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Sent: Thursday, May 15, 2025 8:32 AM

To: planadmin <planadmin@milwaukee.gov>

Subject: File No. 241871 Referral to CPC - Community Garden Testimony

Hello,

I currently reside at 829 North Cass Street in Milwaukee. The west side of the apartment building faces the large parking lot referenced in file no. 241871 that was referred to the City Plan Commission for hearing on Monday, May 19, 2025. I would like to provide testimony to encourage the lots on 711 East Kilbourn and 822 North Van Buren being turned into community garden beds.

1. A large parking lot and an empty lot being converted into garden beds would aid in beautification. Our city is very beautiful, and it is clear we value green spaces, parks, gardens, etc. When I return home to Chicago – while Chicago has many beautiful, large parks – there are nowhere near the same amount or frequency of green spaces as Milwaukee. In Milwaukee, you can throw a stone a mile away and come across a beautiful park or green space. You throw a stone a mile in Chicago, and it ends up hitting a rat. If we have opportunities to make our beautiful city even more beautiful, why not attempt to do so?
2. Downtown Milwaukee has numerous parking garages, both public and private, as well as street parking (which the city may benefit from with pay-to-park and tickets). Though I am not certain and could be wrong, I believe the current parking lot is owned by a company, not the state or the city, and therefore a private entity may currently benefit more than the city and its citizens. While it is my opinion, I think as a society and culture, we should attempt to de-center cars and perhaps make our city less friendly to parking huge, giant, ugly cars everywhere. Milwaukee is a city where you can bike, walk, or take the bus to get anywhere you need to go. I have lived here for 5 years and have never owned a car.
3. As a resident who would live close to the garden beds, I would participate in gardening. While New Land Enterprises intends to program and maintain the garden beds, I would be more than happy to purchase or rent a plot for my own gardening. I have been interested in growing my own veggies for quite some time now, but it is difficult to do so in an apartment and often can incur up-front investment costs that I am not capable of funding at this time.
 - a. Furthermore, the Cathedral Center to the west of the parking lot across the street on Van Buren could also use the garden beds for their work, as they provide food and shelter. The Cathedral Center could grow their own fruits and vegetables and use them to feed the less fortunate in our community, either through cooking themselves or providing raw fruits and vegetables to individuals who maybe have not had fresh produce in some time.
 - b. In addition, the parking lot gets an ample amount of sun, most certainly in good weather, because of its location. An area that faces west is a wonderful place to

grow things; the plants will receive a lot of sun and become very happy. The plants become happy, they grow, and then they can feed us, our neighbors, our friends, and our fellow citizens.

I fully support the conversion of the above-mentioned spaces into a garden space. I have no background or involvement in city planning, but I believe this is something that would benefit Milwaukeeans who live on the lower east side/downtown and the people who come to visit our city in the nicer months.

Thank you for your time, the notification of this project, and providing me with an opportunity to state my opinions.

Sincerely,
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