

**From:** [Nicholas Davies](#)  
**To:** [Plan Commission Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Parking concerns w/ Capitol Lakes redevelopment (87598)  
**Date:** Sunday, May 11, 2025 12:20:58 PM

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Dear Plan Commission,

On this week's agenda is a proposed redevelopment of a 44 unit assisted living facility to what appears to be a 49 unit supportive/semi-independent apartment building (a very minor increase in housing utilization).

Yet the proposal includes 58 parking spaces. Even with this building having 3 employees, that leaves it with a parking ratio of 1.12, on a downtown property. Besides the proposed onsite parking, there is an existing garage directly across the street from the site.

A parking ratio this high would be wild for any downtown development. But even more so, for this particular site and usage.

A parking ratio  $>1$  means that every single unit is expected to come with a parking space, and a car to occupy that space, and it enables the building manager--in initial lease terms or in later updated lease terms--to bundle parking with rent of an apartment, which has these effects:

1. It biases the pool of tenants towards those with cars, because for tenants without cars, the parking space is a large unnecessary expense.
2. It incentivizes keeping a car on site to justify and make use of the bundled feature, which in turn incentivizes regular use of that stored vehicle.

Legistar at this time does not include a TDM worksheet, which would show whether parking will be initially bundled or not.

Even seniors who are otherwise independent can over time become less safe at operating heavy machinery such as automobiles. It is exactly this population who are most in need of reducing their car dependency, and downtown Madison is an ideal location for folks to make that transition. And yet the proposed parking situation sends the opposite message.

This is compounded by the site's adjacency to a fully assisted living facility. You can expect those patients to cross the garage entrance when they're walking around the block--something they should be able to do with minimal risk--and those patients may have longer crossing times, potentially a lower profile due to wheelchair use, and a higher severity of impact or falling. Combine that with the proposed increased traffic, and we're setting people up for tragedy.

If I had the applicant's contact info, I would urge them to consider turning part of that basement level into storage units for seasonal items (kayaks, Christmas trees, etc.). This kind of feature can be really valuable for someone moving out of a larger house. Having downstairs storage can help you make the most of an apartment's square footage, or even fit more housing units into each upper floor.

Thank you,

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