

From: [Jessica Becker](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 2, 64250 Urban setbacks that allow for larger trees
Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 4:08:57 PM

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I am writing in support of the proposed zoning change to allow for larger setbacks. This will make it possible to plant large canopy trees. I am fortunate to live in an older home with a very mature maple in the setback. It keeps our home cool in the summer and makes our neighborhood calm and beautiful. Frankly, it is why we bought our house: the fall foliage is gorgeous. Please help keep our urban forest growing.

Sincerely,
Jessica Becker
East Dayton St

From: [Anne Reynolds](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Rummel, Marsha](#)
Subject: Canopy Trees Ordinance
Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 10:58:20 AM

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Dear Plan Commission,

I am writing to support the ordinance change that increases front yard setbacks, sponsored by Alder Rummel. This change will increase the health and diversity of our canopy trees, and is crucial to both our quality of life and the health of our environment. As a lifelong resident of Madison, I've been alarmed by the gradual destruction of our tree canopy, especially in central Madison.

I support the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Task Force and all improvements that will protect our trees.

Many thanks for your support of this important ordinance change.

Best regards.
Anne Reynolds
2139 Linden Ave

From: [Perry Sandstrom](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#)
Subject: Please Amend Zoning to allow trees to exist in a future Madison. Agenda item 64250 for March 10 2021 meeting
Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2021 12:02:39 PM

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Hi Plan commission,

This amendment is the least we could do as a city to mitigate what is presently an alarming, systematic, and permanent removal of large trees from the landscape.

All one has to do to see how important this is to compare Regent street East of Monroe street with Regent street west of Monroe on a summer day. The residential (West) end is 5-10 degrees cooler, and there are birds and insects. The commercial (East) is essentially a cement desert with only ornamental trees. The sun is the same, the traffic is the same, the main difference is the setbacks of the buildings.

Just because people in urban environments get accustomed to zero setbacks does not make this acceptable or necessary in the (still beautiful) and unique landscape of Madison.

I have watched a number of development projects happen (all recent projects, on Monroe really) that would have looked much better aesthetically if there was a non-zero setback from the sidewalk. The people living in those buildings would have benefited from having their living spaces fronted by shade in the summer and habitat and noise reduction year round.

What people often forget is that when a building goes up with zero setback, we are essentially declaring that no tree will ever grow in that street area again for the foreseeable future. It takes 80 years to grow an 80 year old tree and we are seriously falling behind with policies that do not even take into account the removal of large trees for development. The city should not embrace practices which destroy large trees and eliminate the possibility of any large tree ever growing there again.

Its long past time that our zoning and planning policies reflect the fact that we are not the only species that matters, and that the public benefits of a "shared habitat" philosophy outweigh the narrow aims of developers.

Thanks!

-Perry Sandstrom

From: [Leslie Schroeder](#)
To: [Urban Design Comments](#); [Rummel, Marsha](#)
Subject: Public Comment 3/10/21 Item 2, 64250
Date: Monday, March 8, 2021 6:23:04 PM

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Dear Urban Design Commissioners,

I strongly support the ordinance to create an "if then" setback requirement to insure space for urban canopy trees, item 2 on your agenda, 64250.

I will detail my argument to follow, however, it is relevant for commission members to remember this ordinance has been written to implement actions which have been supported and passed by the Madison Common Council multiple times under multiple guises, for actionable items to respond to climate change and ongoing loss of the urban canopy, the Madison Sustainability Plan of 2011 and most recently the Madison Urban Forestry Task Force and Report completed in 2019.

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/sustainability/documents/SustainPlan2011.pdf>

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8033567&GUID=9B1BC88B-FD1E-4CC6-B4DC-72D52838455E>

There is no question, the city has already set its priorities which have been vetted up and down every relevant committee and commission and supported in droves by the community. Madison wants a healthy urban canopy, Madison needs a healthy urban canopy.

To review, here are some highlights of what canopy trees provide:

- The net cooling effect of a single, large, healthy tree can be equivalent to ten room-sized air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.
- A well-planted property and its surrounding street and neighborhood can raise property values by as much as 15 percent.
- A single mature canopy tree can retain as much as 1,000 gallons of stormwater
- Canopy trees provide critical ecosystem services to the critters and birds we share this place with

This city, and you who sit in the positions of city commissions and elected officials, are not under any obligation to guarantee future maximum profit for developers, there is however an obligation to the future residents for you to make decisions which steward this as a healthy, livable place. Madison is plenty desirable and property values steadily increase year over year- the threat of loss of development interest is a hollow one. The threat to city dwellers in impacts of climate change however- increased flooding and higher temperatures, are very real. The benefits of canopy trees to the city dweller are enormous and they grow with the size of the tree. The short growing trees which are increasingly dominating the city forest do not provide the benefits which canopy trees do- not in cooling shade, not in carbon sequestration, not in rain water retention not in oxygen creation. This is literally what we are talking about- being able to breathe, and for all of that

all
the
trees
are
asking
for
is
a
few
feet.

Literally, just a few feet. There is no point to having a few more feet of buildable space if what we end up with is not a livable space.

Sincerely,

Leslie Schroeder
Madison/Dejope

From: [Lynne R Novotnak](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: canopy trees
Date: Sunday, March 7, 2021 10:15:32 AM

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To whom it may concern,

As a resident of Wirth Ct., where our (east) side of the street was replanted with < 20' shrub-trees a few years ago , I am fully in favor of making as much room as possible for canopy trees in Madison, including further setbacks for developments. We desperately need - and will need even more so in the future - more grand, canopy trees for shade and to mitigate coming climate changes. Making room and planting trees now/soon will prepare us for a better, more comfortable and beautiful future.

Sincerely,

Lynne Novotnak
21 Wirth Ct.
Madison, WI 53704
608-249-2714



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From: annewalker@homelandgarden.com
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#); [Rummel, Marsha](#)
Subject: Tree Ordinance
Date: Sunday, March 7, 2021 11:56:16 AM

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Dear Plan Commission Members, Alder Rummel,

For many isthmus neighborhoods, we face the challenge of creating the right conditions for our urban canopy to thrive in. Part of the challenge is planning for enough room for canopy trees to be planted, due to development, above-ground wires as well as competing interests for the same space.

Additional dwelling units, ADU's, have the potential to further complicate the issue. Protections for trees in rear and side yards is key to a healthy urban forest. During construction, trees roots can be damaged, compaction issues are common as well as grade changes that can affect tree health and lead to the decline and death of trees.

I strongly support creating protections for our urban canopy, including for rear and side yards. Heat waves are the number one weather related killer for city dwellers. Our urban canopy is an essential part of a sustainable, resilient city.

Anne Walker

From: [Bill Connors](#)

Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 3:36 PM

To: [Mayor](#); [All Alders](#)

Cc: [Stouder, Heather](#); [Tucker, Matthew](#)

Subject: Request to Refer Agenda Item 63 to More Commissions and Committees

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Mayor Rhodes-Conway and Alders:

I am writing to request that item 63 on your agenda this evening, Legistar 64250, a zoning text amendment ordinance to increase the front setbacks in a large number of zoning districts, be referred to other commissions and committees in addition to the Plan Commission. At a minimum, this proposed ordinance should also be referred to the Finance Committee, Economic Development Committee and Urban Design Commission, before this proposed ordinance comes to the Common Council for final action.

The Finance Committee should review this proposed ordinance because it could reduce the assessed values of a large number--but a number not known by city staff--of parcels throughout the city, causing a shift of property tax burden primarily onto owners of single-family houses. This proposed ordinance also will discourage future redevelopment projects that would provide increased tax base, which will mean smaller increases in the city's levy limit based on net new construction in future years. Smaller future increases in the levy limit mean harder future city budgets.

Please be aware that the city government is providing NO notice to individual property owners that the city government is considering adopting this ordinance and that it could have an adverse impact on the values of their properties. I am making sure the members of Smart Growth know about this proposed ordinance. How will the lack of notice to other property owners, many of them owners of smaller commercial properties, impact equity?

The Economic Development Committee also should review this proposed ordinance because it will discourage future redevelopment projects in important urban corridors, e.g., Monroe St, Williamson St, Atwood Ave/Winnebago St, E Johnson St, Park St. This proposed ordinance will work against the city's desire to increase density and activity in these urban corridors. In addition, owners of new buildings required to have a five-foot front setback, especially where adjacent older buildings have a zero front setback, will be required to provide security and program the five-foot-wide void in front of their buildings.

The Urban Design Commission should be asked to give their opinion regarding the impact within Urban Design Districts of creating block faces where the building facades

are a patchwork of older buildings with zero front setbacks and newer buildings with five-foot setbacks.

There is no need to rush to adopt this ordinance before its negative consequences are fully understood--information you will need to make an informed decision regarding whether to adopt the ordinance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bill Connors
Executive Director
Smart Growth Greater Madison, Inc.
608-228-5995 (mobile)
www.smartgrowthgreatermadison.com

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