

To Whom it May Concern,

On September 21st, 2018 I received a notice in the mail for a proposed transitional house in my neighborhood. This property is 3120 Farnam St, and the proposal is file number 18-1255. In the proposal, the VA would turn a single family residential home into a CARF transitional facility for veterans suffering from addictions, anger management, PTSD, and homelessness. While the cause is very noble, there are several red flags that arise to myself and others in my neighborhood.

Safety is the first and foremost concern that I have about this potential facility. Consider the type of neighborhood this would go into. It is 100% residential, with several children from birth to 18. We are lucky to be raising two small children at home, ages 7 and 4. To say that I am concerned for their safety with that sort of demographic less than 200 feet from my front door would be an understatement. I am downright scared. I have seen firsthand the damages of addiction and behavior disorder. I know that it doesn't necessarily come from some back alley. I watched it take my own parents from beloved members of their community into a downward spiral. I have seen and experienced the violence that can occur. I have worked very hard to protect my children from this type of negative influence, and now it could be staring me in the face.

While looking through the proposal, I found that the facility would house up to ten residents at a time, for up to a year at a time. The facility would employ one staff member to oversee all ten residents. Basically, they plan on cramming eleven people into a single family home, albeit a large home, into a seven bedroom/four bathroom space. Several residents, who are already working through their own very personal battles, will have to share very close quarters with one another. There is a very real potential for tensions to get high with an already sensitive population. This means that there is less than adequate staffing for the residents, as well as the afflictions that they face and the altercations that would inevitably occur.

In addition to restricted quarters inside the home, the proposal estimated that there would be 4-5 off street parking spaces for the veterans, with additional parking at the VA satellite facility on State Rd. This is certainly unreasonable, as the VA facility on State Rd is nearly a mile walk. We all have lived through a Wisconsin winter, no one is walking a mile after parking their car in order to get home. So the reasonable conclusion is that we are looking at ten vehicles parked streetside in an area with limited streetside parking. It would also increase the traffic to our neighborhood as well.

Our neighborhood is classified as an R-1 residential zoned neighborhood. That means that the homes must be single family, with other restrictions met. When looking at the proposal, they do not intend to change the zoning district, but are outside the parameters of La Crosse zoning laws (Sec. 115-142. - **R-1** Single Family Residence District Regulations.) The facility would also have significant adverse impacts on the livability in the neighborhood. Per article VI in the zoning laws, any exception to the law must not pose a threat to the safety, or basic quality of life in the surrounding area. Given the concerns provided above, as well as the outcry from our immediate community, I would say that this proposal has already negatively impacted the quality of our lives.

In addition to the issues noted above, our neighborhood would be looking at a potential tax increase. If passed, the 3120 Farnam home would be owned by the federal government and tax exempt. This would translate to higher property taxes to those around it in order to recover those funds. Take into account that studies have shown that property values can drop as much as 17% near substance abuse treatment facilities\*, and we are looking at a huge financial disadvantage for our largest investments that we have.

In conclusion, this facility proposal has really turned the Bluffside neighborhood upside down. We are more than a neighborhood, but a community. We have growing families and members enjoying retirement. We care deeply about the safety and well-being of one another. This facility would jeopardize the community that we all cherish so much. I am opposed to the proposal to convert the residence on 3120 Farnam St into a transitional housing that would negatively impact our neighborhood greatly.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Brandon and Amanda Meyer  
1320 31st St S  
La Crosse, WI 54601

\*[http://www.josre.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/9830-63\\_92.pdf](http://www.josre.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/9830-63_92.pdf)