

Good evening everyone. My name is Nick Noggle and my family and I live in Prairie Creek Ridge. I want to thank you all for the opportunity for us to come together and discuss these community issues as a community, and the chance for me to share my thoughts on the matter at hand. While I am here to express opposition to the rezoning and development at the SW corner of P and K, referenced as the NE Apartments, I am not here to present arguments. To me, the reasons one would oppose are irrelevant, and chose to focus on the opposition itself. I would like to start with an origination story for my family and end with an insight and the results of a petition I have organized centered on Prairie Creek Ridge.

I grew up on the north side of Milwaukee. I spent a handful of years living in the Boston, MA area, as well as the Phoenix, AZ area. My wife is from the suburbs of Chicago and has lived in Charleston, SC and the Phoenix area as well, where we met and were married. Thus, we have both spent the majority of our lives living in densely populated, urban areas.

The original plan for our lives together was to live in Arizona, in a home we had bought together and loved, and where we were both very comfortable in our jobs. However, the expected arrival of our firstborn brought us to a singular difficult decision; where the best place to raise a family would be. We ultimately decided on the Midwest for several reasons, including the values and community we grew up with.

Now let me assure you there are plenty of nice locations within an hour of either side of the Wisconsin/Illinois border we looked at and could have chosen for our family, but we chose Oconomowoc for key additional reasons. Growing up, I had probably driven through the area on I94 hundreds of times, and having friends and family from Lake Country, it always seemed like a mystical place to me; an oasis nestled between Milwaukee and Madison. In our research what struck us most was the proximity to everything one could need for modern living, with the small town feel neither of us grew up with. My wife Jenna, being a teacher who is currently full time in the Oconomowoc Area School District, was impressed by the schools, and of course the low crime rates were of utmost importance to our family. So in 2021 we moved to Eastlake Village in Pabst Farms.

We stayed in Pabst Farms for less than a year. The area is great, but was and has continue to become more developed than we were looking for just. So in 2022 we moved to Prairie Creek Ridge, where we reside now. While we may not have the deepest roots in Oconomowoc, I felt the need to get involved with the opposition to this housing proposal because of my experiences in large cities, and Pabst Farms, as well as my commitment to this community, our community.

This proposal has been a whirlwind; from the builders' presentation, to the Common Council resolution passing the 60/35/5 rule, the Planning Committee recommendation the following evening, and this hearing, all within the span of less than a month. The Common Council resolution stopped the development – for now. However, if the land is re-zoned, it will inevitably be developed, and the resultant multi-unit housing will be permanent. This may not happen within the next few years, but most likely within the next, whether this is completed as planned, or the land sold off to another developer.

The definitions in the zoning code question struck me, which I will share now.

- Section 17.104 Residential Districts states that a Multi-Unit (High) Residential “...is generally applied near heavily traveled roadways and adjacent to commercial districts.” While
- Section 17.105 Non-Residential and Other Districts states that General Commercial is “...to provide for shopping, service and office facilities adjacent to heavily traveled roadways... intended to meet the

convenience shopping and service needs of City residents and attract people from surrounding communities.”

A few similarities there, but from my perspective, and many of those I spoke with directly, commercial would be preferable. It is an opportunity to serve this developing area, and create a destination for the surrounding community. This property is in itself the commercial district, and there is no existing commercial district to support the proposed multi-unit housing project.

Finally, I would like to present the findings of an informal petition I started online. I took the approach of posing an objective question without attempting to sway one way or the other; we all know what the arguments for and against the housing are, as this is not a new debate. To me the core question was the most valuable; do you oppose the project? The intent of this project is to make money – that is just business, and it wouldn't have been proposed if there was no profit to be made. The question is at what cost does this project come? Some things, like a small-town feel, just cannot be quantified.

That being said, this was in informal, online-only petition. It was posted in two Facebook PCR groups exclusively, but this does not mean that it was not shared outside the immediate community. In an attempt to verify residents of PCR (and the first district) I requested that an address be added to comments, but it was not required. Several people in fact added their own comments, which will be shared along with the petition I have with me. We also acknowledge that a petition of this type does not reach full community penetration as a door-to-door effort would, for those not in the Facebook group, or those unwilling to share their information to sign electronically. That being said, if it is of interest to the Council, we have volunteers ready to go door-to-door gathering signatures.

The phrasing of the question was as follows;

Do you oppose the rezoning of the property located at the Southwest corner of County P and K in Oconomowoc from General Commercial to Multi Unit (High) Residential? This is being proposed in advance of a high density (currently 200 unit) rental housing project at this property.

Your signature shows your opposition to the rezoning and, therefore, opposition to the proposed future high density housing. Please add your address to the comments section for tracking purposes. This petition will be presented to the Common Council during a public hearing on 20 February 2024, in Council Chambers on the second floor of City Hall, 174 E Wisconsin Ave at 7:30PM. You are encouraged to attend to in person.

In a ten day span we collected 158 signatures, again with nothing more than two posts in our community groups. This represents but a sampling of the community, per the limitations mentioned previously, but shows unequivocally that there is opposition to be heard in addition to those speaking tonight. And in the end we don't need a majority of residents of district one to oppose this project; just enough to let our representatives know that we do oppose the project, which is why we are all here.

One final note, as I reviewed the agenda for tonight's meeting, I couldn't help but notice the multitude of rezoning items. While I am but one voice for one project in one district, I am confident that all proposals will be thoroughly reviewed by this board before any decisions, which will forever alter the direction of the city, will be passed.

Thank you again for your time.