

21 June 2011

Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee  
809 N. Broadway  
Milwaukee, WI 53202-3617



RE: Columbia Hospital

Dear Board Members:

Murray Hill Neighborhood Association represents residents living adjacent to the University of Milwaukee-Wisconsin and will be directly affected by many actions of the University, including changes being made at the newly acquired Northwest Quadrant, the former site of Columbia Hospital. MHNA is opposed to the proposed change from Detailed Planned Development zoning to Institutional because it will eliminate meaningful City tax-payer representation regarding the property. We believe that any decision moving forward should be postponed until such time as UWM can develop a meaningful plan to address the student related issues that face our community.

There is a profound concern about the quality of life and the future of our community. Many families and other long-term residents feel that noise, broken bottles, trash and vandalism no longer make this a suitable place to live and raise children. It is behavior that has contributed to a serious decline in the quality of life in our community and has prompted some to move to other locations. The situation places an undue stress on city services and adversely affects the quality of life of both residents and serious students alike.

Murray Hill has the highest incidence of these problems throughout the year and although UWM provides welcome additional funding for Milwaukee Police in the spring and fall, this contribution does not adequately compensate for the level of services needed to deal with disruptive behavior in peak periods, let alone at other times of the year.

Statistics from the Spring 2011 police Contract I Initiative illustrate the problem. In the eight weeks from April 1 through May 21, there were a total of 452 noise and underage drinking citations reported. There were 240 or 69% of the citations issued to students in the neighborhoods surrounding UWM. The Murray Hill neighborhood is where the vast majority of these offences occur (295). Most disturbances go unreported and the number of citations represents only a small fraction of actual disturbances in the neighborhood. It should also be noted that inclement weather substantially dampens disruptive behavior and this spring's Contract Initiative period took place during unusually cold and rainy conditions.

Criminal elements are attracted to our community to prey on students who are impaired by alcohol. Lack of action by the University puts its own students at risk. Meanwhile, Milwaukee taxpayers are forced to subsidize the policing of misconduct from members of an institution that lacks effective policies for addressing misconduct. In times of severe

budget constraints and reduction in municipal services, the need for city police officers to deal with student-related issues detracts from their ability to respond to other problems.

Neighborhoods surrounding UWM have gained an unwelcome reputation as a place where the partying/**drinking-to-excess** lifestyle is accepted as normal. Until this reputation is reversed, neighborhood conditions will continue to decline. UWM must become an institution with a reputation for serious study and no tolerance for misconduct. Changing its reputation would serve the long-term interests of both neighborhood residents and the University itself.

The University must better collaborate with neighborhood representatives and city agencies to develop effective strategies to address these issues. It seems that many in the student population have come to believe that misconduct is a normal rite of passage into adulthood. To date the University's response to student misconduct can be best characterized as "educational". Implementation of Chapter 17 has not been effective. University representatives have made statements at neighborhood gatherings that suggest an attitude of semi-acceptance of the situation, or at least a belief that a more serious response to misconduct is prevented by Chapter 17 shortcomings ("serious AND repeated" instead of "serious OR repeated") and privacy-related restrictions in the FIRPA law.

We believe these restrictions have been over-stated. FIRPA specifically permits schools to disclose personally identifiable information "regarding the student's violation of any Federal, State, or local law, or of any rule or policy of the institution, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance. The school may non-consensually disclose information under this exception if the school determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to that use or possession and the student is under 21 years of age at the time of the disclosure to the parent."<sup>1</sup> FIRPA also explicitly allows schools to notify parents of students younger than 21 years of age when the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to use or possession of alcohol or controlled substances or has received a legal citation, whether issued by university, municipal, or other policing authorities.

**We believe strategies that should be utilized to address these issues includes the following:**

UWM and the MPD will report citations that have been issued to UMW students to neighborhood organizations for assessment.

UWM must revise its disciplinary policy so as to hold students appropriately accountable for off campus misconduct. A student intervention program must be created to advise all students of the consequences for misconduct whether on or off campus. Consequences must be clearly articulated by UWM students must face tangible and serious consequences for misconduct.

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<sup>1</sup> FERPA General Guidance for Students.

<http://www2.ed.gov/print/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.html>

Parents must be notified following the first alcohol or drug-related offense committed by a student younger than 21 years of age.

Misconduct needs to be tracked throughout a student's entire career at UWM. Repeated citations must be met with consequences that are scaled to the number of incidents of community misconduct whether on or off campus. While a first occurrence should result in a warning and a meeting with the Dean of Students, a second event must result in a suspension of at least one week. A third offense must result in expulsion from the university.

An appeals process should be available provided it includes permanent resident representation. Neighborhood victims of misconduct must be represented during the appeals process.

UWM must increase funding to proportionately cover the cost of Milwaukee Police services required to manage UWM student behavior.

In order to clarify community expectations regarding off-campus misconduct, orientation programs must include permanent members from neighborhoods adjacent to UWM. Orientation should also include participation from MPD as a measure of the seriousness with which neighborhood misconduct is taken.

Sincerely,

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cc via email:

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Michael Lovell, UWM Chancellor  
Michael Laliberte, Vice Chancellor Student Affairs  
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Heather N. Harbach, Neighborhood Relations Liaison  
Robin Van Harpen, Director, Office of Legal Affairs  
Michael Marzion, Police Chief UWM  
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State Representative Jon Richards  
State Senator Chris Larson  
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