

2020 RES-232

FUNDS TO SUPPORT OCCUPY MADISON'S TINY HOUSE PROJECT TO ADDRESS NEEDS OF UNSHELTERED PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Dane County has prioritized provision of safe sheltering options and services to people experiencing homelessness in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A [FAQ](#) issued by the CDC on September 16, 2020, states: "Because many people who are homeless are older adults or [have underlying medical conditions](#) they may also be at increased risk for severe illness than the general population. Health departments and healthcare facilities should be aware that people who are homeless are a particularly vulnerable group." Currently, there are an estimated 200 individuals and 12 families without shelter and living outside or in places not meant for human habitation in Dane County. Many report being reluctant to go to congregate shelters due to fear of an outbreak of COVID 19.

Occupy Madison, Inc. (OM) has a plan to provide temporary shelter in 25 - 30 "tinier homes" to address the unmet need for people experiencing literal homelessness and not accessing shelter. The long term plan is to provide opportunities for long term tiny house residency.

The tinier houses are 6 x 14 and will be set up to have electric heaters. At approximately \$1500 per home, the cost to construct 25-30 tinier houses for this winter is \$37,500-\$45,000. Residents residing in the temporary "tinier" houses will need to agree to OM's community agreement and participate in the governance and maintenance of the community.

OM has an accepted offer to purchase the property at 1901 Aberg Ave to locate these "tinier" homes by the end of the year and to develop a permanent tiny house village over the next 12 - 18 months. The offer is contingent on OM's ability to secure funding for the purchase.

The property is conveniently located near the Dane County Job Center and the Madison Metro North Transfer Point. The existing building, formerly Wiggie's Bar, includes commercial kitchen elements and building renovations would add showers, laundry and a non-commercial kitchen for use by residents. There is also outside electrical work that needs to be completed. The estimated cost of the purchase and renovations is \$375,000. OM is working with the City of Madison to secure the necessary land use approvals.

Residents living at the village who want to make village living a long term housing option will work with OM to build tiny houses. OM will raise funds to finish landscaping and build 12-18 homes. Residents living at the village will determine the additional interior uses (e.g., coffee shop, bakery, retail store, etc.) of the building to make money to fund the village.

For residents pursuing longer term houses, OM will follow the process used at the current village at 304 N 3rd Street. Anyone who wants to participate is welcome, provided they agree with OM's [mission and vision](#), are [voted into membership](#), put in their sweat equity hours, [apply](#) and are accepted, agree to live in OM's cooperative community, and follow the rules of their [contract](#), the [conduct rules](#) and [shop rules](#). OM's successful village at 3rd Street opened to residents in early 2015. OM Village includes five tiny homes, a woodworking shop, greenhouse, raised bed gardens, and a store.

52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71

As the “tinier” homes are replaced with larger permanent tiny homes, Occupy Madison will find a property or other nonprofits and churches to host the “tinier homes” no longer in use at 1901 Aberg Ave.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Dane County supports OM’s vision to help address the unmet need in Dane County for safe shelters for persons experiencing literal homelessness and living outside or in places not meant for human habitation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Dane County amends its 2020 capital budget to allocate \$450,000 to Occupy Madison, Inc. for the purchase and renovation of 1901 Aberg Ave and for the construction of tinier homes to provide safe shelter to persons experiencing homelessness this winter and to operate a tiny house village in future years.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that Dane County is authorized to enter into a 99 year lease with OM which will include the following: \$1 annual rent; an OM option to purchase during the term of the lease for \$450,000; the requirement that OM continue to operate the property as a tiny house village; and OM’s right to early termination of the lease in the event permanent land use approval is not secured.