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To: All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Homeless shelter criteria

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Hello, sorry for the delay on this, I've been out of state, and dealing with a parent who's health has deteriorated.

I've been trying to catch up on information on the shelters criteria, also East Towne redevelopment. As for the criteria, I'm not quite sure what has been talked about, due to minutes not being posted yet. I would like to let you know my thoughts concerning this issue.

As for the shelters that were visited in the twin cities, there are multiple ones there, some addressing different issues. I saw that two visited were either located within about a half mile from downtown Minneapolis (walking distance) and the other was located close to their capitol building, and religious buildings. And neither were attached to a large interior mall. There are not any near the Mall of America.

Although, we feel that the Bell labs buildings are a great option, and out of the dangerous fighter jet noise area, the current temporary location of the shelter seems to be a perfect area in proximity to many things, and almost centrally located in Madison (As does the possible Pennsylvania Ave location). I can think of many free entertainment things to do in the downtown area, and the calmness of the lakes, and fishing. Also, it's walking distant to the shelter if someone finds themselves downtown in bad weather and doesn't understand the bus system or have the money to pay for it. Pittsburgh just started work on a similar shelter in their downtown area.

We also feel plans of attaching a one and only large shelter to a large shopping area with a mall (East Towne and West Towne Malls) is not a good idea due to many reasons. These areas are shopped by many young girls and women who are also employed by many different stores. These females can be vulnerable to those with issues of addiction, mental illnesses, and even some of those who have sexual assault charges against them. They are not committed to the shelter. They can come and go as they feel. Vulnerable, have you spoke with any young females who have been the victim of an attack? Do you actually understand the lifelong struggles that many of these victims deal with? Those working the shelter know how to de escalate a situation, but you can not expect a single female shopper to know how to do this, especially if they travelled an hour or more to spend the day shopping here. This would deter many to travel here to shop. Previously I had told the story of an older lady, who was kidnapped and murdered as she was leaving a mall near where I lived, the two young men with mental illness and drug addiction, needed a car to drive to AZ. They were caught, when they tried to steal an older lady's purse in AZ.

A commercial area is a place to spend money, if someone does not have they money to spend, what will they do? Ask others for money? Do stores want to be located in and area with those struggling to get back on track in life? I do know of a person who struggled with mental illness and all the dr appts and prescription meds could not help. Years of shoplifting, even at a neighborhood store, took its toll and this person used their meds to sadly commit suicide.. so placing individuals in a large shopping area may only hurt their well-being..

I'm also against the shelter being placed near large commercial districts because the more businesses that thrive, the more job opportunities that will be available. Small businesses located near here will get more foot traffic with shoppers too. Daily tax revenue increases, and that helps keep our already way too high home real estate taxes down. This helps with home affordability, whether it be ownership or rental.

As I quickly looked over the East Towne mall redevelopment plan, the comparison to the isthmus was quite wrong.. there are no lakes with beaches with swimming, boating, and fishing, capitol building, multiple police depts, Monona terrace convention center, performing arts buildings, large library, by large public university and their terrace, and close to alliant energy center.... This is a large commercial/shopping area that can be revitalized with great business economic common sense. Creating an inviting area for those with expendable income, will make East Towne successful.

As for criteria, we still feel multiple sites would help keep conflicts down among those using it, although you're focusing on having one site. Keeping sites close to police depts will also keep those using the shelter and surrounding area safe. Metal detectors at entry can only do so much, and many will chose not to use the shelter. Jumping into a one and only permanent site as quickly possible, seems like poor economic planning, especially when they feel/felt the center of one of the largest commercial district in Madison was perfect, and no economic impact or even psychological impact study was even done. This area was not even comparable to the twin cities sites. The city seems like they just want to be through with having to be bothered with it on their end.

Those still at Reindahl Park, most will never use a shelter, and some may actually not be permitted in one. What are their options? With 3 deaths since last year, safety is a huge issue.

What about buildings for sale near south Stoughton road? Or the one on north Stoughton, if it's still available. Vet clinic building in Monona seems like it was some space around it too.

I know that many of those experiencing homelessness are just trying to get their life back in order! But there is a part of this group that causes many problems, which certain people refuse to acknowledge. So please use common sense, not just socially, but also psychologically and economically. Please also keep all Madison businesses and residents in mind when choosing criteria for a site, not just the ones in your district or nearby. Thank you for listening!

Jill Angelo