

Draft

Bassett Neighborhood District Monthly Meeting

7:00 p.m., 13 July 2009

Capitol Lakes Retirement Small Dining Room, 333 W. Main St.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Attending: Diane Boland, Karl Botham, Paul Brandl, Brandon Cook, Jonathan Cooper, Aaron Crandall (Monona Bay Neighborhood Assn.), Peter Cupery, Jim Eisenmann, John Hanson, David Knuti, Rosemary Lee, Matt Long, Davy Mayer, Brendan McGrath, Maureen and Jon Miner, Paula Oeler (minutes), Officer Pedro Ortega-Mendoza, Peter Ostlind (Chair), Karl Roth, Ed Simeone, Paul Soglin, Bert Stitt, Michael Waidelich, Bill White, and Steve Yoder.

1) Introductions.

2) **Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes.** June minutes were approved as written.

3) **Community Police Officer.** Pedro Ortega-Mendoza (Portega-Mendoza@cityofmadison.com and 577.5734 cell) asked to be added to the Bassett Neighborhood Listserv. Officer Ortega-Mendoza noted that there is nothing out of the ordinary to report with regard to the neighborhood. He explained that any calls received in the neighborhood are routed to the detective in charge of the Central Police Team, reviewed and forwarded to him. Of interest this month was an incident after bar time in the 500 block of West Doty. A man attempted to gain access to an apartment building by following a woman inside as she entered the building. She successfully fought off the attacker. In addition to stopping some drunk drivers and responding to noise disturbances related to house parties, the team has continued to focus on the drug activity along State Street and Franklin St. Pete Ostlind asked the status of the CNI Executive Council concern about some houses in the 500 block of West Wilson. Officer Ortega-Mendoza reported that the police did contact the landlord to deal with the tenants (as is policy) and the result was that those tenants have moved on. He noted that he is hopeful that the District Attorney's Office, which has two DAs assigned to work with the police drug unit, will begin prosecuting smaller cases more frequently. Officer Ortega-Mendoza stayed for at least a portion of the Downtown Plan segment.

4) **Madison Downtown Plan** <http://www.cityofmadison.com/neighborhoods/downtownplan/>

Pete Ostlind noted that the City has been working on a new long-term plan for the downtown for about a year and a half. As the effort becomes more and more focused, city planning staff will begin to make recommendations from comments generated both from public meetings and submitted written comments. Pete introduced Michael Waidelich from City Planning who came to tonight's meeting to give an overview of the plan to date, especially with respect to the Bassett neighborhood, and to listen to our feedback.

Michael Waidelich started with an overview of the process to date. It has been twenty years since the last plan was updated. He noted that the website dedicated to this process (see above) has all powerpoint presentations presented at public meetings, the Downtown Advisory Report, the Downtown Plan "Character Areas" pamphlet (dated 4/15/09) as well as much additional information. He also noted that the satellite office located at 125 West Mifflin St (across from the Overture Center and Central Library) would be closing in mid-August. Until then, it is staffed from 10 am to 2 pm Tuesday through Friday. Older planning presentation boards, and information generated by Design Professionals, a subgroup of Downtown Madison, Inc. (a private organization) are on display to generate ideas and comments. Comment cards are also available.

Mr. Waidelich reviewed the Character Areas using a large presentation board (the April pamphlet was also handed out). Yellow-shaded areas should be predominately residential (e.g. Bassett, Mifflin, Langdon, Mansion Hill) and brown-shaded areas would be mixed-use (e.g. Kohl Center Area, West Rail, Student High-Rise, State Street, Broom). City Planning has defined these areas in part based on input to date to allow for recommendations that generate different identities of various downtown areas. Mr. Waidelich focused on describing the transportation nodes and corridors (hatched numbered areas) that are viewed as transition areas and their planned uses are starting to drive decisions. He also presented a preliminary height map board created to get the public talking. The board shows underlying topography, but not setbacks or view corridors. There are a couple of alternative higher height options, including one for the South Hamilton character area.

Mr. Waidelich discussed in detail a board dealing with Key Connections and Linkages – transport linkages to bring people into the downtown that shows off the sense of place that has been developed over the past 30 years (e.g. a pedestrian State Street, events on the Capitol Square, Monona Terrace, Overture Center). He discussed bike paths, updated planned for intersections (Blair/Willy; John Nolen/Broom; North Shore/Proudfit) a streetcar route that could be implemented with a more flexible bus route, the rail corridor, and the lake path. Mr. Waidelich noted the while the commuter rail will go to a referendum, inter-city rail service between Milwaukee and Madison is a project that has an approved Environmental Impact Statement and is therefore “shovel-ready” should federal stimulus funding be designated for the project. The current plan is to have a stop at the Dane County Regional Airport; discussion is underway with regard to diverting a smaller number of the 10 trains (each way) a day into downtown. It is likely that trains continuing on to the Twin Cities would not divert (too time consuming). Asked about the commuter hub area near the Kohl Center, Mr. Waidelich indicated that UW creates a student market for trains and buses and the challenge will be to find a spot that can handle multi-modal and the volume. There is a concern that Memorial Union cannot have 6 buses idling at one time. The hub is envisioned in the general location of the Kohl Center as that it a major draw. He noted the Monona Terrace is hidden and not as convenient to the student market.

Two other items of note was 1) whether Washington and Wisconsin Avenues should retain their wide terraces and trees or be switched to boulevards (areas in the center) and 2) whether Bassett, Broom, and Wilson should be reverted to two-way streets. If people seem to be in favor, then the plan recommendation would be that switching from one-way to two-way should be studied. (A study for Johnson and Gorham is already part of the eastern area plans.) Two-way streets improve ease of circulating, but reduce carrying capacity (generally because of left-hand turning movements). Adding turning lanes to address capacity removes terrace/boulevard areas; these are pedestrian-friendly.

Finally, Mr. Waidelich noted that City Planning is currently reviewing comments and trying to come up with recommendations for the commission and final public hearing presentations. He noted a couple other items of non-agreement: West Mifflin Street (try to retain houses or encourage development of new loft-style buildings) and South Hamilton (again, retain houses or allow for higher-densities in taller buildings).

The following notes on this agenda item reflect discussion among those present including comment by Mr. Waidelich. ***Anyone wishing to comment is encouraged to submit written comments, including reasons why you are for/against something, to allow them to be reviewed and possibly incorporated into the next presentation/draft.*** The next upcoming meeting will likely be late summer/early fall with an anticipated draft plan by the end of the year. Again, the satellite office at 125 West Mifflin will close in mid-August. City Planning is willing to come to another Bassett meeting.

Comments:

One- or Two-Way Bassett/Broom/Wilson – Two-way may allow for parking on one or both sides. The switching, especially on Broom and Wilson, between one and two ways creates confusion. Mr. Waidelich noted that two-ways are more pedestrian friendly, but that notion was disputed by those who felt crossing a one-way street was easier and safer. Easier to ride a bike on a one-way. Bike lanes would reduce terrace space.

South Hamilton Area – Jonathan Cooper spoke about the South Hamilton Area existing and sometimes historic building stock that makes this area similar to the Bassett character area, with the exception of the Nolen Shores tower. The Bassett character area also has its outliers, like zero-lot line buildings. South Hamilton has benefitted from the Block 49 re-development, a Pasdo-McGrath project that revitalized the area. Jonathan lives near, but not in one of the Block 49 houses. There was a tremendous amount of rehabilitation of the existing housing stock that can be used as a model to restore existing housing in both Bassett and South Hamilton to retain its lower height housing character. He is in support of option A (lower height) for South Hamilton that recognizes its similarity with Bassett and takes advantage of the rehab that has been done and keeps it moving in a similar direction to the Bassett character area. He noted that the Block 49 project, which benefitted from re-developing a larger area – cleaned up the backyard parking areas – both legal and otherwise. In discussion, it was noted that the challenge would be to regulate that outcome. This issue touches on the also ongoing zoning code rewrite designed to update the zoning code and reduce the need for the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process. There is not consensus, even within the planning department, about whether the City should have fewer, more broadly defined zoning areas that provide development flexibility or more areas that are smaller and more defined to create greater predictability. Where height would be considered – within zoning or as guides within the downtown (and complementary neighborhood) plan – is a difficult decision that impacts the conundrum between predictability and flexibility as well as that between conflicting private property owner and broader community goals.

Broom Street is another identified transition zone – should it be allowed to rise to 4-stories on both sides of the street and transition in backyards or only on one side? The new owners of the office building on Broom and Wilson indicated they have no plans to increase their building's height. Surprise was noted about the 3-6 story height indicated in the Proudfit area instead of 3-4. It was noted that the previous plan to build a tall residential building may have raised that number, but 3-6 is not much higher than 3-4. Comment noted that our neighborhood plan is a guide and should be flexible enough to accommodate an additional half or one-story. Mr. Waidelich noted that Willy Street does have an incredibly detailed plan that addresses height and sun angles and other neighborhoods may want to consider updating their plans. In fact, the City wants neighborhood plans to be updated so that the plans do not conflict with the final Downtown Plan (it will supersede neighborhood plans). Flexibility may also be included in any updated plan.

Asked about preliminary engineering thoughts for road intersections, Mr. Waidelich noted that there is quite a bit of thought and drawings for Blair/Willy/Wilson and that Proudfit is shown as a roundabout on at least one drawing. Free-flow right lanes such as Park/Washington and Broom/Wilson are good for traffic capacity but do put cars, bicycles, and pedestrians into conflicts.

Support for pamphlet idea of redeveloping zero-lot line buildings.

End of discussion (allotted an hour on agenda). Again, comments to city staff welcome.

5) 115 & 117 S Bassett – Brandon Cook. Pete Ostlind introduced Brandon Cook who has been working with the Urban Design Commission (UDC) to address their concerns and requested

changes for his redevelopment plans for 115 and 117 South Bassett. Brandon noted that the UDC wants to see the backyard carriage house plans as part of the PUD request since changes to the front buildings are not substantial enough to warrant a PUD instead of zoning variance requests. He presented a new board that showed the footprints of the current and proposed buildings at 115 and 117 South Bassett. The plan removes the existing driveway next to 117, replaces the existing garage with a much larger carriage house, and detailed the backyard and bicycle parking plans. He also presented a picture of a carriage house developed at 433 West Mifflin (visible from the sidewalk) that would be similar to his plans. Currently, he is proposing a 4-unit (two two-bedroom and two three-bedroom apartments) at a height no taller than 115 and 117. Asked, he noted that buildings currently adjacent are a 4-story zero-lot line (115), a three-story yellow house (117) and along the back a one-story single family and two more three-story houses. The number of units per acre proposed is considered medium density (at four stories it would rise to medium high density). Side setbacks for the carriage house were discussed as perhaps too limited, especially for working on the building, and Brandon noted that he would likely reduce the footprint to add more greenspace to provide for more bicycling parking. Pete Ostlind noted the proposed project was at 26 bedrooms (8 existing for 117, from 6 to 8 at 115 with an additional 10 at the carriage house) and that the design guidelines call for one bike stall per bedroom. Asked about the status of the proposal, Brandon indicated that he is leaning towards incorporating the entire product into a PUD as favored by the UDC since he has time before the next deadline for submittal. Pete Ostlind noted that this effort started as a simple remodel to clean and fix up the buildings (supported by the neighborhood) but has grown into a major remodel and expansion plus a carriage house that the neighborhood would generally treat as a larger project that requires more review prior to offering neighborhood comment to the UDC. There was general agreement that the initial submittal is too different from the current proposal and more complete information should be presented to the neighborhood. Opposition to the project is not being raised, but more detailed information, including showing the relationship of adjacent buildings to the proposed project, is needed to build support. Brandon indicated that he might seek to get SIP (specific) approval of the front buildings now with only GDP (general) approval of the carriage house. He was reminded that mass and scale are part of the GDP so dimensions for the carriage house will need to be available for the GDP approval process. It was also noted that because the project includes adding additional units without adding to its limited parking that city staff usually holds firm on making it a condition of the PUD approval that residents would not be eligible for street parking permits.

(Added item) American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry – Pete Ostlind apologized for this missed agenda item. The new owners of the now former National Council of Bar Examiners building at the corner of W. Wilson and S. Broom Sts. are in attendance tonight and asked to say a few words. John Hanson, Chief Operations Officer, and Ed Simeone, Executive Director was in attendance to let us know that the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry is excited to be joining the neighborhood. It has long been a goal to establish a presence downtown. Their organization (www.aacd.com), started 25 years ago in Madison by Dr. Jack Hammer, has grown from 43 to just shy of 7,000 members. The academy focused on continuing education for general dentists in cosmetic dentistry as well as dissemination information to dentists and the general public. The academy closed on the building in mid-June, but does not yet have a move-in date. They plan to use it as office space immediately with plans for future educational space in the lower floor. Their staff of about 20 works at creating educational conferences, running an administrative credentialing program and has administrative and technical support positions. Although there have been rumors about looking to expand their parking lot, they do not see a current need. The building will also remain at its current footprint and height; they do plan to

improve the outside – clean, landscape, etc. Appeal is something they know and do as cosmetic dentists.

6) W. Wilson & S. Henry Sts – Apex Hotel Proposal – Pete Ostlind noted that Apex has been allotted 15 minutes to tell the neighborhood about its revamped and reconfigured redevelopment proposal for the corner of W. Wilson & S. Henry Sts. Apex first came to the neighborhood about a year ago, and now has ownership or options on the land they intend to redevelop. This will be the first of several discussions; tonight is only intended as a brief introduction.

In attendance for Apex: Steve Yoder, Apex Group Chairman & President (developer); Bert Stitt, Bill White and Paul Soglin (consultants), Karl Botham, Karl Roth and Matt Long (of Iconica, project contract administrator and architect). Note that Findorff has been named the general contractor and there will be an as yet unnamed development partner with a major hotel flag.

Steve Yoder gave a powerpoint presentation that started with an overview of Apex Enterprises, Inc. Founded 23 years ago by Bruce and Brian Bosben and two friends. The Bosben family has been in Madison for 150 years. Apex considers itself passionate about Madison and historic preservation. Their preference is to buy properties, rehabilitate them and keep them in their portfolio. Apex is headquartered in the Chicago Northwestern roundhouse on Commerce Ave built in 1912 and recently refurbished after a fire. Mr. Yoder shows slides of some rehabilitation projects (e.g. 422 S Baldwin, 116 E. Gorham, 106 N. Few, 1315 Jenifer). Apex owns \$100,000,000 in local property - residential and commercial, including Market Square and the Main Center. They also manage another \$300,000,000 worth in property. Besides Apex Management, there is also Apex Real Estate, Apex Maintenance Services, Apex Building and Remodeling, as well as Warren Heating and AC, McCullough Plumbing, Mark's Reddy Rooter. Apex is structured into eight operating companies, two real estate holding companies and eight real estate investment groups. Mr. Yoder stated that Apex tries to participate in the community although they have kept a low profile to date.

Project Summary — Mr. Yoder described the approximately 450,000 square foot redevelopment as a neo-traditional or livable community that will pursue LEED certification and an intermodal component allowing for a light rail platform. Because Apex was unable to acquire all the properties they wanted, the overall lot size will be smaller (about 46,000 sq ft) and the configuration will go around non-owned properties as well as now include the ShoreCrest, an affordable apartment complex. Apex has an option to purchase 139 W. Wilson, closed on the Porchlight property at 315 S. Henry and owns the other addresses (145, 147, 149, 151 W. Wilson and 309 S. Henry). The project as envisioned would be comprised of a full-service hotel (200,000 sq ft) with about 300 rooms, a fitness center, pool, conference center; an office space (90,000 sq ft) and condominium space (50,000 sq ft), two restaurants and a grocery store. Mr. Yoder said they have had discussions with several grocery stores to date. The project has been re-oriented to favor the lake with the pool and outdoor spaces facing the lake. Mr. Yoder presented drawings and noted that they are necessarily only an initial concept since the selected hotelier will have a lot of say regarding the features. It was noted by the neighborhood that the Iconica drawings presented show trees instead of the Henry St. houses that would sit in front of and beside the project.

Project Timeline — Mr. Yoder said Apex would like to get GDP approval in January 2010, SIP approval by June 2010, start site and foundation work by fall of 2010, construct in 2011-2012 and bring to market in 2013. Pete Ostlind noted that their timeline was probably too tight. The neighborhood will need to hold one or two large neighborhood meetings and set up a steering committee. The Alder will schedule the first meeting and the steering committee will be formed from that first meeting and will likely meet many times with and without Apex representatives. Bill White will sit down with Pete to review the schedule. Look for more information on this project in the future. *[Post-meeting note: A neighborhood meeting to hear about the Apex*

proposal has been scheduled for Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at 7pm at Capitol Lakes Retirement Center, 333 W. Main St.]

7) Bassett Cleanup — Pete reported that Brendan McGrath is organizing the cleanup this year. Brendan suggested that since our neighborhood turns over many residents between August 1 and 15 that perhaps we should schedule a fall cleanup and combine it with outreach efforts to our new neighbors. It was noted that having the event during home football games was a bad idea. Aaron Crandall from the Monona Bay Neighborhood Association said two of his neighbors organize a monthly cleanup of Monona Bay (every second Saturday, anyone welcome). He would be happy to see us coordinate efforts, co-sponsor, and/or promote the others efforts. Brendan and Aaron will follow up on this. Brendan will also plan around Badger and Packer football games. Look for more information at a future meeting.

8) Alder's Report – None. Alder Verveer was at a mandatory city meeting.

9) Other Items brought forth by residents — Rosemary Lee announced that Bob Holloway is encouraging CNI members to volunteer for MOVE OUT NIGHT – August 14 – when renters must move out of apartments by noon on August 14 but cannot move in until noon on August 15. ASM, a student-government organization, (<http://ASM.wisc.edu>) is spearheading an effort to provide students with a safe place to spend the night. UW Campus Police will be working with ASM and other partners to patrol campus parking lots to keep students' belongings safe. Sign up for 2-hour shifts from 10pm Friday night to 6am Saturday morning. Contact Hannah Karns (hkarns@wisc.edu) to signup.

10) Adjourn. Adjourned at 9:10pm. Next meeting second Monday, August 10, 2009 at 7pm.