

## **DISTRICT 3 ALDER UPDATE**

August 22, 2006

### Back to Budget Time

Fall for the little ones is the anticipation of back to school; fall for alders is back to budgets. If you're a news hound, you've seen that the Mayor has instructed most departments (except Police, Fire and Water) to reduce their budget requests by 3%, which means we're receiving proposals proffering working more efficiently, reducing services, consolidating services, and working with fewer staff.

The budget's first public hearing will be Tuesday, August 22, at 6:00 p.m. at the Downtown Library. While no decisions are made, it will give electeds and citizens a glimpse of what the issues will be and what people believe are priorities. On September 5, alders receive the full budget. Right now we're getting bits and pieces. Additional meetings where citizens can craft their own budget are:

- ♦ September 7, 6:30 p.m.  
"Build Your Own Budget" workshop  
Alicia Ashman Library  
733 N. High Point Road
- ♦ September 13, 6:30 p.m.  
"Build Your Own Budget" workshop  
East District Police Station  
809 S. Thompson Drive
- ♦ September 14, 7:00 p.m.  
"Build Your Own Budget" workshop  
South Madison Health and Family Center (Harambee)  
2202 South Park Street

I'd also be delighted to present the budget and hear your ideas in a smaller group at your request. Call me at 226-0987 for a meeting. When I receive the full budget, I'll start to formulate positions and let you know what I think, taking into account what people have asked for over the past year. As you might guess, several have asked for more money to be devoted to the Parks Department and Traffic Engineering, as well as to the Police Department.

### Greenway Update

On August 8, Kathy Cryan from City Engineering and I held a neighborhood meeting in the greenway that extends from Merryturn Road to the Interstate sound barrier to discuss problems with the greenway. The greenway has had trees grow in it over its lifetime, and the swale has filled in enough to compromise the ability of the greenway to hold water during deluges and send it through the stormwater system efficiently. While there was open discussion, there was disagreement about the trees in the greenway, with some neighbors preferring removal and other preservation.

The purpose of greenways is stormwater management, even though many of them have taken on park-like beauty and become available for activity. The Merryturn greenway has trees on the edges and in the middle of varying health and beauty or annoyance, depending on your viewpoint. After intense discussion, this plan emerged:

- ♦ The centerline of trees and shrubs in the drainage area will be removed. The area will be re-trenched and replanted to improve water flow. An inlet area from Portsmouth Way between two houses will also be re-created. The work is anticipated for late fall (or perhaps winter) to prevent large machinery from damaging grass.
- ♦ Some trees along the edges will be removed based on poor health, safety or immediate owner's preference. Those going are marked with a yellow circle. Six trees have question marks, and four of those are slated for removal. Removal will occur this fall, and useful wood will be stacked near Merryturn Road for a period of time for people to take for fireplaces or camping.

### Hanging Around

The re-examination of a loitering ordinance is the topic of the week. I am supportive of a re-examination to offer the police another tool as they try to stem bad behavior before it gets ingrained in either the person or the neighborhood. I think a carefully crafted ordinance that clearly defines when "hanging out" is unacceptable – such as when the corner is truly a corner drug store – in the hands of trained officers is neither racist nor ineffective. Council members in support of exploring the tool will be holding a meeting in September to air all the viewpoints. I'll send e-mail on that one, too.

### Stoughton Road Revitalization Project (SRRP)

About a year ago, neighborhood associations, Eastside alders and County supervisors formed this group to strategize ways to improve the usefulness, friendliness, safety and appearance of Stoughton Road. It's perfect timing, since the road is in the study phases for traffic improvements by WisDOT.

Our first goal is to raise enough money to commission a planning study that will guide the long-term redevelopment of the roadway. This study will collect the desires of stakeholders (users, businesses, nearby residents) and present ideas to accomplish the wishes and desires, as well as attach a price tag. Implementation is v-e-r-y long term and allows for the natural life cycle of the area's development to take place. It doesn't mean businesses or people have to move or make immediate changes. It does mean that we'll have some standards, along with the City's zoning ordinances and Comprehensive Plan, to guide the uses, look and function of the road.

With the receipt of City and County grants as well as business donations, we are almost at our goal of \$80,000 to \$100,000 and ready to send an RFP to local planners. This is a first for the Eastside and will result in a participative process that lets all of us guide the changes for this important gateway to the city. If you'd like to attend a meeting of the SRRP or have a presentation, please call me. I love to talk about this project!

### Committee on Adult Entertainment

Since our area was noted as a possible home for adult entertainment stores if a change were to be made to a zoning ordinance, I volunteered to be on the study committee under the auspices of the Plan Commission. We haven't met yet – I guess there are field trips first – and I'll be sending periodic updates when we get going. I have heard from many of you that you'd prefer no zoning changes, and I don't see a compelling need, either.

### Eyes, Ears and Solutions

I'd like to reinforce the importance of neighbors being eyes and ears throughout the district. I appreciate your observations! In the past month, neighbors have called me to report budding "For Sale" car lots on public streets, naughty dog walkers, Pinney Library's crumbling parking lot and scofflaw trash dumpers. We've been able to "redirect" the offenders to solve the problems, making them better neighbors

besides. One critical role of the alder is to take these day-to-day complaints and help solve them. Whether you want to check on the legality of something, report a violation yourself, or have me make the call, feel free to call or e-mail me, and we can take care of it.

#### Important Meeting Dates

- ♦ **Thursday, August 24**  
**Well 29 Water Meeting**  
District 3 residents served by Well 29, which is offline now due to high manganese levels, are those who live generally north of Milwaukee St. You have received an invitation from the Water Utility about the meeting and I encourage you to attend to learn the history of this well and what the options are going forward for safe water.
  
- ♦ **Tuesday, August 29, 6:00 p.m.**  
**Madison Metropolitan School District – Common Council meeting on growth in the school system.**  
**Room 260, Madison Municipal Building (215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard)**  
While the City and School District are two separate entities, we ought to be working in concert on behalf of citizens in Madison. There is no specific topic to be addressed at this meeting, but I'll be going because I believe we have a lot to share in District 3.
  
- ♦ **Wednesday, August 30, 6:00 p.m.**  
**Loitering Law Proposal Public Community Meeting**  
**Community Room, Villager Mall (S. Park Street)**  
This is a chance for everyone to share concerns and ideas about how this concept would be beneficial or not to control crime in Madison.
  
- ♦ **Thursday, August 31, 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**  
**East District Police Station Open House**  
**809 S. Thompson Drive (Cottage Grove Road and S. Thompson Drive)**  
Tours and refreshments
  
- ♦ **Wednesday, September 13, 6:30 p.m.**  
**"Build Your Own Budget" Workshop**  
**East District Police Station, 809 S. Thompson Drive**