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Award
Continued from Page 3A

Knapp said.

Meanwhile in the new suit, Debra Hamelin of Madison is seeking \$1 million in punitive damages and unspecified compensatory damages.

Hamelin also charged in her suit that Smiljanic's rental company rejected her as a tenant because she is black and receives Section 8 housing assistance.

Hamelin said in her suit that she was shown only basement apartments when she applied in early September at Sun Valley Apartments.

Hamelin was informed by letter on Sept. 16 that her application was rejected because she had insufficient income and failed to meet the complex' housing standards.

Spitzer-Resnick claims that Hamelin had sufficient income to pay for a Sun Valley apartment, as well as good housing references.

Nepal chief justice will speak at UW

Biswanath Upadhyay, chief justice of Nepal's Supreme Court, will speak Monday at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School.

Upadhyay is a guest of Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Shirley Abrahamson.

He served as a supreme court justice in Nepal from 1979 to 1990 and has been the court's chief justice since 1991. He also is the former chair of Nepal's Constitution Recommendation Commission, the panel charged with drafting a new constitution for Nepal based on a multi-party system.

Upadhyay is scheduled to speak at noon in Room 270 of the Law School. His speech is titled "Judicialities of Developing Countries: A Case Study of Nepal's Constitution."

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FOOTLOOSE

Cover-up on Monona Terrace?

By Mike Ivey
The Capital Times

Locals unconvinced that the Monona Terrace convention center is the answer to every thing. The violence to urban sprawl have lobbed numerous charges in an effort to scuttle the project.

But a legitimate environmental concern deserving some scrutiny has surfaced. It also shows what can happen when public officials don't lay all their cards on the table.

The question surrounds the impact of driving some 1,700 steel pilings 60 feet down into the bottom of Lake Monona. The pilings will support the building as it hangs out over the lake.

Here's the problem: Much of the current Law Park shoreline is old landfill, and nobody is exactly sure what's buried there. Some say it's concrete and other construction debris. There might also be empty oil tanks, junk cars or worse.

The fear is that driving pilings into this buried waste might allow all sorts of pollutants to leak into the water. There is also the possibility that contaminated sludge could flow in the opposite direction — down, into groundwater below the lake bottom.

Either way, those concerns were enough to cause the city Commission on the Environment this week to delay the project.

"I'm not convinced this is a major problem, but we need some more answers," says Dick Lathrop, commission chairman, a respected lakes expert and a generally reasonable fellow.

The question of contaminants leaking into the lake from the old landfill is nothing new. It was addressed in the project's environmental impact statement, finalized last month.

What makes this interesting, however, is the discovery that the Army Corps of Engineers now wants to review the project, citing a recent change in federal regulations. Earlier the corps had told the city and state that no permit was needed.

Although convention center officials got wind of the change in June, any mention of a corps review was kept rather quiet until this week.

"The first I heard of it was at the meeting Monday," Lathrop says.

Indeed, neither Madison newspaper mentioned the permit before Tuesday, even though city and state officials traveled to Minneapolis in August to discuss the project with the Army Corps and applied officially for a permit on Sept. 1.

But George Lightbourn of the state Department of Administration says there was no attempt to hide anything — even a permit that could send Monona Terrace planners back to the drawing board.

"There are a lot of things that happen in the life of a project," he says. "Am I supposed to issue a press release every time something changes?"

The permit may or may not prove a significant stumbling block to Monona Terrace. A decision isn't due for several weeks.

The state environmental impact statement downplays the possibility of lake pollution, and convention center backers reassuringly say the Army Corps permit is "just another step in the process."

Lathrop, whose day job is with the state Department of Natural Resources, also doubts if the old landfill holds substantial amounts of toxins.

"That material has been in contact with water for decades," he says, adding that Lake Monona has already absorbed plenty of pollutants from Madison's industrial heyday.

But perhaps a larger question here is the entire environmental review process.

Convention center supporters need to remember that the project referendum passed by the narrowest of margins and included guarantees that the center would not harm Lake Monona.

Even conceding that spending \$63.5 million on Monona Terrace will breathe life into downtown Madison, downplaying a federal permit or any threat to the lake has only added credence to opponents' claims that the environmental impact statement was a whitewash.

Moreover, when government shifts from merely presenting the facts on a public project to an orchestrated campaign that avoids any negatives, Joe Taxpayer never knows if he's getting the truth or another sales job from someone looking to get into his wallet.

Suits 2, Consumers 0: This was a good week for the chemical companies and their lobbyists at the Capitol.

First, on Tuesday, a measure to prevent local governments from regulating pesticides sailed through the Assembly. The "pre-emption bill" is up for a vote in the Senate Tuesday, and things don't look much better there.

Second, a bill to allow dairies to label their milk as BGH-free failed in the Assembly. One bright note was Rick Skindrud of Mt. Horeb, the only Republican to back the measure. Skindrud may be off base on bicycles, but he's right on with bovine growth hormone.

What's hard to understand is that every public opinion survey says people want fewer chemicals in their lives. Consumers also say they will pay more for products that are considered "earth-friendly" — such as that new anti-freeze advertised on TV during football games.

So what do Wisconsin lawmakers do this week? Give two thumbs up to more chemicals. You go figure.

White Milwaukee police get death threat in letter

MILWAUKEE (AP) — A letter has been sent to the Milwaukee Police Department threatening a campaign of killing and violence against white officers.

The letter received this week states it is from a group calling itself "The Eye in the Sky."

"We, The Eye in the Sky, have stood by and watched your white policemen beat and shamelessly pill our black brothers for years and its time we did something about it," the letter states. "We are fed up with you white KLAN in blue trying to fulfill a legacy of genocide! We are going to have our own version of genocide with every racist white cop as its victim."

The letter said the group will "gather printout sheets" on all white officers so that they can know their "exact whereabouts" at all times. "The letter also predicts a "long, drawn out, bloody affair."

The letter says the "campaign" would start soon and would include mutilation of bodies.

Sgt. Earnell Lucas, a department spokesman, said Thursday that Milwaukee police officers were advised of the letter at a roll call and an investigation was under way in an effort to determine its origin.

"Officers are continually reminded to use caution when on patrol," he said.

Leonard Young, a black man, was shot by police Sept. 27 by officer Mark Buetow, who is white. Buetow said he thought Young had a gun in his hand as he got out of the car that had been stopped, and he reacted by shooting Young several times. The object Buetow thought was a gun actually was an audiotape. An inquest jury decided the officer's action was justified.

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