

March 2008

Dear Neighbors:

I am hoping this note finds everyone semi thawed out. Suffice to say it has been a long and very busy winter for the City Council. Although I am hoping winter is over, I want to share a few updates in response to neighbor's snow-related concerns as well discuss other important city news.

Potholes

The Mayor's Office and Streets Department have announced a stepped-up program to fix potholes with the goal of getting each one patched the next day after a report is received. They are also working on preventative steps to repair the streets. I hope people will report potholes and here is a link to the city's website with all the contact information: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/potholepatrol/> as well as handy information about potholes and other road maintenance efforts.

Reports can also be made by calling the Streets Department, West District at 266-4681. I too am glad to follow-up on any street condition reports that I receive.

The Mayor, Streets Department, and City Council are also taking a hard look at the city's response to this season's record snowfall. I hope this review will help us incorporate any lessons from this year into our future response.

Truman Olson Army Reserve Center

I am hosting an important meeting on [Wednesday, March 26th at 6:00 pm at the Labor Temple, 1602 South Park Street](#) to discuss the future of the Truman Olson Army Reserve Center located on Park Street just south of Copp's.

The Defense Department plans to close the facility. In accordance with the Army's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) procedures, two schools and two homeless service providers have expressed an interest in owning all or part of the site. The City of Madison's Community Development Authority is the local agency working with the Army to determine the future use for the site.

We will hear from city planning officials as well as presentations by the schools and homeless service providers. This site is very important to the future of Park Street and I am hoping people will attend the meeting to learn more and share their opinions.

As always, people should feel free to contact me with questions or comments.

Meriter Hospital Master Plan

I am hosting a public meeting on Meriter Hospital's draft 10-year master plan on [April 2nd at 5:00 pm at the Neighborhood House, 29 South Mills Street](#). Meriter has been working on a plan to guide their future development. We had the first neighborhood meeting in November at the Brittingham Apartments. People interested in reviewing the plan before the April meeting should go to www.meriter.com/future

Obviously, the hospital is an important part of our city so I hope people will take the time to attend the meeting and share their thoughts.

Economic Development Plan

I am hoping that some resident economic development gurus will be able to go to one of the three upcoming review sessions of the city's Strategic Economic Development Implementation Plan on **Tuesday, March 25th at the Overture Center.** There are three sessions that day: 8:30-11:00 am, 1:00-3:00 pm, and 6:30-9:00 pm.

A draft of the plan is available on-line at www.cityofmadison.com/business/obr. I am very interested in hearing any thoughts people have on the plan.

Sidewalk Shoveling

Way back in December, the City Council voted to change the sidewalk snow removal ordinance. Previously, we had to shovel our sidewalks no later than 12:00 noon the day after the snow stopped falling. The City Council revised the policy (I voted in favor) to require shoveling by noon the day after the snow has accumulated regardless of whether or not it is still snowing.

Snow Shoveling Violations

I did hear from many folks this winter quite upset about receiving sidewalk snow removal violation notices and want to let people know how to appeal a ticket if you believe it was given in error.

The first step is to call George Hank, the city's chief building inspector at 266-4551. If he does not find grounds to dismiss the ticket, people can still appeal by attending their court hearing on the date and time in the upper left-hand corner of the city-issued ticket.

Of course, I definitely want to hear from neighbors who feel they have received a ticket in error and have followed up on many of those calls throughout the winter; however, I do not have the ability to dismiss the violation.

Other News and Required Reading

I have been appointed to the City's Zoning Code Rewrite Advisory Committee (as known as the "Official Watching Paint Dry Committee"). It will be a ton of work, but I am glad to be involved in something that is so important to the future of our city and neighborhoods.

Finally, I have been extremely busy preparing for the start of the baseball season by reading *Feeding the Monster: How Money, Smarts, and Nerve Took a Team to the Top* by Seth Mnookin. It is an in-depth and well-researched story about the rebuilding of my beloved Boston Red Sox.

If I were a smarter politician, I would not mention the Red Sox here as I am sure get several emails from people across the district saying "Wow, we voted for you and really *liked* you until we found out you are a Red Sox fan...."

Sorry folks, just can't help myself...I am also working on scheduling a trip to Boston this summer to visit Fenway Park with my family!

Enjoy the Spring...we earned it!!!

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