

June 2008

Dear Neighbors:

I hope this note finds everyone getting geared up for summer. School lets out on Friday and it is hard to believe that our daughter is about to finish kindergarten! There a couple of 'hot' issues I know many people are interested in and many, many announcements...so here goes....

Monroe Regent Hotel: This [project](#) has been exhaustively covered in the news media and there is a good bit of history here, but I wanted to explain directly to District 13 residents why I am approaching this with such a high degree of caution.

At last week's City Council I succeeded in making motion to have a draft of the deed restriction returned to the Plan Commission for a final review to ensure that it reflected the elements of the project that has been publicly promised, i.e., a quiet boutique hotel that I agree would be a good addition to the area.

Unfortunately, the developer and his team have worked hard to portray me as an anti-development obstructionist. I am not much for media spin, but want to let constituents know that this developer has a substantial and publicly documented history of non-compliance with Madison's building code and zoning regulations that are cause for great concern.

Suffice to say, I would not be going through all this if I did not feel that it was absolutely necessary to make sure that what the developer has repeatedly promised is what actually occurs. All that said, it is my hope that we can hammer-out the exact language of the deed restriction that will allow the project to move forward as the quiet, boutique hotel that the developer has represented.

Metro Route 13: I worked closely earlier this month with County Supervisor Shelia Stubbs, Bay Creek resident T.J. Mertz, and Alder Brian Solomon to preserve funding for this route, which will be [adjusted slightly](#) beginning in August (see Option 2). Fortunately, service to the pool, South Transfer Point, and Huber Center will be preserved. I also want to thank the Town of Madison, County Board Chair Scott McDonnell, County Executive Kathleen Falk, and Supervisor Kyle Richmond for their support of this very important South Madison bus route.

Penn Park: There are many South Madison neighbors who are working hard on safety at Penn Park and Captain Jim Wheeler of the Madison Police Department has let me know that they are increasing patrols in the area.

Obviously, violence in and a around a park is a huge concern for all of us, but I have been extremely thankful to all the participants in the Partners for Penn Park group that has been working hard and refuse to let bad behavior by a small group of people define the neighborhood and the park.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of former Alder Isadore Knox in establishing the **South Madison Peace Partners**, a group of community members working to promote peaceful relationships in South Madison. Volunteers represent area churches, neighborhood associations, community organizations and neighbors working in collaboration with the Madison Police Department to promote a safe and violence-free community. I hope people will call the Nehemiah Business Service Center, 608-467-1100 to learn more about this important community-based organization. Please leave your name, address, and a phone number!!

A BIG THANK YOU to the **Evjue Foundation** for their support of South Madison Peace Partners. Isadore and I were at our wits end trying to find money to buy t-shirts and radios for the volunteers. I had a very quick phone conversation with Dave Zwiefel from the foundation (and *Cap Times*) and the next day we had their commitment for start-up for the group. Thank you, thank you!!

I also hope that people will plan to attend **The Nineteenth Annual Juneteenth Day Celebration**, which is the one of the summer's signature events in the park. The celebration will be held on **Saturday, June 14, 2008 from 10am to 6pm** in Penn Park and is sponsored by Kujichagulia – Madison Center for Self Determination Inc. The celebration promotes empowerment and self-actualization for our children, young adults and families through exposing them to visual, spoken, and dramatized information and other mediums that showcase the vast contributions of black people in America.

Truman Olson Army Reserve Center: I have heard from many neighbors on the [proposed reuse](#) (click on any of attachments for additional information) of the Truman Olson Army Reserve Center (the building just south of Copp's) and want to thank those who took the time to attend the large public meeting that I hosted in March. There will be a public hearing on this important project at regular meeting of the Community Development Commission (CDA) on **Thursday, July 10th at 4:30 pm**. The meeting will be held at the East Madison Community Center, 8 Straubel Court. I have heard a wide range of opinions from people on all sides of the issue and this meeting is an excellent opportunity for neighbors to voice their thoughts. Those not able to attend should feel free to email me directly. I have been collecting comments from constituents and will to present them at that meeting to members of CDA.

Wingra Creek Clean-Up: Sponsored by Friends of Lake Wingra, Mad City Paddlers, and Strand Associates is scheduled for **Saturday, June 14 between 9:00 am and noon**. Volunteers are asked to meet at the pedestrian bridge on Plaenert Drive. The organizers will supply trash bags and drinks and volunteers are asked to bring gloves and canoes or kayaks, (if available). Please contact David Liebl, Friends of Lake Wingra, (608) 265-2360, liebl@epd.engr.wisc.edu for more information.

Workforce Housing: Many people know that I have been working on a [workforce housing](#) effort with an initial focus on the Greenbush and Vilas neighborhoods. I am thrilled that the two associations were awarded a city grant to beginning planning a pilot project. Briefly stated, workforce housing is a movement to encourage people to live closer to their workplaces.

With a great deal of effort by Gary Brown from UW, we completed a [survey](#) of employees of UW, UW Hospital, Meriter, and St. Mary's that indicates that there are a good number of people interested in living closer to work. I have also been acutely aware of the changing student housing rental market where many are opting to move out of single-family rentals in favor of downtown high-rises. While students will also have a place in our neighborhoods, we need to plan for a very different rental housing market and I hope workforce housing is the best mechanism to do that.

The grant effort was led by (Vilas neighbor and Meriter employee) Melissa Huggins, with great support from Greenbush neighbors Amy Rountree, Laura Gutknecht, and former alder Andy Heidt.

Meeting on State-Owned Heating and Cooling Plants in Madison: I know many neighbors are very interested in the future of the Charter Street Heating Plant, Walnut Street Heating Plant, Capitol Heat & Power Plant, and the West Campus Cogeneration Facility. The Department of the Administration is holding a town hall meeting detailing the progress of a study of these facilities on **Tuesday, June 17 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.** in the room 1106 of Mechanical Engineering Building at the University of Wisconsin-Madison at 1513 University Ave (use the Engineering Drive entrance).

The meeting is designed to inform the public of the study's progress and offer a chance for individuals to provide feedback on a draft of a comprehensive feasibility study that examines how to meet state government's downtown heating and cooling needs.

The session, sponsored by the state Department of Administration and UW-Madison, will allow citizens a chance to learn more about alternative ways for the state to heat and cool the state Capitol, state agency buildings and the UW-Madison campus. The study is being conducted as part of an agreement reached last November between the Department of Administration, the University of Wisconsin and the Sierra Club to complete a feasibility study on the Charter Street Heating Plant and other power plants in Madison.

Questions regarding the meeting should be directed to the Department of Administration at (608) 266-1855 or UW-Madison at (608) 262-9406.

Monona Bay Clean-Up: As part of [Take A Stake in the Lakes](#), the Friends of Monona Bay monthly shoreline cleanup will be held on **Saturday, June 21, 2008, from 9:00 – Noon** . They will be working at three sites: Bernie's Beach (Gilson and S. Shore Drive); Brittingham Park Shelter (W. Washington and Park Street); and Brittingham Beach House (Proudfit and W. Brittingham Place). Please stop by and support these neighbors who have been wonderful stewards of Monona Bay and the adjacent park.

A picnic celebration will follow at the Brittingham Park Shelter. ALL are welcome, even if you didn't get a chance to help during the cleanup! I went last year and can confirm that the picnic goodies were excellent!!

Goodman Pool: [The Goodman Pool](#) is excited to co-op with the McFarland Spartan Sharks to offer a swim team the pool. This competitive swim team is open to the youth of Madison, 6 years and older, who have had previous swim lessons and are comfortable swimming at least two lengths of the pool.

The team aspires to create an environment where the swimmers enjoy the experience of competitive swimming through improvement of their strokes and racing techniques, improved personal race times, appreciation of team friendships and team spirit. Questions on registration should be directed to: Bonnie Griswold at 608-261-9172

Recycling: The City of Madison has a new recycling program. Madison residents can now bring many previously unrecyclable plastic items to the Madison's two full service drop off sites for recycling. These items, called mixed rigid plastics include: empty garbage cans, toys, buckets, milk/soda crates, laundry baskets, lawn furniture, landscape trays, plastic totes and drums, drums, pet carriers, pallets, coolers, plastic shelving and closet organizers, dish drainers, flower pots, traffic signs, and 5-gallon water bottles

The drop-off locations that will accept the rigid plastic for recycling are: East 4602 Sycamore Ave and West 1501 W. Badger Road. The sites are currently open seven days a week from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. They are also open on Tuesday and Thursday evenings until 8 p.m. These hours will remain in effect through Sunday December 2nd. It is important for residents to remove all metal axles, handles, and wires from plastic items before bringing them in for recycling and batteries should also be removed from any plastic toys. There are some plastic items that cannot be recycled in this program including; PVC pipe/tubing, vinyl siding, plastic film (grocery bags & stretch film), Styrofoam, water hoses, hazardous materials, medical waste, chemical and petroleum barrels, and pesticide/herbicide containers

Complete information on program is on the [Streets Division's web site](#) and residents with questions can contact the recycling office at 267-2626.

Required Reading: I have not had as much time to read as I would like, but have started reading the *Bin Ladens: an Arabian Family in the American Century* by Steve Coll and *the Man who Loved China: A Fantastic Story of the Eccentric Scientist Who Unlocked the Mysteries of the Middle Kingdom* by Simon Winchester. I am about half-way through both and really enjoying them. I am also thrilled that our daughter is starting to read independently and we are excited about the library's [summer reading program](#).

Favorite District 13 People and Places

As the school year winds down, I want to tell you about a real superhero at Franklin School: **Christy Russ**, my daughter's kindergarten teacher. She is amazing!! I have been volunteering once a week in the classroom throughout the year and to see her balance the needs and abilities of 16 different little kids has been incredible. We feel very fortunate to have had her for Clare's teacher this year.

One of my favorite Madison restaurants is located in the district: **El Pastor Mexican Restaurant** at 2010 South Park Street. I eat here at least once a week and can say that the staff could not be nicer and the pork tacos are a big favorite!

Another great District 13 place is [Indie Coffee](#) at 1225 Regent Street. Owned by J.J. Kilmer, this tiny space has a great vibe, terrific coffee and sandwiches, and yummy waffles. Their website is definitely worth checking out!!!

Finally, I can't discuss coffee in the district without a plug for **Cargo Coffee** at 1309 South Park (across from Copp's). An alder's job often requires vast amounts of coffee and I can say unequivocally that Cargo's Atomic Blend is the best in town. As an extra bonus, Cargo is owned Lindsey Lee (three cheers!) who is often in the store roasting coffee.

I hope people find this information helpful, but please email me if you would like to be removed from the distribution list. Take care and enjoy the summer!!

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