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November 13, 2013

City of Madison Planning Commission  
Madison Municipal Building  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Suite LL 100  
Madison, WI 53703

RE: Iota Court – Houden – Cliff Dweller Balcony Subject

Dear Plan Commissioner:

I am the alumni advisor to the Chi Psi Fraternity (the "Lodge") at 150 Iota Court immediately to the east of the Cliff Dweller Apartments. As you can see from the attached photo taken from the Lodge, the Cliff Dweller Apartments are already very close, if not the closest, building to the Lake Mendota shore anywhere with the possible exception of the Edgewater Hotel. As you know, there is a Lakefront Setback Ordinance that basically requires an average of the five properties to either side of the subject to be the official setback line. This ordinance has been, in the words of former Alder Tim Breuer, "sacred." The question is, is it?

The justification offered is that reestablishing the new 4 ft. deep balconies in place of the ones that are being eliminated within the building envelope, will justify a higher rent. That is the only question and therefore frames the basis for your decision. Is financial advantage to an owner sufficient to permit an exception to the Lakefront Setback Ordinance?

My purpose in writing to you on this subject is my interest in preserving the natural, leafy lakefront that rings Lake Mendota and that, somehow miraculously, has been preserved. There is no particular hardship here and if others can build as close as Cliff Dweller and disregard the Lakefront Setback Ordinance, we will very soon see a much different and much less beautiful Lake Mendota lakefront.

Sincerely,

Mohs, MacDonald, Widder, Paradise & Van Note

Frederic E. Mohs

FEM: eeh

Enclosure

Cc: Mr. Tim Parks



