

**From:** [Kapusta-Pofahl, Karen](#)  
**To:** [McClain, Maggie](#)  
**Cc:** [Stouder, Heather](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Changes to the Zoning Ordinance/Legistar #63902  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 1, 2021 7:04:25 PM

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Please attach to #63902 thanks!

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**From:** Justice Castaneda <justice@cwd.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 1, 2021 6:39 PM  
**To:** All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>; Mayor <Mayor@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Proposed Changes to the Zoning Ordinance/Legistar #63902

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Good Afternoon Members of the Common Council,

As part of a team, I have been researching different cities' approaches to zoning changes, as part of a number of other comprehensive approaches to addressing the housing shortage faced by every metro area in the United States. Through this work I was able to get the group to assess the current proposal in Madison, which you will be deliberating this evening.

While all of this has been happening, there have been numerous conversations, articles, email threads and memos grappling with this issue, many of which were directed to you all. As such, this memo became harder to put together, as I am not trying to repeat that which has already been analyzed in other forums. Instead, I want to provide a few basic thoughts and observations to accompany my contribution to the RESJI analysis for the current proposal.

**Bottom line:** This proposal is very modest and will not, in and of itself, lead to an increase of affordable housing, nor will it, in and of itself, lead to drastic changes to the neighborhood character in the designated areas. If the goal is to increase the affordable housing stock or if the goal is to aggressively increase density, there are a number of other changes that would have to accompany this proposed change. Its not that significant of a change, either way it rolls. This is drawn out more when looking at it along with many of the similar proposals / actions happening around the US. The big question I think everyone is grappling with, is the "what else," which still has not been defined in specific terms, as it pertains to an actual housing strategy. The Mayor's "Housing Forward" plan is a step in that direction, however even that still falls somewhat short both in terms of defining implementation and in terms of providing any type of ontological reasoning for how we are going to scaffold all of the different ideas Housing Forward to specific goals as it pertains to addressing extreme scarcity in affordable housing in Madison.

There are no easy solutions, however one thing that should be emphasized is that the status quo (i.e. not doing anything) is definitely not going to address the housing shortage either, therefore we do need bold solutions in order to move forward. As always, I do appreciate your willingness to delve into these things. There are not easy answers, only wicked problems that ultimately are going

to require us to move forward with solutions that will inherently be less than perfect. I am always willing to support you and city staff as we move forward together.

Some general points that came up in the review of Madison's proposed changes are as follows:

- The proposal, as written, is not aggressive in any way. Meaning it will not **solve** any problems re: Affordable housing, mitigation of racial inequities, housing shortage, etc. But this also means that it isn't strong enough to warrant a lot of the critique of it either, in that this proposal alone is not at all an aggressive approach to upzoning. I.e. this is not necessarily an example of upzoning as a substitute for housing policy.
- It is a very modest proposal that, coupled with other [very deliberate/disciplined] policies and policy tools, could in fact assist in the creation of more affordable housing. But the proposal itself will not inherently lead to more affordable housing. In the same vein, if there are not very deliberate/aggressive measures taken to accelerate LMI housing development, the changes could potentially lead to an overabundance of at/above-market rate housing in the designated areas, further accelerating the peripheralization of LMI households, especially to areas that do not have as good of transit, access to employment, access to walkable green spaces, etc., that are present in many of the designated areas outlined in the proposed ordinance. However, it needs to be noted that the status quo doing this already, and at some point we will have to grapple with finding a palatable path towards increasing density in / around the central city.

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Respectfully Submitted,



Justice Castañeda

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