

July 26, 2020

Regarding **items #4 & 5 (60902 and 60679)** on your July 27, 2020 agenda

Dear members of the Madison Plan Commission,

I thank you for conscientiously and creatively spending scores of hours every month to achieve the goals stated in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, and also stated in the “100% Renewal Madison” and “Madison Sustainability Plan” documents.

As I understand it, a primary goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to develop *walkable/bikeable neighborhoods that are well-served by mass transit, that include dense and affordable housing, and that have a sufficiently large number of diverse commercial and employment opportunities and enough inviting green space that residents do not need to rely on cars to pursue their daily activities.* In light of our city’s need to achieve this important goal, **I ask you to file items 60902 and 60679** (items # 4 & 5 on your July 27, 2020 agenda), submitted by Alf McConnell of Evanston, IL.

I understand that McConnell’s proposal would produce dense, affordable housing along a corridor that is served by Metro Transit--attributes in line with Madison’s housing goals. However, it is important to note that the developer proposes to build 101 car parking stalls for 80 apartments, assuming residents will rely heavily on cars. It also is important to note that this plan includes no green space, and does almost nothing to create commercial and employment opportunities in the neighborhood. Instead of fostering the kind of neighborhood described in italics above, this proposal very likely would result in dense outer-edge transit sprawl.

That the applicant’s proposal is not in line with the City’s goals and planning criteria, and is not worthy of your approval, is evident from the fact after asking you to rezone this parcel on Packers Avenue, the applicant THEN asks you to grant major “conditional use” exceptions. The City Planning Staff’s report describes the requested new zone as follows:

“The Comprehensive Plan states that NMU development should be compact and walkable and include residential uses, as well as retail, restaurant, service, institutional, and civic uses primarily serving nearby residents. Buildings in NMU areas are generally recommended to be two to four stories in height, oriented towards streets, and located close to public sidewalks. For density, the Plan recommends 70 or less dwelling units per acre.” [Note, the Planning Staff appears to use the acronyms “NMU” and “NMX interchangeably.”]

The four major “conditional use” exceptions that the applicant seeks are as follows:

- Table D-2 in Section 28.061(1) identifies multi-family dwellings with greater than eight (8) units as a conditional use in the NMX district.
- Section 28.064(3) requires conditional use approval for a building in NMX zoning taller than three stories and 40 feet.

- Section 28.64(4)(a) requires conditional use approval for a building containing two or more uses that exceeds 10,000 square feet of floor area in NMX zoning.
- Conditional use approval is also required in the NMX District for a building with less than 75% non-residential ground floor area.

That is, after asking you to rezone this land area, they then ask for so many exceptions to this new zone's standards that the goals of the proposed new zone will surely fail to be achieved. This is not acceptable. Dense low-income housing is needed, but not in this location and not with this process. Instead, we need proposals that will actually achieve stated planning goals.

Please hold fast to our City's goals and planning criteria, do not grant these requests, and file this proposal.

Thank you for considering the points and the request I have made here.

Susan Millar, member, 350 Madison's Community Climate Solutions Team  
2233 Rowley Ave., Madison, WI 53726

CC: Alder Syed Abbas, District 12

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**From:** Kathryn Pensack <katpen7@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 26, 2020 6:11 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Written Comment to Plan Commission meeting 7/27/20 objecting to item #5, 1802 Packers

To the members of the Plan Commission,

Thank you for your efforts and hours spent addressing the many building projects in Madison.

I am writing in objection to the project at 1802-1818 Packers Ave. item #5 on your agenda 7/27/20.

I strongly urge the Commission to consider the impact of this housing on the residents who will live there and on the environment.

Besides having no plans for solar, wind power or green roofs I would urge the Commission to consider the lifestyle this building would provide.

We need affordable housing but must it be four stories high with planned 21 apartments per floor? Buildings like this remind me of hotels and offer tenants little in the way of community or access to green space, especially any green space that is under their control.

What they do offer is maximum return on the investment of the builders.

We can still build affordable housing that offers better quality of life, environmental responsibility AND a profit to investors. I urge you once again to ask the developers and builders to more effectively address environmental responsibility and quality of life.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Pensack  
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Madison, WI 53703