

The developer's proposal at Plan Commission is almost identical to the one withdrawn for the 24 February Plan Commission meeting and to the one submitted for the 18 May PC meeting. Thus the steering committee is resubmitting their report from 3 February. Thus the concerns listed in this report are still pertinent to the Plan Commission's decision on this proposal.

What follows is the results of our investigation into the actual record of Core Spaces in Madison and in other communities. We uncovered serious causes for concern about the quality and integrity of this company, and find reason to doubt any promises or claims they might make. In this report, we summarize the applicant's behavior in college towns around the United States, and how it relates to the proposal for 126 Langdon Street.

### **Madison WI**

Core Spaces have built two large luxury private dormitories in Madison, The Hub and the James. According to Plan Commission members from the time of application, Core Spaces committed to managing both properties and not to sell them. Within eight months of completion, each property was sold to another owner, resulting in discontinuity of management. These properties were known for their disruptive party culture and generated inordinate calls for service. At significant expense to the City, it took several years for the Madison Police Department, the alders and the Planning Division to set up and be able to enforce management plans to maintain a civil and collegiate atmosphere in these properties. Given their history in Madison and elsewhere, **we do not believe that Core Spaces is fully committed to managing and maintaining the proposed development for 126 Langdon St.**

At the 18 May Plan Commission meeting, Mark Lifshin, CEO of Core Spaces, stated, "we've been awarded the industry's highest honor of best new development in the last 5 out of 6 years. *Our management was recently ranked in the top 5 across the country*". According to their website, they have listed the "Innovator Award for Best New Development" from Student Housing Business (a commercial real estate trade magazine) several times. **The only evidence of Core Spaces' management's 5<sup>th</sup>-place ranking is a meta-data analysis by a paid industry consultant.**

When questioned by a commissioner about Core Spaces' move in/move out plan, Mr. Lifshin stated that they have ". . . a strategy that's been implemented over the last 15 years of us being in student housing." It is noted in the summary of media reports from around the country that as late as fall semester 2019, Core Spaces' had inadequate planning and opened buildings before they were ready, resulting in moving day chaos and potential health risks. **Commissioners need to be more careful in their acknowledgment of commitments and inflated claims from Core Spaces.**

For the proposed development under consideration, Core Spaces have aggressively pursued their goals **without regard to adjacent neighbors' concerns, Madison's political process and Madison's ordinances.**

The application being reviewed at the 27 July Plan Commission meeting is essentially the same as what was proposed in October 2019 in spite of several steering committee meetings, several UDC meetings and now 2 Plan Commission meetings. .

- Neighbors' concerns about massing: **ignored**
- Neighbors' concerns about excessive height: **ignored**
- Neighbors' concerns about maintaining the architectural rhythm of the historic Langdon Street neighborhood: **ignored**
- Neighbors' concerns about inadequate delivery and rideshare accommodation: **ignored**
- Neighbors' concerns about deleterious activities directly associated with a rooftop pool: **ignored**
- UDC rejection of proposed excess height: **ignored**
- UDC rejection of proposed site circulation: **ignored**

- Aggressive campaign offering monetary gain to exclusive group of students in exchange for support for the proposed development: **illegal**
- Suspected direct payment of members of exclusive group of students in exchange for support at 12 February UDC meeting: **illegal**

The steering committee would like to point out that on the home page of their website, Core Spaces list their core values, one of which is “Never Settle.” It is obvious from our experience with the developer that it was never their intention to collaborate with neighbors or the city commissions. They are asking for approval of a proposal that is far beyond what is appropriate for the site. We ask the commissioners

- **to respect the recommendation of Urban Design Commission and reject the excess height as per MGO 28.183(6)14 and Downtown Plan Objective 3.3**
- **to respect the recommendation of the UDC and request a revision to the design that provides adequate site circulation for anticipated rideshare services and deliveries**
- **to reject the current application**
- **if inclined to approve the application, to request the conditions of approval found in the 3 February Steering Committee Report to the Plan Commission**

## Summary of media reports from around the United States

### Amherst NY

Upon having a proposal rejected by the town of Amherst, New York Town Board, Core Spaces opened a lawsuit versus Amherst, according to the September 7<sup>th</sup> 2017 edition of the Buffalo News.

### Flagstaff AZ

Flagstaff, Arizona had a similar experience, minus a full lawsuit. Core Spaces lawyers had found a provision in the now-overturned development codes for Flagstaff for an area slated for renewal, that allowed them to bypass concerns for the scale, parking effect, and aesthetic effect of their oversized project. There was ongoing organized protest by many community members. The collective anger at the local administration that advocated for the project directly caused three city council seats to be overturned, and the -existing laws to be reformed such that their experience with the forced-development of the Hub could not be repeated. Feeling about this issue remains so strong that the Friends of Flagstaff maintain a web-page specifically devoted to keeping this history visible. They willingly recontacted our committee in Madison by phone to answer all questions and actively encourage us in resisting the plans of Core Spaces as best we can.

### Lexington KY

The Hub built for the University of Kentucky in Lexington has been troubled by a lack of electricity, and by central air so inconsistent that the apartments could be baking in one room and freezing in another room, and with windows that substantially leaked during rain, all according to the November 11<sup>th</sup> 2019 Lexington Herald-Leader. It was further reported that the tenants had to spend well over a week constantly trying to contact the management to get anything done.

### West Lafayette IN

The Hub on Purdue in West Lafayette, Indiana, likewise was not ready for residents to move into, due to electrical and elevator issues, according to the West Lafayette Exponent, resulting in a class action lawsuit versus Core Spaces. In at least 4 cases, the fire department had to rescue people from stuck elevators. This is also the site where a local teenager fired a gun and injured a pair of residents as an intruder at the poolside.

**East Lansing MI**

The Hub in East Lansing, according to the East Lansing Info, experienced elevator shut-downs and excessive dust problems, with Core Spaces being confronted on this issue before the city council in 2019. The chief building inspector stated that he regretted having declared the building ready to open.

**Tuscaloosa AL**

The Hub in Tuscaloosa, Alabama faced a class-action lawsuit in 2018 for false advertising, flooding, exposure of raw sewage and mold issues according to the ABC news affiliate there, and as repeated by the Exponent.

**Tempe & Tucson AZ**

On what becomes a more minor note in comparison, Tempe Arizona, and Tucson Arizona have all experienced ongoing complaints with residents throwing bottles off their balconies, even with Cameras installed, according to the Arizona Daily Star. This problem was so serious that the Fire Department in Tempe required a police escort to go to that Hub. Especially with the proposed swimming pool, this raises serious concerns about the actual quality of both initial screening, and ongoing management in comparison to the glowing promises that Core Spaces has made. This, in itself, should raise red flags, despite the yet-more alarming issues raised above.

**South Columbia, NC**

According to the newspaper, the State, the Hub there has increased parking difficulties, in contrast to the optimistic picture for Langdon Street expressed by Core Spaces. In light of the above, quite serious problems that have had to be independently discovered, this becomes a matter of greater-than-apparent concern, as must any claim made by Core Spaces regarding any concern expressed and dismissed.

**Corvallis OR**

Corvallis, Oregon, in 2015, declined to permit Core Spaces to build a Hub because the project, due to size, were deemed to be bad for the protected wetlands that had been sited for the project.

A neighborhood steering committee met 2 Dec, 16 Dec and 9 Jan to discuss issues surrounding Core Space's proposed development at 126 Langdon St. The committee is concerned that the proposal does not conform to the zoning for the location. There are features of the proposal that the committee feels are inappropriate for the historically collegiate neighborhood very closely associated with UW-Madison campus. The steering committee recognizes that the Plan Commission is empowered to define the design of the proposed development for 126 Langdon. We would like the commissioners to consider the following.

### **Building Design**

The steering committee is very concerned about the mass of the proposed building and its commercial appearance. The size of the front elevation is out of scale with respect to adjacent buildings and appears to be more appropriate for a location for a mixed-use development. There is little in the design that brings out the residential character found in Kennedy Manor or in the new Evans Scholar building.

Furthermore, the committee felt that the proposed building design should reflect the dignity and integrity of the neighborhood. Superior architectural design encourages respect and civility, thus mitigating many of the concerns for bad behavior. Because we are evaluating what appears to be a commercial design with no effort to integrate into a residential space, the committee feels that the design does not meet the standard of compatibility with surrounding buildings in order to qualify for the bonus 2 stories.

In MGO 28.071(3)(c)(1) concerning façade articulation: *The facades of new buildings more than forty (40) feet in width shall be divided into smaller vertical intervals through techniques including but not limited to the following: a. Facade modulation, step backs, or extending forward of a portion of the facade. b. Vertical divisions using different textures, materials, or colors of materials. d. Variation in roof lines to reinforce the modulation or vertical intervals. e. Arcades, awnings, window bays, arched windows, and balconies to reinforce the vertical intervals.*

A design with much deeper articulation and less vertical height on the front elevation would address the committee's concerns about the aesthetics of the design. The Plan Commission's review of this design is important for maintaining the architectural harmony of this historic neighborhood. Because of the lack of strong articulation, **the steering committee did not feel that the building design met the City's criteria for a bonus 2 stories.**

Another example of this proposal's lack of integration is demonstrated just across from the proposed 9-story northwest elevation is 130 Langdon, Pi Beta Phi, a 3-story contributing building in the National Register Historic District on the lake. The Commission must evaluate whether the bonus 2 stories resulting in a contemporary 9 story building should be directly next to a traditional 3-story historic building.

In MGO 28.183(6)14 concerning allowing excess height, all the following conditions must be present:

a. *The excess height is compatible with the existing or planned (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) character of the surrounding area, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.*

- **The steering committee has concerns with the proposed 9 stories directly next to a 3-story building that contributes to the National Historic District.**

-Also the Downtown Plan (p. 36) "*Objective 3.3: Provide a flexible framework for building scale that encourages innovation and growth while reflecting the existing or planned (if recommended for change) character of the area in which a site is located and considers the larger Downtown context.*". Since the area is not recommended for change, **the steering committee does not see the need for a building that is so far outside the neighborhood's context.**

- Again in the Downtown Plan (p. 122) Appendix C: "*These two small areas within the Langdon District are portions of large, deep blocks that slope downward towards Lake Mendota. Both areas are in a National Register Historic District and include identified contributing buildings, and any new development should enhance that character...*" The steering committee strongly feels that **the proposed development does not match the character of the neighborhood.**

- Appendix C of the Downtown Plan: *“... Where additional stories are available, it is not intended that they be earned merely by complying with standards and criteria that would be required and expected in any case, such as underlying zoning regulations, good design, or sensitivity to the adjacent historic landmark. The intent is not simply to allow a taller building, and additional stories should not be considered “by right” heights. Rather, additional stories are to be used as a tool to encourage and reward buildings of truly exceptional design that respond to the specific context of their location and accomplish specific objectives defined for the area.”* The steering committee feels **that the proposed building is not of “truly exceptional design” and the proposed development does not deserve the bonus 2 stories.**

MGO 28.183(6)14b: *The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.* The steering committee feels that the **proposed development’s quality would be in no way compromised with a maximum 5-story or even 3-story building.** In fact, a building at the shorter heights could easily be of higher quality just because it would integrate better in the National Historic District.

MGO 28.183(6)14c: *The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the projects and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.* Although the development is not adjacent to the landmark Suhr House across the street at 121 Langdon, it is clearly within the immediate area and setting of the proposal. The steering committee is **very concerned about the massing of the proposed development** and its visual relationship with the Suhr House and the adjacent contributing buildings in the National Historic District. The proposal does not create a pleasing visual relationship with them.

Another important feature of the proposal’s design is the apparent inadequate space for commercial and residents’ deliveries including food, merchandise and rideshare vehicles. **There is already insufficient parking on Langdon St and the developer is responsible for accommodating the needs of its residents.** Adjacent neighbors are concerned that delivery and rideshare vehicles will occupy the fire lanes on the east and west sides of the building. These fire lanes also provide pedestrian access to neighboring buildings, so keeping 126 Langdon’s delivery vehicles on that property will enhance neighborhood safety.

The proposed design has a 2-lane driveway that will also be used for refuse and recycling pick-up. **The committee strongly encourages the Plan Commission to require the developer to provide a separate horseshoe-shaped front driveway with obvious entrance and exit.** This will mitigate the pressure of the delivery and rideshare vehicles and will enhance the residential appearance of the proposed development. Because of the concerns with the proposed design, the steering committee proposes the following **possible conditions of approval:**

- The applicant shall submit for review a commercial delivery and rideshare management plan. This will include all delivery vehicles for food, merchandise, rideshare vehicles (Lyft, cabs), etc. Parking of delivery vehicles must be accommodated on site, must not be on the properties of adjacent/nearby properties, must not block fire lanes, and must not be considered illegal parking by the City. The building management and/or security must assure compliance with this condition and should face a fine if neighboring properties submit documentation of violations. This plan will include how building management and/or security will enforce compliance with the use of the commercial delivery space. The applicant shall submit for review a commercial delivery plan. There must be a time-limited, off-street loading zone that can temporarily accommodate enough vehicles for the number of residents in the development. This shall include vehicular turning movements, estimated size of delivery vehicles and on-site location of loading zone of appropriate size (generally 10’ x 35’). Per MGO Section 10.08, drive aisles are required to be a minimum of 20 feet wide.

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- An exterior lighting plan will be submitted for review by Planning staff and MPD, UW-Madison Police. The exterior lighting will enhance pedestrian safety on all elevations of the building.
- The applicant shall submit for review a waste removal plan. This shall include vehicular turning movements.
- The developer is encouraged to plant additional canopy trees in front to complement street trees on Langdon St.
- No utility or HVAC pedestals or penetrations, including HVAC wall packs for units, and gas meters or electric meters for buildings/ units shall be permitted without specific approval by the Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission.
- The project proposes 20 off-street auto parking spaces to be provided for the development, which has 88 residential units. A condition of approval shall be that no residential parking permits shall be issued for 126 Langdon St. In addition, the applicant shall inform all tenants of this requirement in their apartment leases. In addition, the applicant shall submit for 126 Langdon St a copy of the lease noting the above condition with the final plans for this project.
- Noise from the ventilation of the underground parking shall not impact adjacent neighbors.

#### **Rooftop Pool and Outdoor Sound System**

The proposed design has a rooftop deck with a pool and outdoor amplified sound which will be open year-round. Other student-oriented developments have had unfortunate problems with this type of feature, and the steering committee is very concerned about the noise and deleterious behavior it can encourage.

The deck must be recessed from the side of the building by at least 15' on all sides to prevent any issues with objects "falling" off the roof. Not having a line of sight with adjacent buildings and ground below will greatly deter bad behavior.

The steering committee feels strongly that **there should be no pool and sound system on the rooftop**. Recent student housing developments that include luxury amenities have created problems for the police reflected in the increased number of calls for service from these apartment buildings.

The steering committee would like to suggest the following **possible conditions of approval**.

- No rooftop pool shall be allowed.
- No outdoor amplified sound (from ambient music, televisions, etc.) or live performance shall be allowed in outdoor common areas.
- Deck is recessed at least 15' from the edge of the building.

If a rooftop pool is not removed from the proposed design:

- The pool will be open from 9:00 am to 10:00 pm Sunday through Thursday and 9:00 am to 11:00 pm Friday and Saturday.

#### **Management**

The steering committee recognizes that the proposed development is designed for students just moving out of the dorms and will hence have a population heavily weighted with younger undergrads. Good management

will be required to maintain order and livability in the neighborhood. Because the maintenance of order within the proposed development is so important to the neighborhood, the steering committee requests that the Plan Commission adopt the following **possible conditions of approval**:

- The applicant will submit a detailed management plan for the property that should be approved by (1) Planning staff and (2) the district alder. The plan should also be reviewed by the neighborhood steering committee. The days and hours of operation when building management staff will be on-site, numbers of building management staff present at every hour and every day of the week will be included.
- Management staff or professional security will be on site during the hours when the pool is open.
- The guest policy for the building, including policies for overnight stays and use of building amenities (pools, fitness facility, etc.) will be submitted to and approved by (1) planning staff and (2) the district alder and reviewed by the neighborhood steering committee.
- A policy on subletting apartments must be submitted to and approved by 1) planning staff and (2) the district alder. This policy must not allow subletting without full knowledge of management and should include eviction provisions and fines payable by the leaseholder should the policy be violated.
- Quarterly meetings will be held that include building management, building owners, nearby neighbors (including house directors at sororities and fraternities and their property owners), the district alder, MPD, and other stakeholders to review and address any security, safety, parking, and behavioral concerns. The building owners and management should organized and host these meetings. Final details of the regular quarterly community meeting, including the scheduling of the meetings at the building, any noticing required prior to a meeting, required meeting attendees, and policies for meeting cancellation, shall be approved by the Director of the Planning Division and district alder prior to final plan approval and issuance of building permits for the project.

### **Security**

After working with the former Langdon St police officer, the steering committee understood how maintaining good security can avoid many of the issues seen at similar developments like the Hub, the James and the Waterfront. To this end, we propose the following **possible conditions of approval**.

- The applicant should submit a detailed security plan, to be reviewed by Planning Division staff in coordination with staff from the Madison and UW-Madison Police Departments. The security plan should be approved by (1) Planning staff and (2) the district alder and reviewed by the neighborhood steering committee. The plan should include management of and access to common spaces, including indoor amenities, outdoor terraces and pools. Hours of operation of all outdoor common spaces should be detailed.
- Professional security staff will sweep the building twice when management and on-site security staff are not present.
- A code of conduct should be distributed to all residents that includes hours of operation of common areas, security staff and management contact information, MPD contact information, and all applicable rules, regulations, fines, and consequences of violating either noise restrictions whether from apartments or common areas.
- The final security plan shall include a plan for security cameras for all indoor and outdoor common areas to be regularly maintained by building management. Final approval of these documents by the Plan-

ning Division and Madison and UW-Madison Police Departments is required prior to issuance of permits for the development. Any changes to the operations or security plans for the shelter shall require an alteration to the conditional use to be approved by the Director of the Planning Division or the Plan Commission following a recommendation by the district alder and the commanding officer of the UW-Madison Police, Central Police District, or Chief of Police. Security cameras should be operating in all common areas and footage should be accessible to MPD and to UW-Madison Police and management for at least one week.

### **Move in/Move out**

As with the on-campus and large-building off-campus student housing, the proposed development will generate considerable traffic during move in and move out. Managing this traffic will be important to reducing the impact on the neighborhood. The steering committee proposes the following **possible condition of approval**.

- The applicant should submit to (1) planning staff, (2) the district alder, and (3) the neighborhood steering committee, a move-in/move-out plan, including the details on any furnishings to be provided in each and every unit. This plan shall provide assurances that the usability of public streets surrounding the property will be maintained during move-in/move-out and that neighboring properties' driveways and parking lots will not be impacted. Residents will be notified of move-in/move-out plan and the plan will be review by Planning staff before permits are issued.

### **Parking**

The proposed development has 20 parking space for over 350 residents. The steering committee would like to ensure that the proposed development does not impact the neighborhood's limited street parking. Since 20 on-site spaces are proposed, we expect no RP3 permits will be provided to residents. In addition, the committee proposes the following **possible conditions of approval**:

- The applicant should submit a parking management plan to (1) planning staff, (2) the district alder, and (3) the neighborhood steering committee, including an example lease with language pertaining to the amount of automobile, bicycle, and moped parking on the site, and any fees involved to lease a parking stall. This information shall be provided to all tenants and shall include notice to all tenants that mopeds may not be stored in areas on the property except for in designated moped stalls.
- The developer is encouraged to exceed city requirements for bicycle parking for residents and guests.

### **Construction**

As in most dense neighborhoods, the steering committee is concerned about the proposed large development project. This site presents difficult constructability issues with the fire lanes and proximity of adjacent buildings. More importantly, neighbors are concerned about construction dust and its mitigation. The committee would like to propose the following **possible conditions of approval**.

- During construction access to neighboring sites must be maintained at all times, covered sidewalks will be constructed and maintained as soon as possible and little to no access to the public right of way on Langdon St. and on adjacent driveways. Neighboring buildings and their foundations will be inspected prior to construction and re-inspected after construction. If any damage is attributable to the construction project, the applicant shall pay for all repair or, in the case of any unrepairable damage, pay for costs associated with relocation.

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- A dust mitigation plan will be implemented that will minimize silica dust (a carcinogen) and contain it on site. The developer will be responsible for cleaning dust that may happen to travel off site.
- The developer will provide bi-weekly meetings during construction in order to keep the neighborhood up to date on construction issues.

# The Hub gets mixed reviews nationwide

- [Suzanne Adams-Ockrassa](#)
- Mar 20, 2016 Updated Aug 29, 2017

The student housing complexes built by Core Campus, all known as The Hub, are getting mixed reviews across the nation.

Core has Hub complexes in Eugene, Ore., Oxford, Miss., Columbia, S.C., Tucson and Madison, Wisc. It sold its first Arizona apartment high-rise in Tempe in 2013 for \$103 million to Inland American Communities Group. It is currently working on new complexes in Flagstaff and Corvallis, Ore.

In Flagstaff, the company is proposing a 664-bed apartment complex geared toward students on Mike's Pike. The company is asking the city to flip/flop the zoning on the site to allow it to build retail shops on Mike's Pike instead of Phoenix Avenue. It filed an additional site plan with the city on Monday that would allow the company to build using the existing zoning on the site. The Arizona Daily Sun has not seen the details of the alternative plan.

The company typically builds multi-story apartment buildings made of concrete, glass and steel geared toward college students. However, in a number of cities, such as Flagstaff, it has modified its typical building exterior to blend with local materials and colors. In Oxford, it built a

campus of one- and two-story buildings. The Hub buildings typically hold 300 to 800 students depending on the location and are usually located in more urban areas.

## DENIAL IN CORVALLIS

Core's other new project for Corvallis is currently in limbo. According to the Corvallis Gazette-Times, Core Campus withdrew its application to build a Hub there in April 2015, after Corvallis city staff and the city's planning commission recommended denial of the project.

Corvallis is similar in size to Flagstaff with about 55,000 residents and about 25,000 college students from Oregon State University.

Corvallis city staff raised concerns about the cut and fill standards for grading the land for the project, transportation and stormwater issues. Neighbors raised concerns about noise and the compatibility of the project with the surrounding residences.

The topic was supposed to go before the Corvallis City Council at the end of March 2015 when the developers withdrew their request. Core and the land owner, GPA1, may bring their request back to the city of Corvallis sometime this year.

Curtis Wright from the Northwest Alliance Corvallis, a community group formed to oppose the project, said the project would have covered 30 acres of a 200-acre site that represents one of the city's last open space areas. The Hub portion of the project would have been very close to a number of single-family homes and townhomes.

The area is zoned for multi-family residential projects, he said. But, like Flagstaff residents who agreed to the special transect zoning overlay for Mike's Pike and Phoenix Avenue, Corvallis residents were

not expecting such a large and dense project to be built there.

The reason that Corvallis city staff recommended denial of the project was because of a development overlay district on the property, Wright said. The overlay detailed a number of restrictions to protect natural features and animal habitat in the area. The particular 30 acres that The Hub Corvallis is planned for also has a lot of wetlands, which would also require Core and GPA1 to get permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and the state of Oregon to disturb during construction.

Wright and Corvallis Gazette-Times reporter Jim Day said if the project were to come back, it would have to be substantially different in order for it get approval from the city.

## TIGHT PARKING

In Columbia, S.C., the city is dealing with a tight downtown parking situation similar to Flagstaff caused by the rapid growth of its downtown area. According to the Columbia, S.C., newspaper, The State, local businesses are saying that parking has become worse since The Hub has moved in.

However, the Columbia Regional Business Report reported in June 2015 that while parking remains a concern, business owners are liking their new, younger neighbors. The paper reports that the students have brought in more business for existing shops and are attracting new shops to the area.

Core typically provides less than one parking spot per bed for each of its complexes. It also usually charges its residents a fee for a parking spot. Fees range from \$45 per month in Eugene to \$85 per month in Columbia.

In Tucson, Core had a different problem: students throwing things from balconies.

Core opened its first Hub in Tucson in 2014, according to the Arizona Daily Star. A second Tucson Hub is slated to be built next door.

According to the Daily Star, in March 2015, the city had problems with college students in multiple high-rise apartments, including The Hub, throwing beer bottles and other items from the balconies of their apartments at a nearby mosque. Students were also caught yelling at people attending the nearby mosque or just walking by the buildings. All three complexes, including The Hub, installed cameras to monitor balconies and the Hub fines students caught throwing things \$1,000.

Core also built a Hub in Tempe, which it sold shortly after the building was finished in 2013, according to the Phoenix Business Journal. According to [AZCentral.com](http://AZCentral.com), that building, now known as University House, also had a history of students throwing items from its balconies.

The tossing of items from balconies on student high-rise complexes in the Tempe area got so bad that the fire department at one point refused to respond to the high-rises without a police escort. The company that owns University House has closed the balconies and restricted window access at the high-rise.

## MIXED REVIEWS

College students living in the various Hubs around the country also have mixed reviews of the apartment complexes. A search of Google or Yelp reviews for any one of the projects will show numerous comments in favor of the high-rises.

Core's apartments, while pricey, do have their perks. Many of its developments have rooftop pools and hot tubs, tanning salons, study areas, conference rooms and private gyms. Their apartments typically come fully furnished, including big, flat-screen TVs, washers and dryers, walk-in closets and showers, private balconies, stone countertops, some include private saunas and hot tubs. Each Hub is different and offers different perks.

Rents run from \$610 per month to more than \$1,600 per month, depending on the location of the building, size, number of bedrooms and luxury package included with the apartment.

Yelp and Google also list numerous complaints about the various Hubs, including lack of heat in some apartments in Madison, slow Internet, unfinished apartments, students being overcharged for repairs to apartments after they leave, loud neighbors, thin walls, cheap furniture and unresponsive staff.

Core attorney Lindsay Schube has told Flagstaff City Council previously that the company takes all complaints from neighbors and Hub residents seriously. And most online complaints from Hub residents have responses from Hub staff.

Flagstaff Council will hold its final reading on The Hub rezoning request at 6 p.m. Tuesday, at City Hall, 211 W. Aspen Ave.

The reporter can be reached at [sadams@azdailysun.com](mailto:sadams@azdailysun.com) or (928)556-2253.

These links are to articles and editorials in the local press about the Hub.

July 4, 2017, article: [Flagstaff torn over student housing, impact on infrastructure](#)  
May 8, 2017, editorial: [The Hub: An unwanted cog in the machine of change](#)  
May 7, 2017, article: [No Hub appeal expected](#)  
Apr. 29, 2017, letter: [Hub decision: Chicanery, not justice](#)  
Apr. 23, 2017, article: [Judge denies Hub appeal](#)  
Apr. 12, 2017, opinion: [Response, Students are not the problem](#)  
Mar. 24, 2017, editorial: [Should new gas station serve Foxglenn needs?](#)  
Mar. 20, 2017, article: [Hub construction blocks road without permission](#)  
Mar. 14, 2017, article: ["Hub South" stirs up University of Arizona neighbors](#)  
Mar. 14, 2017, editorial: [Students are not the problem with housing: They're the scapegoats](#)  
Feb. 25, 2017, article: [Hub loses first round in court](#)  
Feb. 24, 2017, article: [Judge denies dismissal motion in appeal of Hub](#)  
Feb. 23, 2017, article: [Judge lets the Hub appeal move forward](#)  
Jan. 9, 2017, article: [Flagstaff Council takes on transect zoning](#)  
Dec. 24, 2016, article: [2016 in Review: The Hub saga moves to court](#)  
Nov. 22, 2016, editorial: [To improve on student housing, plan to negotiate](#)  
Nov. 22, 2016, article: [Flagstaff residents want stricter limits on student housing](#)  
Oct. 30, 2016, article: [Mayoral candidates at odds over defining issues](#)  
Oct. 7, 2016, guest editorial: [Stand Up — for Flagstaff's sense of place](#)  
Oct. 6, 2016, article: [Student and Flagstaff issues focus of upcoming Mayoral forum](#)  
Sept. 17, 2016, article: [Hub opponents file complaint in superior court](#)  
Aug. 28, 2016, candidate questionnaire: [On the Hub and citizen participation](#)  
Aug. 25, 2016, article: [Flagstaff group continues year-long battle against housing complex](#)  
Aug. 19, 2016, article: [Construction could begin on Hub in fall](#)  
Aug. 18, 2016; article: [Flagstaff Board of Adjustment denies Hub appeal](#)  
July 17, 2016; editorial: [Get Flagstaff's act together before the next Hub](#)  
July 17, 2016, letter to editor: [Growth cost more than it returns](#)  
July 10, 2016, candidate questionnaire: [What should be done on high occupancy student housing?](#)  
July 2, 2016, article: [Flagstaff Council has 17 candidates for board hearing Hub appeal](#)  
July 1, 2016, article: [Developer razes buildings in preparation for the Hub](#)  
June 21, 2016, article: [Group appeals approval of Hub 2.0](#)  
June 8, 2016, article: [City Staff OK's Hub 2.0](#)  
May 22, 2016, letter to editor: [Enforce form-based zoning for Hub](#)  
May 15, 2016, article: [Attorney: Hub still not meeting Flagstaff zoning requirements](#)  
Apr. 7, 2016, guest editorial: [Revisit zoning code in Flagstaff before next Hub](#)  
Apr. 3, 2016, letter to editor: [Transect zoning needs more scrutiny](#)  
Mar. 31, 2016, guest editorial: [Who We Are and Why We Are Opposing the Hub](#)  
Mar. 29, 2016, letter to editor: [Reject Hub Because Place Does Matter](#)  
Mar. 27, 2016, letter to editor: [Rezoned Hub Plan Was Better](#)  
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Mar. 20, 2016, letter to editor: [Hold Nose On Hub and Vote Yes](#)  
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Mar. 12, 2016, letter to editor: [Scale Development to Flagstaff Values](#)  
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Feb. 17 2016, article: [Council chambers filled to capacity during student housing discussion](#)  
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# High-rise beer throwing stunt near Purdue puts rooftop safety in question

*Video catches guest at the Rise, a 16-story apartment complex, throwing cans of beer to the rooftop pool at a neighboring high rise. Is that it for rooftop development in West Lafayette?*

**Dave Bangert**

Journal & Courier

AD

0:13

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – Could three cans of beer – preserved on social media, arching across the West Lafayette sky from the rooftop deck of one week-old high rise to the rooftop pool, several stories below, of another week-old high rise along State Street – spell the end for rooftop spaces other near-Purdue business have been looking to add for years?

“To say those kinds of things are dead because of one incident is premature,” Erik Carlson, West Lafayette’s development director, said Thursday. “One incident this idiotic isn’t going to necessarily determine what we do next. But isn’t going to make it any easier.”

The “idiotic” incident? A series of three video clips tell the story, up high in the latest in student housing in West Lafayette, blocks from Purdue’s campus.



In each video clip, a shirtless man in a Purdue ball cap turned backward chucks a full, unopened cans of beer from the roof's edge at the Rise at Chauncey – a 16-story apartment complex that opened just before classes started this month – to a crowded rooftop pool of the 11-story Hub on State complex next door.

The clips show two cans landing on the deck of the Hub's pool. A third can lands in the pool, to cheers of those watching and fist-pumping from the guy who made the toss.

West Lafayette police were called to Hub on State at 6:43 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 24, for a report of someone throwing things, Deputy Chief David Van Vactor said. Van Vactor said police didn't see what happened and didn't get many answers that night – including that they should have been looking into a case of incoming beers.

“There was a lot of, ‘We don't know what you're talking about,’” Van Vactor said. “Most people were denying anything like that had occurred. ... At this

point, we're not sure if it was happening at both places.”

Van Vactor, who said police didn't see the video clips until days later, said there were no reports of injuries or damage. Without a complaint, he said, officers warned those around about throwing things off the building and left. Officers did not go to the Rise rooftop that evening, Van Vactor said.

“You'll have balconies and all that stuff where this stuff happens a lot,” Van Vactor said. “This is just totally different, because it's a high-rise building.”

# 2 shot overnight on rooftop of new West Lafayette high-rise near Purdue

Dave Bangert  
Journal & Courier

1:09

1:09



WEST LAFAYETTE – Two men were shot early Sunday morning on the rooftop pool area at The Hub on Campus, a West Lafayette high-rise that opened in August a few blocks from Purdue University’s campus, West Lafayette police reported.

The names of the two men shot and the severity of their wounds were not

immediately available Sunday morning. The incident came at the end of a night when West Lafayette's Village area, filled with bars, restaurants and student housing, was crowded after Purdue's night football game against Texas Christian.

Police received a report of shots fired at 2:12 a.m. Sunday on the top floor of The Hub, 111 S. Salisbury St, West Lafayette Police Lt. Jon Eager said.

**UPDATE: No arrest, no suspect after 2 shot at West Lafayette high-rise roof pool near Purdue**

Eager said officers found a man with an apparent gunshot wound. That man was taken to one of Lafayette's hospitals, he said.

Eager said a second man had been shot and taken to a Lafayette hospital before officers arrived.

Eager said police had not made an arrest Sunday morning and were still talking to people who were there at the time about circumstances that led to the shootings.

WLPD Sgt. Aron Thompson said later Sunday morning that one of the men shot had been treated and released from the hospital. The other victim had been transferred to Eskenazi Hospital in Indianapolis.

Their conditions weren't immediately available beyond that.

As of 5:30 p.m. Sunday, police had not reported an arrest in the case.

# Parents, students find apartment building in disrepair

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by Elizabeth Lane

Monday, August 20th 2018

AA

*THE HUB APARTMENT.JPG*

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Some students in Tuscaloosa arrived back to school to find their off-campus apartment in disrepair. The Hub has been under construction for at least one year, with promises of being the best place to live off-campus.

Some parents and students said conditions were so bad, they were forced to stay in hotels while crews rushed to fix the place up.

"It's just an uneasy feeling," Theresa Berg said.

Berg is one of many parents paying a premium for her daughter to live at The Hub. One move-in day she said she found the opposite of what was promised.

"There was a pretty significant punch-list of things that still needed to get done that had either been overlooked, or really, really shoddy craftsmanship," Berg said, "There are some security issues we were worried about, our balcony door didn't have a handle at all, latches to the windows were missing."

Berg wasn't the only person disappointed. She joined a growing list of upset residents.

One student, who wished to remain anonymous, said his move-in was pushed back due to the problems, and his apartment is completely flooded.

"Each time we speak to someone they say it will be handled, they look at it, they leave

and it just gets pushed onto the next guy."

Students and parents received an email from management, apologizing for the inconvenience and promising to make repairs as quickly as possible.

Berg said she's expecting financial compensation.

"It's a huge inconvenience," Berg said, "We wanted to feel secure leaving our daughter here, heading back to New Jersey, but we don't feel that it's a good situation."

ABC 33/40 received a statement from the Core Spaces Management Team. It reads:

"The product that we delivered does not meet our high standards. There are multiple areas in the common areas of the building and within the units that fell short of our expectations. We are listening to our residents, hearing their concerns, and walking each unit to evaluate all that needs to be completed. Additional crews are on site and a new plan is being created to resolve all issues. We are dedicated to delivering the best product in Tuscaloosa and will continue to work diligently to minimize the impact of these outstanding construction activities on the residents and aim to have all completed swiftly."

Management did not release any more information on what caused the construction delay.



## Core Spaces Says It'll Do Better as Complaints about The Hub Mount

You are on eastlansinginfo.org, ELi's old domain, which is now an archive of news (as of early April, 2020). If you are looking for the latest news, go to [eastlansinginfo.news](http://eastlansinginfo.news) and update your bookmarks accordingly!

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Thursday, September 5, 2019, 10:24 am

**By:**

Brad Minor and Alice Dreger



*Photos of The Hub by Raymond Holt.*

“It’s been a disaster.” That’s how a number of residents have described the move-in experience at one of East Lansing’s newest big developments, The Hub on Campus.

The problems have been big enough that East Lansing’s City Council decided to put the issue on its agenda Tuesday night. City staff subsequently dedicated more space to it than any other topic in this week "Council recap" mailer.

Chief among the complaints against Core Spaces, the developer and operator of The Hub, have been dysfunctional elevators, trash stacking up, construction dust, and an unresponsive management staff. Most residents had to [wait hours on a line](#) just to try to move in.

Staff from Cores Spaces came to City Council on Tuesday night to apologize and defend the company. More than this one Hub project is on the line. Core Spaces has [just submitted an application to build two more The Hub towers](#) – bigger than the one just opened.

If approved, apartments for 1,700 more MSU students would be constructed in additional Hub projects on Bogue Street, just south of the recently-opened project.



### **Council questions whether they really want to see more built by Core Spaces**

The experience of the last few weeks with The Hub has left a sour taste in the mouths of Council members.

Council member Shanna Draheim explained at this week's meeting that promises from Core Spaces of quality onsite management and good communication were reasons that the first Hub project had gotten the support of the Council.

She said that she expected Council would be wary of approving another project by the same developers if outstanding issues are not rectified in a way that signals systemic improvement.

Mayor Mark Meadows agreed, saying, "My expectation is that we will get a report that states how you have systematically addressed each one of these problems because, like [Council member Aaron Stephens], I'm thinking, why would we ever open another Hub? It just doesn't seem to be something that pays off for the City."

But in a later discussion on housing issues in the City at the same meeting, Council members Ruth Beier and Erik Altmann alluded to what makes The Hub attractive to City leaders: it's student housing in an area without owner-occupied houses, and it pays big taxes.

The Hub was constructed without tax increment financing (TIF), which means it will

immediately start paying hundreds of thousands of dollars a year into the City's coffers.

By contrast, all the eligible local taxes from The Landmark (below) in the Center City District project will be diverted for thirty years to pay for that project. Because of [how that deal with Harbor Bay Real Estate was structured](#), City taxpayers will be subsidizing the "luxury" student housing in The Landmark in the coming year.



Core Spaces' The Hub projects are therefore a relative goldmine for East Lansing.

Said Beier on Tuesday night, "They don't need TIF and they never asked for TIF."

She suggested that the City could bargain with Core Spaces to get even more than taxes out of another Hub project – like having Core Spaces buy out rental licenses in areas with many owner-occupied houses, to convert student rental houses to owner-occupied homes.

Altmann agreed with her idea, saying, "That's exactly what I was getting at" as he suggested there might be a way to use taxes from a new Core Spaces project to deal with wider housing concerns in the City.

### **Residents of The Hub describe negative experiences**

Council member Aaron Stephens has been spending time at The Hub talking to residents there, and he asked a number of them to come to Council this week. He specifically asked MSU student Sarah Shankie to describe her experience.

"About a week ago, me and some of my friends were stuck in one of the elevators for almost an hour," Shankie told Council. "There were seventeen of us total in the elevator, but we did the math, and we were under the weight limit," she said.

"There is a sign now outside the elevator saying that the maximum occupancy is nine people, but that wasn't the case a week ago."

She said the people in the elevator tried to push the emergency button, but that it wasn't working.

There was no cell phone reception in the elevator, so the trapped people started pounding on the doors until somebody went and got help. The whole ordeal lasted about an hour, she said, and management didn't want to talk to them afterwards.

"I was terrified hearing these stories," said Stephens from his Council chair. "Imagine as an elected official hearing the story of constituents you're supposed to protect being trapped in an elevator for an hour with an emergency button that doesn't work."



The building has three elevators, but not all have been working at the same time. At one point, all three were out of commission, leaving residents to trudge up and down stairs.

Called to the podium, East Lansing's chief building inspector, Scott Weaver, explained that the building only required two operational elevators to open, and that the State, not the City, handles elevator inspections.

Weaver also explained that he would not have allowed the building to open if he and his team had not found that the building was safe and ready. He said he did not find the kind of extreme dust problems residents are describing.

#### **Core Spaces says it will do better**

Rodney King, Senior Vice President of Development, came to Council with other members of his staff to apologize and defend the company.

“We absolutely own the move-in experience,” King told Council. “It absolutely did not go as planned, and we do apologize for that. We expected the TCO [Temporary Certificate of Occupancy] earlier in the day and that did not happen. We got the TCO late in the afternoon and the plans did not go as we would have hoped. We understand that it was a bad experience for the majority of our residents and we apologize,” King said.

*Below: Rodney King of Core Spaces.*



King went on to say that, during move-in week, management tried to do what it could and to compensate the residents by “giving them fifty-dollar gift card to Target if they needed to go get something.” He also said that they would have provided reimbursement for lunch and hotel accommodations if residents provided receipts.

[Email](#) to residents from Core Spaces and stories shared with ELi confirm that at least some residents received offers for lunch reimbursement and Target gift cards.

But Sanjana El, a grad student who moved from California, said that she had not been offered any form of compensation. She said that communication had been terrible and that, while Core Spaces had promised helpers and carts for move-in, there were no helpers and the carts turned out to be “cardboard boxes on wheels.”

According to her, residents stole move-in carts from MSU dorms. “We still have those carts,” she

said.

Trash was also named as a serious problem by El. She showed City Council pictures on her phone. She also said that her closet was not yet finished, even though she was supposed to have “customized closet organization.”

“So your apartment was incomplete when it was provided? Mayor Mark Meadows asked.

“Yes,” she replied. She also noted that her floor, the ninth, was supposed to have “restricted access” but that anyone could enter.

The complaints have not arisen only at Tuesday’s meeting. Angry residents can still be found in and around The Hub.

“The whole thing was just a disaster from start to finish, and I wish I would just get out of this lease,” one resident interviewed by ELi said.

“Are there any plans at this point to offer any compensation for the issues they have had?” Stephens asked on Tuesday.

Core Spaces’ Vice President King responded, “We take it by a case by case basis. We will see what their issues are and walk their units with them, if they're willing, and at that point, we can discuss compensation as well.”

“It sounds like there are problems with the building but also problems with the people running it. What do you say to the allegations that people have emailed the management company and haven't gotten any response?” Altmann asked.

“I’d have to dig into it more, King replied. “I know they were bombarded. It may have gotten lost but that's no excuse.”