

From: [Susan Millar](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Susan Millar](#)
Subject: Comment on #61675, agenda item #15 (Sweet Willow Pass) on 10/05/2020 Plan Commission Agenda
Date: Sunday, October 4, 2020 6:53:04 PM

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October 4, 2020

Dear members of the Madison Plan Commission,

I begin by thanking you for your commitment to and work for the City of Madison.

I write to convey concerns about the Sweet Willow Pass apartment complex proposal (#61675, agenda item #15) on your October 5, 2020 meeting agenda.

I understand that the Planning staff approves of the technical elements of this proposal, and that the Plan Commission has approved proposals from Cascade Development before. Presumably Cascade is a very good company. And I am glad that the proposed development provides for relatively high density - 110 residential units on 4.2 acres.

That said, there appear to be no plans for how these proposed buildings, which I assume are designed to last at least 50 years, will help the City of Madison achieve its goals for reducing harm to our natural environment (particularly due to CO2 emissions) into the future. We cannot achieve these goals for our community by continuing to approve plans that (a) foster car-culture-based urban sprawl (e.g., no mass transit, no safe bike lanes, 180 car parking stalls for 110 units), and (b) do so in a manner that, *in no apparent way*, is designed to reduce the harmful impact on our environment that will result over many years if this project goes forward as planned.

It may be that this Cascade Development proposal includes *unstated* plans for reducing the environmental harm that will result from this proposed project. To that end, I write to ask the Plan Commission to ask Cascade Development to provide specific information about such plans. To that end, please consider asking them to respond to questions such as those listed below.

Questions Focused on How this Proposed Project Will Reduce Environmental Impact

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- Re limiting GHG emissions from gas-powered cars

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- Why is the ratio of parking spaces to residential units (1.6::1) so high?

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- Will Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations be installed, and if so, how many,

as a proportion of total parking stalls?

- Aside from EV charging stations and bicycle parking spaces, are there any other features of this development that enable and encourage non-use of gas-powered cars?

- Re how the proposed buildings will approach or achieve net-zero CO2 emissions?

- Are the buildings sited to optimize summer breezes and wintertime passive solar warming?
- Are they solar ready or will they include solar panels?
- How efficient is the building envelope (what are the R-values of the siding and windows)?
- Will the building be all-electric, thus not designed to utilize fossil gas for heating?
- Will the HVAC systems and home appliances be highly efficient?
- What is being done to provide for energy efficient lighting, inside and outside of these buildings?

- Re how does the proposed development seeks to reduce and effectively manage water?

- Will there be low flow appliances and water systems?
- Will the sidewalks and parking lots be water permeable?
- Will the stormwater management meet or exceed City requirements?

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Re other elements important for protecting our environmental

- Is the glass to be used bird-friendly?
- Will garden plots for residents be available?
- Are the buildings designed to enable residents to compost food waste, and maximize recycling?
- Re enabling our community to address social justice issues (“What harms the least of us harms all of us.”)
 - Are any of the proposed residential units “affordable”?

Thank you for your patience with my questions pertaining to how these proposed buildings will help the City of Madison achieve its stated climate and justice goals.

Sincerely,

Susan Millar, Member, 350 Madison’s Community Climate Solutions Team
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