



# Neighborhood Survey of Caroline Heights & Meadows of the Grove

Spring 2020

# Executive Overview

- ▶ **Background of Survey.** The Mandel Group announced in late February 2020 their intentions to purchase the School Sisters of Notre Dame (“SSND”) 23-acre property, build apartments on the land and engage the residents in the nearby neighborhood for their input.
- ▶ **Purpose.** Engage constructively by proactively collecting the views of neighborhood residents to recent news to help inform the Village Trustees regarding future re-zoning decisions of the SSND property. Residents believe it is important that they play a constructive role in the process and that their views be shared with the Mandel Group and the Village Trustees of Elm Grove *before* plans become too far advanced to truly take the neighborhood's views of residences into account.

## Methodology

- ▶ **High Proportion of Neighborhood Immediately Adjacent to SSND Participated.** All residences were approached in person in late February to mid March to collect personal email addresses, cell numbers, and willingness to participate in the survey. A total of 67 email addresses were collected from 53 residences (out of the total of 83). The remaining 29 either a) did not answer the door (17), declined to participate or (2) were never contacted due to COVID-19 “shelter in place” orders restricting non-essential, in-person contact[10].
- ▶ **Integrity & independence of the poll was viewed as of the utmost importance.** This was not a “push poll” designed to elicit desired responses, a message that was reinforced verbally when collecting information and included prominently in the survey instructions. The wording of the survey was chosen carefully to avoid unintended biases and the order of the multiple choice answers were randomized for each survey participant to prevent any “leading of the witness”.
- ▶ **2+ Week Collection Period in Early April.** The survey was launched on Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. A total of 25 responses were collected within one week. A second solicitation generated an incremental 23 responses when the survey initially closed with two additional responses recorded as late as April 21.
- ▶ **Results Are Verifiable.** 47/48 residents surveyed indicated their willingness to share their name and address with the Village Trustees to allow for independent verification/authenticity by the Village. With limited exception, the contact information was collected “in person” by the survey author to ensure only participants from the Caroline Heights & Meadows of the Grove neighborhoods.
- ▶ **About the Author** – The survey was designed and conducted by Jeff Behring at 1100 Red Barn Lane to measure the opinions of the neighborhood and not his own (with which he is entirely familiar). His only goal was to facilitate the communication of all neighborhood views to Village Officials and the Mandel Group and drive positive civic engagement in the upcoming rezoning process.

# Overview of Neighborhoods Surveyed

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# Text of Survey (Introduction + Questions 1-5)

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## **Caroline Heights & Meadows of the Grove Resident Survey**

*(Unofficial but Important)*

Thank you for taking the time to complete this brief yet important opinion survey. The survey is designed to capture the opinion of residents of Caroline Heights and Meadows of the Grove to recent news in late February that the School Sisters of Notre Dame ("SSND") have agreed to sell their existing property in Elm Grove to the Mandel Group. The results of this survey will be shared with Village of Elm Grove officials. The goal is for key concerns identified from this process can be taken into account while the Mandel Group creates a development plan for the SSND property, which is likely to be presented to the Village in the coming months.

The integrity of this survey is critical and therefore two key elements are fundamental to ensure that Village officials and Trustees have confidence in the results of this survey. (1) High participation rates are to demonstrate that the views of all residents are being captured (instead of only a small and vocal minority of residents). (2) Also, questions must be fair and not "leading" since this is not a "push poll" designed to elicit certain desired feedback – there is no "right" answer to any question. Please note that our Village Trustees are a remarkable group of individuals who volunteer a substantial amount of their time and truly care about the Village and deserve the appreciation of all residents of the Village.

**Question #1.** Provide your name and that of your spouse/partner.

**Question #2.** Provide your street address.

**Question #3.** What year did you move into your residence?

**Question #4.** What are the three words or phrases that best describe the Caroline Heights and Meadows of the Grove Neighborhoods best features/strengths that attracted you to this neighborhood?

**Question #5.** Please rank the key features of Elm Grove, if lost, would cause you to decide to leave Elm Grove?

- Elm Grove Library
- Low(er) Taxes (\$/thousand of appraised value relative to Milwaukee County)
- Highly Rated Public Schools
- Elm Grove Events (e.g. Memorial Day Parade, Christmas in the Grove, July 4 Fireworks Display)
- Quiet (Limited Traffic)
- Restaurant Options
- Current Retail Options
- Safe (limited crime)
- Village Park and its Associated Amenities
- Safe (limited crime)

# Text of Survey (Questions 6-17)

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**Question #6.** When social distancing requirements are finally lifted, would your family be interested in being included in invitations for highly informal Sunday evening get-togethers in front yards & driveways this summer?

**Question #7.** If you answered "yes" to the prior question, would you be interested in hosting? Locations will vary on a weekly basis so no one single residence would need to do 100% of the hosting.

**Question #8.** A Sale of the School Sisters of Notre Dame Convent ("SSND") to the Mandel Group has been announced. According to a recent article in the Waukesha Freeman (see article at [https://www.gmtoday.com/business/school-sisters-of-notre-dame-property-to-be-converted-into-apartments/article\\_e6bb4392-5d52-11ea-9d5b-f7ba74962065.html](https://www.gmtoday.com/business/school-sisters-of-notre-dame-property-to-be-converted-into-apartments/article_e6bb4392-5d52-11ea-9d5b-f7ba74962065.html)), the Mandel Group envisions apartments. To be clear, no specific plan has been formally presented to the Village at this time, according to Village officials.

Rank (in order of preference with 1 being the best use and 5 being the worst use) how you would like to see the School Sisters of Notre Dame ("SSND") property re-developed.

- Multi-family apartments (rentals)
- Single family residential
- Multi-family condominiums (owner-occupied)
- Senior Housing
- Public Park

**Question #9.** Discuss the primary rationale for how you ranked your preferences in the prior question. Please limit to 200 words or less.

**Question #10.** Enter your question Based on this description in Question #8 above, please describe what you hope for and concerns about the use of the SSND land. Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.

**Question #11.** Enter your question Certain Village officials have recently raised the possibility of connecting Green Meadow Drive to Wall Street (and Elm Grove Road) for the purposes of safety for the proposed growth of housing on the SSND property. Would you support this connection?

**Question #12.** Please share your rationale (positive or negative) on this potential change to traffic patterns and street connections referenced in the last question (200 words or less):

**Question #13.** What comments would you like to share with your elected Village officials as they consider re-zoning the SSND property and potential new road connections. Please limit your comments to 300 words or less.

**Question #14.** Do you support the extension of municipal water to the Caroline Heights and Meadows of Elm Grove neighborhoods from Wauwatosa)? See <https://www.wauwatosa.net/government/departments/water-utility> for more information on water quality and source of Wauwatosa's municipal water.

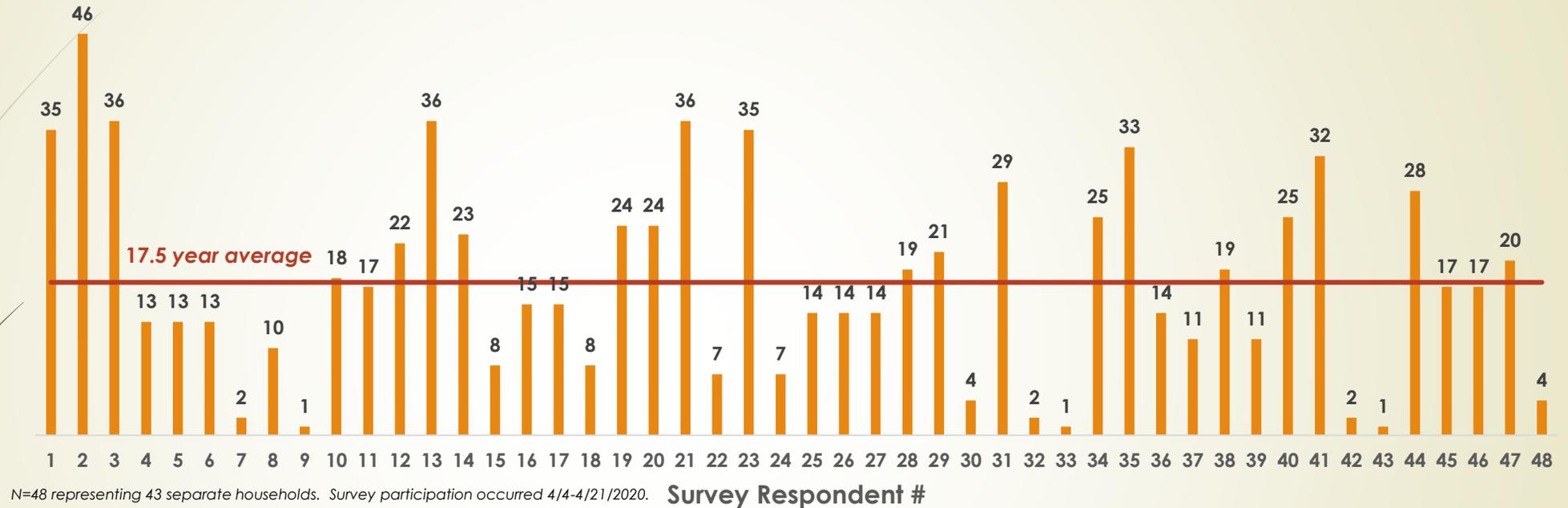
**Question #15.** Do you support the extension of municipal water to the Caroline Heights and Meadows of Elm Grove neighborhoods from Brookfield? See <https://www.ci.brookfield.wi.us/22/Water> for more information on water quality and source of Brookfield's municipal water.

**Question #16.** Would like to provide permission to share your survey responses with the Village Trustees that includes your name and address? (Strongly Encouraged)

**Question #17.** Do you want a copy of the summary results of this survey?

# Well-Established Residential Neighborhood

## # of Years At Current Residence



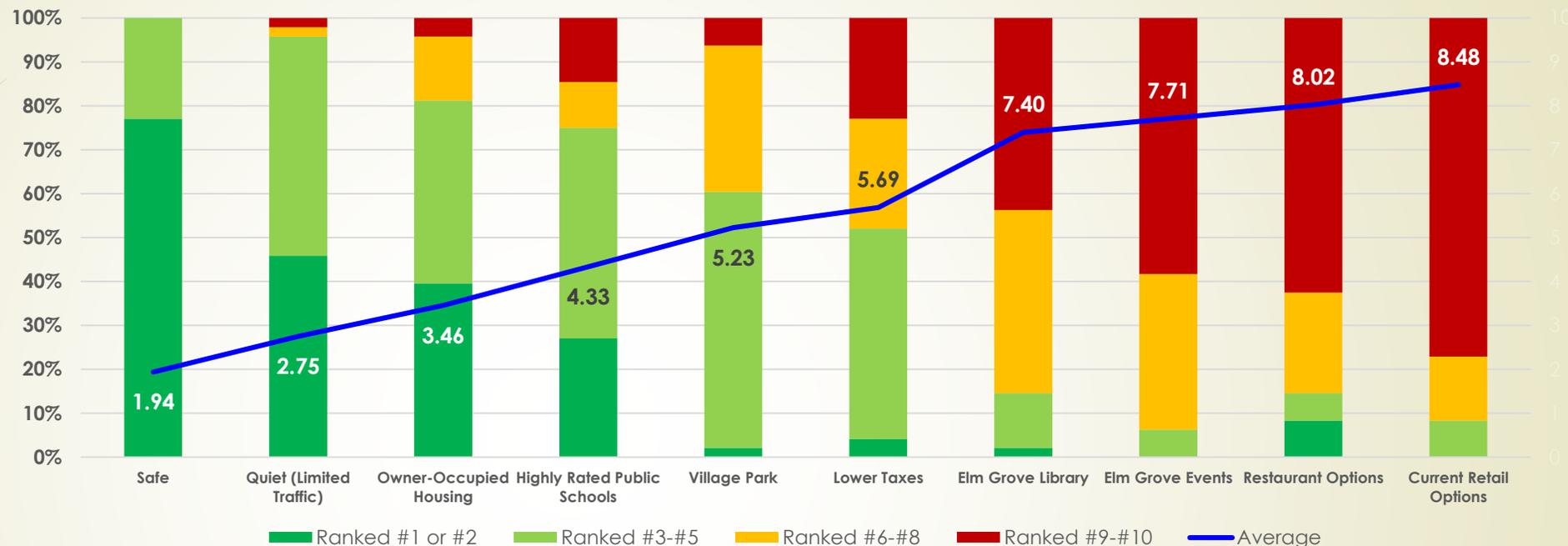
- Neighborhood demographics represent an excellent blend of long-standing, intermediate, and newer residents
  - Data demonstrates a nearly “normal” bell-shaped curve distribution (17+ year average and 16 year median) and remarkable balance among survey participants
  - Some “original” residents still remain although those numbers are declining (30+ years)
  - <5 year respondents (18%) and tend to represent new, young families
  - Clear life cycle of young couples raising their families and then remaining as “empty nesters”

**Survey results represent the views of a broad, family-focused demographic cross section**

# Key Reasons Residents Love Elm Grove

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Residents Ranked the Key Features of Elm Grove That, If Lost, Would Cause Them to Leave Elm Grove



N=48 representing 43 separate households. Survey participation occurred 4/4-4/21/2020.

- Top choices appear to reflect the differentiating attributes fundamental to Elm Grove (e.g. its brand)
  - Low crime rates are generally attractive but particularly to families protective of their children
  - “Quiet/limited traffic” is a unique feature of Elm Grove and is in sharp contrast to adjacent communities with arterial roadways, multiple lanes and higher speed limits
  - The appreciation for owner-occupied residences reflects the strong preference for a) neighbors heavily invested in their community and b) neighborhood stability
- Lower rated choices include features residents view as less critical to their view of the Village

**A clear preference expressed for key attributes of Elm Grove be protected as “core”**

# Key Reasons Residents Love Elm Grove

## Word Map + Selected Resident Quotes

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community<sup>oriented</sup> Convenient<sup>work</sup> school<sup>values</sup> village<sup>size</sup>  
 family<sup>trees</sup> Safe<sup>downtown</sup> Quiet<sup>traffic</sup> Friendly  
 neighborhood homes<sup>safety</sup> proximity<sup>low</sup> Peaceful<sup>park</sup>  
 Close<sup>Spacious</sup> neighbors



**“Beauty (layout & homes), stable property values, friendly people”**

**“Peaceful Quiet Serene”**

“Safe Beautiful homes and surroundings Very little traffic”

“Family, Community, safety”

“Quiet, with little traffic and open green space. Houses are all similarly sized and spread far enough apart that neighbors aren’t looking in the windows. A welcome change from Tosa.”

“Quiet, hidden neighborhood with convenient access to more urban areas; lush, mature trees; owner occupied single family homes”

**“Trees, birds, safety”**

“Serenity, family values/oriented, peaceful (feeling like your in the country yet in the city”

**“Tranquil, quiet & peaceful”**

“Peaceful...Safe...Great neighbors”

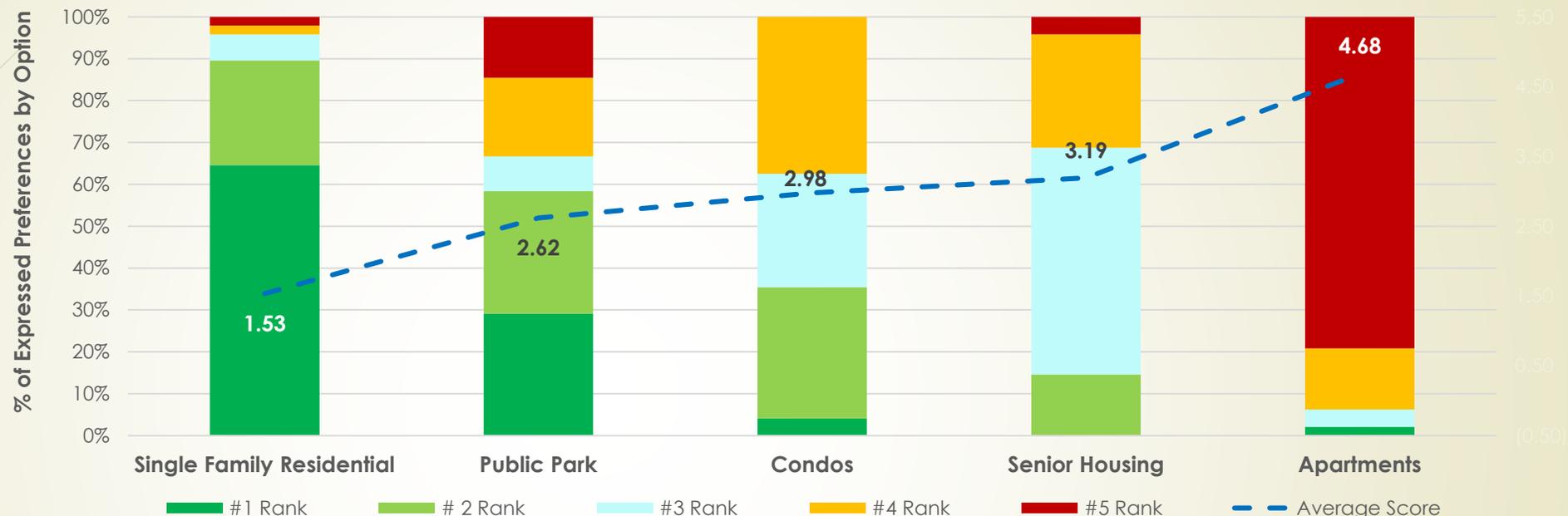
**“Quiet Safe for our future children/family Limited traffic”**

“Safety and privacy Proximity to village and school Families “

**Residents’ perception of Elm Grove is consistently very favorable**

# Strong Preference for Single Family Residential for SSND Rezoning

Expressed Preferences for Likely Rezoning of SSND Property



N=48 representing 43 separate households. Survey participation occurred 4/4-4/21/2020.

- Residents expressed a strong preference for single family residential housing to maintain consistency with the existing neighborhood. Nearly 90% of respondents rated it among their top two preferences.
- Rental apartment housing received the lowest score with nearly 80% selecting it as their least favorite choice and 95% among the bottom two preferences
- Data is consistent with the Village's December 2018 survey results (of all Village residents) for the Downtown Master Plan with apartments and multi-family similarly receiving very limited support

**Clear preference expressed for continuation of single-family residential neighborhood**

# Resident Preferences for Development of the SSND Property

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**"I hope that the developers will be respectful of our neighborhood and maintain the tranquility."**

"I hope for a productive use of the property that **enriches, diversifies** and **maintains the character of the neighborhood.**"

"When we moved into our home it was specifically for the quiet secluded area. **We are raising three very young children (3yr old, 2yr old, 9 month old.) My families safety, both with crime and increased traffic, is my number one concern.** I ranked the items in a way that that I felt benefited both my family and the neighborhood as a whole. I.E. less people less crime, less people less traffic."

"They didn't buy it to make it a park (wishful thinking), **you build to fit the village, the neighborhood so it blends in and doesn't change what we're all about.** Nothing better than owner occupied single families closest to present residential homes, then maybe side-by-side condos, then maybe where the current multi-story buildings are replace those with townhouses or high end rental units."

"We are a young couple who purchased this home in April 2019. We were looking for a year and this neighborhood was perfect. **We will be having children and I feel comfortable having them play outside because it's so quiet and has low traffic.**"

"Our neighborhood cannot and should not have to absorb the traffic that any additional development would bring."

**"Looking to keep our neighborhood functioning in a similar manner. To keep traffic to a minimum, we'd strongly prefer a park like development or single family housing.** The idea of multi family developments would be less desirable due to parking lots, congestion, noise, etc."

**"One of the main attractions of Elm Grove is the low-density housing and wide open spaces.** The community is very stable and we feel that rental apartments would have an impact on that. We would be concerned to see the SSND grounds built up."

**"Dense pack? Bad idea. Rental units? The WORST idea!"**

**"I would like to see side by side condos for seniors under [\$250k] for those in Elm Grove that need to move out of their homes** but would feel like they are in a home vs apt style."

**Consistency With Existing Neighborhood & Limited Density Strongly Preferred**

# Residents' Hopes & Concerns for the SSND Property



"My hope would be to maintain the quiet secluded nature of our neighborhood. The SSND land represented an almost buffer for our area from the hustle and bustle of the city . I specifically moved my family into this area for that reason. The increased traffic, both human and vehicle, represents an increased risk for my family."

"Understanding that there will be a change of ownership for the SSND property, I'm hoping that the Village officials will allow the development of single family lots and a limited amount of owner-occupied condominiums of the property. I have concerns that too much density of housing on the property will result in problems with traffic, crime, water scarcity and potential rainwater runoff issues"

"We hope that our area will continue to have that small village/residential feel. We are very concerned that multi-family rental units would make our neighborhood congested and not as safe. We feel blessed that we were able to purchase my husbands family home and want to provide our family the same traditions/community that he grew up in. Elm Grove is such a special place and we love the small town feel."

"Hope for - something in line with the current housing code, a variety of housing designs, large lawns, kind neighbors. Concerns - crowded, tacky, uniform looking apartments or condos, cheaply made. Trees are removed, much of the green space is now pavement."

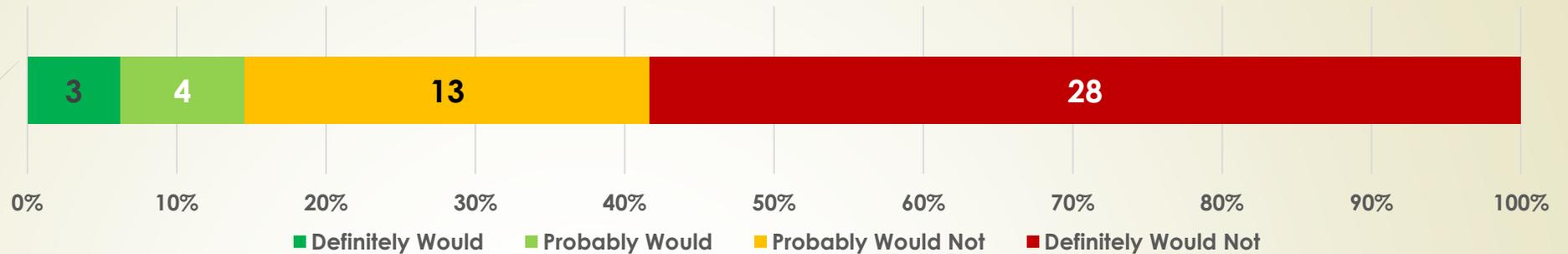
"We would prefer the least density possible."

"Our main concerns are an increase in traffic (and with that, comes greater danger to pedestrians, especially children) and density in the neighborhood. Also, we would like there to be more of a focus on owner-occupied units rather than apartments. Owners who live here are more likely to invest in the community. At the same time, we recognize that some apartments might provide a desirable housing alternative for individuals who currently live here (though only for a minority of the individuals living in Elm Grove according to another recent survey)."

**Resident feedback is generally thoughtful and constructive with pointed concerns about density/traffic**

# Strong Preference Against Vehicular Connection to Wall Street

Would You Support the Connection of Green Meadow Drive & Wall Street for Safety Purposes?



N=48 representing 43 separate households. Survey participation occurred 4/4-4/21/2020.

- A strong aversion was demonstrated to a new vehicular connection into the existing neighborhood
  - Residents expressed concern about the likelihood of new traffic into the neighborhood
  - These responses are consistent with earlier results indicating that residents place high values on “quiet/limited traffic” and “safe”
  - Young families in particular expressed alarm about the safety risk to small children posed by additional traffic
  - Concerns were also expressed about neighborhood being used as a bypass to Watertown Plank Road or a cut-through either to the Recycling Facility or to Bluemound Road (via Wall Street / Elm Grove Road)
  - Multiple respondents noted that allowing traffic to bypass Watertown Plank Road would also bypass the businesses there, defeating a core purpose of the proposed Downtown Master Plan
- Proponents (~15% of respondents) thought the connection might reduce traffic on Watertown Plank. An alternate suggestion was made to connect Wall Street to the SSND property but not Green Meadow to prevent new traffic from flowing into the existing neighborhood.

**Comments demonstrate a viscerally negative reaction to the prospect of additional traffic**

# Resident Views on Potential Street Connection Between Green Meadow & Wall Street

Wall Street need Elm Grove become Watertown Plank provide road Bluemound Rd 124th new street live neighborhood Bluemound increase traffic make traffic increase safety connect area will Green Meadow neighborhood will want see



Supportive

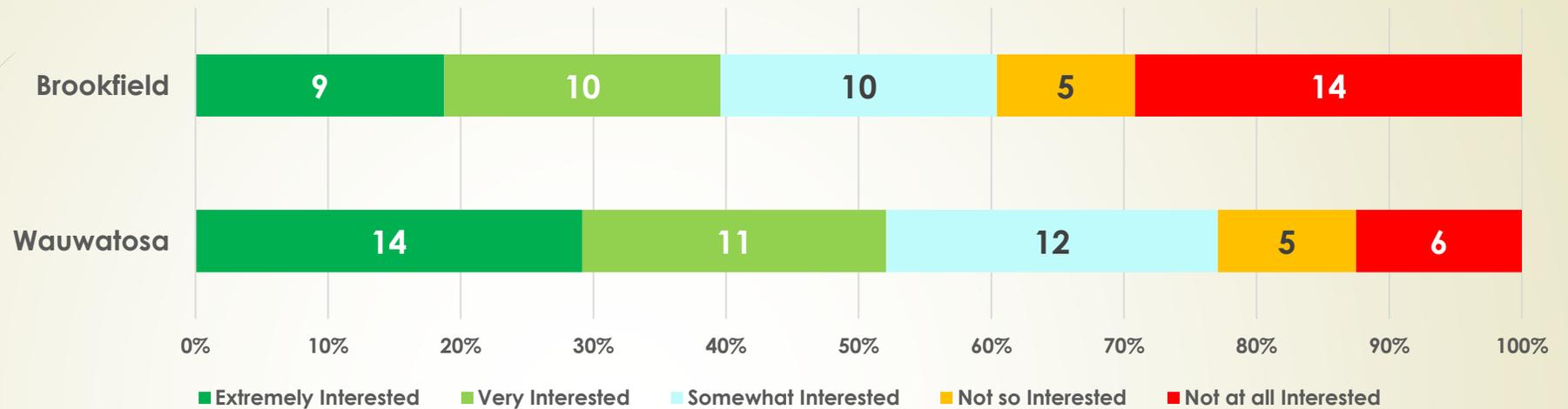
- "We would appreciate having a more direct way of getting to Bluemound Rd. We do not want to see traffic coming directly from 124th St to Green Meadow Pl however."
- "This may reduce traffic on Watertown Plank Road."
- "What's not to love about a quicker walk to Sendiks?"

Opposed (most frequent)

- "Don't want more roads going through; want to keep Elm Grove and our subdivision from becoming too accessible. Want it to remain quiet, the way it is. If I didn't like it, I wouldn't have stayed for the past 45 years."
- "Obvious increase in traffic going through Caroline heights similar to folks flying through here looking to get to Bluemound Rd. Street connection would also provide a bypass around our downtown area - not ideal for those businesses."
- "I thought the initial intention was to have traffic flow through Watertown Plank Road to encourage more stops to businesses. I worry the connection from Green Meadow to Wall Street would turn into a raceway for locals who wish to avoid Watertown Plank."
- "Diminishes the safe environment for kids and families to walk and enjoy safe passage on the streets in the immediate area. Confusion to drivers coming off Wall Street and the impatience (speeding and un-attentive driving) they will show in driving through the neighborhood. We already see this from drivers coming off 124th thinking they could get through to Bluemound, and speeding through the neighborhood."
- "Again, this would create more unwanted and non-local traffic go through our subdivision to get through to the other side of village. We bought our house because this is a safe and QUIET neighborhood. Having this street would increase traffic which is nerve wracking as a parent. This new proposed street would NOT provide more safety for the people that live in Meadows Grove and Caroline Heights that could be affected on a DAILY basis."
- "There are currently 8 young children that live on our street alone. There are 5 on the adjacent street. They like to ride bikes, play basketball and take walks. All of this would be much more dangerous with more traffic."
- "The reason why we moved to this neighborhood was that traffic is limited to those who live here. I do not want to be a cut through neighborhood. "

# Residents Open to the Expansion of Municipal Water

Resident Interest in Municipal Water Connection



*N=48 representing 43 separate households. Survey participation occurred 4/4-4/21/2020.*

- Residents are notably more open to the expansion of municipal water, particularly if it is not well water
  - Poor water quality (mineral “rich”) from private wells is a concern for newer residents
  - Wauwatosa water, sourced from Lake Michigan, is perceived to be of higher quality and over 50% of residents are “very” or “extremely” interested
  - Brookfield water, sourced from a common well, counts fewer proponents due to unclear water quality benefits for the additional costs (e.g. connection, ongoing charges)
- Opponents to municipal water either are very satisfied with their own private well or express concerns about costs

**Additional information would benefit residents to evaluate costs & benefits**

# APPENDIX

# Participating Households\*

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## **124th Street, Knoll Road**

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Jon & Carol Pfaff (947 N. 124th Street)  
Patrick & Rachel Velyov (12500 Knoll Rd)

## **Green Meadow Place**

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Tom and Emily Wanezek (12550 Green Meadow Place)  
Jeffrey & Elizabeth Browne (12555 Green Meadow Place)  
Paul & Mary Rampson (12600 Green Meadow Place)  
Becky Sullivan (12725 Green Meadow Place)  
Steve & Laurie Kalmer (12800 Green Meadow Place)  
Sheila Reynolds and Bob Chang (12850 Green Meadow Place)  
Thomas & Kathryn Powers (12900 Green Meadow Place)

## **Longwood Avenue**

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Stephen & Karen Steen (1005 Longwood Avenue)  
Gary Krista Colpaert (1085 Longwood Avenue)  
Patricia Jaeger (1145 Longwood Avenue)  
Elizabeth and Paul Pesci (1160 Longwood Avenue)

## **Meadow Drive**

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Mark and Kay Ehlinger (12605 Meadow Drive)  
Adam Nash Siemers/Tricia Weigman (12650 Meadow Drive)  
Jeanne Danes (12655 Meadow Drive)  
George & Cindy Whitaker (12720 Meadow Drive)  
Nancy & R. Joe Toelle (12725 Meadow Drive)  
Dani Cawley / Brian Williams (12755 Meadow Drive)  
Allen and Sandra Dearing (12770 Meadow Drive)  
Michael and Melinda Dwinell (12775 Meadow Drive)  
Jim & Connie Malewicki (12800 Meadow Drive)  
Larissa Auger (12855 Meadow Drive)  
Pete & Patty Bunce (12925 Meadow Drive)  
Jenny and Russ Barcelona (12955 Meadow Drive)

## **Red Barn Lane**

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Sara and Sean Scullen (1030 Red Barn Lane)  
Gregory Leas (1070 Red Barn Lane)  
Adam & Julia Romeiser (1090 Red Barn Lane)  
Jeff & Kate Behring (1100 Red Barn Lane)  
Katherine and Glenn Schrubbe (1150 Red Barn Lane)

## **Stephen Place**

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Kathleen A Nesseth (12430 Stephen Place)  
Laura Davidson (12455 Stephen Place)  
Shelley and Mike Hansen (12520 Stephen Place)  
Kristina and James Sayas (12535 Stephen Place)  
John (Jack) and Maribeth Lynch (12600 Stephen Place)  
Beth and Brent Wenzel (12705 Stephen Place)  
Matthew & Paris Kilps (12755 Stephen Place)  
Leonardo Martins and Ana Maria Santos Salado (12800 Stephen Place)

## **West Grove Terrace**

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Gary and Sue Kolesari (12500 West Grove Terrace)  
Anne Neafie Terry Neafie (12505 West Grove Terrace)  
Bob & Rita Lorenz (12600 West Grove Terrace)  
Pamela Finberg & William Rhead (12605 West Grove Terrace)

\* N=48 representing 43 separate households. Survey participation occurred 4/4-4/21/2020. One resident requested anonymity and is not listed in this schedule.