

**From:** Brittney Neidhardt [mailto:scarlet\_bd@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 10, 2008 4:27 PM  
**To:** Schiller, Lynn  
**Subject:** From a concerned citizen

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Brittney Neidhardt. I am a graduate student at the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare at UWM and a member of the National Association of Social Workers. I am writing to you today in the hope that you will support File Number 071292, Rosedale zoning change on Monday February 11, 2008.

Support of this zoning change is an important first step toward improving the lives of hundreds of people living with severe mental health diagnoses in and around this city. I have worked with this population for years now and was very excited last year to hear that the city and county would be working to solve the issue of the overwhelming poverty and homelessness suffered by so many people living with a devastating illness.

Like so many in my field, I am frustrated with the "Not in my backyard" philosophy of many community members. I understand that a lack of understanding and education about mental illness can lead to this opinion, but this philosophy will not change unless we make some changes. We will continue to stagnate in our collective goal of providing affordable housing to this population if we do not begin to move forward by example.

Those who oppose the re-zoning of the land located on the East Side of South 6th Street and North and South of West Rosedale Ave. also fight for an important cause. Environment preservation is also a passion of mine, but I fail to understand the argument they put forth when several compromises have been offered that appear (to me) to have met their major objections.

As a social work intern at a psychiatric inpatient hospital I see the devastating effect of homelessness every day. When it is -30 degrees outside and the only choice I have for an individual who is about to be discharged (into the cold with no place to go) is to hand he/she a list of homeless shelters and say "good luck" I feel I have failed. We need to begin moving forward in this community; we need to give people without a voice more than just "good luck".

Sincerely,

Brittney Neidhardt