



# Middleton Hills After 10 Years Lessons Learned

Dane County Planning Forum: September 16, 2005

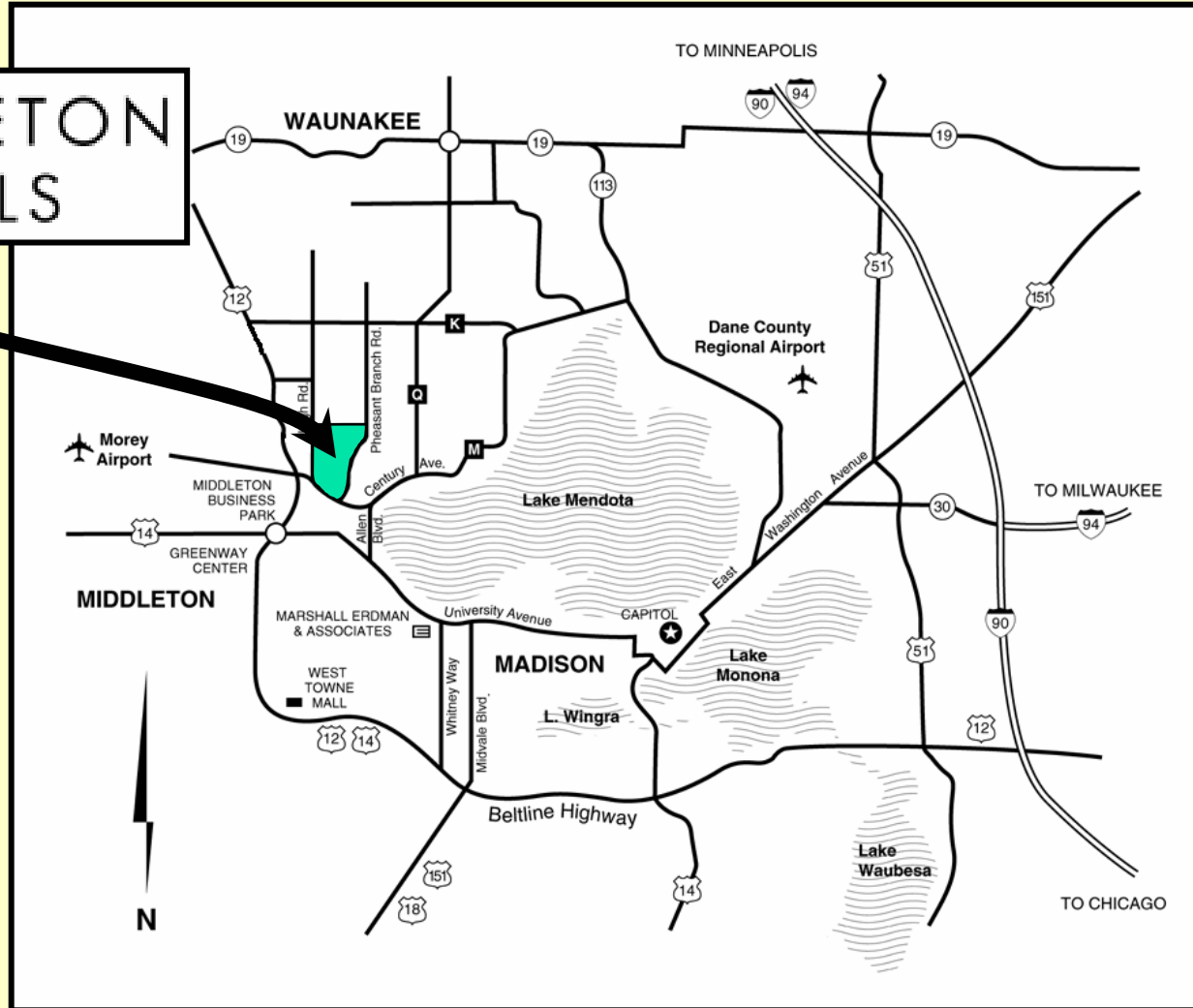


Eileen Kelley and Mark Opitz  
City of Middleton Planning Department

Paul Brunsell and Jane Grabowski-Miller  
Middleton Hills, Inc.

# Project location (160 acre site)

MIDDLETON  
HILLS



map courtesy of Marshall Erdman & Assoc.

# Initial planning: 1993-1995



Middleton Alderperson: "I will oppose the project until road widths are widened, commercial/business areas are removed, and all safety issues such as fire protection are resolved."

# Key Features of Middleton Hills TND Plan

- 500 households, varying lot sizes, a range of housing options
- Mix of land uses; commercial sites available in first phase
- Pedestrian scale; people-oriented building design
- Local architectural style (Prairie, Craftsman, Bungalow)



# Key Features of TND Plan (cont.)

- Street grid & alley system
- Prime natural areas and vistas reserved as public space
- Civic sites, uses in four locations
- Structured Neighborhood Code (Regulating Plan, and Urban, Architectural & Landscape Regulations)



# Initial issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



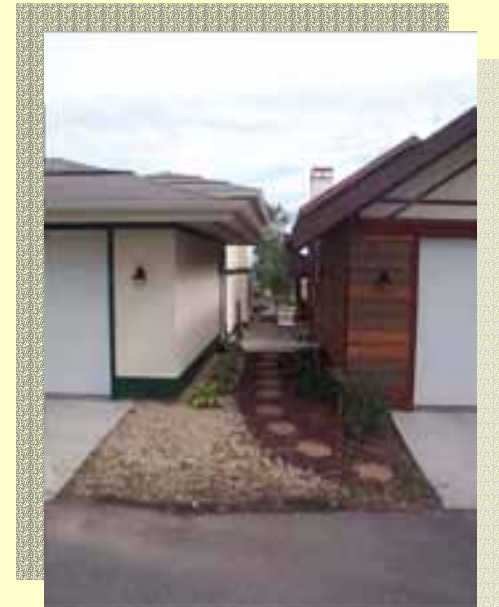
# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting



# Issues

- Street widths
- Alleys
- Parking
- Lot size
- Stormwater management
- Neighborhood property values
- Impact on existing businesses
- Precedent setting

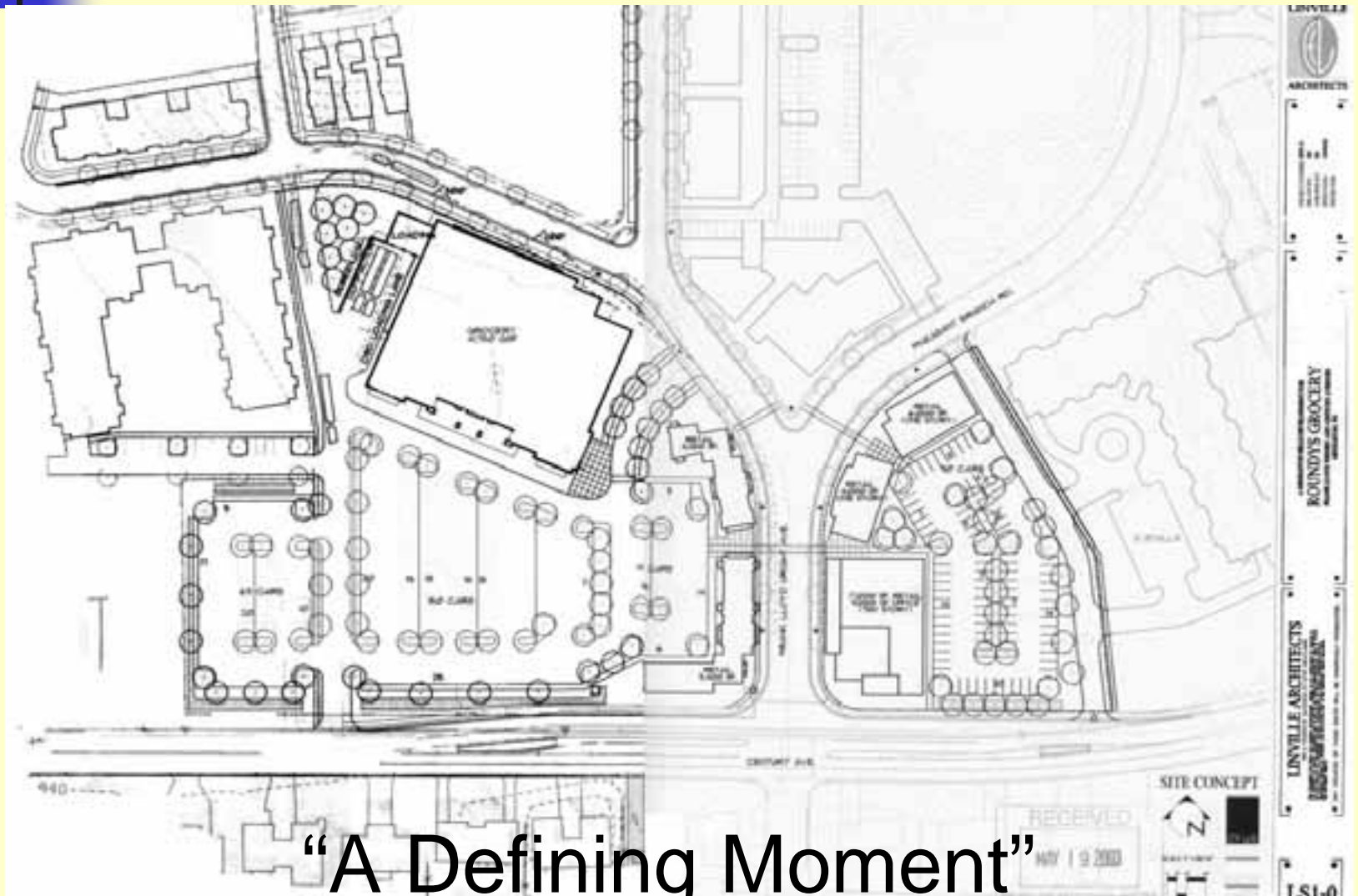


## 2003: Commercial Phase

- Residential lots were selling rapidly
- Until 2003: Commercial development limited to Café building and 4 live-work units
- May 2003: Developer (son of founder) proposed commercial development anchored by 45,000 sq.ft. grocery store



# May 2003 Proposal



“A Defining Moment”

# Chronology of the commercial component

- June 2003: Plan Commission approves general concept, creates work group to sort through design issues; City requests traffic impact analysis
- Numerous neighborhood and City meetings; both opponents and supporters organize
- Fall 2003: Duany's office reviews plan: "*It can work if properly designed.*"





## Mid Hills GIP & SIP language

---

- The **G**eneral **I**mplementation **P**lan is more specific in some areas than the **S**pecific **I**mplementation **P**lan.
- The **GIP**: the commercial area “should be serviced by a grocer similar in character to the Regent Market or a down-sized Brennans.”
- The **SIP** permits “food stores” under “commercial activities”
- City had to go through rezoning procedure to modify GIP



# Issues & concerns with grocery concept

---

- Size of grocery store / overall site plan
- Traffic (volumes, speeds) on local streets
- Design & architectural concerns
- Environmental impacts
- Safety & security
- Retail mix & diversity of shops
- Negative impact on surrounding property values
- Public involvement





# Proposed Site Plan

- Creates more street edge
- Creates Marketplace entry
- Creates 4 way intersection

## September 2004 Site Plan Revision

# Final site plan



**Approved April 2004**

# Grocery buffered from neighborhood



Destree Design  
Architects

West Gateway Condominiums  
Middleton Hills  
Middleton, Wisconsin

# Conditions of approval (commercial plan)

- Appropriate street frontage
  - Residential and commercial buildings “buffer” rear elevation
  - Street-facing doors must be glass & open during business hours
- Aesthetics
  - Restrict exterior storage of materials
  - Screening of rooftop mechanicals
- Noise, traffic impacts
  - Restrict loading dock operations
  - Truck access via Century Ave.
- “Go dark” provision
  - Reduce chance of anchor space remaining vacant
- Other conditions



# Middleton Hills Center, Summer 2005



# Experiences, lessons learned over 10 years

- A few minor SIP modifications at first (residential lots)
- Many modifications with the commercial project (design details)
- Slight increase in housing density overall
- Neighborhood Code / Design Review has preserved architectural consistency



# Experiences, lessons learned over 10 years

- Small lots have at times presented challenges: utilities, vision triangle, encroachments, construction



# Experiences, lessons learned over 10 years

- Street widths: Typically range from 18' to 28'; slightly wider than initially planned
  - Occasional traffic blockages
  - Sight distance around curves
  - Parking restrictions; one-way streets
  - Fewer options to locate utility lines
- Alley system works quite well
  - allows unbroken streetscape
  - 14' pavement; private
  - snow storage, trash pick-up
  - periodic vehicle conflicts
  - slight increase in impervious area



# Plan Implementation: Results to date

- Environmental restoration & stormwater management: A textbook example?
- Sensitive land, vistas preserved for public enjoyment
- Extensive human interaction, walking
- Multiple community focal points





# Plan Implementation: Traffic, development

---

- Trip generation
  - Few nearby employers & services
  - Metro buses not running along neighborhood's main street
  - Grocery-anchored development is now having an impact – neighborhood more self-sufficient
- After slow start, commercial center now well under way
  - For first 8 years, only café, 4 live-work units, in-home businesses
- There has been limited interest in civic sites to date
  - Charter school, church, daycare
- Critical to have mix of uses in the neighborhood

# Plan Implementation: Housing

- Cost of new SF housing: \$300,000-\$600,000+
  - Initial house: \$140,000 w/o finished upper or lower levels
- Many existing homes sell for over \$500,000
- Condos: \$180,000-\$350,000
- Few apartment / rental opportunities
- Rapid appreciation in housing values
- Factors affecting housing cost:
  - Demand well-designed neighborhood (architecture, mixed-use)
  - Neighborhood code requirements (materials, site requirements, design costs, etc.)
  - Market forces: last area to build in city



# Recipe for success: Some helpful ingredients

- Terrific site
- Patient, persistent landowner with a philanthropic vision and a long-term commitment to:
  - develop a place where people will be happy to live
  - use an innovative approach that would set a constructive example for others
- City officials (mayor, alders, planner) receptive to TND concepts
- Substantial public support (but also some vocal opposition)



# A Successful TND: Lessons Learned

- Plan in regional context
- Respect the site
- Approve plans (text, graphics) that are clear and internally consistent
- Update zoning & subdivision ordinances
- Design for pedestrians, but still accommodate autos
- Early & continuous participation by stakeholders
- Developer and City compromises
  - parking restrictions in exchange for narrow streets, private alley & greenway system, traffic signal, etc.
  - Erdman: “integrity of the project was never compromised.”
- Educate, communicate with all involved!



# For more information...

- Eileen Kelley, Planning Director  
(608) 827-1070  
[ekelley@ci.middleton.wi.us](mailto:ekelley@ci.middleton.wi.us)
- Mark Opitz, Assistant Planning Director  
(608) 827-1094  
[mopitz@ci.middleton.wi.us](mailto:mopitz@ci.middleton.wi.us)
- Paul Brunsell, Project Director  
(608) 836-4923  
[pbrunsell@erdman.com](mailto:pbrunsell@erdman.com)
- Jane Grabowski-Miller, Design Director  
(608) 836-4923  
[jmiller@erdman.com](mailto:jmiller@erdman.com)



(Duany may be hard to reach)

