

Harlow & Hem: Comments for Design Review Board, December 5th, 2024

Bicycle Racks



This apartment complex will help with the overall pedestrian feeling of Wauwatosa by bringing more people to the Village that will work, play, and live right there. This apartment, along with others that are in the works or have been built already are strong steps to contribute to the "placemaking" that has been going on in the Village over the last decade and beyond. There are a few aspects of this specific design for Harlow & Hem I would like to raise to the design teams attention.

Brief background is that I am a "car-light" household. Meaning, we have one car, and I am the one that predominantly gets around by foot, bicycle, and MCTS bus.

Because of these non-automotive transportation habits, I aim to provide input on this design using that perspective. Firstly, I would like to provide some comments based around bicycle transportation that motivate some of the comments I will be making. Humans are the best indicator species of the health of a place. People spending time al fresco in front of a restaurant, cafe, or bar shows a lively human element to a space. I would argue that a second best indicator of the vibrancy of a place is a bicycle. It is a human powered means of transportation that integrates well into the urban fabric, especially within the Village. Encouraging bicycle transportation within the Village has many benefits to the area, the specifics of which are not directly relevant for my comments. I would argue that not only is the general increase in bicycle transportation important, but so is the visibility of those bicycles. I base this off my extensive experience with travel to Copenhagen for work. While replicating

Copenhagen is not necessarily the goal, adopting certain elements I believe should be. One thing that can be observe in Copenhagen is the visible prevalence of bicycle parking infrastructure. The Village already has some of this with their stylized "staple" or inverted-U shaped bike racks that can be seen throughout the area. I believe that the Harlow & Hem development should also implement more publicly visible bike racks. The above image with red indicator arrows show potential locations of these bike racks.

As mentioned previously, an inverted-U shaped rack is the best rack format available, and should be considered the only standard to be implemented in any new development. The reason for this is because the rack format allows for multiple points to secure the frame and rear tire to the rack, and can have two bikes per rack. A video to demonstrate this proper locking can be found here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rn3vUCdxX6o>.

The locations indicated are on the sidewalk, which is a public right of way and would require the city to approve the installation of these racks. A similar format can be seen around the corner in front of Anodyne coffee. Those style of racks are great for locking up a bike securely. However, the installation in front of Harlow&Hem would be even better since there is no car parking along the side of Wauwatosa Ave.

Another benefit of these locations along Wauwatosa Ave is increased visibility of the bikes. This is beneficial because these locations have more "eyes on the street", to borrow a quote from Jane Jacobs. This means these bikes are safer because there is more "traffic" to see anything happen. This also means that any bikes parked at these rack locations can play a role as that indicator of vibrancy.



Next, a comment of the *Mural View - Blanchard St.*(Above image) The bike parking here is certainly nice in the amount of space dedicated for the parking. However, the rendering's choice of bike rack is concerning. This is a wheel held rack, which in a pace like Copenhagen where is is common to have rear wheel frame locks, this would be fine. But in the US, we do not commonly have these types of locks. So, I would suggest to the design team that they consider "staple" racks in this location. Racks that are identical to other installed in the Village is great for both function and overall aesthetic consistency in the Village. If other designs are considered, Madrax

is a Wisconsin based manufacturer of these racks, and anything similar to the styles below is excellent:



[Pedestrians](#)

There are a few aspects of the design I have some questions and concerns about related to pedestrians and the like. In the purple circle in the *Ariel View- 2024* on page 53 (Below Image), the public parking entrance/exit intersects with the sidewalk. Based on the rendering, I am slightly concerned about the sight lines that drivers will have to see pedestrians. Could it be considered to add a slightly raised crosswalk at this intersection to ensure that those drivers entering and exiting the parking

structure are traveling at a slow enough speed that they are able to properly react to any pedestrians around them? There are examples of this raised crosswalk implemented along the newly redesign stretch of North Ave. from Mayfair Rd. to Met-o-wee Ln.



Another remark is related to the *intersection View - Wauwatosa Ave & Blanchard St* and *Mural View - Blanchard St* on pages 54 and 57 respectively. Each of these images displays people sitting on a bench, and based off the renderings, these benches look to be below a balcony. This seems like a precarious location for someone to site depending on what goes on on the balcony above. Planters could leak water onto someone, or a residents pet could relieve themselves on an unfortunate individual seeking reprieve. I hope these concerns are merely due to misunderstanding of the difference in depth because of digital rendering not displaying that depth properly, but in case this is indeed true, I hope the design team provides some mitigation for these locations.



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The last comment would be related to *Intersection View - Wauwatosa Ave & Blanchard St* on page 54. The wall with the building name on it, highlighted in green box, is a little bland compared to the retaining wall segment further West where there are small, terraced garden boxes. Incorporating something like that for this Eastern segment of wall would enhance the pedestrian experience and provide some continuity between these two segments at the pedestrian level.



Intersection View - Wauwatosa Ave & Blanchard St