

Occupy Madison Inc proposal for 2046 E. Johnson St.

Management and Accountability 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.

DAILY LOGISTICS/MANAGING THE SITE

How will noise on the site be handled (manufacturing and people)?

Quiet hours will be 10pm to 8am for the residents. After 8pm, excessively loud noises from the shop will cease and garage doors will remain shut. If there are issues, please contact the person on site that is security for the evening.

Who will clean up additional garbage in the neighborhood?

We don't anticipate any additional trash in the neighborhood due to this development since we will have trash facilities on site. However, we understand that high school students and bus riders currently create trash in the neighborhood and we would be happy to help with that issue. Daily resident neighborhood ambassadors/security will patrol the surrounding area and pick up any trash. We will also make ample trash and recycling containers available on our property, including for public use.

How will trash be handled on the site?

Initially we will use trash and recycling cans supplied by the City of Madison and we will follow all their [rules about refuse](#). We will also provide trash cans for public use. As the village grows from 3 to 11 homes, we will provide dumpsters to be stored in an enclosed fenced area.

Additionally current [rules](#) include:

The area around your Tiny House or the trailer is your responsibility. You are expected to keep it clean and trash-free. If you smoke, properly dispose of your butts. Please help recycle. Clean up after your pets immediately.

and

Steward(s) of the Tiny House agree to abide by Occupy Madison, Inc. rules about waste, garbage, compost from the compost toilet, and sanitation.

How many cars will you have and where will they park? How much additional traffic will be on the site?

We have two parking spaces available on the site ([preliminary site plan](#)) and we will explore the possibility of additional spaces. We anticipate that most people volunteering and living on site will ride bikes, ride the bus or walk as their preferred mode of transportation. Parking spaces will be for visitors to the site.

What power will be available? How will power get to the houses?

Currently working on the site plan and construction details. Initially there may not be electricity to the individual houses and they will use the solar and propane as power sources installed because we thought

they would be parked on the street or at a church or non-profit initially. As we raise money, we will install electric for each of the “camp sites” as would be available in a campground.

Will people not living there be allowed to use the showers and restrooms?

While there is a current extreme need for restrooms and showers for people living on the street, this property cannot meet those needs and will be used exclusively by residents and volunteers of the site. Limited and infrequent overnight guests of the residents as well as visitors to the retail store will also be allowed access to the restroom facilities.

How will compost from the toilets be handled? Will there be odors coming from the site? Will this cause more commercial traffic to the site?

See [Environmental and Flooding FAQ](#) No, there will not be odors coming from the site due to composting toilets. The composting toilets will not be “composted” on the site beyond what is stored in the toilets, we will either have them emptied via a service or at an RV waste disposal site. Commercial traffic, if any, would be quarterly or as needed.

What security will be provided for the lot?

When fully occupied, during the hours of noon to 10 pm there will be one or two people assigned to ambassador duty and they will be in charge of: sweeps of the neighborhood for garbage and unwanted behavior, donation delivery, retail shop hours, tour and visitor questions, security and other duties as needed. From 10pm to noon, the site will be secured and a pair of people will be on-call for any disturbances on the site. The living portion of the property will be secured after 10pm.

Will there be hypodermic needles on the site?

[Sharps containers](#) will be installed in each of the restrooms so diabetics or those using IV catheters may dispose of their medical waste appropriately and we will properly dispose of them as needed.

Who has insurance and who will be liable for issues that occur on the site?

Occupy Madison Inc has insurance and will obtain insurance for the site that also covers the houses.

What screening will be provided so we don't have to look at the site?

We are working on the design of a decorative fence and landscaping that will allow for privacy of the people living on the site and screening for the neighbors. Simultaneously we want to make sure the fence provides security but is not a fortress, we intend for the property to be inviting and welcoming. From the neighborhood planning meeting we attended on 1/23/14 it was clear that more public art in the neighborhood is desired. We plan to incorporate public art in our screening/fence landscape. See more information [here](#).

Who cleans the bathrooms and kitchens, removes trash, does the groundskeeping?

This is a cooperative living situation and the people residing at the site will be responsible for various duties as determined by the group. If there are issues, the [Board of Directors](#) will address them and ensure the site is kept clean.

How will violence on the site be handled?

Violence on the site will not be tolerated. [Current rules](#) in place include:

- If you are disruptive, disorderly, excessively loud, or participate in fighting, you will be held accountable. Conflict is normal. Violence, abusive language or anti-social behavior will not be tolerated, particularly on church property or in the surrounding neighborhood.
- Stewards of Tiny Houses agree to treat each other and other residents and guests in a courteous manner.

- Occupy Madison strives to be an anti-oppressive community. We have no space for racism, ageism, sexism, homophobia, discrimination on the basis of gender identity or physical disability, or hatred in general. We expect all participants to work to create this environment.
- Brandishing of objects that can be used as weapons will not be tolerated. Firearms are prohibited.
- Stewards agree not to be verbally or physically abusive to anyone and instead work to express feelings and deal with disagreements constructively
- Violence in your Tiny house, in the trailer, or anywhere in the vicinity of the shop, church property, or the surrounding neighborhood will not be tolerated.

Will there be panhandling?

No.

Where will food be prepared/where are the kitchen facilities?

Currently food preparation would be in the tiny houses that have electricity and can have electric appliances. We are exploring the possibility of including communal space within the workshop building as well. This would be in Phase 2 of the project once we have more than 3 houses and do the work to provide additional restrooms.

Will alcohol be banned from the site?

No. We currently have four areas of agreement on the alcohol policy and it will be further developed as more residents are added to the site.

- We have strict zero tolerance policy in the work shop – no one under the influence of alcohol can be in the shop at any time.
- No one under the influence of alcohol can be in the building if the shop is open.
- There will be no alcohol allowed outside of the residential area.
- Alcohol shall not be outside of the houses during quiet hours.

How transitional will this be for people, will there be different people there every night? Will people stay for weeks, months?

The site will only be for people building a tiny house or who have built a tiny house. In order to have been considered for a tiny house the person would have had to volunteer 32 hours and will have to work hundreds of hours before getting a house, so they will be longer term (months or years) residents of the site (unless their home is moved to a church or nonprofit property), not short term (days or weeks).

How will the cooperative process work?

Members of the site will be living in a typical housing cooperative with weekly meetings, chores that rotate and a self governance structure. Disputes will be resolved or [appeals](#) heard by the [board of directors](#) if necessary.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Who is responsible if anything goes wrong? Who do we hold accountable? Who oversees and manages the property?

People living on the site are responsible for their own behavior. [Occupy Madison, Inc.](#), a not-for-profit corporation governed by a membership that elects a [board of directors](#) registered with the State of Wisconsin and seeking non-profit status from the IRS. Our current fiscal agent is [Center for Community Stewardship](#). The board is ultimately responsible for the management of the site.

What if there is vandalism in the neighborhood?

We would expect residents of the site to report it. Whomever did it should be held accountable through

the normal tools available to the community. If anyone from our site is responsible they will be additionally subject to consequences agreed upon by the group.

What happens if the group runs out of money? What if OM folds? Where is all the funding coming from? What if it dries up? Is this sustainable in the long run? Where does money for management of the site come from?

If the group runs out of money, the property will be sold and the non-profit would likely donate its assets, if any, to another nonprofit to carry on with our mission. Money currently comes from donations and we will be applying for grants as well. All non-profits face this dilemma which has become more difficult in the most recent economy, but largely, the community rallies behind the good projects and they are successful. Non-profits don't make sense from a traditional business model, but instead of relying on customers buying our widgets, we rely on donors believing and wanting to invest in our work.

What kind of oversight will the neighborhood have once the project goes in?

The group intends to be active in the neighborhood association, invites members of the community to become members of the Occupy Madison, Inc. (no dues) and even run for our board and would consider a neighborhood advisory board if neighbors are interested and would attend. Additionally, we would be subject to all approved zoning conditions in the plan.

ADDITIONAL HOUSES THAT DON'T FIT ON THE LOT

What happens with houses that don't fit on the lot?

It should be understood that we only have one completed house. One partially completed house and we expect to have a 3rd potentially completed by the time we would move on to the property. It would be approximately 1.5 – 2 years before we were able to produce the ~~11~~ 9 houses that could potentially be on the lot. At that time, we will either have to find non-profits or churches to agree to host them, buy new property or (worst case scenario) park them in the street and move them every 24 – 48 hours.

Can you park them on the street? What are the restrictions to that?

Yes. Normal parking restrictions apply, including moving the houses every 48 hours and following alternate parking rules in the winter.

OWNERSHIP/OCCUPANCY & EQUITY

Who owns the units? – Will OM or the people own the tiny houses?

Occupy Madison retains ownership of the structures for insurance purposes and to enforce rules, but the occupants are stewards of the houses and have use rights in perpetuity and can modify them to their liking within reasonable limits as long as they follow the [written agreements](#).

Will they fall under the City of Madison and WI Statute for renters?

No. They won't be paying rent for living there, therefore they are not tenants.

How do new occupants earn equity?

Volunteering with the organization. 32 hours is minimal to apply to get a home. People who work more hours get higher placement on the list. Hundreds of hours of sweat equity are required to get a home.

As the number of houses increases, will the high degree of investment/ownership continue?

Yes. This is a cooperative living arrangement and full participation is required.