

# Occupy Madison Inc proposal for 2046 E. Johnson St.

## Miscellaneous FAQs

The board of Occupy Madison Inc has submitted the following answers to community questions. The answers are, however, work in progress and may change as we get additional community feedback and as we find out more information. Additionally, the village will be a cooperative and the rules are primarily developed by the members of that cooperative living on the site and will be adjusted over time. To benefit from all of the information linked in this document, please visit <http://occupymadisoninc.com/om-village-2046-e-johnson-st/faqs/how-will-the-property-be-managed/> and submit additional questions there or email to [occupymadisoninc.com](mailto:occupymadisoninc.com).

### PROCESS

#### **Can there be a thorough discussion on the 4 similar projects with feedback (direct) from neighbors and law enforcement?**

Are you talking about Portland OR, Eugene, OR, Olympia Washington and Austin, TX? Are you talking about neighbors and law enforcement from those cities? Sorry, we are just confused by the intent of the question. If you are asking if we can do a powerpoint presentation on our trip and have a discussion with police and neighbors, the answer is yes. We are finishing the powerpoint presentation and research.

#### **Why did you come to the neighborhood so late, after the offer to purchase? Everything is already decided?**

Everything is far from decided. We notified the neighborhood and alder informally after we looked at the property and decided it was feasible. We formally notified them once it appeared we would have standing to make an application for a conditional use – after talking with staff and understanding their preference for a planned development, we re-notified the neighborhood and alder as required by ordinance. The project is currently being designed by our architect and early neighborhood input has resulted in dramatic changes to the [site plan](#). We have submitted preliminary plans for an informational session with the Urban Design Commission (required by ordinance) and we will submit full plans on 19th. At that point, the city process begins, staff and committees will review our proposal and further modifications will be made. We notified the neighborhood and alder as soon as we could. We have learned from the past not to invest time and money into a project until we have an accepted offer to purchase on the property so that neighbors or others do not try to buy the property so we cannot pursue the project. We had to put the offer in to secure legal rights the property.

#### **Why don't you have detailed and complete answers to our questions?**

See above. It is work in progress, with help from the early neighborhood input we have received. We will continue to address questions as they come in and/or when we have new or additional information.

#### **How will more discussion about this process happen?**

- Neighborhood Association meetings Feb 5th and March 5th.
- Aldermanic meetings, to be scheduled one for February (17th) and one for March (?).
- Small meeting with immediate neighbors to be set up by Alder Palm (2/20)

- Urban Design Commission – Informational presentation Feb. 5th, full presentation April 23rd.
- Plan Commission Meeting – April 28th
- Common Council meeting – May 6th.
- We attempted to meet with the police department, but they refused to look at the details of our proposal and are opposed on principle. We have met with the fire department, got information from city engineering and are working on meetings with others. We are amenable to forming a neighborhood steering committee to address additional concerns or creating an advisory committee for ongoing input.

**What will you do to address the needs of the immediate neighbors?**

See [Management and Accountability FAQs](#)

**Where is their business plan? Plan for long term sustainability?**

Non-profits typically don't have business plans in the traditional business sense – they have strategic planning and missions and visions, budgets and on-going board meetings to set policies. The vision for OM Village or OM Campus has been in the works for over a year. We are in the process of implementing that vision. The plan for long term sustainability is continued fundraising, grant writing and selling OM Goods and eventually maybe even some of the Tiny Houses.

**Why are you defensive and talk down to the neighbors?**

It's hard not to be defensive when we heard the hurtful things said about our members and friends, however we will try harder not to be. We apologize if anyone feels we talked down to them or hurt anyone's feelings in any way. We remain committed to continuing the community discussions and addressing the needs of the neighbors and community. We look forward to the continued discussions that will improve our property. Please, remember when you make comments in public meetings, some of the people you comment about are in the audience.

**PROPERTY VALUES**

**How will this impact my property values?**

We intend to upcycle the property from what it is now with its current conditions. This should be an improvement to the neighborhood. Due to the unique character of our project, it is difficult to find a study of property values that correlates to our project. There are no definitive conclusions that can be drawn that this project will have a negative or positive impact on surrounding property values.

**How will this impact the sale of my house?**

See above. As we heard at the neighborhood meeting, for some it may have a positive impact, for others it may have a negative impact, but overall it is difficult to say conclusively, one way or the other.

**Is there a way for several realtors to address the property value concern?**

We would be happy to ask some realtors to provide their opinion if the community can agree on the realtors we should ask. We would like to ensure that we do not have undue influence over their opinion.

### **Will my homeowners insurance go up?**

There is no evidence to suggest that your insurance will go up. In fact, if it does go up based on discrimination, there could be a basis for a discrimination law suit.

### **NOT THE RIGHT SOLUTION TO HOMELESSNESS**

#### **People need real housing, why are you working on this solution to homelessness?**

It is one of many solutions and it is one of the more immediate solutions available. “Real housing” is incredibly difficult to obtain, and the longer you are without housing, the harder it gets. In this current market, this is not a realistic option.

#### **Why doesn't OM accept social services?**

We accept Social Services. We took the Mayor up on his offer to find 16 people housing. Nothing happened. People filled out the forms from the Department of Human Services, nothing happened. Simple reality is, those services don't really exist. Social workers and case managers can't perform miracles in this rental market with a 2% vacancy rate. Unless people are on SSI many programs struggle to find people housing because the affordable housing agencies need income to support the project. Increasingly families (90 days) and single women (60 days) are using their maximum number of days in shelter, have gotten case management services and remain without housing, or emergency shelter. Men have 60 days in shelter, but no case management services offered at the shelters. Others may not use shelters because of being a couple, having a dog, fear of violence, mental health issues that make crowds and confined/locked spaces difficult, stealing, bed bugs, getting sick from others around them, working non-traditional hours etc. We will seek grants and ask Shine 608 (“Sarah and Z!”) to provide services requested by residents.

#### **This does not get to the root of homelessness – the City is developing 40 – 60 apartments – why isn't this sufficient?**

It will help 10% of those in need, we would need to do that 9 more times to accommodate the need and the project won't be done for another 2 years. There are currently 450 chronically homeless men, 95 women and 60 families. We don't have enough housing to accommodate that population.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **Will this create living wage jobs?**

Not necessarily on its face, but we are interested in forming [OM Works](#), which would be our own day labor program. We also are planning on having a food cart run by the residents of the site, they would be paid a living wage. Any employees we might have in the future would be paid at least a City of Madison living wage.

#### **Why should they support supply side economics proposal?**

Other options aren't currently working. We need multiple solutions to address this problem.

#### **Unhealthy food choices available at PDQ. Will there be access to adequate food?**

People can walk or bike to Copps. We will have raised bed gardens to grow food on site and possibly chickens and bees.

**Why was this reported as not starting up for 1 – 2 years?**

We believe this comment is in reference to the city proposal for affordable housing for single adults, not our proposal.

**What happens if there is a tornado? Where will people go?**

We are working on a solution to that. Good question!

**Why keep the Occupy Name?**

Simple, that is how we all know each other, without the Occupy movement we would not exist. Furthermore, even if we abandoned the name, it would look like we were trying to cover up who we are. We have learned a lot from our experiences and we believe that makes our project stronger.