

From: [Tom Turnquist](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Vilas park master plan
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 3:19:06 PM

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Thank you so much for your efforts in designing the Vilas Park master plan. It's beautiful!
The only thing I noticed lacking is that there aren't very many, if any, new benches planned for the park.
At seventy years old, I would love more places to sit and rest and view the beauty and the people.
I would also be happy to contribute funds, as I'm sure many others would. Just let me know how much the benches are and where to send the money!
Tom Turnquist

From: [Tim Chapman](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#); [Vilas Master Plan](#); [Evers, Tag](#); [Knepp, Eric](#); [Freiwald, Ann](#); [Wendy Fernside VNA Board member and Vilas Park rep](#); [Ann Rivlin VNA Vilas Park rep](#); [Sarah Bahauddin VNA pres](#)
Subject: Vilas Park Master Plan (VPMP) comments
Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 3:15:09 PM

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Dear Planners and Decision-makers:

We have lived at 1420 Vilas since 1986. We are currently paying over \$11K in property taxes.

We love the park and applaud efforts to keep it up--but we feel this plan overall:

- is overly ambitious and expensive;
- fails to address some current problems; and
- creates several new problems.

Here are some detailed **negative criticisms**:

1. **Moving the north entrance (and exit.)**

- This change is extremely disruptive and does not appear to sufficiently address the negatives of the current traffic flow.
 - The owners of properties at that new exit's intersection will have stop-and-go traffic and headlights sweeping across them that they never had before.
 - Whereas the property across from the current exit (at Drake and Grant) is already protected by greater distance, elevation and private fencing.
 - Unless busses are prohibited from entering from the north (which might be a good idea) they will have to negotiate a series of left and right turns to complete the course--whereas currently it could be all right turns.
 - Note: If busses are to be redirected to the south entrance (to the zoo most probably) they should be instructed with signage to come via Mills to Wingra Park Drive.
- If the north entrance (and exit) "must" be moved to Campbell then
 - that exit should allow **only right or left turns**--i.e. no through traffic across to Campbell as the grade and narrows are a definite pinch point.
 - Similarly, traffic entering the intersection from Campbell should also be allowed only right or left turns
 - This issue was mentioned in the plan--but without specifying these as possible mitigations.

2. Many VNA/Greenbush people attending the most recent Parks presentation said they **opposed adding so much new parking within the park**, saying that residents were accustomed to, and accepting of, the impacts of UW event and zoo overflow parking--and wanted the park to retain its expansive, open look and feel.

- The west end parking addition will negatively impact what is currently a spectacular view from the "bike" path--down the steep hill over a "meadow" to the lagoon and beyond to Lake Wingra.
- The north (east) parking addition (near the zoo entrance) will impinge on an open area that handles many hungry zoo goers that arrive from afar who immediately tailgate before venturing on to the zoo. Note: A few tables there would be an inexpensive and welcome addition.

- The south parking addition will encroach on a gem of Wingra shoreline with a nice bench and native plantings where the cranes like to hang out. The new playground there will also impinge--as well as yet another new path (see below.)
- 3. The **number and size of new paths** are also of concern to many of us as it impacts the open, expansive feel of the park.
 - We wonder why a "cloverleaf" is required at so many of the path intersections.
 - The proposed new paths and alterations to the existing paths through the east park off Erin street will not be beneficial to users or maintainers and will be a costly and radical change to that little park. Note: I would ask the Native American consultant to clarify how a swing set is not compatible with those mounds--but a bunch of new asphalt is?
 - An existing wide asphalt path just south of the current "edible landscape" leads to a western gate into the zoo. That road is not on the plan--has the county signed off on permanently closing that access?
 - Note: The UW Arboretum uses perforated rubber runners that get covered with organic material over time, yet seem to continue to provide wheelchair access while looking quite natural.

Here are some **neutral/positive comments**:

1. Returning some **recreational/open space to "natural area"** feels like a good idea in most cases. However, considering for example the woods along the paths near the Vilas Ave edge--as others have noted, there are noxious weeds spreading. In some cases it may take even more resources to keep up a natural area than a lawn. Maybe our park needs bigger mowers?
2. We neighbors have gotten used to the closing of the Edgewood Park and Pleasure drive to cars--we can certainly get used to **closing Vilas Park Drive to cars**. Some commuters and fisher persons will be unhappy. It is a good thing--though there will be traffic ramifications when covid has passed.
3. One of the great things about the Lake Wingra shore is looking over towards the arboretum and seeing almost nothing but trees. Coming into Vilas Park one gets a spectacular view of mixed shade and open green space--with Wingra beyond! Let's keep it that way. Clearly there has been a lot of effort put into this plan--**thank you all** so much for working so hard for these beautiful gems.

Sincerely,
Timothy Chapman and Lynn Danielson

From: [Ka'tya Fassett](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: concerns about proposed move of Vilas Zoo entrance/exit on North side
Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 10:40:17 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I am a new resident of the Vilas neighborhood in 2020, and I'm distressed by one key proposed change to Vilas Park. Specifically, I disagree with moving the North parking entrance/exit. I previously submitted this opinion via the Vilas Park master plan survey website in June, but I wish to reiterate my point here in a formal letter to those making decisions.

I strongly dislike the proposed change to the location of the Vilas Park Zoo entrance from the corner of Drake/Randall to Drake across from Campbell for several reasons:

- (1) The stretch of Drake St along the edge of the park is currently quiet and shady and I think it adds to the serene feeling of the park itself; to put a parking lot entrance in the middle of that peaceful street would be a shame.
- (2) It concerns me that mature trees would need to be destroyed in order to make the proposed entrance change.
- (3) Increased traffic on the narrow circular street around Bear Mound Park would be a problematic side effect of moving the entrance across from Campbell. Bear Mound is a sacred site. In addition, residents who live in the houses around the mound park their cars along the circle on the one-way street. Therefore heavy traffic there would be both dangerous and culturally insensitive.

A better option would be for the N zoo parking entrance to be on Randall, a street that already has an entrance to the zoo staff parking lot. I feel that an entrance in that area would be more appropriate and a natural fit.

Lastly, I want to go on the record with my surprise at the fact that in all 3 proposed park re-designs the North entrance to the Zoo was moved to Drake/Campbell. This is a major change that I feel should be discussed and debated before being presented as the only option.

Ka'tya Fassett
1528 Vilas Ave

From: [kathy gerhardt](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Vilas Park plan
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 4:03:54 PM

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I would like the designers to consider how this project will get paid for in this time of massive economic debt. There are many basic things that need our tax payer dollars, like vaccines, education, food and shelter. Our Park is just fine the way it is and doesn't need more cement or resources to draw even more people. We need more trees and green spaces, not more parking spaces. As for closing of the Vilas Park Drive, I would be sad to see increased traffic on Drake St and Vilas Ave once the Park Drive is closed to traffic. One of the beautiful things about this neighborhood is its ambiance. Drake St would become a thoroughfare, no longer a quiet neighborhood.

Dear Ald. Evers and Park Commissioners,

Please see my comments below to the DRAFT Vilas Park Master Plan presented by MSA and the Parks Department staff at the Community Input #3 Meeting on 11/16/20:

1. Reduce Surface Lot Parking: Parks Department staff's idea that surface parking counts need to be maintained to avoid on street parking in the neighborhood is a faulty assumption. Green space in this park is too valuable to dedicate so much to parking lots. Parking on neighborhood streets is welcomed by most residents and slows traffic. The 400 current and proposed parking stalls are rarely if ever full. They can still provide HC or otherly-abled accessible spots adjacent to facilities on a much smaller footprint. All three lots (tennis court, beach and main zoo entry) should not be expanded as shown on the proposed plan and those areas should remain park space. The green open spaces east of the beach, north of the tennis lot and east of the main zoo lot are drastically reduced in the proposed plan and all three areas are currently heavily used for picnicking, hammocking and recreation. Alder Grant Foster of the City Transportation committee has explained that the City considers 1/4 mile to be a "walkable distance" for bus stops. And, if that works for our city residents that use the bus system, why can that same standard not be applied to zoo parking?

The City's Park and Open Space Plan for 2018-2023 states that in areas of high residential density we should preserve undeveloped land for open space. Vilas Park ranks as the 3rd highest of all parks with the most number of people within 1/2 mile. The open space should be sacrosanct.

I would also add that the "official" parking count is erroneous. It includes the street parking on Drake (32 stalls) and Randall (24 stalls) but excludes the street parking on Vilas Avenue (128 stalls) or any other street within a 1/4 mile. When you include actual available street parking in the official count you could drastically reduce the amount of surface lot parking required. The total street parking just to the west of the park (between Jefferson and Vilas Ave) is 460 spaces in less than a 1/4 mile! (For reference, Madison Street to the park is a 1/4 mile). See attached parking count exhibit.

There has been no serious study of the ways most people get to the park, whether current parking within the park was fully utilized before COVID-19 (and whether we need to replicate the same amount), or of the huge amount of street parking available within a walkable distance (1/4 mile) to the park, especially along Vilas Avenue and the blocks to the north-west.

The response from the Park Superintendent that "without sufficient parking, the park will be less inclusive for all members of our community" is vague; and if this is an evidence-based conclusion relying upon effective community engagement, data, and analysis, this information has not been shared publicly in a transparent way.

In addition, the Park Superintendent's view that additional street parking is a burden on the surrounding neighborhood is not based on facts. For example, in the survey developed by the surrounding neighborhoods, it asked: *"How big a problem do you consider the parking pressure on your street due to use of Vilas Park (other than associated with UW football games) to be?"* 73% of 131 respondents said they "consider the parking pressure on [their] street due to use of Vilas Park" is either "not really a problem" (36%) or "mostly just an inconvenience" (37%); only 24% said that "it can be a big problem." The city should seriously consider neighborhood streets in parking spot counts for the park—it seems increasingly clear that people would rather have neighborhood street parking utilized than large surface parking lots in beautiful spots of the park.

Parking restrictions on the streets in the neighborhood can also be changed to encourage park users to use these already paved and accessible spots. For instance, the 1-hour restriction on Vilas Ave. near the tennis courts and the 2-hour restriction elsewhere could be expanded to 3-hour parking for zoo and park users. Better signage on the streets showing pedestrian access points to the park would help guide visitors too, as well as improving the informal pedestrian entrances along Vilas Ave west of Van Buren.

Even with less parking available this summer and fall with the shut down of Vilas Park Drive to motor vehicles, the park had even more users, and the parking lots that were accessible were rarely if ever full. Imagine planners in New York City paving over green space in Central Park for parking lots – It's insanity!

2. Keep the West Playground: The West or Van Buren playground should remain because it is heavily used by neighbors and visitors to the park and children can run between the two playgrounds without risk of getting hit by a car. The Parks Superintendent's reason for the proposed removal of the playground, even though its retention is supported by the community input, were "more efficient playground maintenance" and creation of "additional open space for field recreation." It is not clear that open space in this location would be more worthwhile than the playground it would replace. Nor is it clear that any savings in maintenance costs would be significant. I cannot begin to understand why a Parks Superintendent would advocate for the removal of a playground.

3. Acknowledge Active Shoreline Use: The shoreline should be accessible and how it is being used now (with the street shut down) should be acknowledged by the planners. Making it into a strictly natural edge with no room for fishing, hammocking or picnicking except a few lookouts is missing how the park is actively being used now. As for the shoreline, natural areas with marsh grasses, etc. are not compatible with the extensive fishing, picnicking, and hammocking along the water's edge. Look at all the activity out there - even now with 36° temps there were picnics along the shore! Vilas should be an active park not an arboretum. These are very important uses by a diverse group of participants not reflected in the draft master plan.

4. Remove the Proposed Open Air Shelters: Remove the two open air shelters proposed on the plan. These block informal recreational use and limit green space and active uses, in addition to being a waste of money.

5. Limit the Access Road to the New Shelter: The access road to the proposed new shelter should be limited in use similar to Garner Park. Parking for the winter use of the shelter can "park share" with the existing south Zoo parking lot when zoo use is down. It is less than a ¼ mile walk to the shelter which is considered a "walkable distance" per above. That way kids enjoying the bridges and pathways throughout the park do not need to worry about getting hit by cars or riding across a parking drive.

6. Add Soccer Goals: Regardless of the ability to house a regulation size field, it would be great to have soccer goals available at the park for training and pick up games.

This park is a special feature of our community and city and requires thoughtful approaches to problem solving. Continued staff and consultant justifications for why things "need" to be a certain way or paternalistic "in-the-box" thinking is increasingly frustrating.

Sincerely,

David Gevers
Former Vilas Neighborhood Association President 2014-2015

From: [Bonnie Gruber](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Cc: [Evers, Tag](#); [Knepp, Eric](#); [Freiwald, Ann](#); [Ann Rivlin](#); [Sarah Bahaudin](#); [Eileen Hornberger Thompson](#)
Subject: Vilas Park master plan
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 5:00:06 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I hope you will oppose the parts of the proposed Vilas Park relating to the area near Drake Street, in particular the proposed new entrance/exit and expanded parking.

Here is the present view from Campbell Street near my driveway:

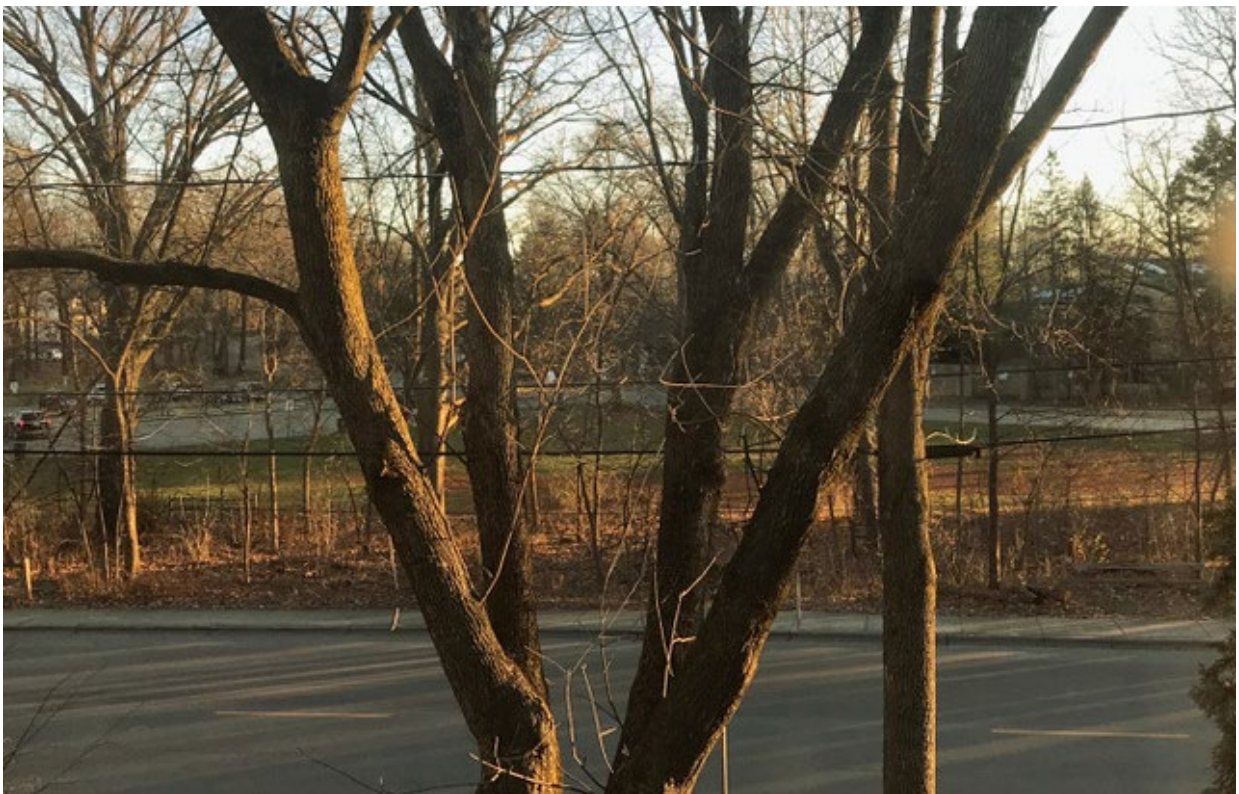


Here is what the draft plan proposes:



As you can see, it would replace an edge-of-town view with a highway view. It would mean the loss of many trees, some large and some that could grow large in time. It would make it easy for drivers leaving the park to go straight up Campbell Street to Bear Mound Park, with its historic burial ground and narrow street—not a good place for heavy traffic..

And here is the current view from my bedroom window:



The draft plan would replace almost all of the green area with pavement. That would degrade the environment and make the park less attractive.

I have lived here for more than 58 years. We opposed a similar park plan proposal in the 1970s, and settled for a compromise that expanded the parking area you can see on the left of the view from the bedroom.

We should let that compromise stand.

Bonnie Gruber
1430 Drake Street

11/18/2020 Email received from Larry Johns, Oneida Tribe, expert in Native American Burial sites and Marker Trees, and has documented many sites throughout Wisconsin. In 1996-98 Larry was instrumental in saving the Marker Tree in Bear Mound Park with its former Conical/round mound determined to be a burial site.

Hey Eileen,

Just a few comments and concerns. All based on my understanding of the map.

First, **I really don't like the entrance at Campbell and Drake.** I've never lived in the neighborhood but I've certainly been in that neighborhood many, many times either driving, riding a bike or walking. I'm mostly concerned with the spring and summer months when there is a real problem with traffic and parking in the area.

At such times, it seems to me, there will be an inclination by some to use Campbell Street as a shortcut to the north which, of course, will lead to increased traffic around Vilas Circle (Bear Mound Park) as well as shortcuts from Monroe St. to Campbell St. And, given the nature of students using the area, they may take additional shortcuts which would be detrimental to all historic features on the circle (Bear Mound Park) So for this reason I believe the Campbell St. entrance to the zoo **should not be allowed.**

Second, regarding the mounds on the overlook at Vilas Park. It has been quite a while since I've been to this park but I don't remember a sidewalk or "Overlooks" going around these mounds. If these features exist there is little we can do about that but if they don't this probably isn't a good idea. My reason for this is the possibility of burials existing anywhere outside of the mound group. The Ho Chunk and other peoples would sometimes bury their deceased in and around mounds which is the reason a 5 ft. or 25 ft. setback from development was enacted in Wisconsin and Dane County.

But, if this cannot be done, prior to any digging being done, the area should first be scanned by GPR (ground penetrating radar) and then any digging for the sidewalk and overlooks should be no more than a few inches (less if possible). Any digging should be overseen by a qualified archaeologist and Native familiar with the soils and features at these sites. All mounds and nearby land should have protection.

Those would be my concerns.

Larry Johns, Oneida Nation

From: [Sally Lehner](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Cc: [Evers, Tag](#); [Knepp, Eric](#); [Vilas Master Plan](#)
Subject: Mounds & Vilas Park
Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 3:04:59 PM

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Dear Members of the Urban Design Commission,

I agree with the statement submitted to you by our Vilas Neighborhood Representative for the Bear Mound Park, Eileen Thompson, and the statements of Larry Johns, Oneida Nation, an expert on Native American Burial Sites, Mounds, and Marker Trees in Wisconsin; I oppose the Draft Plan's proposal to move the Zoo entrance to Drake and Campbell street as well as the new features (sidewalks and overlooks) near the mounds in Vilas Park due to the possibility of burials existing outside the mound group, as Mr. Johns describes.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,
Sally Lehner
Madison Street
Madison, WI 53711

From: [Joan Nugent](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Cc: [DAN R ANDERSON](#)
Subject: Vilas Park draft plan 12/2/20 meeting Item 3
Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 2:30:38 PM

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Dear Urban Design Commission,

I feel that it was totally unfair and inappropriate to offer the neighborhood 3 concepts, and all included the new entrance/exit at Drake/Campbell streets.

I feel that this is the most contentious and impactful decision in the Vilas Park Draft plan. The city parks department seems to have made up their mind without neighborhood input, so now our only option is to keep pressuring the city and groups like the UDC to reconsider.

Please refer to Bonnie Gruber's responses where she asks where is the justification for this new entrance/exit, what are the problems with the current entrance/exit, is there hard data

on dangerous accidents and injuries that have occurred at the current entrance/exit.

As suggested by Bonnie, maybe that entire part of the plan dealing with the new Drake/Campbell Street entrance/exit should be dropped from the plan.

The current entrance/exit on the park north side is sufficient. People come into the park from many points--walking, biking through the woods, paths. Another new entrance/exit for automobiles is not needed.

Related to the above, I believe two general concepts should be present in the Vilas Park Draft plan.

One, no trees should be cut down;; and Two, no additional concrete should replace green space in the park.

The new proposed entrance/exit would require cutting down trees, and reducing green space under

growth along Crake Street, and replace it with concrete in a park-sounds like a Joni Mitchell song.

Under the current draft plan, traffic will increase substantially on Campbell Street and Vilas Avenue

and funnel around Bear Mound Park, an important historical and archeological park, with ties to Native Americans.

The Park has recently been subject to substantial disruption and damage in order to install

curbs and gutters
all around the Park. Increased traffic would further violate the Park.

I like the shelter where it is now.

I really like the Vilas Park drive being closed to cars. I think the present set up with the
barricades at
the beach building is a reasonable compromise. Permits to use the shelter for events could
include
a pass to drive from the zoo south parking lot, to unload food and equipment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joan Nugent and Dan Anderson
1521 Vilas Ave.
Madison, WI 53711

From: [KATHARINE H ODELL](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Vilas Park reconfiguration
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 4:51:38 PM

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Like many of my neighbors, I am strongly opposed to making Campbell St. the entrance to the zoo.

- we already have a fine entrance, leading directly to the zoo entrance. Why make families with little kids walk so far?
- an entrance using Campbell would create untenable traffic - increased noise, increased pollution, many many parking issues, with potential for crashes/pile ups/danger.
- spillover of traffic issues onto nearby streets.

Katharine Odell
1415 Vilas Ave

From: [Margo Reeder](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Cc: [Vilas Master Plan](#); [Evers, Tag](#); [Knepp, Eric](#); [Freiwald, Ann](#); [Wendy Fernside VNA Board member and Vilas Park rep](#); [Ann Rivlin VNA Vilas Park rep](#); [Sarah Bahauddin VNA pres](#)
Subject: Vilas park master plan
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 7:47:10 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Urban Design Commission,

We are writing with comment about the Vilas Master Plan. We are grateful for the city's investment in Vilas park as we love the neighborhood and park.

However, we strongly oppose the proposal to move the park entrance the corner of Campbell and Drake St and prefer to keep the entrance at the 4 way stop at Randall and Drake. Moving the entrance to Campbell street will undoubtedly increase the traffic on Campbell and around Bear Mound Park. Park users leaving the park will be more likely to go straight and around the circle. The zoo attracts a large amount of traffic on weekends and special events- a new entrance on Campbell will create traffic jams for users turning left or right into the parking lot from Drake. Other traffic will likely veer around turning cars, making the intersection unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. The current 4 way stop into the zoo is a controlled intersection, and improvements to that intersection are a safer solution than moving the entrance to Campbell Street. Campbell street is narrow and cars should not be encouraged to enter or exit the park on Campbell.

No alternatives to the Campbell street entrance were proposed or ever discussed with the community. The people who live here see every day how people come and go from the zoo. Some of us have small children. Our concerns have been roundly ignored by city staff at every meeting, with one city employee informing us that the Campbell street entrance is "obvious." It is not obvious to those of us impacted by the change. It is clear that an early decision was made to not have meaningful public input on the location of the entrance, even though that change will have the largest impact by far on the neighborhood. We understand that a traffic study assessing impact on both car and pedestrian safety was never performed. We are disappointed that more study was not done before proposing such a large traffic change, especially one that will impact car, pedestrian, and cyclist safety in our neighborhood. Please remove the change to the entrance from the park plans.

Sincerely,

Margo Reeder and Justin Chasco
1502 Drake St
Madison, WI

Thank you for asking for input to the Vilas Park Master Plan. We have lived in the Vilas Park neighborhood for over 40 years. Over the years, the park attendance has skyrocketed. Attendance at the Zoo is estimated at three quarters of a million people per year. It is difficult to review the Master Plan for Vilas Park without consideration of the Zoo. I feel fortunate to have this beautiful park, Lake Wingra, the UW Arboretum and the Park & Pleasure drive in the neighborhood. It's wonderful. Sharing this with the wider community is the goal of the plan and we support that. I have offered written and verbal comments to the Master plan during the process and appreciate that the plan has morphed to reflect input from the community.

However, my partner, Richard Levinson & I want to support the resistance to moving the Zoo entrance to Campbell Street. We think it is a terrible idea for all the reasons voiced during our November 11th neighborhood Zoom conversation with Alder Evers & the park commissioner, Eric Knell.

- All three concepts presented in the Master Plan add a new Park gateway to be located at Campbell and Drake Avenues. There were no other options offered, such as
 - reconfigure the Drake/Randall entrance. Keep the gateway at Drake and Randall and the existing 4-way stop. The one-way flow through the Park appears to be working.
 - move the main entrance of the zoo to the south side of the park.
- The additional Campbell gateway will disrupt traffic flow and add congestion to Drake Street.
- Putting an entrance on Drake and Campbell invites traffic to use the Vilas Circle around Bear Mound Park. This narrow, one-way circle is not intended for heavy traffic and is unsafe. As Joan Nugent said at our meeting, car & foot traffic circling the Bear Mound park is a definite safety issue. It is a challenge for families with small children & strollers to use the sidewalks and often walk in the road. Also confused drivers often drive in the wrong direction on the one-way street.
- Current arguments for moving the entrance relate to safety, yet there is no traffic demand plan or accident analysis provide to back up this claim.
- Encourage the City to issue tickets to those parked illegally in the neighborhood.
- We support maintaining and adding to the tree canopy to encourage wildlife. The Park redesign is meant to be a place for community where people come together to enjoy nature. Let's honor and promote the natural aspects of the Park.

Peggy Rosin and Richard Levinson
1515 Vilas Avenue
Madison, WI. 53711

From: [M Sushore](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Vilas Park
Date: Tuesday, December 1, 2020 6:18:53 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Urban Design Commission:

This is the third time that I have submitted comments regarding the new Vilas Master Plan, but I am told that the first two sets of comments did not make it to you. I will keep my comments brief.

1) I would like to strongly support the notion of keeping Vilas Park Drive free of automobiles. One thing the pandemic taught us is just how valuable, precious really, our natural resources are for helping to maintain both mental and physical fitness. Closing of the drive during the pandemic has given way to a safer, more relaxed and fun experience in the park for all. As a neighbor of the park for over 25 years, I can say with 100% certainty that the park has never seen the kinds of uses it is now experiencing. On any day I am able to see dozens of people engaged in dozens of activities, peacefully enjoying the park, without the noise or fear of traffic, without loud car radios and honking which I have experienced hundreds of times in the past. But it isn't only people who are benefiting; the wildlife there has flourished too. On a regular basis I now see herons, hawks, sandhill cranes, and even an eagle. Please keep it closed. And if you must allow for cars, please do so only on Sunday.

2) Please maintain as much green and forested space as possible. As you perhaps know, there is a family of four Great Horned Owls living in the park. They are nesting in the modest band of forest behind the homes on Vilas Avenue. Any less space and I'm afraid they would not be able to thrive there as they have now. The canopy provided by the trees in that forest are also home to a wide variety of birds. It is like a bird sanctuary to walk through there. The birds need a home and to take that away for more parking or tennis or other sports would be an unfortunate choice.

Thank you for striving to preserve as much natural space as possible for not only the neighborhood but for the whole of Madison that comes to visit.

Marilee Sushoreba
1818 Adams Street
Madison, WI 53711

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The CO2 level in the atmosphere the year I was born was 312.2 parts per million. Today it is 411; 99 ppm higher.

From: [Eileen Hornberger Thompson](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Please protect Bear Mound Park / Do not move Vilas Park plan Zoo entrance and Exit to Campbell St and Drake St / Remove from Vilas Park plan
Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 10:17:19 AM
Attachments: [Larry Johns, Oneida Tribe, 3 comments.docx](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

We are sending our letter below and an attached letter from Larry Johns, Oneida Nation, an expert on Native American Burial Sites and Mounds, and Marker Trees in Wisconsin.

We oppose the moving of the Zoo entrance to Drake Street and Campbell Street. Please do not support the current Vilas Park Master plan with this Zoo entrance change, this change should be removed from the Master plan. Here is why :

1. Bear Mound Park, the former Vilas traffic Circle before 1998, is just one block to the north of Drake Street. This entrance and exit would bring more unwanted traffic around Bear Mound Park between 1400-1500 Vilas Avenue and throughout Vilas neighborhood – Oakland St. to Campbell St, Chandler St. Bear Mound Park is now designated a culturally and historically significant. Not only is there the Bear Effigy Mound, but the former Marker Tree and its newly rediscovered Round/ Conical Mound make this a sacred Native American land (documented in August 1888 by TH Lewis, and again by CE Brown in 1920's, and 1997 confirmed with Radar Penetrating unit) . An additional intersection at Drake Street and Campbell Street would create more problems than it solves.
2. Neighborhood traffic will be more confusing to visitors going to the Zoo or Park. With a creation of a new entrance at this location, visitors will disobey one way signs and many of the street sign. Adding to the existing confusion that occurs . For example the one- way section of Vilas Avenue, Oakland one- way block, or cars will want to enter onto Campbell St. from Monroe St. from the northern side of Bear Mound Park.
3. Altering the existing barrier between residential homes from the Vilas Zoo and Park areas is detrimental to homeowners. This area not only provides a physical barrier, but also reduces noise for all these neighbors. The Oak trees, other trees, and understory provide important biodiversity and habitat for birds and wildlife, which is diminishing. Children enjoy playing in this magical wooded area. These Oak trees can live to more than 100 or even up to 200 years and are not near their end of life. Oak trees and others work in syncytium to protect each other during storms as described by Hugh Iltis, Professor of Botany University of Wisconsin–Madison.
4. Possible option:
 - a. Consider widening the current entrance to include an exit, adding traffic bumps and

possibly a traffic light at Randall Avenue and Drake Street rather than redirecting traffic to a new entrance and exit.

b. The current entrance location shared between Greenbush and Vilas neighborhood restricts visitors and their cars to primary roads moving directly toward the zoo while avoiding the perimeter roads Znext to Bear Mound Park (from the east from Park St. to Drake St. from the north from Regent St. to Randall Ave., from the West from Grant St. on Drake Street). We need to look at alternatives, rather than add another large intersection on Drake Street.

There are many great ideas on the Vilas Park Master Plan but not the move of the entrance and exit to Campbell St. and Drake St. significant.

Regards,
Craig and Eileen Thompson
311 Campbell Street .

ATTACHED is an email I received from Larry Johns, Oneida Nation, an expert on Native American Burial Sites and Mounds, and Marker Trees. In 1997, Larry was instrumental in assisting the Vilas Neighbors to saving the Marker Tree and its newly discovered former Conical / Round Mound on Bear Mound Park (formerly Vilas Circle Park) In addition to the Bear Effigy, this former conical mound and Marker Tree are designated as historically and culturally significant.

11/18/2020 Email received from Larry Johns, Oneida Tribe, expert in Native American Burial sites and Marker Trees, and has documented many sites throughout Wisconsin. In 1996-98 Larry was instrumental in saving the Marker Tree in Bear Mound Park with its former Conical/round mound determined to be a burial site.

Hey Eileen,

Just a few comments and concerns. All based on my understanding of the map.

First, **I really don't like the entrance at Campbell and Drake.** I've never lived in the neighborhood but I've certainly been in that neighborhood many, many times either driving, riding a bike or walking. I'm mostly concerned with the spring and summer months when there is a real problem with traffic and parking in the area.

At such times, it seems to me, there will be an inclination by some to use Campbell Street as a shortcut to the north which, of course, will lead to increased traffic around Vilas Circle (Bear Mound Park) as well as shortcuts from Monroe St. to Campbell St. And, given the nature of students using the area, they may take additional shortcuts which would be detrimental to all historic features on the circle (Bear Mound Park) So for this reason I believe the Campbell St. entrance to the zoo **should not be allowed.**

Second, regarding the mounds on the overlook at Vilas Park. It has been quite a while since I've been to this park but I don't remember a sidewalk or "Overlooks" going around these mounds. If these features exist there is little we can do about that but if they don't this probably isn't a good idea. My reason for this is the possibility of burials existing anywhere outside of the mound group. The Ho Chunk and other peoples would sometimes bury their deceased in and around mounds which is the reason a 5 ft. or 25 ft. setback from development was enacted in Wisconsin and Dane County.

But, if this cannot be done, prior to any digging being done, the area should first be scanned by GPR (ground penetrating radar) and then any digging for the sidewalk and overlooks should be no more than a few inches (less if possible). Any digging should be overseen by a qualified archaeologist and Native familiar with the soils and features at these sites. All mounds and nearby land should have protection.

Those would be my concerns.

Larry Johns, Oneida Nation