

From: [JACK K PHILLIPS](#)
To: [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)
Subject: OPPOSE eviction and SUPPORT alternatives
Date: Monday, July 12, 2021 4:31:16 PM

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Hello,

I'm Jack Phillips, a graduate student at UW Madison and a representative on the Associated Students of Madison. I've been following the Reindahl story closely, and I'd like to voice my opposition to the eviction of the park's residents. Madison has a severe lack of infrastructure to aid unhoused community members- there's no program for establishing permanent housing despite continuous construction of luxury condos in the city, a resolution to acquire a more suitable building for a men's shelter was shot down by one vote the same week that the residents of Reindahl Park learned that their temporary permission for camping was rescinded, that same men's shelter was the site of human rights violations by Madison Police Department earlier this year, including the preventable near-death of a man who collapsed because law enforcement would not allow him access to his inhaler, and soon, the eviction moratorium will be lifted, making houselessness a pressing issue that must be addressed immediately and with compassion. Alder Halverson led the charge against a new men's shelter, and now leads charge against campers who've found some semblance of stability. His proposal for a ten-tiny-home village is a good start, but it offers neither the capacity that the men's shelter expansion would have brought nor the stability of a housing-first policy. I am writing you today to implore you to act with grace and compassion for the most vulnerable members of our community, and to break the cycle of abuse and exploitation that leads people to criminality. To that end, I ask that:

You OPPOSE agenda item 2, the resolution to evict the residents of Reindahl Park, who collectively have no other options for housing in Madison or Dane County- remember that our shelters are continuously at capacity.

You SUPPORT agenda item 3, the first-step measure of the Housing People initiative, which seeks to locate a site for ten tiny homes plus basic utilities. Remember that this measure does not offer an immediate alternative to camping at Reindahl, and that even once implemented this measure would house only a fraction of Madison's unhoused population. Additionally, the resolution for this initiative explicitly calls for it to be temporary housing, and Madison and Dane County do not currently have housing-first initiatives to find participants a permanent solution.

While I agree that the encampment at Reindahl Park doesn't provide the kind of stability that you and I enjoy, it is simply the best option for many of our unhoused neighbors in a city that's decided to invest more in police to harm houseless people than beneficial programs to help them. If you do decide to subject them to eviction, then I recommend you go down to the park, look each resident in their eyes, and inform each resident that you are personally responsible for the violence which Madison Police Department will enact on them. Thank you.

-Jack

Mx. Jack K. Phillips

They/Them

Graduate School Representative, Associated Students of Madison Student Council

Graduate Student, Biomedical Engineering

University of Wisconsin-Madison

From: [Joan D.](#)
To: [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)
Subject: I remain vehemently opposed to Ald. Halverson's proposed resolution #66239 to evict the homeless from Reindahl Park
Date: Monday, July 12, 2021 3:16:33 PM

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It is a heartless thing to do.

Joan Downs
Madison, WI

From: [Steve Verburg](#)
To: [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)
Cc: [Currie, Jael](#)
Subject: oppose eviction of Reindahl campers
Date: Monday, July 12, 2021 12:17:40 PM

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Members of the City-County Homelessness Issues Committee:

I'm writing to urge you to reject action item #2 on your agenda tonight.

Shuffling our houseless brothers and sisters from place to place needlessly disrupts their lives and traumatizes them.

This latest proposal appears to fit well with our community's ongoing practice in which those who benefit from the existing social and economic systems do their best to remove from their view the damage caused by those systems.

The ongoing growth of wealth and income inequality in the U.S. is well-documented. If we want to continue the systems that produce inequality we should at least be willing to look at the damage it does to people's lives. Looking at and acknowledging these costs could be a step toward reducing the harm being done by the system that benefits some but not others.

As an alternative to agenda item #2, I suggest recommending that the Common Council and County Board emerge from quarantine and conduct their meetings in Reindahl Park until a serious dialog with the neediest among us results in policies that address the needs of those most at risk as a result of the social and economic systems. These systems have delivered growing wealth and privilege to a class of people who have ready access to city and county officials for the purposes of influencing policy.

Rather than hiding the homeless, let's put them front and center. Let's give them access to our government bodies so that they can help inform local government decision-making that can create policies that benefit all of us.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Steve Verburg
Wendy Ln
Madison, Wisconsin
608-212-9726

From: [Bob](#)
To: [City County Homeless Issues Committee](#)
Subject: homeless
Date: Monday, July 12, 2021 7:50:15 PM

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Ending the encampment at Reindahl park:

It is time to end the encampment at Reindahl park. It violates state, county, and City of Madison laws or ordinances prohibiting encampment activities in public parks. Currently campers' tents are springing up in many other areas of the park which impact residents' ability to enjoy the intended use of the park. Our parks ought to be safe for our residents to use, especially in this case where many low-income and marginally challenged residents of various ethnic origins live. Is it right to deprive Madison residents of the Greater Sandburg neighborhood, whose residents are challenged with crossing East Washington Ave or Stoughton Road for activities, the opportunity to enjoy the full use of Reindahl park by allowing illegal free camping?

Are all campers out there homeless due to circumstances outside of their control? I think not based on the testimony given at an earlier city meeting by a person arriving from out of town, stopping at the park, and receiving a tent and sleeping bag to join the encampment.

Reindahl park does not seem to be a location equipped to accomplish helping homeless people recover and move forward.

There are reports that some campers are soiling the area with disrespectful hygiene practices, and disrespectfully taking advantage of the community gardens by going in and helping themselves.

The homeless people of our communities, who through no fault of their own have become homeless, deserve our respectful help and services to move back into homed status, where they can participate in helping Madison and Dane County become welcoming and vibrant communities.

Efforts have been made to find other park locations, but why is it necessary to occupy a well-used city park? Google Earth shows that there could be facilities to park campers in the First Street city lot near the current temporary men's homeless shelter. Adjacent to the surface parking, there are also grassy lands for tents. The city could also erect large tent tops in unused portions of the surface lot to provide exposure relief from sun and rain.

Facilities in the men's shelter could be used for respectful hygiene purposes and other homeless service providers would be closer for those seeking help.

To be most effective, we must focus our limited resources on the homeless people who want help to improve their lives.

Here are some of my thoughts.

We cannot help homeless people if they do not want to improve their living situation.

We cannot help homeless people unless we know who they are.

We cannot help homeless people unless we know what help they need.

We need an organized plan to provide that help.

Letting homeless people just wander around and find a place to sleep does not help improve their lives.

The plan we need to adopt must have requirements.

All homeless people who desire to function in our society and achieve homed living must agree to the following:

1. Register with the city or county with name, previous address or community, reason for being homeless, what type of help needed if known, and agree to participate with the services

provided to help homeless people.

2. After registering, they can be given identification documentation that also lists the service providers they need to work with and the resources the community provides.
3. Agree to contact and work with the suggested service providers to make progress and find suitable living locations.

Something of this nature will provide the community with measurable data about the services provided and the progress made.

Without a plan that also includes future acceptable safe camping options, we will not effectively end the homeless crisis.

Bob Schaefer



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