

From: Evers, Tag

Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 11:03 AM

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Cc: Hogendorn, Bennett; Wachter, Matthew; Stouder, Heather

Subject: Triangle Monona Bay Neighborhood Plan Amendment

Fellow Board Members,

This letter is to augment the testimony I offered to the Transportation Policy & Planning Board at their December meeting. I encourage you to review that testimony, linked here: (<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9003042&GUID=982A2430-49AC-4536-861D-E02F8BF1B538>)

TPPB voted unanimously in favor of the amendment which is before you at our Thursday, February 11 meeting.

Two years ago, during my first campaign for D13 Alder, I attended several meetings of the Triangle Monona Bay Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee. It quickly became apparent there was a disconnect between planning staff's view of what was lacking in the Triangle and what residents perceived to be in their best interests.

Staff saw the deficit in the Triangle in terms of what was perceived to be a lack of connectivity. However, staff's concept of connectivity was decidedly car-centric; hence, staff's initial proposal was for five new streets laid out with a grid concept.

Residents saw the matter differently. The kind of connectivity valued among residents had very little to do with car access. Residents on the Triangle, by and large, were not asking for a street design that would privilege automobiles, as car ownership on the Triangle is considerably less than the city average due to low incomes. Rather, residents proffered a vision of connectivity that was more human-focused. Bayview residents were particularly concerned for the safety of the large number of children living in their community. Safe bicycle and pedestrian pathways were continually advanced as solutions to connectivity concerns rather than car access. Residents at the CDA Apartments, many of whom have mobility issues, were also not calling for more car access from those who live outside the Triangle; these residents were instead concerned that those who use wheelchairs and walkers would have ease of access and not have to worry about cars cutting through their neighborhood.

Both residents groups, those at Bayview and those in the CDA Apartments, expressed strong interest in safe passage across the perimeter streets of W. Washington, Regent, and S. Park. That was the connectivity they were looking for, not the kind of connectivity that tends to favor those from the outside-in who are coming to the Triangle by automobile.

I am told that members of the steering committee, on which one of our fellow CDA Board Members served, repeatedly asked staff to bring forth a plan without a new street. Staff did not acquiesce. Over a period of time, the committee reluctantly accepted the one new public north/south street bisecting the Triangle from Regent to W. Washington.

There are two primary reasons to vote in favor of the Plan Amendment. The first has to do with equity. As Planning Director Heather Stouder stated in a recent story in the Wisconsin State Journal:

"We need to closely and critically assess the system we have now for planning, and its impacts on equity. We need to do a better job of elevating the stated needs of those who rent their homes, and also the needs we foresee for future Madison residents."

"Whether we make incremental improvements or completely overhaul our planning framework, equity is a central question."

(Link to full story here: https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/planners-seek-fairer-approach-to-guiding-madisons-growth-covering-all-neighborhoods/article_741604ff-6f3d-57fe-8af0-a49e33679cbf.html)

The second consideration has to do with safety. Safety is the primary concern of residents on the Triangle. This concern for safety aligns with the City's renewed emphasis on safety as expressed in our commitments to the Vision Zero program. <https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/initiatives/vision-zero>

Elevating the concerns and hearing the voices of our most vulnerable residents must be our top priority, particularly when it comes to safety.

I ask for your vote in favor of this amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tag Evers

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