

MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Madison Plan Commission and Staff

FROM: Michael J. Lawton, Chair, Hill Farms Association Planning Committee

SUBJECT: Application for Approval of Specific Implementation Plan for Blocks 3 and 6, Madison Yards, 702 Gardener Road and 4728 Sheboygan Avenue, Legistar Nos. 58900 and 58984

DATE: May 6, 2020

The Specific Implementation Plan for Blocks 3 and 6 of the Madison Yards project at 702 Gardener Road and 4728 Sheboygan Avenue is before the City of Madison Plan Commission on May 11, 2020. The Hill Farms Association Planning Committee has the following comments on the application:

First, we want to complement the development team for their willingness to meet with us and to provide information on and to discuss their project in detail. We look forward to continuing to work with them on the overall Madison Yards project.

Second, while we are not opposing the project, we want to point out certain issues that we have noted regarding the project and request that changes, additional conditions or future actions by City staff be recommended by the Plan Commission and made part of the official action on this matter, as follows **[matters to consider for inclusion in motions or conditions are highlighted]**:

1. Traffic and Parking. The SIP approval must be conditioned on continuing compliance on the part of the Madison Yards project, both as a whole and with respect to the phase subject to this application, with Madison Ordinance section 28.098(2)(d), which states that a “PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands.” Our neighborhood has been adversely affected by commuter parking issues arising from the new state office building project and commuter bus parking, so we are very sensitive to any further parking issues that may be caused by additional development for which excess parking demand may be created that will spill over into our neighborhood. Hence, **we are requesting that the Plan Commission include in the approval documents a specific condition stating that continuing compliance by the Madison Yards project with this provision of the ordinances will be required and that this compliance will be reviewed by the Plan Commission and City Council at each stage of approval of all other SIP’s for the Madison Yards project at which time additional requirements may be imposed to assure compliance with section 28.098(2)(d).** [Note: Page 3 of Memo from the University Hill Farms Ad Hoc Steering Committee to Mayor Soglin and the Common Council, dated June 10, 2015 concerning the State Office Building Site, which stated that “New land use developments should provide adequate parking and transportation facilities to accommodate their needs.”]

2. Sustainability. This proposal is subject to compliance with Madison ordinance section 28.098(1)(a), which states that an objective of PDD zoning is “Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.” While the development proposal includes a couple of items that promote sustainability, we feel that the project could add additional features that would make it more sustainable, including additional sustainable

treatment of the roofs, the installation of solar equipment and additional stormwater management or geothermal, among other features. **We request that the Plan Commission either refer the application to a future Plan Commission meeting to permit the applicant to include more sustainable features, or that the Plan Commission include a condition requiring the applicant to include additional sustainable features that will satisfy the requirements of section 28.098(1)(a) in full, subject to the review and approval of the Director of Planning and Development.**

3. Transit, Biking and Pedestrian Improvements. Our committee believes (a) that the transit stop location on Sheboygan Avenue should be reviewed by Madison Metro and determined by them to be in the optimum location, including for future use for Bus Rapid Transit, (b) that there be a better connection for state employees to walk to and from the Madison Yards development without having to connect through the state parking garage, (c) that the project provide for better bicycle connections to the Shorewood bicycle path by providing for a safe crossing of University Avenue to and from the project, (d) that the project include improved pedestrian connections along University Avenue, and e) that the project include a new, relocated or improved paved path connecting the project to Rennebohm Park. **A condition of approval should be inserted in the conditions of approval requiring that all of the above items be addressed to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Development.** Note: Pages 24, 60 and 95 of the Hill Farms Neighborhood Plan refer to the need for the improved Rennebohm Park connection.
4. Tax Incremental Finance. This project, when fully built out, will generate a large tax increment. We believe that there may be public benefits from including the Madison Yards project in a tax incremental finance district with an adopted TIF plan. Among other things, we think that increment from this project could be used for biking, pedestrian, parking and traffic improvements, stormwater management improvements, mass transit improvements, affordable housing and other improvements that are allowable expenditures under the TIF law. The Hilldale area has chronic stormwater management issues and may benefit from further stormwater improvements. There are offsite pedestrian and biking improvements that are needed for connection along and across University Avenue, which could be funded by TIF. Bus system improvements, including improvements related to the bus rapid transit station at a location at or near this project, can also be funded from the increment to be generated here. We understand that this is a City decision and not an applicant decision, so we do not ask that this be made a condition of approval, but instead **that the Plan Commission ask that City staff consider, in conjunction with the Mayor and the Alder for District 11, whether this project and all of Madison Yards should be placed in a tax incremental finance district with an approved TIF plan that will allow for the funding of projects of the type referred to above.**
5. Workforce/Affordable Housing. Given the amount of employment being generated over time in the area of the Hill Farms Neighborhood, some consideration should be given by the City and the developer to the prospects for having some component of workforce/affordable housing located in a future phase of the Madison Yards project. We think that **this is a planning issue that the Plan Commission should ask that City staff consider, in conjunction with the Mayor, the Alder for District 11 and the Developer prior to the next SIP application in Madison Yards.**