

From: [Ann Kovich](#)
To: [McGuigan, Patrick](#)
Subject: FW: Re: Vilas Park
Date: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 2:19:48 PM
Attachments: [8057CE915DE34829BB8371F7D16518F0.png](#)

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Hi, Patrick. You may shoot me, but here is the final reply in this long email chain I asked you to save in Legistar for Vilas Park Drive. If you could please save this as the final, I would appreciate it very much. Such great follow up by Denise! I am so glad she was added to the TC.

Thanks!

Ann

Ann E. Kovich
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From: [Denise Jess](#)
Sent: Wednesday, May 5, 2021 5:00 AM
To: [Callaway, Renee](#)
Cc: annelizabethkovich@gmail.com; [Freiwald, Ann](#)
Subject: Re: Vilas Park

Renee,

Thanks so much for your thoughtful reply and for the great problem-solving mindset. I like these suggestions a lot to help all users acclimate to the space. I'm looking forward to visiting the space and getting an on-the-ground feel for it after the changes are made. I don't have any additional suggestions.

We have a TC meeting at the same time as the board of parks meeting, so I won't be able to give verbal comment at the parks meeting. I'll send written comment supporting these suggestions and speaking to the need for creating inclusive public spaces so that the comments are part of the public record.

Thanks again!
Denise

Denise Jess
CEO/Executive Director
Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired
754 Williamson Street
Madison, WI 53703

608-237-8103 - Direct

Www.wcblind.org

From: Callaway, Renee <ReCallaway@cityofmadison.com>

Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 8:49:57 AM

To: Denise Jess <djess@wcblind.org>

Cc: 'annelizabethkovich@gmail.com' <annelizabethkovich@gmail.com>; Freiwald, Ann <AFreiwald@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: RE: Vilas Park

Denise,

Thanks for your thoughtful email. I agree that a main goal for the changes to Vilas Park Drive needs to be making the park more accessible. The space that will be marked along the roadway will be for pedestrians only but your comments make me think that it will need some type of signage that it is not for biking or it may be viewed by bicyclists as a space they also can use. The intention is for pedestrians to be able to have their own space in the roadway or on the gravel pathways while people biking will be in the road along with people driving. The width of Vilas Park Dr does vary so I think where we can we will make the pedestrian area wider and we can certainly discuss if we can go narrower than 19 feet for two-way motor vehicle/bicycle travel. West of the shelter the space will be shared between pedestrians and bicyclists but with space marked for each. If you have other ideas that you think of please share them with Ann and I as it will go to the Board of Park Commissioners on May 12.

Thanks,

Renee

From: Denise Jess <djess@wcblind.org>

Sent: Sunday, May 2, 2021 7:31 AM

To: Callaway, Renee <ReCallaway@cityofmadison.com>

Cc: 'annelizabethkovich@gmail.com' <annelizabethkovich@gmail.com>; Freiwald, Ann <AFreiwald@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Vilas Park

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Hi, Renee.

Thanks so much for your work on the Vilas Park temporary plan and for all you do to create greater safety, access, and equity.

I appreciate all the work that has happened with the neighborhood, parks and bike/ped and strongly favor the plan for the Vilas Park temporary solution. As a member of the Transportation Commission and a Madisonian with a disability, I'm still having difficulty letting go of my concerns regarding access issues for people with disabilities; both those who use mobility devices and those with vision loss. I recognize that the current situation has accessibility challenges and that this plan helps to reduce them a bit by removing cars from portions of the roadway. I'd hoped that even in a temporary situation,

we can lift up the design to take a step forward with access, rather than maintaining the status quo.

I appreciated Grant's suggestion to narrow the bike lanes to allow for more ped space. This will give people using mobility devices more physical room when on the roadway and it increases the buffer zone for those of us on foot. Often, as you know, shared spaces with bikes are really confusing for those of us with vision impairment, because the bikes can be difficult to hear as they approach. I'm hopeful that this suggestion can be incorporated into the plan.

In the places where there is shared use with cars, bikes and pedestrians, could paint markings be used to help remind bikers to give space to pedestrians? While those with vision loss may not see the markings, they give valuable information to others and could help people stay alert to multiple users in the space. As I recall from the presentation, currently the bike/ped space markings are yellow lines. Could green paint be used in some way to remind bikers to give space to peds?

While it may be preferred for people to step off the roadway to use the gravel paths, as was noted at the Transportation Commission meeting, this gravel pathway is likely unusable by people with mobility devices. As a legally blind user I'm unlikely to use it either. Loose gravel is a tripping hazard. It is also very difficult to navigate with a white cane unless using a specially designed hiking disc attached to the cane. Most people don't have these.

I recognize the need for low-cost options in this situation, but want to be sure that we aren't naming cost as the scapegoat for failing to create greater equity.

I'm open to further discussion and ideas for increasing use of this area for all Madison residents and visitors.

Thanks so much for your consideration.

Denise

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