hanson Rd. yields to the traffic on the left at that one. I have come very close to being broadsided at that particular intersection. From the handout at last evening's meeting relative to changes wanting to be made to the north side of Madison, State approval would be required to install roundabouts. It is my hope that the State will not approve the roundabouts.

For the love of God and for everyone's safety, please – please do install roundabouts at Packers Ave./Aberg Ave.

My next suggestion is for you all to somehow get the word out about these meetings so that all of the North side knows about them. I don't think there are a lot of folks even aware of proposals being made. If I was not on [nextdoor.com](http://nextdoor.com), I would never know about these meetings.

Donald and Roberta Thornton

1624 N. Golf Glen, Unit F

Madison, WI 53704

Phone: 249-1853

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Greg Padden wrote:

1. Calming traffic on Packers Ave to legal speeds (35 MPH) by installing traffic lights or traffic circles BOTH north and south of Commercial street (this will better support bike traffic east-west also)
2. Good bike paths though the new development BOTH east-west and AND paths southbound to 1st/North Street
3. I support a though road through the Hartmeyer Property
4. I support the extension of Coolidge Street, but suggest that Kedizie street be connected to Aberg Ave for cars.

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Dear Beth Sluys,

Thank you for taking the time to do this. The following are some comments regarding my main concern about opening up Coolidge Street to a four way intersection with Packers Avenue. Coolidge Street now ends at the Packers frontage road and is contained within the Eken Park neighborhood. (I have also sent these thoughts to Alder Abbas.)

I would like to propose the following as a possible Alternative C or D to the Oscar Mayer (OM) overall plan regarding Coolidge Street and Packers Avenue.

Instead of making this a four way intersection with traffic signals I would like the city to consider making it a three way intersection with traffic signals. Traffic could leave the OM property to go north or south on Packers Avenue, but there would be no access to Coolidge Street eastbound from Packers or OM other than by foot, bicycle, wheelchair, etc. One possible design would be a raised, colored or tiled crosswalk with overhead flashing lights activated by persons wanting to cross Packers Avenue, similar to what is on Packers near North Sherman Avenue. There could also be bollards to prevent motor vehicle traffic from entering Coolidge Street.

Mr. McAuliffe (city planner) stated the city wants to slow down traffic on Packers - having a raised crosswalk with flashing lights would definitely have that impact, and would not negatively impact the residents of Eken Park. It would encourage people to cross Packers by foot and connect Eken Park and the residents that will be living on OM property at some time in the future. It would still provide another exit/access point to the OM property which is what the city also seems to be looking for.

As Mr. McAuliffe stated at the Eken Park Neighborhood meeting on December 5, the Eken Park neighborhood is like an island. As such, to divert traffic from OM or Packers/ State Highway 113 into the strictly residential streets (all zoned residential until you reach the North Street/Commercial Avenue intersection) serves no purpose. Traffic would come onto Coolidge, turn south on North, and exit the neighborhood, and nothing would be gained. Instead, traffic would be increased on two sides of a neighborhood park and children's playground, and through a purely residential neighborhood. There is nowhere to go that is not more directly served by Commercial Avenue access. The Eken Park residents DO NOT want another motor vehicle egress from the neighborhood as was made clear at last night's meeting.

The city of Madison wants to have human scale, walkable and liveable neighborhoods. Eken Park is a shining example of this, with affordable, smaller working class homes averaging 1,100 square feet, where neighbors know each other and can freely cross the street to socialize without fear of being run over, where most people know their close neighbors, and where people feel safe walking to area businesses. We are proud of our neighborhood, and proud that Coolidge and Myrtle streets are being considered for National Historic status due to the character of the houses and the preserved neighborhood. Sending unnecessary traffic through this residential area would negatively impact a neighborhood that is an example of what the city of Madison is trying to promote.

The following is a direct quote from page 130 of the Regional Transportation Plan 2030: "Traffic Direction The plan seeks to draw local auto through-traffic to local arterial major travel corridors as a way to reduce the amount of through-traffic penetrating central Madison neighborhoods and other neighborhoods in the region. ... Traffic calming and other transportation system management (TSM) techniques are encouraged to reduce and/or redirect traffic from local neighborhood streets and other sensitive areas."

Also, from the City of Madison's Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, version 10 dated November 28, 2016: (Page 1 of Introduction)"There are several forms of "unwanted traffic" recognized on residential streets: Traffic using the street as a shortcut, detour or overflow from a congested arterial. Traffic travelling at excessive speeds. Use of curb parking spaces (with related vehicle movements in searching for and leaving such spaces) by inattentive drivers. "

And, from page 2, item number one of Policies:" Neighborhood cut-through traffic should be routed to arterial streets as designated in the Highway and Street Functional Classification Map, published by the Madison Traffic Engineering Division."

Opening up residential Coolidge Street simply to give traffic another way to exit what is expected be a booming commercial and residential area in the future seems to be a direct violation of the city of Madison's stated traffic pattern and neighborhood objectives.

Thank you for your time in reading this lengthy email,  
Maggie Freespirit, 2302 Coolidge Street, Eken Park Neighborhood



Comments on Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan  
by Judy Kingsbury and Leslie Grossberg  
from the 4th December 2019 presentation hosted by the Northside Planning Council

We first wish to convey our appreciation for the efforts of City staff, the Northside Planning Council, and the many people from our neighborhood that have presented or otherwise participated in this planning effort. Our comments, we are here sharing with you, are from us as Eken Park neighborhood residents since 1998.

General considerations:

In considering the various changes proposed, we found it to be of primary importance to first consider what is not to be changed. In this case, what is to be conserved is that which is irreplaceable, which is the remnant of wetland on the Hartmeyer property. Site design would then follow from considering that feature as having the greatest value. Being also highly valued, site design would also incorporate linking to nearby green spaces.

We also see as fundamental to planning the provision of guidance about the order and priority of development, for those areas it is desirable and feasible to develop. Such guidance seems to be lacking. Although there are existing structures, many with currently useful purposes, it does not seem that the current functions of existing facilities or the energy and resources that have already been invested in existing structures have been evaluated to provide such guidance.

Projections that the population of Madison is to increase has informed suggested plans but it less clear to what extent projections of decreasing energy availability and increasing climate instability have been considered. These considerations are important.

Sadly, another general consideration in planning that is important to have addressed, but which seems not to have been, is the mitigation of any contaminants found or suspected to be present.

On Hartmeyer Property preservation:

We think it is crucial to preserve all 30 acres of this area. Let's not pave or build over any more wetlands — not only because they are crucial to our and other species' well being, but also because we don't need to pass on any more flooded basements to future generations. As urbanites, we enjoy visiting the site to watch birds, listen to frogs, and relax. Keep nature in the heart of our city, and do our best to keep it healthy. Don't put streets and houses in this area — learn from the problems of nearby neighborhoods that struggle with flooding already.

On street network arrangements:

Instead of bringing Collidge Street through to Sherman Avenue, protect the Hartmeyer natural area, don't run it through that area. Don't add streets to that area. Focus on creating pedestrian and bike corridors and connections. Slow down car traffic as much as possible. Adding access from Packers Avenue into the central area of the Oscar Meyer site makes sense.

On adding new traffic signals:

We appreciate the goal of slowing down Packers Avenue traffic. Yes.

On changes to Packers Avenue to Aberg Avenue exchange:

Roundabouts seem like a fine approach to easing traffic flow and reducing the maximum speeds.

On increases in building height:

For those living in the surrounding single family homes that have long-distance views, it would be felt as a loss to have those views obstructed. Please have that a consideration in the planning of future buildings' heights, design, and placement.

Lesleigh Luttrell wrote:

#### Plan Commission Questions

##### Residential / employment mix

The total number of units which will be primarily rentals are too many for an area which has been primarily single family and smaller number of units rentals. This would be an appropriate area for a concentration on adding what the city describes as the 'Missing Middle Housing' of duplexes, townhouses and smaller multiplex buildings. Some should be units which can be owned by the residents. As we know renters are much less likely to be involved in the neighborhood than owners. We would support a plan with fewer units, no high density residential and some ownership opportunities.

##### Hartmeyer

Very strong support for saving all 30 acres of wetlands with some designated as conservation type park (i.e. no dogs allowed near wetland).

#### Transportation Policy and Planning Board questions

We support no vehicular traffic through the Hartmeyer natural area. The proposed bike path development on the east side of the tracks is reasonable. More options for transit will be key. The North Transfer point and a connection to BRT are very important. We would not oppose moving the transit point somewhat closer to Packers for visibility but it needs to be easily accessible for persons arriving by bike or on foot, and must include adequate space for park-and-riders. (And in our dream future intercity bus connections (and passenger rail) would be included in the plan.)

##### Intersections

All intersections should contribute to speed control along Packers with traffic lights, roundabouts, marked turn lanes, marked pedestrian crossings and possible consideration of one way streets within the newly developed area. A traffic light at Schlimgen – as traffic coming from the north approaches the OM area is a necessity.

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One part of the Oscar Mayer Special Area Plan with a lot of appeal is inclusion of a multimodal transit hub. This could improve quality of life for the North Side by reducing traffic congestion, and by making neighborhoods safer, more pedestrian-friendly, and more bike-friendly. I think it's particularly important to include or keep the option to add an intercity passenger rail station. Madison needs a hub that could help to return passenger-rail service to our city (or at least connect to existing or expanded service in nearby Columbus) and connect it to assets that we already have or have planned, including the Dane County airport, Metro and BRT, dedicated bike paths, and existing roadways for cars. It would be so helpful to have the option of arriving in Madison by air or rail and easily getting to downtown or other parts of the city via BRT, bike, etc. It would be a boon to the North Side to host this, and this is our chance. Thank you for considering it.

Chris Ott  
1401 Ruskin St

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To the Madison Plan Commission,

As the planning process is quickly evolving, so to are the ideas and input options being discussed by Madison's north side residents, business owners and community members. The layering of planning that has taken place over the past few years in Madison is amazing. Let us honor the work of our neighbors, city personnel and the vision of the elected leaders. If we truly are about the business of being future- focused, let us not disregard the residents who currently live on the north side as we look to welcome new neighbors as redevelopment occurs. It is always better to blend the old with the new.

As our Comprehensive Plan clearly talks about the "importance of ensuring redevelopment can integrate well with its surroundings through context-sensitive design and scale." As we look to "complete" our neighborhoods in this area made newly available when Oscar Mayer closed its doors, it is the people who live and work here that have the connections to our physical surroundings and who are most invested in the outcomes as we move forward.

I offer these comments:

Do not extend Coolidge Street through Packers to Sherman. Install a pedestrian / bike overpass to connect the east west neighborhoods to encourage the walkability model that the city is working towards through its Comprehensive Plan. If the city is truly interested in creating a interconnected walkable city connected by public transit, then a bridge over Packers would do this without impacting road traffic. Coolidge Street from Packers heading East travels into a dead end at Washington Park that requires the driver turn right (south) on North Oak Street. The driver then travels south to Commercial Avenue and able to turn west to Packers or turn east. To route traffic through the Eken Neighborhood makes no sense, just to meet the goal of connecting West and East neighborhoods. If walkable neighborhoods are what the community and the Mayor want, then do not open up Coolidge to car traffic but rather foot and bike traffic. If Commercial is ONE Way to the East from Sherman to Packers, then car traffic can remain on Commercial heading East from Packers, and the walkable boulevard concept maintained. Improve the sidewalks by also installing wide terraces along Packers Ave. Both the multi-modal hub that includes bus and rail options, would still be readily accessible and within an easily walking distance for the residents of Eken Park. If walking and public transit use increase is what we want, then why add a road? Seems like a conflict in the design.

Include **single family homes** and missing middle housing that includes duplexes, low- height rowhouses, bungalow courts; housing along Sherman that in-fill into 2-4 story courtyard (green space) apartments (keep the zoning as proposed in the Comprehensive Plan GFLU map, i.e. low residential)

Design towards accommodating all stage of the life cycle – millennial to retirement. Mixed neighborhoods provide a well-rounded social network for all who live there. My neighborhood is thriving due to millennial families buying **affordable single family houses** (up to the \$250,000 price point), the issue is low housing stocks currently in Madison. Rather than demand commercial space in all new apartment buildings, why not include some small houses in the design plans?

The north side has a rich history of successful co-housing (Troy Drive), include co-housing options

Require development review by Neighborhood Associations for neighbor input on scale, layout and design

Create an available commercial space database (CommSpace) for business owners to make it easy to locate available space in the city as all of the new buildings are completed. There is an abundance of vacant commercial space in the city, but it is difficult to know where they are located. Support new business to fill those spaces.

Include an off road bike/ped path along the side of the extended Oscar Avenue up to Aberg. Provide a safe crossing and connection to already existing bike routes on the north side.

Light rail for passenger traffic would be excellent at the multi-modal hub. The current multi-modal hub location is shown on top of the Canadian Pacific RR. I do not know how far they traverse the city, nor that they will allow the city/developers access to their railroad, but the Wisconsin Southern Railroad might be willing to look at this option as the

owners, Watco Corporation, run passenger rail in Kansas City. And run the freight trains here in Madison. They were quite involved when the light rail system was taking shape until it was undone. It would take some funds but maybe the redevelopers, the owner of Epic, the airport, Amtrak, etc. might come together on this idea...one never knows unless you consider all options. It would be a great thing to have trains run from the airport all the way downtown through to the Epic campus, Verona, and over to Columbus to connect to Amtrak and beyond. Now this truly would be a multi-modal hub connected to and supported with the BRT, and serving the newly settled 4,000 new workers and residents planned for the north side by 2040.

In terms of redevelopment of the Brownfields property at OM Station, despite the current FTA award for \$7 million dollars towards the development of the Metro facility, no improvements should be allowed without remediation to avoid exposure of Metro employees to toxic chemical vapors of TCE, among many other chemicals in the subsurface of the building. I worry for the health and safety of the Metro employees that are slated to work in Building 43, indeed over the entire lot. Due to the intense industrial use of the land for many decades, contamination has been found for each lot presented. Lot 1 has data indicating significant subsurface contamination, the extent of the plume needs to be assessed and a clean up to ensue. This is where the Metro facility is planned.

Lot 2 has high levels of contaminants and heavy metals, in particular related to previous use related to gas stations along Packers Ave.

Lot 3 contains, in particular, elevated levels of ethylene dichloride, in an area potentially slated for the public gathering space and perhaps mixed use housing. Remediation will need to occur.

Lot 4 is a building that is also likely sitting on a subsurface plume of petroleum related contaminants, among others. I am concerned for the tenants currently in the building.

I understand that no improvements are allowed without remediation in this smaller lot, primarily comprised of Building 20.

As part of an economic opportunity zone, the city can receive Federal funds from the US EPA as part of their Brownfields program to be put toward the remediation of the site as we move forward.

Please make this property one that sets the standards for environmental excellence, both above ground with all that is planned as well as below the ground, and likely spreading to the East.

Beth Sluys