

From: Kristopher Steege-Reimann <reimannk@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 8:33 AM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: 817-821 Williamson St

Hi,  
My wife and I live a block away from this development and I we would like to offer our support.

I believe more density in the area is good for business and housing affordability.

Best,  
Kristopher

---

From: Julia and Kristopher Steege-Reimann <jksrproperties@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 8:30 AM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Support for development at 817-821 Williamson St

Hello,  
I live in the neighborhood (725 Jenifer St) and want to voice my support for the development at 817-821 Williamson St.

Anything we can do to increase density in the area and prevent urban sprawl is something I support.

Sincerely,  
Julia

---

**From:** Vaughn Brandt <[vbrandt@gmail.com](mailto:vbrandt@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 11:08 PM  
**To:** Planning <[planning@cityofmadison.com](mailto:planning@cityofmadison.com)>; Rummel, Marsha <[district6@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district6@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed project at 817 Williamson. I am a homeowner on the 1300 block of Jenifer for 23 years, and a committed member of maintaining the neighborhood's history - while also respecting the needs of our times.

The plan for 817 Williamson exceeds the recommended neighborhood plan, BUILD 2, that was adopted by the Madison Plan Commission. It also exceeds the recommended volume of the existing historic buildings within 200 feet of it -- by approximately 8 times.

While urban density and adding housing is important, this is a bridge too far.

Thank you for your consideration.

Vaughn Brandt  
1314 Jenifer St.

---

**From:** James Fenley <[jfenleywi@gmail.com](mailto:jfenleywi@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Aug 23, 2020 at 5:37 PM  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson, 8/24 - Support  
**To:** [district6@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district6@cityofmadison.com) <[district6@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district6@cityofmadison.com)>, [planning@cityofmadison.com](mailto:planning@cityofmadison.com) <[planning@cityofmadison.com](mailto:planning@cityofmadison.com)>

Hello Alderwoman and City Staff,

I am writing today in support of the proposed demolition and construction of a new apartment building at 817 Williamson St that is on the agenda for the August 24th meeting.

I live on this block of Williamson Street, and I want more people to be able to live here at an affordable rent and enjoy the wonderful amenities our neighborhood has. In order for people like me to not get priced out of living here we need more density along this corridor. The surface level parking lot and ugly building on this site should be converted to apartments for more housing options.

I see no reason to object to this building, and urge its passage at the upcoming meeting.

Thanks,

James Fenley  
403 S Livingston St, Apt 201  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** Victor Toniolo <vatoniolo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 5:13 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Agenda item 8 tonight

Plan commission,

I would like to add a comment to agenda item 8 for tonight's meeting. I hope I am not too late.

817 Williamson street is an ideal candidate for redevelopment, and the 24 housing units will help our city's housing shortage. Despite having my own rentals in the nearby area and this bringing more competition, I offer my full support for this project. The low vacancy rate on the isthmus is shameful. Please approve agenda item 8

Victor Toniolo  
VEMA LLC

---

**From:** MARYLINE BEURG <beurg@wisc.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 4:59 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson, 8/24/20 opposition

Dear Plan Commission,

I am opposed to the outrageous height and gross volume of the building proposed for 817 Williamson St. People in the neighborhood worked very hard to create BUILD II to provide protection for the area. Now it is included in the Comprehensive Plan. Why should an exception be permitted?

Housing on this site would be very good. That would be much better than what is there now. But I totally opposed to the colossal dimension of the Cook proposal.

Maryline Beurg  
416 S Paterson St

---

**From:** Jessica Wartenweiler <jessicawartenweiler@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 4:57 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Support of agenda item 8 - 817 Williamson St

Greetings,

I'm writing to support Brandon Cook's development at 817 Williamson St. Demand for housing units in the area is far outpacing new supply, resulting in runaway rent increases that are unsustainable for most tenants. We desperately need more housing, particularly in this area, to help balance the power between tenants and landlords and to slow rent increases. The existing building that Cook is proposing to demo is an eyesore that contributes nothing to the neighborhood. This is an excellent site for investment in our neighborhood, and I commend Cook for taking on the project and contributing positively to the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Jessica Wartenweiler  
1341 Spaight St  
Madison, Wi

**From:** Laura Lob <louloubear@me.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 4:14 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson, 8/24/20 opposition

I am opposed to the Brandon Cook 24-unit apartment building proposed for 817 Williamson Street.

My main concerns are about the very large volume and height of this building. These types of developments have been built, and continue to be proposed in areas of the Marquette Neighborhood that are out of scope with any other buildings and properties in the immediate vicinity. The houses in the neighborhood I live in often do not have driveways, but they do have a front yard, some have sideyards, and most have backyards. Every development proposed in the last few years in this neighborhood goes "edge to edge" and is totally out of character with any other "residential" property.

The developers also often want to change the zoning to get their building to fit. When neighbors ask if any of the units will be affordable, the answer is always no. This type of building does not help make the area more inclusive, it just makes money for the developers. The developers do not care that the renters they are trying to attract are paying high rents, will not be long-term residents, and those residents will most likely also not care to engage with the neighborhood and its issues because they live in large buildings which are essentially cut-off from their surroundings, and the parking is inside, etc., etc.

In short, the fabric of the neighborhood is torn with this type of development. What works downtown or along the East Washington corridor does not work in the neighborhoods that are alongside Williamson Street.

I am greatly concerned that Williamson Street is becoming a focus for future housing, when it is classified as a Neighborhood Mixed Use street. It was specifically removed from the list of corridors named "Growth Priority Areas."

Thank you,

Laura Lob

---

**From:** Gary Tipler <garytip8778@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 4:00 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>; Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>; Ledell Zellers <ledell.zellers@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Plan Comm, Item 8, 817 Williamson. Opposed

Dear Plan Commissioners:

We who live in and near the west end of the Marquette Neighborhood are faced with the prospect of a proposed development for 817 Williamson that is grossly out of scale among the older houses in which we live.

**This is not merely an academic discussion of appearances -- it is about the economics of being able to live here without the threat of neighborhood instability.**

Approval would open the neighborhood to a new wave of speculation, higher property taxes, higher rents, redevelopment/demolition, an onslaught of building proposals to exceed existing zoning capacities. With this comes the loss of affordable housing, neighborhood character, young families and long-term neighbors. There are investment groups watching for your decision on this, poised to bring forth similar projects on Williamson and Jenifer Streets.

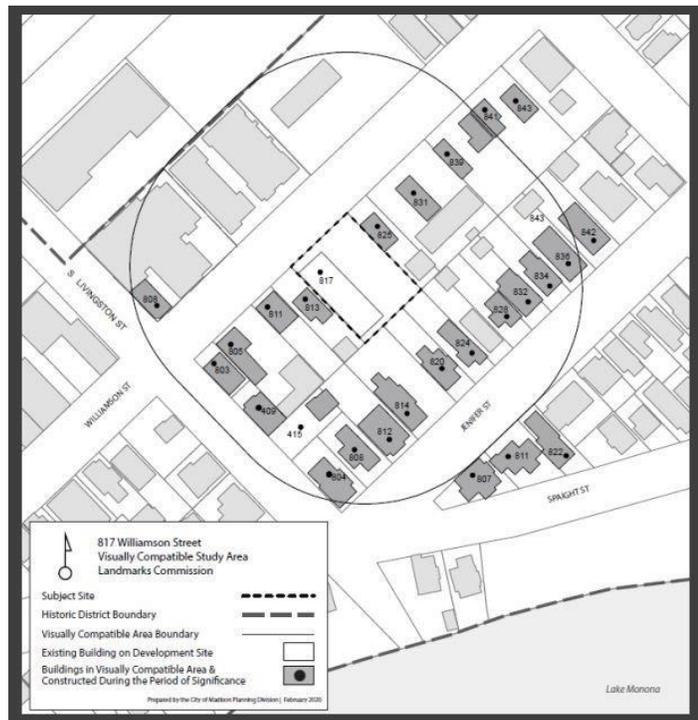
The proposed building for 817 Williamson exceeds the recommended neighborhood plan, BUILD 2, that was adopted by the Madison Plan Commission. It also exceeds the recommended volume of the existing historic buildings within 200 feet of it -- by approximately 8 times. My house was among them.

Last Monday, the now pro-redevelopment-majority Madison Landmarks Commission reviewed the proposal and recommended approval based on the street-front appearance, the commission failed to address the building Volume criteria in the Third Lake Historic District Ordinance, though three commissioners discussed it.

Please reject this proposal and urge the development of a more fitting substitute that will be an asset to the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gary Tipler  
807 Jenifer Street, (view the attached map)



---

**From:** Claire Wegert <claire.wegert@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 3:35 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Support for 817-821 Williamson St. redevelopment

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my support of the proposed redevelopment of 817-821 Williamson Street.

First and foremost, I firmly believe that Madison needs more available housing. As a semi-recent graduate of the university and current renter on this block, the increasing housing costs in the city have consistently been a source of stress. Simply having more available rental units is one easy way to directly impact this issue. To me, the answer is clear. With over 95% rental unit

occupancy for this zip code and a significant amount of single-family buildings close to the capitol, I think it's time that our city consider more high-density housing in this area. Whether directly or indirectly, it would benefit several different demographics.

I would also like to add, frankly, that I find the current building to be an eyesore. The fact that the proposed development would be bigger and different in style does not outweigh the benefits we would see by adding 24 apartments and maintaining commercial space. Not to mention the 18 underground parking spots proposed in the plan! I consider underground parking/hidden cars to be a huge plus. As a resident of this block, I take pride in the area in which I live. I would be thrilled to see the benefits, both visually and economically, of this new building.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions regarding my views on the matter.

Thank you very much for your time.

-Claire Wegert  
Claire.wegert@gmail.com

---

**From:** Scott Thornton <sbthornton@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 3:33 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Support of 817 Williamson Street, Agenda Item #8

Dear Plan Commission Members,

Thank you for your service to the City of Madison. Reviewing development projects, especially infill in established neighborhoods must at times be daunting.

I have attended multiple meetings regarding the proposed development at 817 Williamson Street. I have witnessed the developer make changes requested by the neighborhood Preservation and Development (P&D) Committee and the City of Madison Landmarks Commission. The P&D Committee had a split vote and I voted in favor of the project. In earlier meetings I was not allowed to vote and would have voted in favor of the project. This is important to note as you may hear that early votes of the committee were unanimously against it, when not everyone was allowed to vote.

The improvements that have been made to the project secured approval of the City of Madison Landmarks Commission. This is significant as the site is within the Third Lake Historic District.

Not everyone in the neighborhood supports the building, but that is OK. It has been my experience in the 20 years I have lived in the neighborhood that some residents are regularly opposed to change. The arguments move from one issue to the next as city committees strike them down. It is a neighborhood where just the mention of a property owner's name will instigate fierce opposition, not to a project, but to the individual proposing it. It is a sad commentary on our usually friendly and wonderfully eclectic near-East side.

The building proposed at 817 Williamson Street will replace a one-story commercial building and surface parking lot that are completely out of character. It is a huge improvement. The new building will bring housing that we need in the central city and efficiently use the site. The building is not overwhelming. It will provide apartments at competitive prices. It is exactly the kind of infill that we need to balance the urban sprawl that we have experienced for decades. It brings housing to a walkable and bikeable corridor and keeps it on a human scale.

I have heard comments that the building needs to be pushed back so that the property owner can plant shade trees. Well, the neighborhood made sure that Willy Street could accommodate underground utilities because we are very concerned about the loss of tree canopy. However, we are waiting for someone at the city to step up and make it happen. Failures of the city should not be thrust onto property owners. I would love to see some canopy trees there, but it isn't going to happen with the overhead wires.

I have also heard comments that mid block structures shouldn't have flat roofs. That is something I don't understand at all. There is a commercial building just a few lots down on that block with a false facade to mimic a flat roof. The Nature's Bakery building on the 1000 block is mid-block and has a flat roof. Considering it is in the historic district and the Landmarks Commission approved the new building as being compatible I really don't understand how this is more than another red herring.

The massing of the building is stepped back from the street. The architectural changes requested by the Landmarks Commission and adopted by the developer significantly break up the appearance of the structure. The facade mimics two buildings. Part of the massing is behind the driveway and further offset from the street. The building is compatible with the surroundings which was recognized by Landmarks.

I support that staff report and it's conclusion that the building is an appropriate infill for the 800 block of Williamson Street and urge your support as well.

Sincerely,

Scott B. Thornton  
1104 Jenifer Street  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** Steve Ohlson <steve.ohlson@wisc.edu>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 3:32 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson, 8/24/20 opposition letter

Dear Plan Commissioners,

The design appearing before you today from Brandon Cook for a 24-unit apartment building at 817 Williamson Street ought to have significant changes before it is approved by the Plan Commission.

This building mimics nearby warehouse and industrial properties in the area. But that appearance is just like tinsel or glitter sprinkled on as a disguise to sneak a warehouse-sized building into an area of much smaller residential properties. And also, the property is located out at the sidewalk like a commercial property when it is in reality an overwhelmingly residential property. Our Neighborhood Plan and the BUILD II plan were created, with city and county assistance, to prevent a huge structure such as this in the location where it is being proposed.

Please do not approve the proposal for 817 Williamson Street without requiring significant changes to the height, setbacks, width and sidewalk placement.

Yours,

Steve Ohlson  
416 S Paterson Street

---

**From:** Helen Schneider <haschneider47@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 3:21 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Plan Commission Agenda and Registration for Item 8

Dear Plan Commission:

My apologies that this narrative is a bit long. Please read it through to the end.

I moved to Madison in 1978, living at 906 Jenifer Street. In 1981 I moved to Blooming Grove (due to a marriage). Last year I moved to 902 Jenifer Street. The neighborhood has always had a certain charm for me.

From what I have read of Mr. Cook's plans for 817-21 Williamson, the new building will be bigger to a degree that it will alter the rhythm of the architecture on that side of the street, which will alter the character of that block and the neighborhood.

When I first moved to Madison, I was told there was a rule, perhaps a law, that no building could be so tall as to block the view of the Capitol. Clearly, that rule has been scrapped. Greenbush was demolished, as a neighborhood, before I moved here. There's a memorial monument. On Park Street there used to be a park, maybe called Walden or Thoreau Park. I was told it was established after the area witnessed mass construction. A sign read, "In wildness is preservation of the world. -- Thoreau." When Park Street was widened, a chunk of the park and the sign were gone.

I do realize that cities grow and change. I wonder at what strikes me as an obsession with "bigger." There are size standards for that section of Williamson Street. Could they not be adhered to and neighborhood character be maintained?

For years I told people with petitions, "I can't sign. I'm not a Madison resident." Now I am and I oppose Agenda Item 8.

Sincerely,  
Helen Schneider  
902 Jenifer Street #5  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** Jack Kear <jackkear53703@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 2:20 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Full support for the housing proposed for 817-821 Williamson St

Dear Commissioners:

I recently participated in the online discussion the Planning Commission had addressing potential zoning changes to adapt to the housing crisis we face in Madison. I was very motivated to see that the commission has carefully reviewed the impact this crisis has on disadvantaged people and how the current approaches do not do as much as they could to remove the obstacles that exist to these communities.

We can begin to take the steps needed to manage the complexity of the issue now and so I encourage your vote to permit the new development proposed for 817-821 Williamson St. My interpretation of existing plans indicate that the project meets the guidelines and should therefore be permitted. For example:

*\*In Standards for Design & Preservation for Williamson Street 600-1100 Blocks, "Commercial infill projects shall be built two feet (2') from the front lot line, have flat roofs, narrow bays, recessed entries, large display windows and be constructed of materials recommended previously in this chapter..."*

This project meets these requirements including a setback of 2' - 4' and of almost 60' at the garage site. Landmarks has recently decided to determine the color of external brick which will certainly keep the project in line with the requirement.

*\*Alleged conflicts of the design related to north v. south differentials such as flat-roofing only emphasize the more eminent requirement that "the massing of larger buildings...should preserve the space and rhythm of existing buildings."*

When factored collectively, the roofing, height, setback, compartmental massing, and open space also aligns with Standards for Design & Preservation for Williamson Street 600-1100 Blocks. It has earned a certificate of appropriateness.

I encourage you to do as you did regarding potential zoning changes and that is to dig deeper and see above the standard opposition because moving this project forward only benefits the Marquette district and the City as a whole.

Thank you for your fair deliberation.

Jack Kear  
1045 East Wilson Street

---

From: Judith Strand <matystrand@hotmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 2:13 PM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>; Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: 817 Williamson, 8/24/20, opposition

Willy St. is a distinctive, highly valued street of modest sized houses, flats, stores, restaurants, and apartments. It sets the tone for the near Eastside and attracts people for daily visits, as well as lifelong residents whose children's attend schools blocks away. It is historic and loved. The proposal for 817 Williamson St. disrespects what has been created, nurtured, and protected by generations of people. Such a structure cannot be justified. There is no benefit to people beyond the developer. I hope you will consider the spirit that's being violated - a spirit people, all people can describe. There are tangible costs of the proposed scale too - increased car traffic and congestion, growing vacant first floor spaces in apartment structures that undermines neighborhood safety and vitality, and a ruined 'sense of place' which is Willy St. The cost to us all outweighs any benefit to us all. Protect Willy St., respect Willy St., and vote down this project. Thank you, Judith Strand 745 Jenifer St. (30 year resident)

---

From: anewalker@homelandgarden.com <anewalker@homelandgarden.com>  
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 1:57 PM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: 817 Willy St I do not support

Before the Plan Commission tonight-817 Williamson St

Dear Marsha

I do not support the proposed redevelopment at 817 Willy St. For those of us who know the documents that relate to the proposed site, we know that the project came in too large.

The first meeting I attended with MNA P & D in relation to this project, Mr Cook spent his time encouraging the committee to support an overlarge development due to his purchase price. A specific design was not shared, but it was certainly very clear from the onset that Mr Cook either had not read the relevant documents, or was comfortable disregarding them. They exist for a reason and that reason is so that we are all "on the same page."

The proposed development does not fit in this location nor is it a fit based on guiding documents. I do not support the proposed development.

Anne Walker

---

From: John Martens <johnmartens@charter.net>  
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 1:25 PM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: 817 Williamson Street Proposal

Commissioners,

The proposal for 817 Williamson St. does not comply with our Comprehensive Plan or with BUILDII, but those have been better addressed by others. 817 Williamson St. simply put is vastly out of scale with the neighborhood and sets a serious potential for the demise of the entire third Lake Ridge historic district.

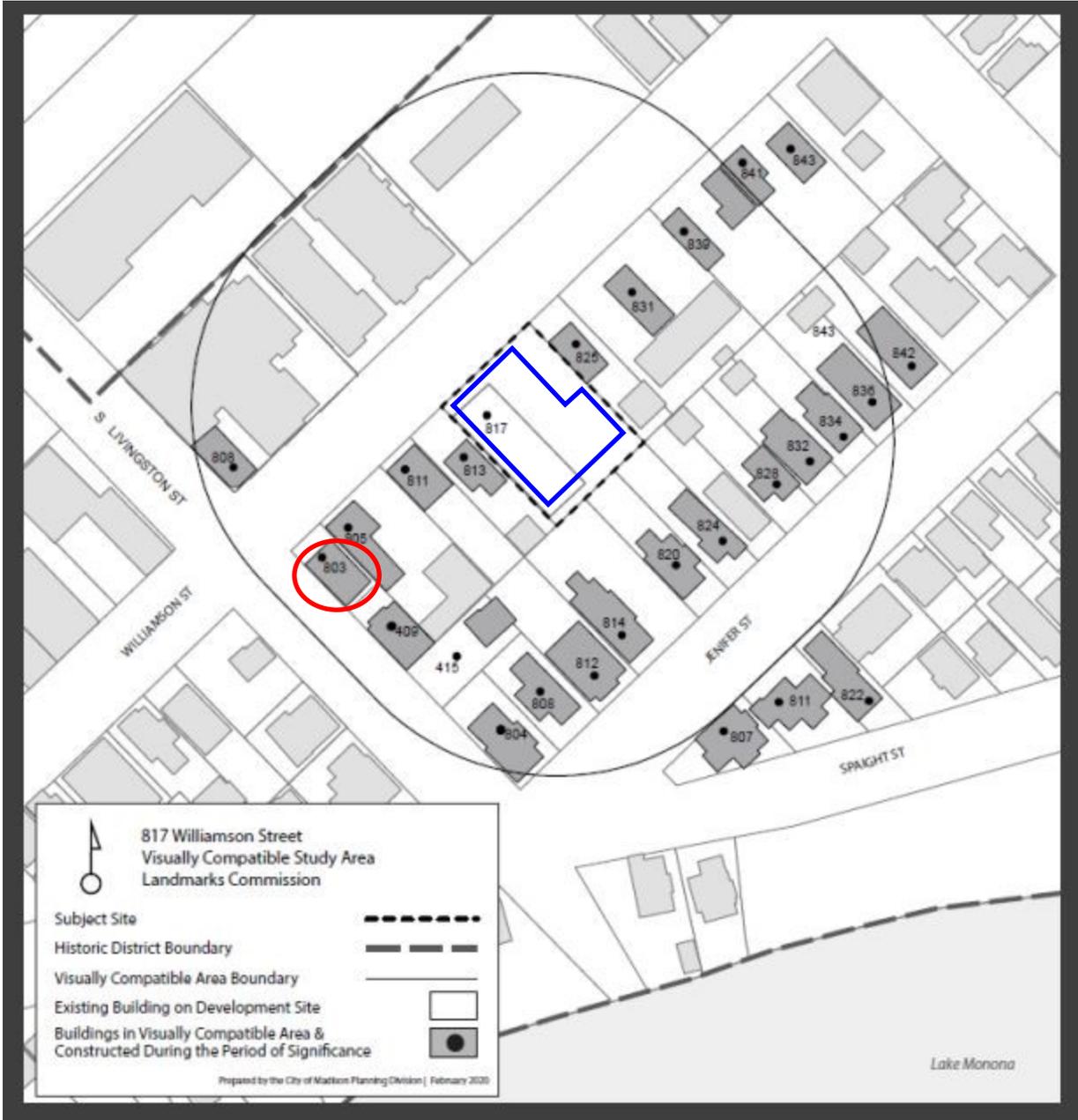
The proposal was recently approved by Landmarks Commission without serious discussion of the six standards and with major help from an incorrect and misleading submission from staff. Standards for Third Lake Ridge require compatibility with buildings built before 1929 within 200 feet (VRA) of the subject proposal. The staff drawing of the buildings within 200 feet (Exhibit A) included 803 Williamson St., a lot-filling building built in 2019. Staff then went on to show a photo of 803 as an illustration of why the proposal was compatible. (Exhibit B) Ordinance clearly states that the comparison should be made with “contributing” buildings, in this case buildings built before 1929. 803 Williamson was not built before 1929 and its inclusion here is critically misleading, especially supporting visual compatibility.

Never once in the most recent Landmarks hearing was 41.23 (6) (f), the most relevant standard, discussed. That is the standard that requires compatibility of “the rhythm of building masses and spaces.” The interpretation of this standard has typically been the relationship of the volume of the building to the space around it.

The fabric and critical essence of the Third Lake Ridge is the relationship of the buildings to the spaces around them. Other than the roof configuration and materials on the façade, our Third Lake Ridge ordinance mandates nothing of historical style, as the district is composed of an eccentric mix of many styles of modest buildings on ample lots. The other four of the six standards in this district emphasize compatibility of volume, height, proportions, and rhythm of masses to spaces.

The proposal at 817 is the tallest, most massive, lot-filling building in the VRA, and staff supported it both visually and verbally by comparing it to a noncontributing building. If this creative way of looking at “compatibility” of scale is applied to future buildings, density in this desirable neighborhood will likely domino throughout the entire district, each new lot-packing, taller-than-the-rest, building justified by the previous one.

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Martens  
Williamson Street Property Owner since 1974





**Project Name & Address:** 817-821 Williamson Street

**Application Type(s):** Certificates of Appropriateness for demolition, new construction, and a land combination in the Third Lake Ridge historic district

**Legistar File ID #** [59708](#)

**Prepared By:** Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

**Date Prepared:** May 26, 2020

## Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Brandon Cook, John Fontain Realty

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve Certificates of Appropriateness for the demolition of an existing commercial structure, construction of a new mixed-use structure, and a land combination.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location/Information:** The subject site is located in the Third Lake Ridge Local Historic District.

### Relevant State Statute Section:

**Wisc SS 62.23(7)(em)2m.** In the repair or replacement of a property that is designated as a historic landmark or included within a historic district or neighborhood conservation district under this paragraph, a city shall allow an owner to use materials that are similar in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities.

### Relevant Ordinance Sections:

- 41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.** A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.
- (1) New construction or exterior alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
    - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.
    - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.
    - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
    - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City’s historic resources.
  - (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a certificate of appropriateness for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks

Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:

- (a) Whether the structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition or removal would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.
- (b) Whether a landmark's designation has been rescinded.
- (c) Whether the structure, although not itself a landmark structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.
- (d) Whether demolition or removal of the subject property would be contrary to the policy and purpose of this ordinance and/or to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable historic district as duly adopted by the Common Council.
- (e) Whether the structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
- (f) Whether retention of the structure would promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
- (g) The condition of the property, provided that any deterioration of the property which is self-created or which is the result of a failure to maintain the property as required by this chapter cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for demolition or removal.
- (h) Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the historic resources of the historic district in which the subject property is located, or if outside a historic district, compatible with the mass and scale of buildings within two hundred (200) feet of the boundary of the landmark site.

Prior to approving a certificate of appropriateness for demolition, the Landmarks Commission may require the applicant to provide documentation of the structure. Documentation shall be in the form required by the Commission.

- (4) Land Divisions and Combinations. The commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for land divisions, combinations, and subdivision plats of landmark sites and properties in historic districts, unless it finds that the proposed lot sizes adversely impact the historic character or significance of a landmark, are incompatible with adjacent lot sizes, or fail to maintain the general lot size pattern of the historic district.

#### **41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.**

- (6) Standards for New Structures in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Mixed-Use and Commercial Use. Any new structures on parcels zoned for mixed-use and commercial use that are located within two hundred (200) feet of other historic resources shall be visually compatible with those historic resources in the following ways:
  - (a) Gross Volume.
  - (b) Height.
  - (c) The proportion and rhythm of solids to voids in the street facade(s).
  - (d) The materials used in the street facade(s).
  - (e) The design of the roof.
  - (f) The rhythm of buildings masses and spaces.

## Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant is requesting a Certificates of Appropriateness to demolish an existing commercial structure, resolve the underlying lot line for a land combination to create one lot, and construct a new three-story mixed-use structure. The existing building was constructed in 1966 for the Gilman Press and housed their shop. The single-story International-style brick building crosses the lot lines for 817 and 821 Williamson. The remainder of the existing lot contains a surface parking lot.

### Demolition

The narrative in the applicant's letter of interest details how they believe that they meet the criteria for demolition. The existing building is well outside of the period of significance for Third Lake Ridge. Both its architectural style and form are out of character with the historic resources in the district. Please see the March 16 staff report for a discussion of the demolition standards. Staff continues to believe that the request meets the demolition standards.

### Land Combination

While there were originally two buildings on this parcel (one on each lot), those were torn down due to their deteriorated condition in 1966 and 1978. The current building was constructed so that it crossed the lot line and the rest of the property functioned as a surface parking lot. The result is that the parcel has functioned as a single lot and the current proposal is more of a platting process to address an unresolved underlying lot line. Please see the March 16 staff report for a discussion of the land combination standards. Staff continues to believe that the request meets the land combination standards.

### New Structure

Prior to the March 16, 2020 staff report, the applicant requested that the application be put on hold so they could complete a neighborhood meeting. Based upon staff comments and community feedback, they have redesigned the proposed building by setting back on bays on either side of the central façade. This helps to mitigate the perceived mass of the building where previously the façade had been 61-feet in width whereas the widest historic resource in the vicinity was 30-feet wide. The central bay of the street façade is 41-feet 9-inches in width, which is still wider than the historic resources in the vicinity, but is more comparable. However, the southwestern bay on the façade is only set back two feet, which does not provide much of a visual separation. Staff would recommend maintaining the symmetry of the building by setting back the southwestern bay approximately 8-feet, which is the amount of setback on the northeastern bay.

At a full three stories, the building is taller than the historic resources within 200 feet, which are either two or two-and-a-half stories. The application contends that their building is of a similar height to the taller historic resources, however most of the taller historic resources are significantly set back from the front property line. However, the standard is about being visually compatible, not identical. At the corner of the block, the non-historic building at 803 Williamson St. is a three-story commercial building that comes up to the front of the property and is adjacent to a two-and-a-half story historic building. It is taller, but visually compatible:



Streetview of 803-811 Williamson Street illustrating a similar street façade height

The design of the façade is sympathetic to historic commercial resources in the vicinity both in its design and use of masonry. The symmetrical pattern of windows on the façade is in keeping with the pattern of the rhythm of solids and voids in the vicinity. There is a larger proportion of glass on the street level, which is in keeping with some of the historic commercial resources in the vicinity. Overall, the street façade uses a similar architectural vocabulary to historic resources within 200 feet while not creating a false sense of history.

A discussion of the relevant ordinance sections follows:

**41.23 THIRD LAKE RIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT.**

- (6) Standards for New Structures in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Mixed-Use and Commercial Use. Any new structures on parcels zoned for mixed-use and commercial use that are located within two hundred (200) feet of other historic resources shall be visually compatible with those historic resources in the following ways:
- (a) The application does not provide an analysis of the gross volume of the proposed building as compared to the gross volume of the historic resources within 200 feet. Most of the volume of the new building is nested into the back of the lot, which lessens the appearance of the volume on the street façade. The entrance to the garage in the back can read like a separate garage in the back of the lot, which is a feature of other historic resources in the vicinity. The historic commercial resources within 200 feet are approximately 30-feet in width. The front of the building is 61-feet wide with a 41-foot 9-inch wide central bay that comes up to the front property line. At 41'-9", the central bay of the building would be wider than the street facades of the historic resources, but could be visually compatible if the bays on either side of it are significantly set back. To assist with making the street façade compatible in terms of its perceived gross volume, it is critical to set back the southwestern bay from the currently proposed 2 feet to approximately 8 feet to be comparable to the setback on the northeastern bay.
  - (b) The height of the proposed building does not appear to have changed from the previous submission. By providing a substantial setback of the bays on either side of the central street façade, the height of the building could be visually compatible while not identical to the historic resources in the vicinity.
  - (c) The new design maintains a similar rhythm of solids and voids as found on historic resources in the vicinity.

- (d) The use of brick and cast stone on the street façade is in keeping with the historic resources in the vicinity.
- (e) The flat roof design with a simple parapet on the street façade is a form found on historic resources within 200’.
- (f) The other buildings that were originally designed to be commercial buildings are all located up against the front property line. They tend to have some space on the sides of the building to allow access to the rear of the principal structure, and then feature garages at the back of the property. While the current proposal is for one building, its configuration will read like a traditional commercial building occupying most of the front of the property, and a garage accessed from the side.

## **Recommendation**

Staff believes that the standards for granting Certificates of Appropriateness for the demolition and land combination are met and should be approved as proposed. Staff believes that the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new construction could be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the proposal with the following condition:

1. Setback the southwestern bay of the street façade to approximately 8 feet to be comparable with the setback of the northeastern bay.

**From:** peter wolff <peterwolff@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 12:55 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** proposal for 817-821 Williamson Street

To: members of the planning commission,

The proposed building in question is in the Third Lake Ridge (TLR) Historic District in the Marquette neighborhood. Our city has decided, as have most major cities in the US, that some amount of historic preservation makes a significant contribution to the value of the city. As are other valued aspects of the city, the historic districts are supposedly supported by a city commission, the Landmarks Commission, which overlooks all the historic elements of the city of Madison, including its four historic districts.

But while the Landmarks Commission addresses many of the minutiae of the TLR district, as well as many of the major decisions, at least an equal amount of time and effort is spent by the Marquette neighborhood on preservation, major planning and new development in the district. While planning for the residential streets has been relatively simple and is managed in the major neighborhood plans, planning for the major commercial street, Williamson Street, which includes both commercial and residential aspects, has been far more difficult.

Following many years of unsuccessful attempts at Willy Street planning the efforts finally ended up in two plans, BUILD1 for the 3 concentrated "downtown" blocks and BUILD2 for the remaining highly mixed blocks and block faces, each with its own character. These plans were approved by the City. Now successful replacement of a building on Willy Street needs to respect the character of its exact location. It does not have to copy the existing buildings but it has to feel comfortable in its location. The "history" of "historic district" now extends to the present.

The project under discussion is located on the 800 block of Willy Street in the middle of the block on the south side of the street. This block face is characterized by mostly original single family wooden houses with a few small mixed-use buildings. The buildings are noticeably smaller than the buildings on the north face of the block, which is adjacent to the East Rail Corridor that was home to several large commercial enterprises.

However, I will propose that, assuming 2-4 units per residential building on the south face of the 800 block, there is no way a 24 unit plus 800 sq ft commercial space building can "feel comfortable in its location". Furthermore, even if the spatial character of the proposed building could somehow be suitably shrunk, in my opinion its present design bears no meaningful esthetic relationship to the existing buildings.

As far as the potential importance of the additional housing goes, every new building project we have been associated with for the past 20-25 years has involved a significant increase in usable space. But recently in a city-wide planning process to identify likely locations for increase in residential space, apparently Willy Street was not included. Finally, traffic-wise Willy Street is approaching capacity and is already regarded by our traffic committee as becoming dangerously over-crowded, so large middle-block housing projects on Willy Street should not be encouraged.

But if you refuse to approve this project in its present form what will happen? I will assure you that over the years the P/D (Preservation/Development) committee of the Marquette Neighborhood Association has faced this situation a number of times. But I cannot think of one that wasn't resolved sooner or later to the benefit of the neighborhood and the historic district.

Thank you,  
Peter Wolff

---

**From:** Rachel Bauer <Rachel.Bauer@countryfinancial.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 12:31 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Full Support of 817-821 Williamson Street

Good Afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,

While I am unable to join the meeting live this evening I wanted to share my sincere appreciation for the difficult work that you do and the challenging decisions you all face in considering the many projects that come before you for approval.

Madison has long been my home by choice. There are very few cities that offer and attract growth for its residents and make living in the downtown area as comfortable as we do. Your role as part of the Madison Plan Commission is to continue that important work and continue to build and grow our neighborhoods according to the adopted plans set forth and adopted by our great city.

I have had the privilege of developing property and working on commercial projects in Illinois, Austin and Denver. I feel as though none of those places are as welcoming to residents as Madison is. I applaud your continued efforts to create and attract residents to the downtown area and to continue to build a vibrant and walkable city. In 2008, I worked with commercial real estate at M&I Bank and watched the plan for the east corridor unfold. I am delighted by what the east corridor has become today and encourage you to continue that vision by bringing additional living units to the Williamson Street area as the city development plans have allowed for.

Today, I would describe myself as a passionate adaptive-reuse and preservationist who understands the complex nature of growth while maintaining our history. Humans and buildings have a long symbiotic relationship and we must respect. The redevelopment of the historic Kleuter-Mautz building, now the Hotel Indigo, is a project I have envisioned since 2009. It looks exactly like I believed it would one day become.

I am in full support of the proposed building at 817-821 Williamson Street. I am the resident of the adjacent property at 825 Williamson Street. I have looked closely at the city plans and guidelines for this project and found this project not only meets the guidelines of the Williamson Street 600-1100 Block Plan and the East Rail Corridor plan, the proposed building is **smaller** in size and density than the guidelines allow for.

I have included key elements in italics below for quick reference to the argument that this building is too massive or out of scale with the neighborhood plans. Of which, I have heard from passionate opposition in the neighborhood *“that this building is too massive to be set among 2-story homes and therefore should be opposed!”* With all due respect and equal passion, I disagree. I am living in the 2-story home next door. While building of this size would be far out of proportion if placed on Jennifer or Spaight street, it is very appropriately scaled for the Williamson Street which is a commercial/residential corridor and has no negative impact on the homes on those streets. If the opposing parties are not residents of Williamson Street, it is hard to imagine that their opposition should be considered grounds for slowing the progress of Madison while within the guidelines of well adopted plans.

I am sure the same arguments were made to stall mixed-use residential properties with undergrown parking along the Johnson Street corridor. As you already know, redevelopment of critical sites is key to providing the housing to meet the projected growth demands of the city while maintaining the character and quality building stock that grounds these neighborhoods to our history.

*“The setback differences between commercial and residential buildings on Williamson Street should be preserved. Commercial and mixed-use buildings are usually built at or close to the front lot line.” (ref: Standards for Design & Preservation Williamson Street 600–1100 Blocks – Section 8 Commercial Buildings, page 29)*

*“Commercial infill projects shall be built two feet (2’) from the front lot line, have flat roofs, narrow bays, recessed entries, large display windows and be constructed of materials recommended previously in this chapter. (ref: Standards for Design & Preservation Williamson Street 600–1100 Blocks – Section 11 Commercial Buildings, page 30)*

The proposed building has a 4’ set back and 59’ at the garage entrance to reduce massing.

*“The Plan Commission and Landmarks Commission addressed the differences between the Williamson Street 600-1100 Block Plan and the East Rail Corridor plan. In essence the final resolution calls for the land use recommendations in the East Rail corridor plan to prevail and **the recommendations regarding design guidelines and criteria in the Williamson Street 600-1100 Block Plan to prevail.** “(Adopting resolution is located on page 49.) (ref: Standards for Design & Preservation Williamson Street 600–1100 Blocks - Reconciling of the two neighborhood plans; Williamson Street 600-1100 Block Plan and the East Rail Corridor Plan. page 31)*

The land use and the purposed design of this project are within the guidelines set forth in both plans.

*“On the north side of the 800 and 900 block of Williamson Street, flat-roofed three story structures shall be permitted.” (ref: Standards for Design & Preservation Williamson Street 600–1100 Blocks – Section 11 Commercial Buildings, page 31)*

The purposed building is the appropriate height being a 3 story structure and in Zone 1. Which allows for a maximum of 3 stories in height on the 800 block of Williamson Street.

*“The massing of larger buildings should be compartmentalized or broken up, to preserve the spacing and “rhythm” of existing building groups.” (ref: Standards for Design & Preservation Williamson Street 600–1100 Blocks – section 4 pg. 27)*

According to the proposed and revised plans the following densities shall be considered:

Open Space	3,677 S.F. (960 S.F. Min. Required)
Open Space / Unit	153 S.F./Unit (40 S.F./Unit Required)
Lot Coverage	9,015 S.F. = 70% of total lot (85% Max.)

Alone with the driveway set back of 59’ to break up the front of the building and reduce massing. The building mass has been broken up by several other design features. The landmarks committee HAS awarded the project a certificate of appropriateness.

I am disappointed that last night someone dropped off a plea on my doorstep to register to oppose this project providing a quick link to do so. I would encourage each of you to consider that the opposition on this project is coming from a single source of a committed individual(s) and does NOT reflect the neighborhood as a whole. There is no equally aggressive campaign by any party to support it. As we all know, a campaign against something is far more likely to register votes than a campaign for some sort of change. Please take this personal crusade into consideration when you are reviewing all the opposition.

Overall the proposed building is well within the guidelines for it’s location. The planning commission should approve this project immediately and allow it to move forward.

In closing, I would again like to thank you for the often thankless job each and every one of you do to preserve and promote our history and our growth. Madison is a very special place and without your leadership and commitment to progress and growth that does not trample our history we could soon look like a city that has forgotten our past in favor of our future. I am confident each of you is dedicated to maintaining our past while encouraging and meeting the demands of our future.

Many thanks,

*Rachel Bauer*

**COUNTRY Financial**

Insurance Agent

Madison, WI 53718

Office: (608) 237.5994

[Rachel.bauer@countryfinancial.com](mailto:Rachel.bauer@countryfinancial.com)



AUTO | HOME | LIFE | BUSINESS | RETIREMENT



**From:** Tracy Doreen <myrealibrary@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 12:12 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>; Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson 8/24/20 opposition

Dear Madison Plan Commission Members,

Please uphold standards and characteristics needed for new buildings to fit harmoniously into this historic neighborhood. The current proposal for 817 Williamson is not compatible with this historic block on the south side of Williamson especially in the areas of gross volume, height and sidewalk setback. It would be most desirable if this building also offered truly affordable housing.

Yes, new building/buildings will be built in this space. It seems to me a crucial point and problem between the neighborhood historic planners and any building to be built here is: How do you fit enough units into a smaller building stipulated in the Build II plan and rent them at an even semi affordable rate and still make money? Real estate speculation may not be such a good thing for the integrity of a small historic neighborhood. Did the current owner overpay for the site?

To fit in successfully this building needs to have a greater setback from the sidewalk, less height and mass. Green space would be nice, and remember the largest and closet neighbors to this proposed project who are voiceless - the large trees behind the present building.

There are multiple solutions and yes multiple constraints. Creative thinking must prevail, not simply squeeze a larger building into this mid block space. It doesn't have to look like all the other big brick buildings. It could be innovative and contemporary as long as it fits the space instead of being squished into the space.

A few suggestions: how about an all residential building, or include a greater number of smaller commercial units that are artist studios? Or larger live/work spaces? Not just ground floor retail space as is often done. I believe there is a way to rethink the space and its use, while decreasing the proposed building's mass and height and increasing the sidewalk setback.

This isn't asking for perfection, this isn't anti build or NIMBYism. This is asking the city and developer to respect this historic neighborhood and all the forward thinking work - creating guidelines for the future development that is now on our doorstep. Please consider this as a *very rare, precious and unique opportunity* to become a beloved new building on the 800 block south side of Williamson Street!

Please do not approve the current proposal for this project. Please respect the Third Lake Ridge Historic District.

Respectfully,  
Tracy Dietzel  
515 S. Paterson  
Madison, WI

**From:** Leigh Mollenhoff <[leighm@firstweber.com](mailto:leighm@firstweber.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 7:03:27 AM

**To:** Stouder, Heather

**Subject:** Fwd: Please forward attached documents to the Plan Commission this morning regarding 817 Williamson

I am writing to ask a favor: please send the attached two letters to the members of the Plan Commission and staff. The simple fact is, the developer has tweaked the building twice, but these tweaks are so cumulatively tiny that they cannot pass the Third Lake Ridge Historic District criteria. Therefore, we hope the plan commission will consider our two letters when they meet tonight.

Thank you,

Dave

---

Date: July 12, 2020

To: Members of the Landmarks Committee

From: David and Leigh Mollenhoff

Subject: Legistar [Hold for Legistar # and agenda item #]  
Problems with the 817-821 Williamson Street project

We sent you our first letter on this project on May 31 and now we find it necessary to send a second. Based on our experience as citizen activists and developers, we want to make the following points:

1. You rejected this proposal at your June 1 meeting, but allowed the developer to come back with a significantly revised proposal that would meet Third Lake Ridge Historic District (TLRHD) ordinance requirements.
2. However, the developer has returned with tweaks so trivial that it cannot meet ordinance standards. The developer's decision to submit trivial tweaks means one of two things: either he has no interest in satisfying the ordinance requirements or he does not understand it.
3. The developer has decided to ignore the clear and compelling *ordinance-based arguments* provided by the Marquette Neighborhood Association and its Planning and Development Committee and numerous neighbors.
4. Staff's primary job is to demand compliance with the ordinance. Citizens like Linda Lehnertz should not have to prepare a veritable legal opinion to demonstrate that this building does not meet TLRHD criteria. The ordinance clearly protects the independence of the preservation planner against the pressures of others in the plan department.

5. As Lehnertz argues, too many TLRHD standard-violating projects have been approved by the commission with the encouragement of staff. The process has produced a classic example of standards creep. Each new building is a little bigger than the last and, falsely, becomes a precedent for still another bigger building. As the standards get ratcheted up the integrity of the historic district is inevitably lost.

6. This constant fight by citizens to demand compliance with ordinance standards is not sustainable. Citizens are volunteers and don't get a penny for their efforts. By contrast, project architects and developers have compelling financial incentives to come back again and again and again to persuade you to approve bigger, more profitable buildings. Money almost always trumps volunteer efforts. Developers know this.

7. Because the integrity of the TLRHD has been under great developmental pressure for many years, it is imperative that the commission demand compliance with the ordinance. And if the project fails to meet the criteria, then the only right decision is to reject the project--again.

---

Date: May 31, 2020

To: Members of the Landmarks Committee

From: David and Leigh Mollenhoff

Subject: Legistar 59708, Agenda item #1  
The need to reject the proposal for 817-821 Williamson Street

We write as two persons who have served on the Landmarks Commission for a total of 16 years. Leigh served as Chair for 3 years. We think we understand the role of the Commission and the ordinance it is obligated to enforce.

David served as chair of a citizen committee that played a large role in rewriting the landmarks ordinance that was approved unanimously by the Common Council in 2015.

We have been residents of the Marquette Neighborhood for 56 years and have been highly active in its civic life during this time. For example, we were founding members of the Marquette Neighborhood Association and served in many of its offices including president, transportation committee chair, and the neighborhood plan committee chair. In addition, we were the developers of The Fauerbach Condominiums, Madison's first downtown condo project.

Based on our experience as citizen activists and developers, we want to make the following points:

1. We strongly *endorse* the seven thoughtful "key points" at the beginning of the memo that Linda Lehnertz' submitted to you for your June 1 meeting. We plead with you to review and heed her rigorously researched analysis and its ineluctable conclusions.

2. The proposed project blatantly violates the standards of the Third Lake Ridge Historic District and therefore must be rejected by you.

3. The integrity of the Third Lake Ridge has been under great developmental pressure for many years and it is imperative that the Commission oppose the project so that it does not become another project that subsequent developers will use to ratchet up and violate the ordinance standards. Indeed, rejecting this proposal is not just the right decision; it is the only valid decision you can make to abide by the ordinance.

Thank you.

cc: Heather Bailey  
Linda Lehnertz

---

From: John Beck <jb.fireal@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 8:48 AM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: 817 Williamson St.

I am opposed to the current plan for development of 817 Williamson St. I think the building is too large for the surrounding environment.

I think the developer should adhere to the recommendations of Build 2.

John Beck  
814 Jenifer St.  
Madison, WI  
53703

Sent from my iPad

---

From: James Montgomery <madisonmarquettehotel@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 8:31 AM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Number 8

Good morning,

I am writing to the city of Madison planning division to express my support for development number 8 by Brandon Cook on Williamson Street. Not only will this development fill the immediate needs of the neighborhood it will prove to be a valuable asset as our neighborhood grows in the future. This project will add residential units to the housing stock in the city of Madison and ultimately help with the affordability of housing. The commercial storefront aspect of this project will attract business owners who will need modern space that is ADA (American disability act )accessible, this is clearly an issue in our

neighborhood since the majority of Commercial buildings are older. Brandon Cook has demonstrated his willingness to be a good neighbor and go above expectations with his Real estate projects in the city of Madison.

Thank you for your consideration, James Montgomery  
414 S. Baldwin street.

Sent from my iPhone

---

**From:** John <colemanjj@ameritech.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 8:15 AM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Cc:** Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Opposition to Agenda Item #8 817 Williamson St.

Plan Commission,  
I am writing to oppose Agenda Item #8,?? the project at?? 817 Williamson as it is currently formulated.

The proposal by Mr. Cook for 817-21 Williamson, on the south side of the street, still does not meet the minimum standards for our neighborhood plans.

As a long-term member of the Marquette Neighborhood Association Preservation and Development Committee (P&D) I have reviewed countless development proposals for the neighborhood. Most of those proposals have moved forward after improvement motivated in part by input from the P&D committee.

**With 2 separate votes, on May 12th and August 12th, the neighborhood P&D Committee voted to not support the project.**

The 817 proposal needs additional changes to meet neighborhood and City plans and gain the support of the neighborhood.

In relation to the Build II neighborhood plan the project exceeds height standards specified in that plan and does not comply with the small scale buildings specified for the south side of the 800 block of Williamson St.?? In addition, the mass of the project vastly exceeds that of adjacent properties and that indicated by the BUILD II plan.

Below are specifics related to the excessive height and lack of adequate setback of the project.

According to the developer's plans, the current proposal is for a 3 story building 40feet 7.75inches high as measured from the sidewalk elevation to the parapet. The flat roof behind the parapet is at 39feet 7.75inches height.

**Adjacent properties:**

I surveyed the properties adjacent to the proposed development at 817 Williamson. They are 2 or 2-1/2 story residential and commercial structures. The adjacent properties have the following dimensions:

address	roof-style	height(ft)*	setback-from-sidewalk(ft)
813	gabled	32	25
817 (existing MTI building)	flat	16	10
825	gabled	31	26
831	flat	26	4

Heights are feet about the sidewalk elevation to the gabled roof peak or top of parapet on flat roofs and are accurate to within 1 foot.

**BUILD II specifications:**

In the Build II neighborhood plan (attached, page 31) the plan specifies the 800 block as Zone 1 and states:

"Zone I. New buildings shall be no higher than 2-1/2 stories, except for the following:??

On the north side of the 800 and 900 block of Williamson Street, flat-roofed three story structures shall be permitted."

As a member of the BUILD II plan development committee I remember that the 2-1/2 story limit on the south side of the 800 block was specified because:

- neighborhood strong desire to keep that side of the street at it's current residential scale
- a desire to allow sunlight to enter Willy street from the south side and not create a shadow corridor along Williamson St..
- a desire to keep large-scale development to the blocks adjacent to the railroad corridor and where there are existing large buildings on the north side of Willy.

In Build II there is a possible exception to the 2-1/2 story limit but only at corners where cross street intersect Williamson St. This was because of the existing and potential retail/commercial nodes at those locations.?? The stated goal was to keep the interior of the blocks of south side Williamson St. in the 800 block small scale residential.

Page 29 of BUILD II

"d. While the plan does not encourage the construction of brick flat-roofed commercial and mixed-use buildings outside the commercial nodes, those that are built should occupy the corners of the blocks."

The BUILD II plan does encourage larger mixed use developments, but on the north side of Williamson and in the railroad corridor, not on the south side of Williamson. The project can be made better and

more in keeping with neighborhood and City plans by a reduction in mass and height and with increased setback from the sidewalk.

I hope that the commission will consider these issues and not approve the project as currently formulated.

Sincerely,  
john coleman

--

413 S. Dickinson St.  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** Victoria Kohlman <chezvous831@live.com>

**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 7:42 AM

**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>

**Subject:** 817 Williamson 8/24/20 opposition

I own the building at 831 Williamson.

I oppose the development because it is out of scale and context with the neighborhood.

I restored my building and received a Historic Preservation Award in 2011 for Commercial Rehabilitation from Madison Trust.

Projects can be commercially viable and still maintain the historic fabric of our neighborhood.

Victoria Kohlman

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

---

**From:** Mitch Sands <mtsands90@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Monday, August 24, 2020 12:46 AM

**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>

**Subject:** 817-821 Williamson

Dear Members of Madison Planning Commission,

I love Madison. I love living here for multiple reasons. It is a vibrant city with nightlife, abundant outdoor recreation, friendly people... I could go on. I moved here almost six years ago, like most young people who have come from other places to choose to call Madison home. I choose to live here and I choose to stay here.

I have noticed over the past six years that unfortunately, Madison (government and the public) are extremely anti-development. When a developer tries to invest millions of dollars into our community, they are met with anger and accusations of trying to "gentrify" a neighborhood or attempting to ruin the historical relevance of a certain area. There is merit to that and I don't begrudge community members for trying to keep their home the way it has been for their entire lives. But, when that happens, we stall growth.

Every city in America and in Wisconsin wants to grow. Growth looks different everywhere, but everywhere you go in this country, growth is celebrated and encouraged. Not in Madison. The culture in Madison is to keep things the way they have always been. It is ridiculous to make developers jump through unrealistic hoops when all they are trying to do is better their neighborhoods, provide quality housing, and increase the tax base.

If you look at this particular property that is being discussed at this meeting, the building is not of historical significance and it is not visually appealing. Willy Street is one of the most popular areas in Madison. It is full of restaurants, shops, and homes. Allowing this developer to tear down a useless building and parking lot and building a new complex would add to the desirability of the area and attract even more businesses to the Marquette Neighborhood. Again - this should be celebrated, not protested and stopped.

Full disclosure - I am a tenant of the company who owns this property and will be developing it. This email was written by me and I was not directed to write it. I simply feel that the anti development sentiment in Madison is unwarranted and is slowing the growth of this great city.

It is also worth noting that I live steps away from the proposed project. This project would likely cause me to lose my parking spot for an extended period of time and construction would interrupt my everyday life. However, I feel so strongly about development in Madison that I am willing to fully support it despite its impact on my life.

Members - please do the right thing. Do the right thing for your city and its future, not the loud few who will never be happy or satisfied. Their goal is to stand in the way of progress. Opponents have mentioned that this project will be "amongst historic two story homes". While these homes might be old, I would bet that they are not, in fact, historic. Just because something is old does not mean it is historic and that a new building cannot/should not be built NEXT TO it.

I also challenge you to think about the future property taxes this new project would pay to the city. Tens of thousands of dollars a year in new property taxes into city coffers when we know for a fact that budgets are going to be tight for municipalities in the near future.

I support this project and I hope you do too.

Thank you for your time,

Mitch Sands  
403 S. Livingston St. #201  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** Sharon Kilfoy <sharon@willyart.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 23, 2020 8:53 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Cc:** Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson, 8/24/20 Opposition

Dear Plan Commission Members,

I am writing to you in opposition to Agenda Item #2, 817 Williamson St.

I have lived on Williamson St since 1970 and have owned my home at 1020 Williamson Street since 1975. As a longtime resident of Willy Street, I have witnessed immense changes – some good, some not so good. I have participated in many neighborhood “charrettes” (community design get-togethers), Willy St Build #1 and #2, Landmark ordinance reviews, countless related meetings and am a founding member of Friends of Historic Third Lake Ridge, a group intended to find balance between the needs of Madison’s ever increasing population and that of preserving something worthwhile from our past.

I believe that what is most germane to 817 Williamson St is:

- The Landmarks approval was granted, in no small part I would imagine, because the staff person gave the commissioners FALSE INFORMATION regarding the compatible buildings in the “visual” area. Giving her the benefit of the doubt, we must assume that she does not understand the ordinance and made an honest mistake. None-the-less, this decision is to be disregarded by the Plan Commission, and hopefully will be rectified once the truth comes out.
- The Plan Commission is to be guided by neighborhood plans – among them, Willy St Build 1 & Willy St Build 2. It is clear to me and to others who have spent years working on and studying these neighborhood plans, that the 817 proposal is aesthetically incompatible with the surrounding buildings – not only will it totally disrupt the rhythm of voids & solids on the street, but will set a precedence in scale that is completely unacceptable.
- My understanding is that in order to approve this building, you will need to grant it a PUD or whatever is the current equivalent of an exception to the standards. Please, exceptions should only be given to exceptional projects – and this one is not exceptional – it is not even ordinary – it is detrimental.

Finally, on a personal note, some of us are tired of fighting this fight. In some ways, we were much better off when Willy St was considered to be the “worst” street in town. Even though there are two (newer) developments on the opposite side of the block on which I live (which are way too big) at least they are occupied by stable neighbors – one as a condominium – the other as long-time renters.

The building next to me at 1018 Williamson was Brandon Cook’s first venture on Willy St. I did not oppose it – maybe I was too tired to get involved – maybe I was thinking to give him a chance. Even though the doubling of the size of the building permanently blocks sun I once had, the paint & tar left on my driveway from the project was never cleaned up, and the light on the rear of the building is so bright, the students could do their homework out there, worse is that they are student renters who stay for

one year at best. They never take out their own garbage – never shovel their own snow – and never become part of the community.

I was much better off when the house belonged to notorious landlord Ron Putkammer – who at least kept his rents cheap enough that the Gomez family stayed there for over a decade – their children becoming lifelong friends with my children. Therefore, really, the quality of my life has gone down with the advent of the project next to me. And, by the way, what with the Gomez family's 5 children, mom & dad and assorted cousins, there was greater density back then than there is now with a building twice the size as the one before.

In conclusion, I urge you to turn this project down. In its place could be two 2-flat homes, with owner-occupiers who would commit to building a life here on Willy Street as many of us have – not just using it as a pass-through as they prepare for their “real” life. Please do not violate the Plan Commission ordinances pertaining to this neighborhood, and do not allow a monstrous building to be built here that you would not allow to be built on your own street.

Thanks

**Sharon Kilfoy**

Director

Williamson St Art Center

1020 Williamson St

Madison, WI 53703

[www.willyart.net](http://www.willyart.net)

---

**From:** mike engel <mik3eng3l@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 23, 2020 5:24 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Cc:** Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 8 Aug 24 917 Williamson

Dear Plan Commission

Reject this plan.

The developer for this site needs to take a walk in the neighborhood and read City Planning documents. Nothing about his proposal fits.

I am a neighbor. This development backs up to my lot line. Our common ground is something that should replace the existing building and surface parking lot. What he proposes needs to be rejected and sent back for them to comply with Build II.

It is in reality a story taller than it should be by building height (10 feet taller all neighboring buildings). The massive front in height and width does not fit at all. Please ask the development team

to document the similarities and differences of their proposed building to the rhythm of the buildings within 200 feet on this side of Willy. Also it is important to note this is MID-block not a corner building.

Please note the Marquette Neighborhood Association could not get a vote to support this project. The Landmarks Commission approved after several tries but only within their very limited scope. They can not consider failure to fit neighborhood plans.

Mike Engel  
826 Jenifer St

---

**From:** Ross W <ross.wuennenberg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 23, 2020 2:58 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>; Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 8, Planning Commission Meeting 8/24

I would like to register my opposition to this proposal for 817 Williamson Street. The building size and mass is out of character for the south side of this block. My fear is that if this building is approved, the rest of Williamson Street will be open to more large buildings which are being rented at market rates, as this one, with no affordable housing component.

Please ask the developer to go back to the drawing board for a smaller building which can be supported and include affordable housing.

Best regards  
Ross Wuennenberg  
836 Spaight Street  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** dorla mayer <screendoorstudio@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 23, 2020 1:20 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** opposition to 817 Williamson 8.24.20 Plan Commission

As a resident and business owner in the same block as proposed development, I feel the sheer mass and scale of the building as proposed will overpower the streetscape and diminish the character of the block and perhaps the feel of the overall street. It would loom over the street and take away from the current livable open feel, leaving a cavern like encroaching, dominating feel to the street, rather than the current stepped back more welcoming ambiance. Please consider rejecting the development as currently presented.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dorla Mayer  
851 Williamson St.  
Madison, WI 53703

---

**From:** Hannah Spaul <hmspaul@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 23, 2020 12:37 PM  
**To:** Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
**Cc:** Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 817 Williamson, 8/24/20 opposition

I write to express my opposition to the proposed development at 817 Williamson, an agenda item for the Monday August 24th Plan Commission meeting. The building proposed would be uncharacteristically large both in height, width and bulk for the neighborhood. Recent alterations since the February 24th proposal are mere nods to cosmetics of the building, but do not address the clearly expressed concerns of local residents and property owners that the size of the building is not in keeping with BUILD II guidance. The 2018 Comprehensive Plan specifically kept Williamson Street off the list of corridors for "Growth Priority Areas" Both the Plan Commission and the Common Council determined that Williamson street was not a street to focus on for large housing developments. The street and block is classified as a neighborhood mixed use street with housing units not to exceed 70 units per acre. The proposed building at 817 exceeds this at a density of 81 per acre.

As a resident and home owner living immediately adjacent to the proposed development, i can state that i am in support of using the space for a multi-unit housing development, however, i advocate for it to be something in keeping with approved guidance of already developed community development plans, and something that is in keeping with size and scope of the other residential buildings on the block.

I believe a better proposal could be put forward that would enable the space to be developed, provide needed housing, and compliment the historic residential neighborhood. The current plan is unacceptable to me.

Sincerely, Hannah Spaul  
826 Jenifer Street Madison WI 53703

---

From: Dan Fuller <callingdanfuller@gmail.com>  
Sent: Saturday, August 22, 2020 8:48 PM  
To: Planning <planning@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: 817 Williamson Street proposal

Dear Planning Commission,

I oppose Brandon Cook's proposed apartment building at 817 Williamson because it will result in too much density for the neighborhood. The proposal calls for 81 units per acre while the current Neighborhood Mixed Use designation calls for 70 units per acre. Cook should not be given an exception.

I don't care much for the buildings that would be torn down. No great loss, but Cook's replacement would be too big.

Thanks,

Dan Fuller  
845 Jenifer St.