



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

**Application Type(s):** Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction in the Third Lake Ridge historic district

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

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

**Date Prepared:** August 11, 2020

**Summary**

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

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new mixed-use structure.

**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.
- 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**

At its June 1, 2020, meeting, the Landmarks Commission approved the applicant's request for demolition of the existing building at 817 Williamson and the combination of the lots at 817 and 821 Williamson. They provided feedback to the applicant on the proposed new structure and referred the project to a future meeting for a final decision. The commission reviewed the updated proposal at its July 13 meeting and referred the item to the next meeting with guidance to explore a two façade solution and address the height of the building at the street.

The updated submission has two street façades with a slightly different rhythm of window and door placements between the two. The commercial façade is two stories with a third-floor balcony screened behind the cornice. The apartment façade is three-stories, but the applicant as reduced the height of the building down to 40'-7" from the original 41'-3". There is a cornice applied between the second and third stories on that façade. The cladding on the front portion of the building has returned to the darker red brick of the initial proposal. The spacing between the two façades is comparable to the spacing between the other buildings on this block face.

The applicant has broken up the mass of the street façade of the building by creating two street façades and has reduced the height of the building at the street. Staff believes that the project as submitted meets the standards for new construction in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District. Please see the analysis in the previous staff reports.

## **Recommendation**

Staff believes that the standards for granting Certificates of Appropriateness for the new construction are met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the proposal.

## Applicable standards

### STANDARDS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

#### **(1) General**

##### **(a) Primary Structures**

The design for a new structure in a historic district shall be visually compatible with other historic resources within two hundred (200) feet in the following ways:

1. Building Placement. When determining visual compatibility for building placement, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as lot coverage, setbacks, building orientation, and historic relationships between the building and site.
2. Street Setback. When determining visual compatibility for street setbacks, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as the average setback of historic resources on the same block face within two hundred (200) feet, and the setback of adjacent structures.
3. Visual Size. When determining visual compatibility for visual size, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as massing, building height in feet and stories, the gross area of the front elevation (i.e., all walls facing the street), street presence, and the dominant proportion of width to height in the façade.
4. Building Form. When determining visual compatibility for building form, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as building type and use, roof shape, symmetry or asymmetry, and its dominant vertical or horizontal expression.
5. Architectural Expression. When determining visual compatibility for architectural expression, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as the building's modulation, articulation, building planes, proportion of building elements, and rhythm of solids to voids created by openings in the façade.

#### **(2) Building Site**

##### **(a) General**

1. New parking areas, access ramps, trash or mechanical equipment enclosures shall be designed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible, retain the historic relationship between the buildings and the building and the landscape, and are visually compatible with other historic resources in the district.

#### **(3) Exterior Walls**

##### **(a) General**

1. Materials used for new structures shall be similar in design, scale and architectural appearance to materials that date to the period of significance on historic resources within 200 feet, but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as a historic building.

#### **(4) Roofs**

##### **(a) Form**

1. Roof form and pitch shall be similar to the form and pitch of the roofs on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.

##### **(b) Materials**

2. Any roofing material shall be permitted on flat or slightly pitched roofs not visible from the developed public right-of-way.

##### **(e) Rooftop Features**

1. Rooftop decks or terraces and green roofs or other roof landscaping, railings, or furnishings shall be installed so that they are inconspicuous and minimally visible on the site and from the street.

#### **(5) Windows and Doors**

##### **(a) General**

1. Door and window styles should both match the style of the new structure and be compatible with those on historic resources within 200 feet.
- (b) Windows and Storm Windows
  1. Multi-light windows shall have true divided lights or simulated divided lights with muntin grids on the exterior and interior the same color as the window sash with spacer bars between the panes of glass.
- (c) Entrance Doors and Storm Doors
  1. Sliding glass doors shall not be installed on the ground floor elevation along any street frontage.
- (e) Awnings
  1. Awnings will be of a configuration and form consistent with the awnings in the district
  2. Awning materials shall have the appearance of the materials found on historic resources with awnings
- (f) Garage Doors
  1. Garage doors shall be similar in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities prevalent within the historic district.
- (6) Porches, Balconies and Decks**
  - (a) Porch Elements
    1. Entrances and porches shall be of a size and configuration consistent with the historic resources in the district.
    2. The primary entrance for the structure shall be located on the front elevation, or, structures on a corner lot may have a corner entrance.
    3. Second exit stairways shall be provided on the interior of the structure.
  - (b) Balconies and Decks
    1. Projecting, partially projecting/inset, and inset balconies are prohibited on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way, unless there is precedent on the historic resources in the district.
- (7) Building Systems**
  - (a) Mechanical Systems
    1. Mechanical equipment shall be screened if it is visible from the developed public right-of-way.
    2. Static vents, electric vents, wind turbines, and attic fans visible from the developed public right-of-way are prohibited.
    3. Grilles, vents, equipment, and meters shall be finished or painted to match adjacent building materials.
  - (c) Lighting and Electrical Systems
    1. Decorative light fixtures shall be compatible in style and location with the overall design of the building.
    2. Security light fixtures or security cameras shall be installed so that they are as unobtrusive as possible.
    3. Exterior mounted conduit on elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way is prohibited.
    4. Roof appurtenances such as antennas, satellite dishes, or communications equipment should be installed so that they are minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure historic features.

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A discussion of the applicable standards:

**STANDARDS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**(1) General**

**(a) Primary Structures**

The design for a new structure in a historic district shall be visually compatible with other historic resources within two hundred (200) feet in the following ways:

1. Building Placement. The location of the building is in keeping with the historic commercial structures within 200 feet. It occupies most of the lot, whereas most of the historic resources have more rear yard space, often for surface parking.
2. Street Setback. There is a mix of street setbacks for the historic resources in the vicinity. The structures that were constructed as commercial buildings are all located at the front of the parcel. This setback is comparable to the historic commercial structures in the vicinity.
3. Visual Size. The building design presents a smaller scale at the front of the structure, with the bulk of the structure nested behind. The street frontage presents as two separate street facades, with a step back above the western façade. This mitigates the appearance of the structure, making the street presence compatible with the visual size of the historic resources within 200 feet.
4. Building Form. There are flat-roofed commercial structures within 200 feet, and one false front historic structure that gives the appearance of a flat roof. The building form is in keeping with the form of historic commercial structures in the vicinity.
5. Architectural Expression. The proportion of the window openings and use of cornices on the two storefront facades reference details found on historic resources within 200 feet. The use of the red brick with the cast stone decorative elements use the same architectural vocabulary as the historic brick commercial structures in the vicinity.

**(2) Building Site**

**(a) General**

1. The ramp to access the structured parking is located on the side of the building and the garage door is on the side of the structure, making the access to the parking area minimally visible from the public right-of-way.

**(3) Exterior Walls**

**(a) General**

1. The red brick and cast stone accents allow the street façade to read as architecturally compatible to the historic resources within 200 feet, but differentiate so as to read as a new building. The rear half of the structure will be clad in smooth-surfaced composite clapboard, which is in keeping with the residential historic resources in the vicinity.

**(4) Roofs**

**(a) Form**

1. The flat roof is a form found on similar historic resources in the vicinity.

**(b) Materials**

2. The building will have a flat roof that is obscured behind a parapet and not visible from the public right-of-way.

**(e) Rooftop Features**

1. There will be a rooftop deck above the western street façade. It is largely hidden behind the cornice for that projecting bay with railings minimally visible above the cornice.

**(5) Windows and Doors**

**(a) General**

1. Door and window styles are compatible with those on historic commercial resources within 200 feet.

(b) Windows and Storm Windows

1. There are multi-light windows in the transom area of the western storefront façade and these should have true or simulated divided lights.

(c) Entrance Doors and Storm Doors

1. No sliding glass doors are proposed to be installed on the ground floor elevation along the street frontage.

(e) Awnings.

1. The current proposal has awnings above the eastern storefront. They are of a design and pattern consistent in the district.
2. The awning materials appear to be of a similar appearance to what is typically found in the district, but the applicant should provide specifications on the awnings to confirm.

(f) Garage Doors

1. The garage door will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way, but should be of a compatible appearance with the structure and doors found in the district. Applicant should provide specifications on the garage doors.

**(6) Porches, Balconies and Decks**

(a) Porch Elements

1. The configuration of the storefront entrances on the two projecting bays on the street façade or of a configuration typical on commercial structures in the district.
2. The primary entrances for the structure on the front elevation of the structure.
3. Second exit stairways are provided on the interior of the structure.

(b) Balconies and Decks

1. While there is a rooftop deck above the western projecting bay on the street façade the balconies on the rest of the structure are largely on the rear clapboard-clad half of the structure. Most of these are either not visible or minimally visible from the public right-of-way. The exception are three balconies above the garage entrance that face towards the street. These are substantially set back from the street and there is precedent of a street-facing balcony on the residential-form historic structure at 839 Williamson.

**(7) Building Systems**

(a) Mechanical Systems

1. Mechanical equipment is not addressed in the applicant's submittal, but should be screened from the right-of-way. Applicant should provide details on any visible mechanicals on the structure.
2. Applicant should provide details on locations of any static vents, electric vents, wind turbines, on the structure.
3. Applicant should provide details on grilles, vents, equipment, and meters to be located on the structure, which should be finished or painted to match adjacent building materials.

(c) Lighting and Electrical Systems

1. The renderings show minimally decorative light fixtures. Applicant should provide specifications on the proposed lighting.
  2. The applicant has not provided any information on security light fixtures or security cameras to be located on the structure.
  3. The applicant has not provided information on any exterior mounted conduit on the structure.
  4. The applicant has not provided information on any roof appurtenances such as antennas, satellite dishes, or communications equipment.
-

Staff Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness can be met and recommends the Landmarks Commission approve the proposal with the following conditions:

Staff approval of:

1. Pedestrian door, garage door, and window specifications
2. Awning specifications
3. Lighting specifications
4. Information on locations for mechanical equipment on the roof and exterior walls of the structure

# LANDMARKS COMMISSION APPLICATION

LC

Complete all sections of this application, making sure to note the requirements on the accompanying checklist (reverse).

*If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access these forms, please call (608) 266-4635*

City of Madison  
Planning Division  
215 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Ste 017  
PO Box 2985  
Madison, WI 53701-2985  
(608) 266-4635



## 1. LOCATION

Project Address: 817-821 Williamson Street Aldermanic District: #6 Rummel

## 2. PROJECT

Project Title/Description: mixed-use building (commercial and residential)

This is an application for: (check all that apply)

- Alteration/Addition to a building in a Local Historic District or Designated Landmark (specify)\*\*:
  - Mansion Hill       Third Lake Ridge       First Settlement
  - University Heights       Marquette Bungalows       Landmark
- Land Division/Combination in a Local Historic District or to Designated Landmark Site (specify)\*\*:
  - Mansion Hill       Third Lake Ridge       First Settlement
  - University Heights       Marquette Bungalows       Landmark
- Demolition
- Alteration/Addition to a building adjacent to a Designated Landmark
- Variance from the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 41)
- Landmark Nomination/Rescission of Historic District Nomination/Amendment  
*(Please contact the Historic Preservation Planner for specific Submission Requirements.)*
- Other (specify): new mixed-use building

DPCED USE ONLY	Registrar #:
	<b>DATE STAMP</b>
	<b>Preliminary Zoning Review</b> Zoning Staff Initial: Date:        /        /

## 3. APPLICANT

Applicant's Name: Brandon Cook John Fontain  
PO BOX 694 Madison WI 53701 Company: Inc.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: 608-279-7962 Street City State Zip  
JohnFontainRealty@gmail.com Email:

Property Owner (if not applicant): John Fontain Exchange

Address: PO Box 694 Madison WI 53701

Property Owner's Signature: Brandon Cook City State Zip  
7AD8B4FC8C084E3... Date: 2/22/2020

NOTICE REGARDING LOBBYING ORDINANCE: If you are seeking approval of a development that has over 40,000 square feet of non-residential space, or a residential development of over 10 dwelling units, or if you are seeking assistance from the City with a value of \$10,000 (including grants, loans, TIF or similar assistance), then you likely are subject to Madison's lobbying ordinance (Sec. 2.40, MGO). You are required to register and report your lobbying. Please consult the City Clerk's Office for more information. Failure to comply with the lobbying ordinance may result in fines.

## 4. APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS (see checklist on reverse)

All applications must be filed by 12:00 pm on the submission date with the Preservation Planner, the Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development, Planning Division, located at 215 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Suite 017. Applications submitted after the submission date or incomplete applications will be postponed to the next scheduled filing time. Submission deadlines can be viewed here: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/2019-LCMeetingScheduleDates.pdf>

February 24, 2020  
Updated August 4, 2020

Heather Bailey, Ph.D.  
Preservation Planner  
Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development  
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017  
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Re: Letter of Intent  
817 Williamson Street – Letter of Intent  
**KBA Project #2003**

Heather Bailey,

The following is submitted together with the plans and application for the Landmarks Commission's review and consideration:

This proposed development involves the redevelopment of 817-821 Williamson Street, which is located within the Third Lake Ridge historic district, by removing an existing one-story commercial building and surface parking lot and constructing a new three-story mixed use building. There will be a total of 24 apartment units and approximately 830 sq.ft. of commercial space. There will also be 17 underground parking stalls for residential use.

The structure to be removed was constructed well outside of the period of significance for the Third Lake Ridge historic district (1850-1929) and has no historic significance to this area. It is also out of character and is not a landmark structure, nor is it of an uncommon or unusual design or method of construction, and as such should meet the demolition criteria.

As part of this project the underlying land that the existing and the proposed building will sit on needs to be combined into one lot. The size of this lot will not be out of place with the irregularly sized lots in this block and also within the nearby blocks in Third Lake Ridge. Given that the existing building was built across the lot lines and has existed as such for many years, this has been functioning as a single lot already.

The proposed building has been designed to be in context with the neighboring structures while not trying to look like a false historic structure. The front façade will be all masonry with storefront glass at the first floor level and the apartments above have taller windows. The façade has been designed with a recessed area in the middle to break this into two elements as would be similar to two buildings located next to each other with just a walkway inbetween. This condition exists on this same block on this same side of the street between 803 and 805 Williamson Street. The corner of the second façade is also stepped back so that each façade is less than 24' wide, which would maintain the rhythm and massing of this block. The garage entry is set also back 57' from the front façade and is lowered down in grade so it is not a primary feature for this building. By recessing the garage entry back from the street, the overall massing at the street is further reduced. This has been done in order to be compatible with the surrounding structures as it further maintains the existing rhythm on this block with buildings with driveways located along many of them.



The overall height of this building with a flat roof is in context with the tall 2-3 story gabled roof structures that are on this block which are set higher above the sidewalk given the increasing grades of this 800 block of Williamson St. The properties located behind this building on Jennifer St. are also set approximately a full story above the sidewalk grade on Williamson St. so this height will be compatible with them as well. Along the front façade we are stepping the building down from 3 stories to two stories on the western side, which is closest to the neighboring property. We are also stepping the building down from three stories to two stories along the rear property line, so that we are further tying into the heights of the structures behind this building. The use of a flat roof is also compatible with several other commercial and multi-family buildings located on Williamson Street and especially with those located directly across the street.

At an earlier Landmarks Commission meeting there were concerns raised as to the location of the building on the site and we were requested to look at its relation to the sidewalk and to set the building further back if at all possible. The building is currently set back from the sidewalk 2', even though there is not a required front yard setback, and the back of the building is set back just over 20' because there is a required 20' rear yard setback. Given this we are not able to move the building further back on the site, so the space would need to come from the interior of the building. We have taken a look at this and determined that given the configuration of the apartment units and the required density in order to make this project feasible we are not able to remove any interior space out of the building. We have also reviewed the location of the other existing buildings on this side of the 800 Block of Williamson Street and found that 803, 805, 811, 831, and 851 are all located within 2' to 3' of the sidewalk. Every other property with the exception of 813 also have front porches with the steps coming down and hitting the back of the sidewalk. Based on this, our building location will not feel out of place on this block.

Prior to the previous Landmarks Commission meeting we had lowered the upper parapet for the front façade of the building and we had also reduced the height of the floor structure such that we were able to further reduce the overall height of the building. These changes are still a part of this updated design and with the splitting of the façade and the stepback from three stories to two stories we believe that the overall mass of the building is in context with the surrounding historically significant structures.

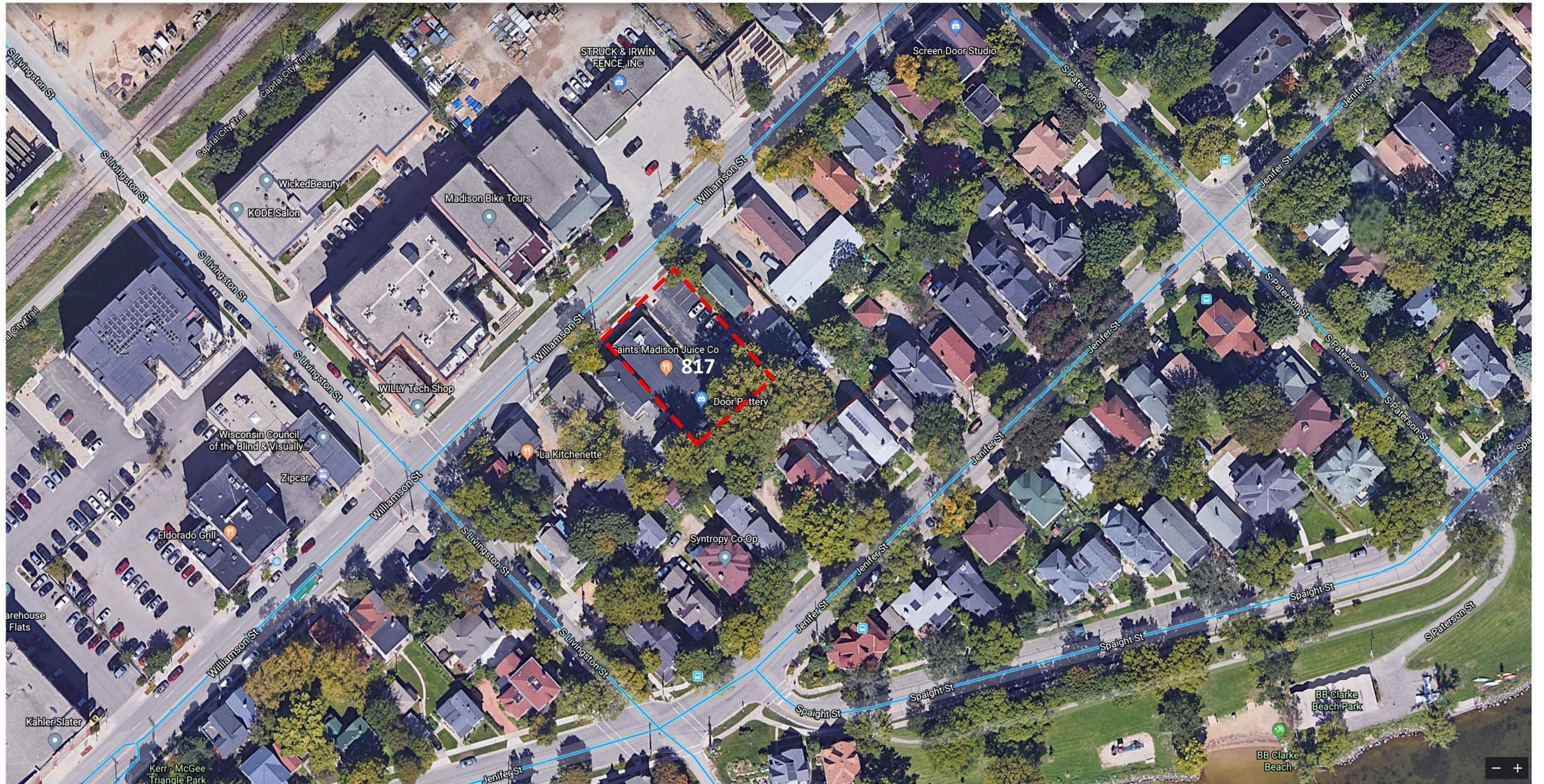
Included in this updated submittal are comparison renderings so that you can see the difference between the previous design and the new design. We feel that these revisions have had a very positive affect on this design and hope that you will find these successful in creating a building that will fit in well in the Third Lake Ridge historic district. I look forward to discussing these with you at the upcoming Landmarks Commission meeting.

Thank you for your time reviewing our proposal.

Sincerely,



Kevin Burow, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP  
Managing Member



Site Locator Aerial Map  
81 -821 Williamson Street  
February 24, 2020





817 Williamson  
Building to be demolished

813

811



831

825

817 Williamson

Photos  
817-821 Williamson Street  
February 24, 2020





839



831



825

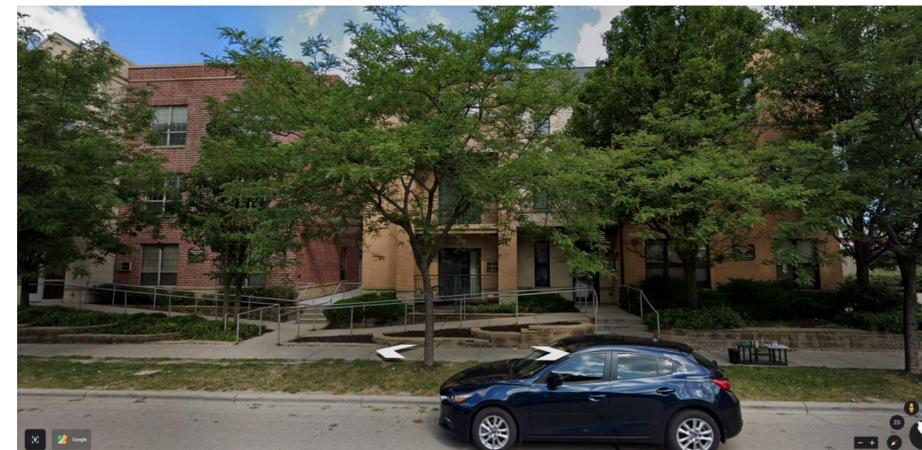


817-821 (project site)  
Williamson St.



813

811



across the street from proposed project  
Williamson St.



808

Intersection of Williamson St. & S. Livingston St. looking East



409 S. Livingston

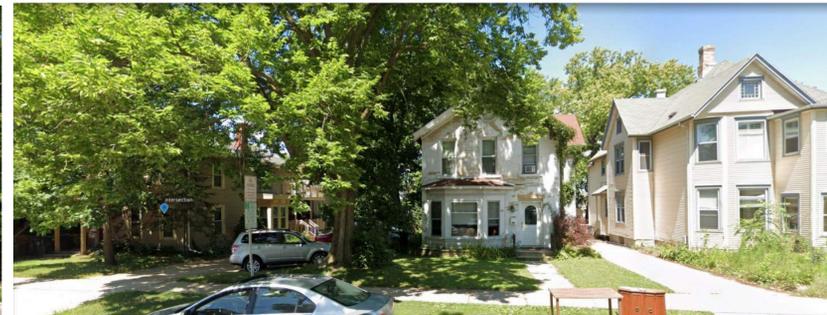


804 Jenifer

S. Livingston St.



804-812



814-824

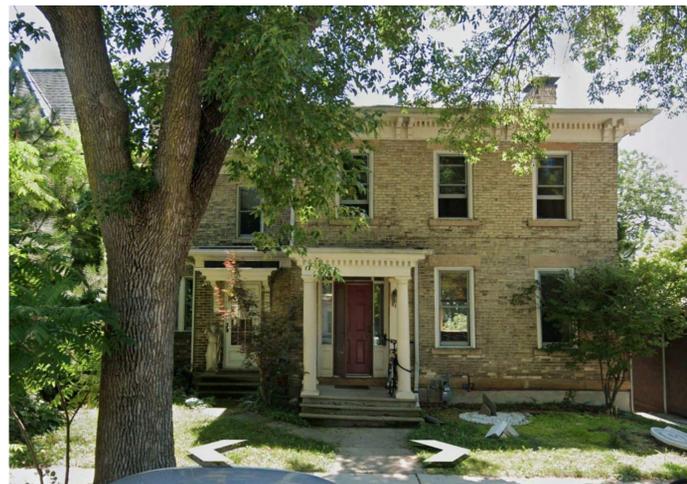


828-834



836-842

Jenifer St.



811



807

Jenifer St.



822



Spaight St.



**knothe • bruce**  
ARCHITECTS

Phone: 7601 University Ave., Ste 201  
608.836.3690 Middleton, WI 53562

ISSUED  
Issued for Land Use Submittal - May 6, 2020  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

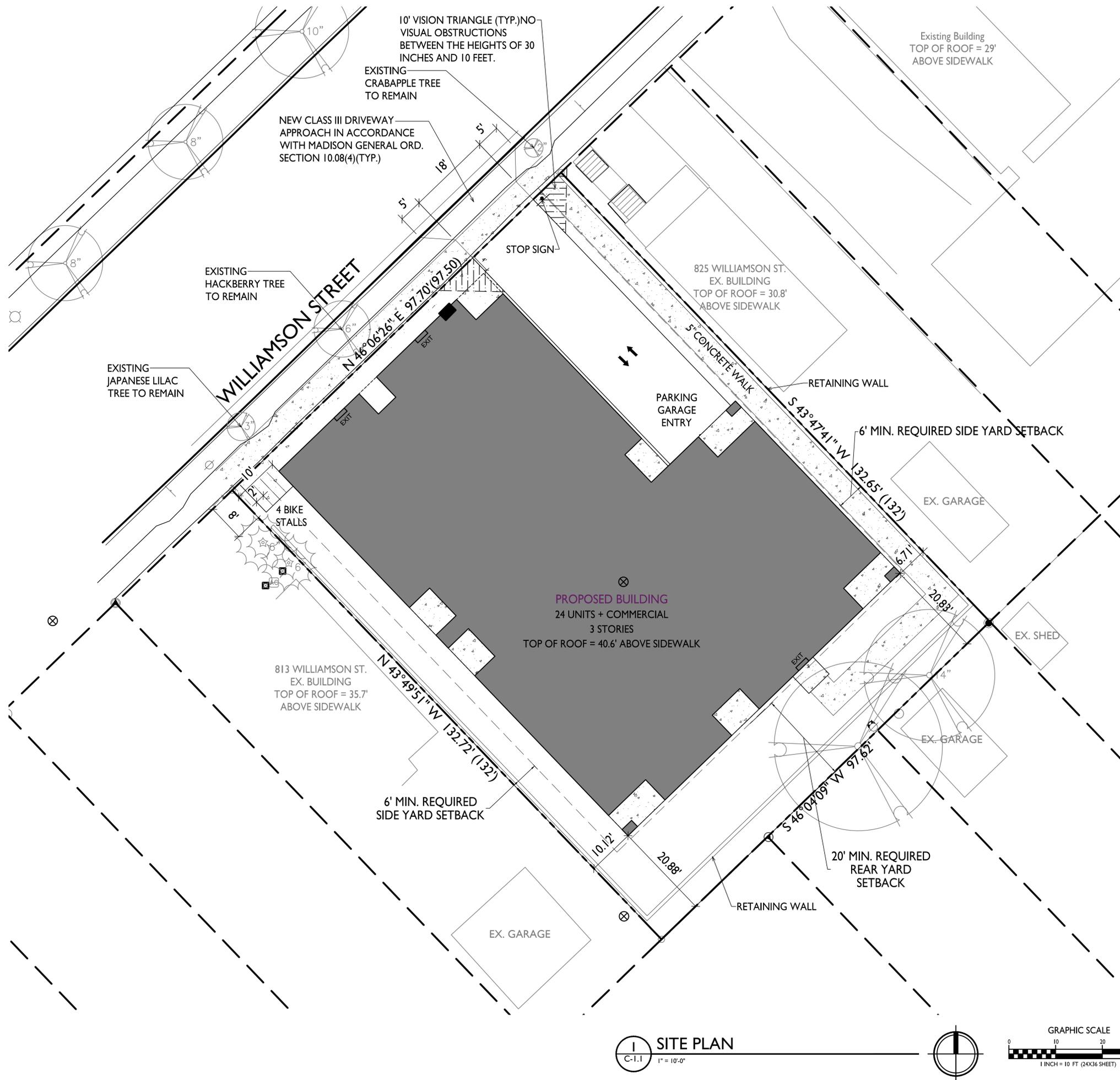
817-821 Williamson St  
Madison, Wisconsin  
SHEET TITLE  
**Site Plan**

SHEET NUMBER

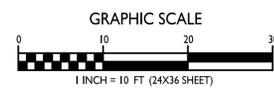
**C-1.1**

PROJECT NO. **2003**

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**I SITE PLAN**  
C-1.1 1" = 10'-0"





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KEY PLAN

ISSUED  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

817-821 Williamson  
Street, Madison  
Wisconsin

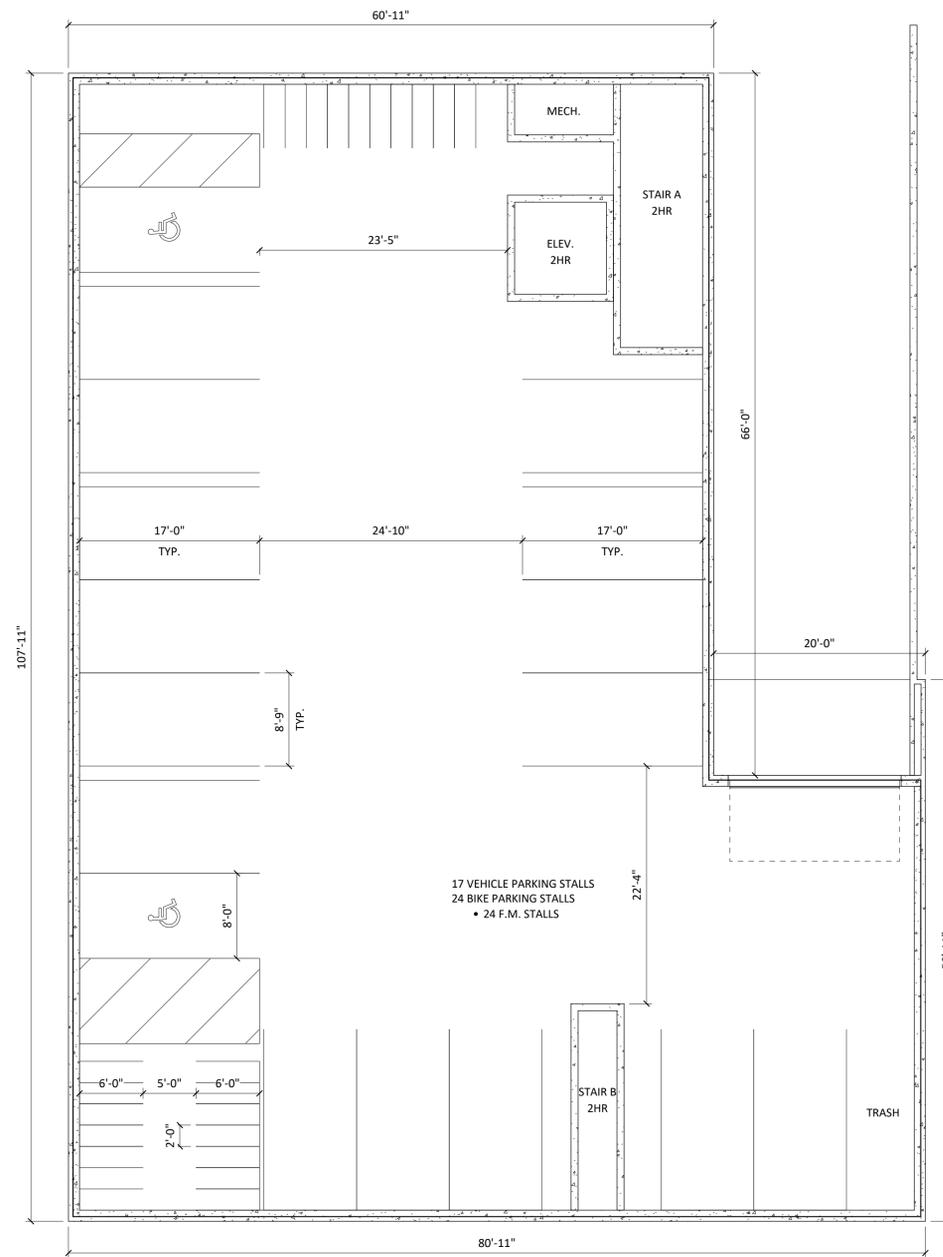
SHEET TITLE  
**BASEMENT  
FLOOR PLAN**

SHEET NUMBER

**A-1.0**

PROJECT NUMBER **2003**

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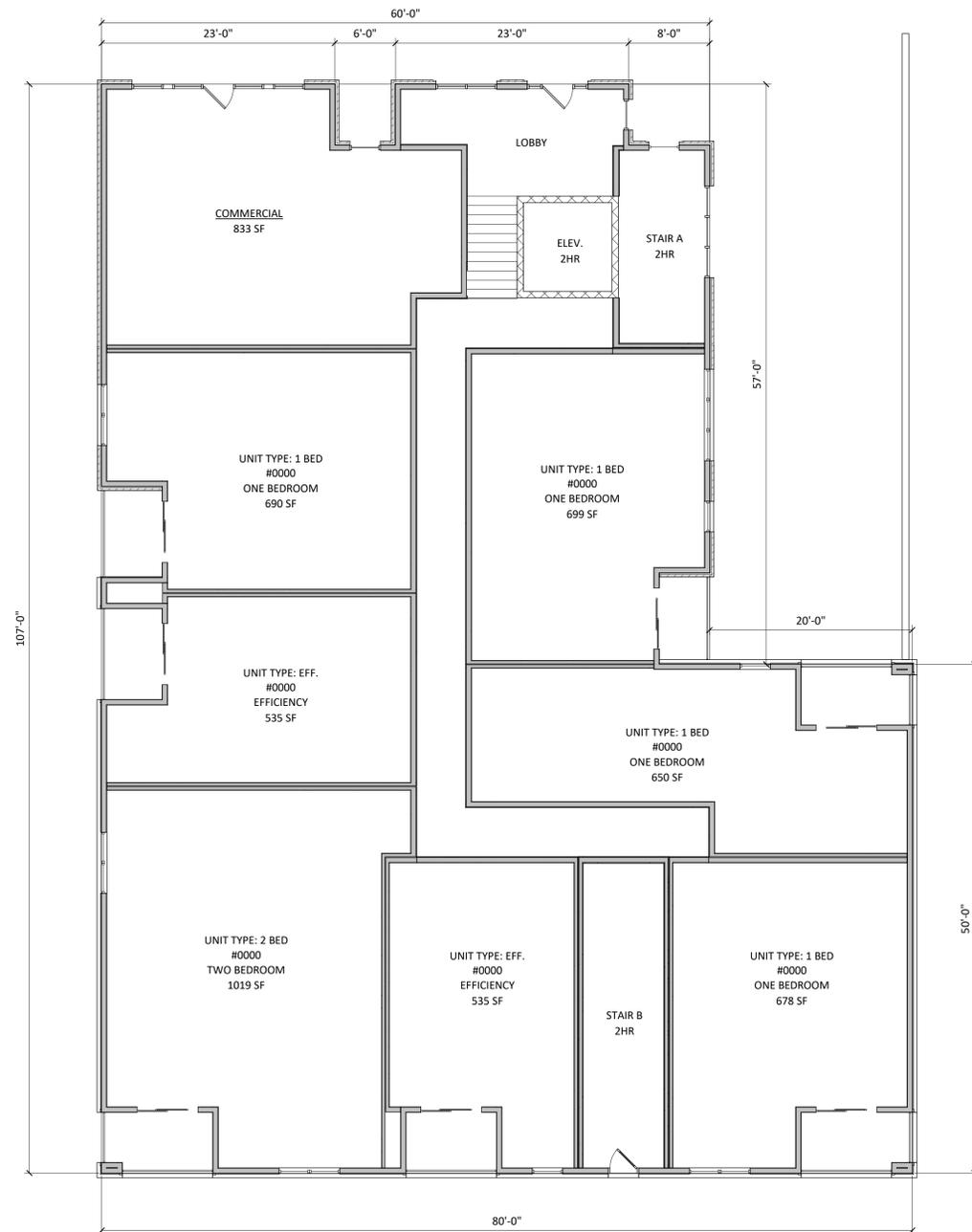
**1** BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN  
A-1.0 1/8" = 1'-0"



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KEY PLAN



1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
A-1.1 1/8" = 1'-0"

ISSUED  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

817-821 Williamson  
Street, Madison  
Wisconsin

SHEET TITLE  
**FIRST FLOOR  
PLAN**

SHEET NUMBER

**A-1.1**

PROJECT NUMBER 2003

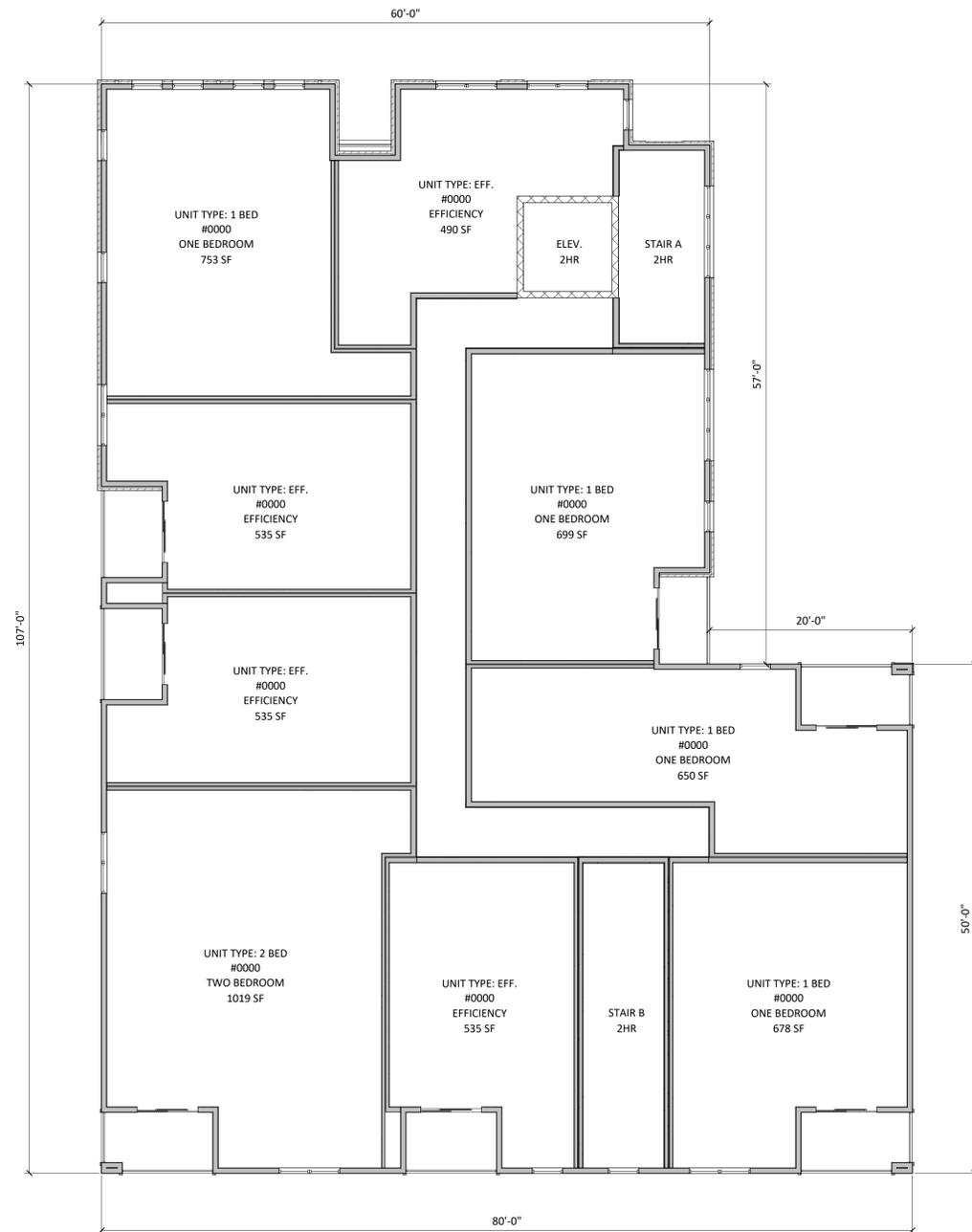
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KEY PLAN



1 SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
A-1.2 1/8" = 1'-0"

ISSUED  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

817-821 Williamson  
Street, Madison  
Wisconsin

SHEET TITLE  
**SECOND FLOOR  
PLAN**

SHEET NUMBER

**A-1.2**

PROJECT NUMBER 2003

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KEY PLAN

ISSUED  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

817-821 Williamson  
Street, Madison  
Wisconsin

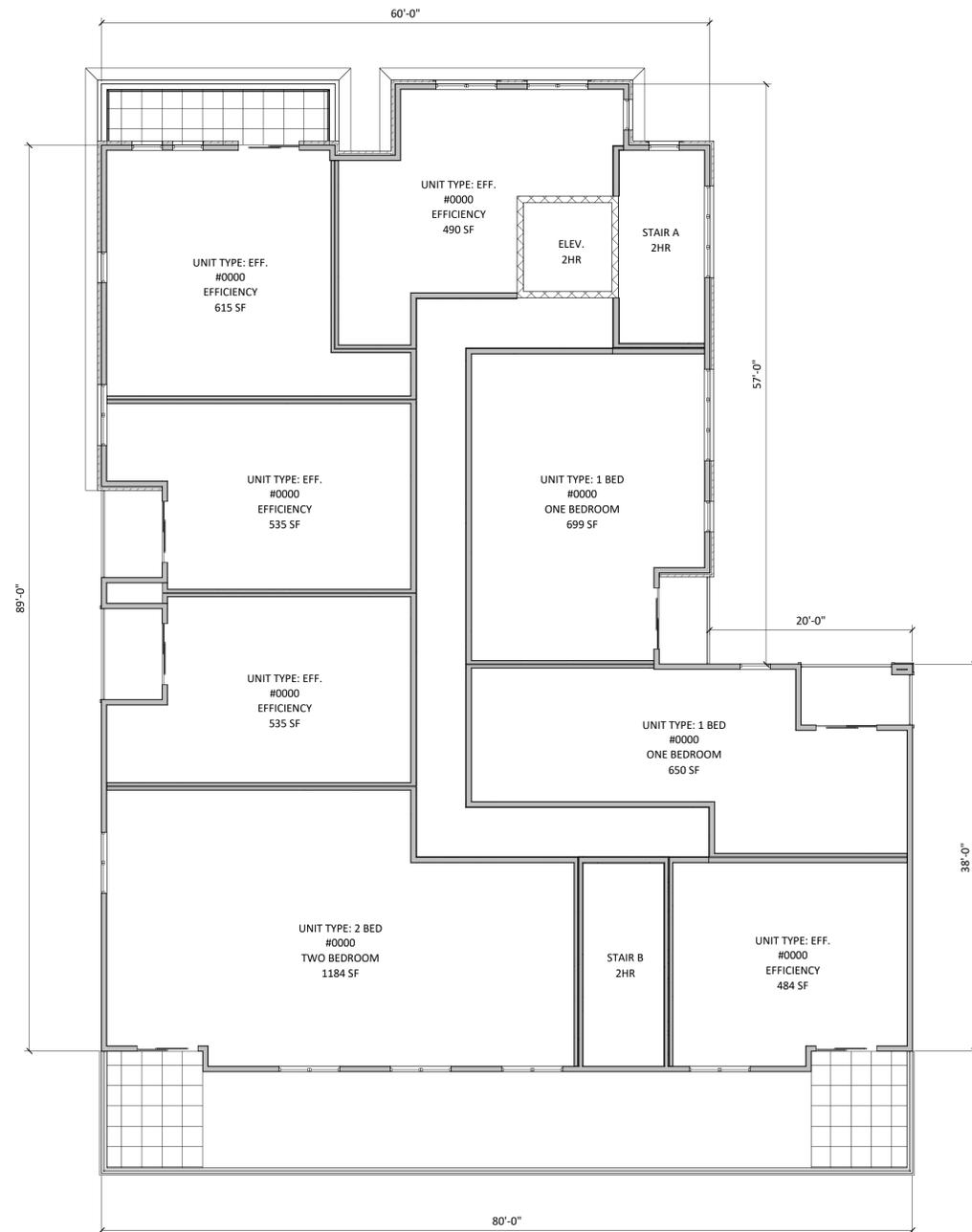
SHEET TITLE  
**THIRD FLOOR  
PLAN**

SHEET NUMBER

**A-1.3**

PROJECT NUMBER **2003**

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**1** THIRD FLOOR PLAN  
A-1.3 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 NorthEast COLORED  
A-2.3 1/8" = 1'-0"



2 NorthWest COLORED  
A-2.3 1/8" = 1'-0"

ISSUED  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

817-821 Williamson  
Street, Madison  
Wisconsin

SHEET TITLE  
**EXTERIOR  
ELEVATIONS -  
COLORED**

SHEET NUMBER

**A-2.3**

PROJECT NUMBER 2003

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ISSUED  
Issued for Landmarks - August 04, 2020

PROJECT TITLE  
**John Fontain  
Development**

817-821 Williamson  
Street, Madison  
Wisconsin

SHEET TITLE  
**EXTERIOR  
ELEVATIONS -  
COLORED**

SHEET NUMBER

**A-2.4**

PROJECT NUMBER 2003

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COMMERCIAL

John Fontain Development  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin





John Fontain Development  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin





APARTMENTS

COMMERCIAL

John Fontain Development  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin





John Fontain Development  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin





**John Fontain Development**  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin





John Fontain Development  
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John Fontain Development  
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Comparison Renders





**John Fontain Development**  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin  
Comparison Renders





John Fontain Development  
817-821 Williamson Street, Madison Wisconsin  
Comparison Renders



## Bailey, Heather

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**From:** Jack Kear <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 1:51 PM  
**To:** PLLCApplications  
**Subject:** Fwd: Register my support for 817/821 Williamson St.

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Commissioners:

The Marquette Neighborhood Association received this statement of support for the proposed Brandon Cook project which is on your agenda for this Monday. The statement is from the next door neighbor of the proposed project so I felt it very important to share and I am forwarding to you now.

Thank You,  
Jack Kear  
Preservation and Development Chair  
MNA

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Rachel Bauer <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Wed, Aug 12, 2020 at 5:24 PM  
**Subject:** Register my support for 817/821 Williamson St.  
**To:** [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** Rachel Bauer <[REDACTED]>

To Madison Preservation and Design Committee:

I am the resident at 825 Williamson Street and I am familiar with Brandon Cook and his proposed project at 817/821 Williamson Street. I would like to register my support for this project and encourage the committee to immediately recommend this project to approval.

I have a background in commercial real estate as an owner/operator and developer of several projects (none of them are in Madison). I also have a passion for architecture and adaptive reuse and preservation and worked on a project in the last few years with Wisconsin Historical Society. I am by no means an expert of preservation but I most certainly have an appreciation for it as well as development.

Brandon Cook is a developer with integrity. That matters. Brandon will do what he says he will do. He will build a quality building and deliver it on time. The influx of people who want to live in city center downtown

space means Madison needs to support the development of housing that delivers on that demand and move those project forward to completion in a timely manner.

I have heard a great deal of talk about parking. While parking is a commodity that is important, fewer people who choose to live downtown also maintain full time car ownership. The trend towards city living and non-car ownership is a real one that has not been discussed at meeting like this often enough. I have spent months at a time and worked on projects in downtowns such as Austin, TX and Denver, CO and in both cites we see more and more that fewer parking spots are built per building as the demand for parking steadily declines. I encourage everyone on the committee to consider this very real trend that is evolving and changing the landscape of development for city centers in the past couple of years.

The most important thing I can convey in this message is the urgency to move this project forward for the sake of development in Madison. Brandon’s investment in our community, in this neighborhood, and great projects is important. What is even more important is that Madison proves itself a community that can deliver on the demand for housing such as this project provides and do so in a manner that encourages great development such as this.

I encourage each and every one of you to put yourself in a position to realize that great development and great developers belong in great cities. This project should be approved without delay.

Best,

*Rachel Bauer*

**COUNTRY Financial**

Insurance Agent

Madison, WI 53718

Office: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



AUTO | HOME | LIFE | BUSINESS | RETIREMENT



**From:** [John](#)  
**To:** [PLLCApplications](#)  
**Cc:** [Rummel, Marsha](#); [Heiser-Ertel, Lauren](#)  
**Subject:** Reasons for Opposition to Agenda Item #2, 817-821 Williamson St  
**Date:** Monday, August 17, 2020 10:10:40 AM  
**Attachments:** [WillyBUILD II.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Landmarks Commission,

I am writing to oppose Agenda Item #2, 817 Williamson St.

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. The proposal by Mr. Cook for 817-21 Williamson still does not meet the minimum standards for our neighborhood plans or the standards of the historic district.

In relation to the historic district standards, the proposal exceeds heights and has less setback than immediately adjacent properties. In addition the mass of the project vastly exceeds that of adjacent properties.

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.

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 project can be made better and more in keeping with neighborhood and the historic district expectations. 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



## Bailey, Heather

---

**From:** Tracy Doreen <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2020 4:36 PM  
**To:** PLLCApplications  
**Cc:** Rummel, Marsha  
**Subject:** Agenda item #2 817 Williamson Street opposition

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Landmarks Commission,

I am writing again to ask that you please do not approve the proposed building for 817 Williamson St.

I quote here from the letter I wrote to you in early June asking you: “to uphold standards and characteristics needed for new buildings to fit harmoniously into this historic neighborhood. The developer needs to go back to the drawing board for the plan for 817. The current proposal is not visually compatible with the present historic buildings in the areas of the Gross Volume, Height, design of the roof, and The rhythm of masses and spaces.”

Thank you. You asked for changes and some changes were made. Though a few things have been tweaked, they are not to the extent of what “going back to the drawing board” truly means. In stating this in my previous letter, I meant the design had failed and to start over.

Even with the facade and setback changes, the overall size of this building does not work for many who appreciate the historic Third Lake Ridge including me. The attraction of Willy Street is not the larger new buildings. No, they are not the attraction because most often they really do not fit. Voids and green space seem not to be considered when squishing. Why would you approve something that doesn't fit in this historic district? Needed housing? Then build two-flat or three-flat houses - for families.

I am a long time resident living less than two blocks from 817 Williamson. I bought my home as a first time home buyer thirty years ago and it is the only home I have ever owned. As other long time owners in this neighborhood have observed, in saving these historic houses we have created a desirable place to invest. Yet with these investments comes great responsibility. We trust that Landmarks will more strongly guide investors to seriously understand and uphold the historic standards we demand be respected.

The reworked designs presented for 817 Williamson do not meet the “standards and characteristics needed for new buildings to fit harmoniously into this historic neighborhood.” The building is too big. Period.

Please reject this proposal.

Respectfully,  
Tracy Dietzel  
515 S. Paterson

**From:** [mike.engel](mailto:mike.engel)  
**To:** [PLLCApplications](#); [Rummel, Marsha](#); [mnaboard@marquette-neighborhood.org](mailto:mnaboard@marquette-neighborhood.org)  
**Subject:** 817-821 Williamson St  
**Date:** Monday, August 17, 2020 1:28:04 PM

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## Landmarks Commission Agenda Item #2

I am a neighbor of this proposed project. It is located in my backyard. I have attended numerous meetings about it. Quite frankly, the current design is the worst. It is a sophomoric attempt to fake appropriate massing within the historic rhythm of the neighborhood. I don't want trivial visual tricks that only work on paper. I want the developer to truly comply with the intent and language of the Third Lake Ridge.

I applaud the Landmarks Commission for previously rejecting this project. I concur that demolition of the existing structure and development of the surface parking lot is appropriate. The problem is the current proposal does NOT fit mid-block. It might work on a corner on the north side of Willy St.

Let us not be worn down by the process but instead use this as an opportunity to get something that could be an award winning modern buildings that fits the context.

Mike Engel  
826 Jenifer St

**From:** [Carolyn Freiwald](#)  
**To:** [PLLCApplications](#)  
**Subject:** "Agenda item #2, 817 Williamson St opposition"  
**Date:** Monday, August 17, 2020 9:45:34 AM

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Dear Landmarks members:

I'm writing to oppose a new development that doesn't meet the planning set for the neighborhood. I own three houses in the neighborhood and have followed all rules set out as I restored the properties. Please ensure others do as well, or why have landmarks or planning groups? This is why you are there - to lead, not to follow.

Thanks,  
Carolyn Freiwald

**From:** [Jack Kear](#)  
**To:** [Bailey, Heather](#)  
**Cc:** [Heiser-Ertel, Lauren](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Register my support for 817/821 Williamson St.  
**Date:** Monday, August 17, 2020 12:15:18 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Landmarks Commissioners:

The proposal for the new Brandon Cook project for 817-821 Williamson Street is before you this evening. I am in support of the new development.

I attended the recent online public discussion the Planning Commission set up to discuss the potential zoning code changes to address the housing crisis. As the chair of the Marquette Neighborhood Association's development committee, I have seen numerous housing proposals for the Marquette district shot down in neighborhood association committee for the duration of my 5+ year term. Many of those making up those "no" votes are writing you today to oppose the Cook project.

I have come to see that the NIMBYism of the Marquette homeowner is an unfortunate tag to all residents of this district.

It's always the same: a person says they support affordable housing but they don't like the mass of a proposed project that is big enough to contain those affordable units. They want "families" to live in the neighborhood but they don't want a housing project to be above three stories. They want to preserve "historic quality" and one of those district qualities is long-term homogenized whiteness.

Last Wednesday we held an online meeting to endorse the Cook project. It failed in a 5-4 vote. I am thrilled! Why would a proponent of the project be thrilled by this vote? Simple. The Nay voters were the same Nay voters that shut down the Mike Kohn 4-story development at 210 S. Dickinson Street two years ago and that caused Barry Perkel to walk away from the 5-story development he pitched for 1318-1328 Williamson St. They write you today from my district even though their homes are not in the shadow of this simple Cook project because they oppose any and all changes to the district. I have the committee's record of votes so I can say this without hyperbole.

But the four Yea votes were different. Marquette residents who understand that the need for housing is the paramount need of the district and that this need surpasses inflexible standards. These are the Yea voters that will benefit most from zoning code changes the Planning Commission may make. These are the voters that reviewed the Cook design and see it as a positive addition because it is a needed addition.

I encourage you to consider the future and assist us in moving Marquette into a new era that wants to solve the housing crisis.

Thank You-

Jack Kear

1045 East Wilson Street

On Thu, Aug 13, 2020 at 3:49 PM Bailey, Heather <[HBailey@cityofmadison.com](mailto:HBailey@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

I'll keep an eye out for additional correspondence prior to the meeting!



**Heather L. Bailey, Ph.D.**

Preservation Planner

Neighborhood Planning, Preservation + Design Section

Department of Planning + Community + Economic Development

Planning Division

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.; Suite 017

PO Box 2985

Madison WI 53701-2985

Email: [hbailey@cityofmadison.com](mailto:hbailey@cityofmadison.com) Phone: 608.266.6552



*The 2020 Census is here! As we practice social distancing, take the opportunity to complete the census now from the comfort of your own home. You can fill it out online at [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov), by [phone](#), or by [mail](#).*

**From:** Jack Kear <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 3:21 PM

**To:** Bailey, Heather <[HBailey@cityofmadison.com](mailto:HBailey@cityofmadison.com)>

**Cc:** Heiser-Ertel, Lauren <[LHeiser-Ertel@cityofmadison.com](mailto:LHeiser-Ertel@cityofmadison.com)>

**Subject:** Re: Register my support for 817/821 Williamson St.

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Thank you, Heather. Also, unfortunately the MNA board meets Monday immediately after your meeting so our statement of support for the Cook project will come too late. I have asked the board for an uncommon e-vote on it and if that comes through can I send you a

board statement by Monday afternoon?

-Jack

On Thu, Aug 13, 2020 at 2:32 PM Bailey, Heather <[HBailey@cityofmadison.com](mailto:HBailey@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

Jack,

Thank you for passing this along. We will include it in the record.



**Heather L. Bailey, Ph.D.**

Preservation Planner

Neighborhood Planning, Preservation + Design Section

-----  
Department of Planning + Community + Economic Development

Planning Division

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.; Suite 017

PO Box 2985

Madison WI 53701-2985

Email: [hbailey@cityofmadison.com](mailto:hbailey@cityofmadison.com) Phone: 608.266.6552



*The 2020 Census is here! As we practice social distancing, take the opportunity to complete the census now from the comfort of your own home. You can fill it out online at [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov), by [phone](tel:6082666552), or by [mail](#).*

**From:** Jack Kear <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 1:51 PM

**To:** PLLCApplications <[landmarkscommission@cityofmadison.com](mailto:landmarkscommission@cityofmadison.com)>

**Subject:** Fwd: Register my support for 817/821 Williamson St.

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Commissioners:

The Marquette Neighborhood Association received this statement of support for the proposed Brandon Cook project which is on your agenda for this Monday. The statement is from the next door neighbor of the proposed project so I felt it very important to share and I am forwarding to you now.

Thank You,

Jack Kear

Preservation and Development Chair

MNA

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rachel Bauer** <[REDACTED]>  
Date: Wed, Aug 12, 2020 at 5:24 PM  
Subject: Register my support for 817/821 Williamson St.  
To: [REDACTED]  
Cc: Rachel Bauer <[REDACTED]>

To Madison Preservation and Design Committee:

I am the resident at 825 Williamson Street and I am familiar with Brandon Cook and his proposed project at 817/821 Williamson Street. I would like to register my support for this project and encourage the committee to immediately recommend this project for approval.

I have a background in commercial real estate as an owner/operator and developer of several projects (none of them are in Madison). I also have a passion for architecture and adaptive reuse and preservation and worked on a project in the last few years with Wisconsin Historical Society. I am by no means an expert of preservation but I most certainly have an appreciation for it as well as development.

Brandon Cook is a developer with integrity. That matters. Brandon will do what he says he will do. He will build a quality building and deliver it on time. The influx of people who want to live in city center downtown space means Madison needs to support the development of housing that delivers on that demand and move those project forward to completion in a timely manner.

I have heard a great deal of talk about parking. While parking is a commodity that is important, fewer people who choose to live downtown also maintain full time car ownership. The trend towards city living and non-car ownership is a real one that has not been discussed at meeting like this often enough. I have spent months at a time and worked on projects in downtowns such as Austin, TX and Denver, CO and in both cities we see more and more that fewer parking spots are built per building as the demand for parking steadily declines. I encourage everyone on the committee to consider this very real trend that is evolving and changing the landscape of development for city centers in the past couple of years.

The most important thing I can convey in this message is the urgency to move this project forward for the sake of development in Madison. Brandon's investment in our community, in this neighborhood, and great projects is important. What is even more important is that Madison proves itself a community that can deliver on the demand for housing such as this project provides and do so in a manner that encourages great development such as this.

I encourage each and every one of you to put yourself in a position to realize that great development and great developers belong in great cities. This project should be approved without delay.

Best,

*Rachel Bauer*

**COUNTRY Financial**

Insurance Agent

Madison, WI 53718

Office: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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**From:** [Sharon Kilfoy](#)  
**To:** [PLLCApplications](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item #2, 817 Williamson St opposition  
**Date:** Sunday, August 16, 2020 8:22:02 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Landmarks 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 that my neighborhood is unique in its landmark designation. All the others are intended to preserve architectural style - the articulation of buildings – the “froufrou.” Ours, however, intends to preserve the RELATIONSHIP between the buildings – the “rhythm between the voids and the solids.”

OK – let’s unpack this. What is rhythm? “A strong repeated pattern” or as I would put it – “variation that produces harmony.” Solids? The buildings. And voids? Empty spaces. Another very important point that is relevant here comes from the Willy St Build guidelines – that bigger, denser buildings should be allowed closer to the capitol – and that as one progresses towards the river, that rhythm of voids and solids should become quieter, less dense, with more single family homes, duplexes and smaller businesses.

So yes, there are bigger buildings two blocks away – in the 600 block. But, take a look at the other buildings on the 800 block – a couple that are already too big – and a whole host of smaller buildings whose AGE – time on the street – should take precedence over the SIZE of the newcomers (one of which was built recently by Brandon Cook himself.) Once another monstrosity is built on the 800 block, that harmonic rhythm is gone – BOOM, BOOM, BOOM - and the rest of the blocks on the street are threatened as well.

Then, of course, is the question of VOIDS –the empty spaces. How can there be a harmonious rhythm between solids and voids when there are NO VOIDS? NO EMPTY SPACES? A 2 foot setback??? Lets get real! Placing buildings that extend virtually lot-line to lot-line should never be allowed in this neighborhood – not if you intend to uphold the ordinances, you are charged with protecting.

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 landmark 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

608-658-3736

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

## Bailey, Heather

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**From:** Lindsey Lee <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2020 2:19 PM  
**To:** Bailey, Heather; Jack Kear; Marquette Neighborhood Association  
**Subject:** I support 817/821 Williamson Street

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Landmarks Commissioners:

I am writing you to express my support for the proposed project at 817/821 Williamson Street. I live with my family at 731 Williamson Street and I own Ground Zero Coffee across the street at 744 Williamson Street. I am also a regular participant of the Preservation and Development Committee (P&D) of the Marquette Neighborhood Association (MNA). I agree with the co-chair of the P&D committee, Jack Kear, that this is a good and much needed project for our street. It is one story less than the relatively new building at 739 Williamson Street which is one house down from my family home. It is also less dense based on acreage than 731 Williamson Street. The P&D committee and MNA overwhelmingly supported the 739 Williamson project which has proven itself to be a real asset to this block. I am positive that, if built, the 817/821 Williamson Street project will have the same result.

Please give great weight to Preservation Planner Heather Bailey's report and recommendation and approve this worthy project.

Thank you for your time,

Lindsey Lee

## Bailey, Heather

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**From:** Lindsey Lee-GZ <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2020 3:39 PM  
**To:** Bailey, Heather  
**Subject:** I support 817/821 Williamson Street (updated)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Landmarks Commissioners:

I am writing you to express my support for the proposed project at 817/821 Williamson Street. I live with my family at [731 Williamson Street](#) and I own Ground Zero Coffee across the street at [744 Williamson Street](#). I am also a regular participant of the Preservation and Development Committee (P&D) of the Marquette Neighborhood Association (MNA). I agree with the co-chair of the P&D committee, Jack Kear, that this is a good and much needed project for our street. It is one story less than the relatively new building at [739 Williamson Street](#) which is one house down from my family home. It is also less dense (based on acreage) than [739 Williamson Street](#). The P&D committee and MNA overwhelmingly supported the 739 Williamson project which has proven itself to be a real asset to this block. I am positive that, if built, the 817/821 Williamson Street project will have the same result.

Please give great weight to Preservation Planner Heather Bailey's report and recommendation and approve this worthy project.

Thank you for your time,

Lindsey Lee

Landmarks Commission  
Meeting of August 17, 2020  
Agenda item #2, Legistar #59708, 817-821 Williamson St.

At the last Landmarks meeting, there was discussion of the mass of the project being too large, as well as too high (though a comment was made that height might not be as big of an issue if the appearance of mass was decreased) and that the lack of a significant setback from the sidewalk makes the presence of that mass felt.

So what has changed?

1. The façade abutting the sidewalk was three segments, west to east: 9'3" (setback 8'2"), 41'9", 10'2" (setback 8'2")  
The revision is 4 segments, west to east: 23', 6' (setback 6 feet), 23', 8' (setback 6 feet).
2. The western 23' segment has the third story stepped back about 5.5', with a railing set back about 1' from the building face.
3. A cornice has been added between the second and third stories. This cornice hangs out about 1½ feet.  
The cornice is offset on the two 23' segments – on the western segment it is perhaps 2 feet higher than the eastern segment.

I believe these changes are mere tweaks that do little, if anything, to address the massing of the project. In fact, the setback segments have been moved 25% closer to the sidewalk (6' rather than a little over 8') and the width of the eastern setback segment is shrunk by 20% (down to 8'). The depth of the setback may have decreased due to the required City easement. These easements are generally used to make the sidewalk wider or to move the sidewalk closer to the building to allow for a wider terrace. Whichever, the presence of the building will still be 2 feet from the sidewalk, with shallower setbacks. If anything, the mass will be felt even more.

I could reiterate my comments from my prior letters as I believe those comments are still applicable. However, I will limit my comments to the primary issue that the developer claims to have addressed – the creation of the appearance of two buildings, thereby decreasing the appearance of mass.

1. Per the revised submission letter: "The façade has been designed with a recessed area in the middle to break this into two elements as would be similar to two buildings located next to each other with just a walkway in between. This condition exists on this same block on this same side of the street between 803 and 805 Williamson."

The recessed area is 6 feet wide and 6 feet deep. The space between 803 and 805 is about 6 feet and runs the depth of the lot. The fact that this same developer was able to build 803 as close as possible to the 803 lot line should not serve as evidence of a visually compatible rhythm of buildings masses and spaces for this project. Historically, the corner building at 801/803 was also set close to the property line, but that home was also substantially set back from the sidewalk, creating a seemingly larger space. (See Attachment A for comparison photos.) Existing spaces between the historic buildings on the 800 south block generally range from about 10 feet to 30 feet.

A 6 foot wide recessed area that is only setback 6 feet does not create a visual space, especially when the materials are the same and the design motif is continuous through the four segments. When the Landmarks Commission approved 739 Williamson it required a 9 foot wide living wall - a green wall that gave the illusion that a 40+ foot wide project was two separate buildings, one 17 feet wide and the other 20 feet wide (including the setback wings at the building edges). That green space was critical to approval, as it was expected to actually create a sense of space.

2. The revised submission letter states: "The corner of the second façade is also stepped back so that each façade is less than 24' wide, which would maintain the rhythm and massing of this block."

These two stepbacks/recesses are a mere 6 feet in depth, reduced by 25% as compared to the last set of plans. At some point a stepback does nothing to create an illusion of less mass, for example a 6" stepback would be meaningless.

For 739 Williamson, the Commission viewed the setback wings and the portion abutting the sidewalk as a single segment. Under that analysis, assuming the 6' wide middle recess counts for anything, there are two segments, one 31' wide and one 23' feet wide.

But then again, this is not an issue of mathematics, it is an issue of visual compatibility. And even if the mass arguably "reads" as two separate structures due to the 6' recess, the mass remains incompatible with the historic resources. Looking at the last pages of the revised project, the mass does not appear lessened by the 6 foot wide recess. (Though, once again, the perspective seems off. The last page is a front view and the western segment looks to be 3 feet or so shorter even though it is set back just 5½ feet from the front façade.)

3. The revised submission letter explains why the building cannot be moved further back, and then explains the other commercial properties are set close to the sidewalk and then says: "Every other property with the exception of 813 also have front porches with the steps coming down and hitting the back of the sidewalk."

The commercial buildings are close to the sidewalk, but the street facades of those buildings range from about 670 to 825 square feet. The facade of this project, not including the garage, is about 2,200 square feet. As to the homes, the open-air framing of the front porches actually decreases the feeling of the mass of the homes. Steps and sidewalks coming down the hillside to hit the back of the sidewalk are irrelevant.

The revised submission letter also states that "in order to make this project feasible" no interior space can be removed from the project. The issue of a project's financial feasibility is irrelevant to the Commission's decision. Like BUILD II requirements, financial feasibility is not within the ordinance decision making criteria.

I would also like to comment on document #43 of the Legislative record. This is not relevant to the Commission's decision, so please feel free to skip the rest of this comment letter. But I cannot allow Mr. Kear's comment letter to stand as the representation of any sort of truth.

- Mr. Kear discusses the Plan Commission's discussion of the housing crisis. That discussion is not new. In fact, it was widely discussed in connection with the

Comprehensive Plan. Much of Williamson Street was initially designated for higher intensity. The 800 and 900 north blocks were Community Mixed Use, but were reduced to Neighborhood Mixed Use on the final map. The 900 south and the 1000 and 1100 blocks were Medium Residential, reduced in intensity to Low-Medium Residential. Williamson Street was specifically removed from the corridors named as a "Growth Priority Areas." The Plan Commission, and ultimately the Common Council, decided that Williamson Street was not a street on which to focus for future housing needs, in part (perhaps in whole) because of its historic designation.

- Those of us commenting on 817 Williamson are not NIMBY's. Rather, we value the historic designation of this neighborhood and are working to maintain the historic characteristics. There is more to City and neighborhood planning, and keeping livable neighborhoods, than just increasing density.
- Mr. Kear structures part of his argument around "affordable housing" and that such cannot be achieved without greater mass/height. First, this is not an affordable housing project. The developer is not under any constraints as to how he can outfit the interiors or as to the rents he can charge. The other large housing projects on the north side of Williamson that have been built in recent years are all luxury housing. Second, the so-called NIMBY's have been asking for years for affordable housing. One staunch proponent of affordable housing even obtained agreement from the then P&D chair to have a meeting focused on affordable housing – such meeting was never scheduled. One example of a project where affordable housing proponents worked to get affordable housing was 906 Williamson. The developer agreed to provide 2 units and then, after approvals were obtained, reneged. BUILD II even provides an additional story in select locations if there is truly affordable housing.
- Mr. Kear claims that one of the historic qualities we NIMBY's want to maintain is homogenized whiteness. That is completely offensive. I bought my house in 1985. At that time there was a mix of colors and incomes. Houses were cheap because this was not labeled a desirable neighborhood. As the neighborhood has become more popular, infill does tend to be whiter and richer. I, for one, miss the great diversity that once was this neighborhood – including talking with the homeless men on their way to spend the afternoon drinking at the beach. But building yet another apartment building to house just a certain segment of the population, whether students or young professionals, does not help to increase diversity. Of note, this project has 11 efficiencies, 10 one bedrooms and 3 two bedrooms.
- Those of us writing today do not, for the most part, live "in the shadow of this simple Cook project." Historic preservation is not a goal for just the immediate neighbors. Historic neighborhoods are a city-wide resource and whether a person lives next door, or two blocks away, or 5 miles away, they should work to maintain that historic fabric (assuming they are interested) and not be subject to name-calling and dismissive attitudes.
- Mr. Kear calls those who voted against the project nay-sayers. I would call those nay voters residents who care about the historic fabric and care about following the plans and processes, whether the historic ordinance or neighborhood plans, that were created to help ensure orderly development.
- Mr. Kear calls the yea-voters residents who understand the "need for housing is the paramount need of the district." The need for *affordable housing* does exist in the neighborhood and is of great importance to many. The "need" for yet another

development that does nothing but create more housing for a limited market segment is questioned by many.

- Mr. Kear says the need for housing “surpasses inflexible standards.” Ordinances, and the Comprehensive Plan, do create standards for the regulation of growth. It would seem that Mr. Kear is suggesting you abandon those standards for what he, in his personal opinion, deems to be the one and only goal of creating housing.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Lehnertz

ATTACHMENT A



Google Street Map Oct 2016 and Jul 2019

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.

## The Nature and Importance of Preservation in Madison's Third Lake Ridge

Over the last 45 years I have worked as an architect designing renovations and additions in four out of the five historic districts in Madison, as well as a developer within the historic Third Lake Ridge. Because of the tremendous variation and sometimes confusing nature of ordinance requirements from one district to another, it became important for me to summarize and simplify them in order to maintain compliance in my work. Attached is the most recent of many iterations of my attempt to clarify these differences.

It's clear from the chart that the requirements vary greatly from district to district with some of the variation due to the fact that the ordinances were developed over a sequence of time: each district both built on and added to the requirements of previous districts. On the other hand, it's also clear that some ordinances reflect the inherently different architectural characteristics of each district in and of itself.

Since most of the work I've done has been in the Third Lake Ridge, I was always puzzled by why those ordinances seemed to emphasize spatial qualities and not architectural design. After much consideration of the building forms on Williamson Street along with the residential structures in the rest of the district I realized that the intent of preserving those spatial relationships was well-founded.

The Third Lake Ridge, especially Williamson Street, is an amalgamation of diverse architectural styles accumulated over a long period of time. Unlike Mansion Hill, University Heights, First Settlement, or especially the Bungalow District, there is no single style that characterizes the district. Rather, until its recent development desirability, Third Lake Ridge was an extant example of our architectural heritage as it developed organically over a full century, and as such even more importantly as a genuine representation of our social heritage, "warts and all." Real history doesn't apologize or idealize.

Williamson Street exemplified an authentic example of what is now referred to as "traditional" development: a primary transportation corridor lined with working-class structures from different historical periods, typically with owners living above their modest enterprises. This corridor was interspersed with a mixture of single and multi-family units that transitioned toward Lake Monona with more lavish single-family homes, typically owned by bigger business owners, professionals, and politicians. Because of the appropriately deserved working class reputation of the East Side, this part of Madison remained untouched by big development until very recently.

It was the wisdom of those who wrote the ordinance to have seen the value of preserving this intact example of traditional development, the spatial relationships within the whole being more important than the characteristics of its individual parts. And now as the pendulum has swung back to the popularity of so-called "New Urbanism," the value of preserving this last remaining example of "Original Urbanism" is greater than ever.

Critical to the preservation of this rapidly eroding urban fabric are the restrictions on the volume, scale, and the relationship of mass to space that were so wisely and predominantly incorporated into the ordinances for Third Lake Ridge and it is more important than ever that we all acknowledge, understand, and enforce these essential qualities. The unrelenting mass of the proposal for 817 Williamson not only defies our current standards [*MGO Sec. 41.23(6)(a) and (f)*] but adds precedent towards the ultimate demise of the entire district.

John Martens



**From:** [eric.pueschel](#)  
**To:** [PLLCApplications](#)  
**Cc:** [Rummel, Marsha](#)  
**Subject:** Development at 817 Williamson St.  
**Date:** Monday, August 17, 2020 2:07:16 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Landmarks Commission Members,

As a long time resident of the Willy Street neighborhood, I am writing to you in support of Agenda Item #2, 817 Williamson St.

While this project is by no means perfect - I would prefer that new construction eschew parking entirely - it is a welcome improvement on an unsightly parking lot and an architecturally uninspired commercial building that currently occupy the space. Given how grim the current situation is, I don't think that close analysis is really needed, but I will say that the current street facade has a pronounced void at this address, and this building is appropriately sized to fill it. I also think that the use of brick cladding and cast stone does a nice job of echoing the Geiger-Williamson Blacksmith Shop a few doors down, without feeling overly uniform.

On a more philosophical note - one of the great Madison success stories of the last twenty years has been the revitalization of the Willy Street corridor. There is a thriving ecosystem of small businesses - the sort of businesses that are rooted in our community - and it makes a great deal of urban planning sense to build additional residential units intermixed with them. There are a lot of fantastic things about the Willy Street neighborhood - plentiful parks, restaurants, multiple grocery stores, great bicycle infrastructure, decent access to mass transit - all of these things are within walking distance and none of them are close to overcrowded. I am delighted at the prospect of additional residents joining us in this neighborhood and becoming part of our community.

In conclusion, I urge you to approve this project. It is an opportunity to welcome another 24 households to our neighborhood, to increase density within our city without developing greenspace, and to place housing close to a community of small businesses and to the employment core of the city.

Thank you for your attention. I hope you will do the right thing.

—eric pueschel

## Bailey, Heather

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**From:** Gary Tipler <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 17, 2020 2:55 PM  
**To:** Bailey, Heather; Rummel, Marsha  
**Subject:** Corrected: Item 2. 817-821 Williamson Comments

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Heather,  
This letter has corrected notes for readability.  
Thank you.

Re: Item 2, 817-821 Williamson

Landmarks Commissioners.

These comments below address historic district requirements in the review of the proposal for 807-821 Williamson Street.

I agree that these new development criteria must be strongly adhered to if we are to have certainty in changes to the district, which is the underlying purpose of the Historic District and the Landmarks Ordinance. Otherwise we will see rampant speculation and destabilization if zoning parameters are exceeded.

Thank you.  
Gary Tipler  
807 Jenifer Street

### **On Historic District requirements:**

The project is simply too large.

The gross volume is far in excess of neighboring properties and would dominate the block face.

*Non-historic resources are inapplicable as measures of compatibility. These include buildings on the north side of Williamson, where a few industrial buildings with rail service were larger -- on the 700 block. **This project has 8 times the volume of the existing historic resources on the south side of the block.***

The height along the sidewalk is far in excess of historic properties.

*The new design is about 40' in height. Both sides are 3 stories and 40 feet, but the western portion is setback about 5.5 feet and has a railing at the sidewalk edge. Landmarks limited the developer's project at the corner, 803 Willy, to 33 feet --and corner buildings tend to be higher than midblock buildings.*

The roof design is not compatible as all other historic resources (except one small corner property of the north side of Williamson) have peaked roofs.

The rhythm of building masses/spaces is not visually compatible with historic resources.

*Height was reduced by almost 3 feet at the last version. This version has the same height. The rhythm issue is not about height. It is about building façade (masses) to spaces (non-structure). Unlike 739 Willy, where Landmarks required the green living wall (designed to look like a space), this project does not have any space – it is an 80-foot wide building with a setback garage entry. Whether having the two areas (a 6 foot center area and a wing of 8 feet at the eastern side) setback a mere 6 feet from the front of the façade creates space is a matter of interpretation. I think not.*

The building is about two times as wide (street frontage) as the larger historic resources.

*The building does not look like two buildings.*



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Planning Division

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August 18, 2020

Brandon Cook  
John Fontain Realty  
PO Box 694  
Madison, WI 53701

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness for 817-821 Williamson Street

At its meetings on March 16, June 1, July 13, and August 17, 2020, the Landmarks Commission reviewed, in accordance with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, your plans to construct a new mixed-use structure located at 817-821 Williamson Street in the Third Lake Ridge historic district. The Commission approved a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new mixed-use structure with the following condition:

- Submit brick samples to staff for final approval

This letter will serve as the "Certificate of Appropriateness" for the project described above. When you apply for a building permit, take this letter with you to the Building Inspection Counter, Department of Planning and Development, 215 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Suite 017.

Please note that any scope of work or design changes from the alterations approved herein must receive approval by the Landmarks Commission, or staff designee, prior to commencing with the work. This Certificate is valid for 24 months from the date of issuance.

Please also note that failure to comply with the conditions of your approval is subject to a forfeiture of up to \$500 for each day during which a violation of the Landmarks Commission ordinance continues (see Madison General Ordinances Chapter 41, Historic Preservation Ordinance).

Please contact me at 608-266-6552 or [landmarkscommission@cityofmadison.com](mailto:landmarkscommission@cityofmadison.com) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Heather L. Bailey, Ph.D.  
Preservation Planner  
City of Madison Planning Division

cc: City preservation property file