

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

March 3, 2025



PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

Project Address: 623 North Lake Street (District 2 – Alder Bennett)
Application Type: Conditional Use
Legistar File ID # [86728](#)
Prepared By: Colin Punt, Planning Division
Report includes comments from other City agencies, as noted.
Reviewed By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

Summary

Applicant: Dustin Dresen; GBA Architecture & Design; 2248 Deming Way #120; Middleton, WI 53562

Owner: Patrick Corcoran; Patrick Properties; 2417 University Ave; Madison, WI 53726

Requested Action: The applicant is seeking re-approval of a mixed-use building with conditional uses for a lodging house and more than 8 dwelling units in a multi-family dwelling in DR-2 zoning, both per §28.072(1) MGO.

Proposal Summary: The applicant is seeking approvals to convert a former fraternity space into two dwelling units and a lodging house in an existing eight-story building previously approved with 20 dwelling units and a fraternity. After conversion the building is proposed to include a lodging house and 21 dwelling units.

Applicable Regulations & Standards: Standards for conditional use approval are found in §28.183(6) MGO

Review Required By: Plan Commission

Summary Recommendations: The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** the conditional uses for a mixed-use building with 21 multifamily dwelling units and a lodging house at 623 North Lake Street, subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies beginning on page 4;

Background Information

Parcel Location: The 8,266-square foot subject property is located on the southeast quadrant of the intersection of North Lake Street and Mendota Court. The site is within Alder District 2 (Alder Bennett) and the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Existing Conditions and Land Use: The site, zoned DR2 (Downtown Residential – 2), is currently occupied by an 8-story building originally approved for multi-family residential and fraternity uses.

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:

North: Across Mendota Court, a fraternity house zoned DR2;

West: Across North Lake Street, the UW Pyle Center and Below Alumni Center, zoned CI (Campus Institutional district);

South: Three-unit multifamily residential buildings zoned DR-2; and

East: Three- and four-story multifamily residential buildings, zoned DR2.

Adopted Land Use Plan: The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) recommends HR (High Residential) uses on the site. The [Downtown Plan](#) (2012) recommends predominantly residential development and a maximum height of eight stories.

Zoning Summary: The subject property is zoned DR2 (Downtown Residential - 2 District):

Requirements	Required	Proposed
Lot Area (sq. ft.)	3,000 sq. ft.	8,226 sq. ft.
Lot Width	Residential buildings: 30' Non-residential and mixed-use buildings: 40'	103.07'
Front Yard Setback	10'	Adequate
Side Yard Setback	5' Lot width <40': 10% lot width	Adequate
Rear Yard Setback	Lesser of 20% lot depth or 20'	Adequate
Usable Open Space	20 sq. ft. per bedroom (1,720 sq. ft.)	1,729 sq. ft. (See Zoning comment 5)
Maximum Lot Coverage	80%	Existing lot coverage
Minimum Building Height	2 stories	8 stories existing building
Maximum Building Height: See Downtown Height Map	8 stories/116'	8 stories existing building
Stepbacks: See Downtown Stepback Map	None required	None

Site Design	Required	Proposed
Site Design	Required	Proposed
Number Parking Stalls	Not required: Central Area	None
Electric Vehicle Stalls	Not required	None
Accessible Stalls	Not required	None
Loading	Not required	1 short-term stall
Number Bike Parking Stalls	Multi-family dwelling: 1 per unit up to 2-bedrooms, ½ space per add'l bedroom (37) 1 guest space per 10 units (2) Lodging house: 1 per lodging room (10) plus 1 guest space per 4 lodging rooms (2) (51 total)	4 exterior 42 interior (46 total) (See Zoning comment 6)
Landscaping and Screening	Not required	Existing landscaping (see Zoning comments 2 & 7)
Lighting	Not required	Existing lighting
Building Form and Design	Not required	Existing building

Other Critical Zoning Items	Barrier Free (ILHR 69), Utility Easements
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Table Prepared by Jenny Kirchgatter, Assistant Zoning Administrator

Environmental Corridor Status: The property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor.

Public Utilities and Services: The site is served by a full range of urban services.

Project Description

In November 2020, Plan Commission considered an application for demolition permits for two fraternity houses and conditional uses for a mixed-use residential building with 20 dwelling units and a fraternity. The application was placed on file without prejudice (Legislative File ID [62598](#)), but this decision was reversed on appeal to Common Council in May 2021 (Legislative File ID [63305](#)). The proposed building was subsequently constructed and completed in 2023.

The applicant is now seeking the necessary approvals to remove the fraternity use from the previous approval and modify the building to add two dwelling units in place of the fraternity's common areas, and to re-approve the fraternity's ten-bedroom dormitory as a lodging house. The fraternity originally intended to occupy the first floor of the building is no longer seeking residence in the building. The first floor will be renovated to add a five-bedroom apartment unit and a two-bedroom apartment unit, as well as a new lobby space. The changes to the interior layout of the first floor and addition of units will require modification to exterior doors and windows along the north and west facades of the building. A five-bedroom unit on the second floor will be converted to a three-bedroom unit with additional living space. No other changes are proposed to the existing building, but without the presence of the fraternity as the users, the existing ten-bedroom dormitory must be redefined and approved as a lodging house according to the zoning code.

According to the letter of intent, the applicant intends to start construction in spring 2025 with completion by summer 2025.

Analysis & Conclusion

This request is subject to the standards for conditional uses. This section begins with a summary of adopted plan recommendations, followed by conditional use standards, and finally a conclusion.

Consistency with Adopted Plans

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) recommends HR (High Residential) uses on the site. HR Areas include large multifamily buildings or complexes that are generally four to twelve stories at densities of greater than 70 dwelling units per acre. The [Downtown Plan](#) (2012) recommends predominantly residential development within this area (Langdon district) of downtown, specifically student-oriented residential development. The [Downtown Plan](#) also recommends a maximum height of eight stories. Staff believes the proposal is consistent with the recommendations in adopted plans.

Conditional Use Standards

The applicant is requesting approval of a conditional use within the DR2 district for a multi-family building of more than eight dwelling units. In regard to conditional use approval standards, the Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the City's adopted plan recommendations, design guidelines, supplemental regulations, and finding that all of the conditional use standards of §28.183(6) MGO are met. Staff advises the Plan Commission that in evaluating the conditional use standards, State law requires that conditional use findings must be based on "substantial evidence" that directly pertains to each standard and not based on personal preference or speculation.

While staff do not have concerns regarding the addition of the two units on the first floor or the size reduction of the second-floor unit, the loss of the fraternity organization from the proposal removes the known operator of

the ten-bedroom unit labeled “dormitory” on the submitted plans. This space, if approved, will be defined as a “lodging house” under the zoning code’s definitions, and staff have recommended a condition of approval requiring additional management details of the lodging house in place of the fraternity.

Staff believes that when considering the consistency of the proposal with the land use recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and the more specific use and height recommendations of the Downtown Plan, the very minimal changes to the architectural design of the building, the consistency of use as student-oriented housing within the neighborhood, and the small increase in overall density, all applicable conditional use standards of approval can be found met.

Conclusion

Staff believes that the proposal is consistent with adopted plan recommendations and that all applicable standards of approval for conditional uses can be found to be met.

At time of writing, Staff is unaware of any written comment from the public regarding this requests.

Recommendation

Planning Division Recommendations (Contact Colin Punt 243-0455)

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** the conditional uses for a mixed-use building with 21 multifamily dwelling units and a lodging house at 623 North Lake Street, subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies below.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

Planning Division (Contact Colin Punt, (608) 243-0455)

1. That the applicant submit a management and operations plan, including for the lodging house, in the format required by the Zoning Administrator for review or approval by the Zoning Administrator, Planning Director, or their assigns.

Zoning Administrator (Contact Jenny Kirchgatter, (608) 266-4429)

2. Verify the site layout. The submitted site plan and landscaping does not match the most recent Minor Alteration to Conditional Use and site plan approval dated 09/29/23.
3. Identify and label the existing site features on site plan page ALT-02 including bicycle parking, generator, and fences.
4. Provide a dwelling unit summary on site plan page ALT-02 with the count and types of dwelling units (number of bedrooms).
5. Identify the useable open space areas on the plans. A minimum of 1,720 sq. ft. sq. ft. of useable open space is required. Usable open space may take the form of at-grade open space, porches, balconies, roof decks, green roofs or other above-ground amenities. Within the Central Area, as defined, where usable open space

requirements cannot be met due to limited existing lot area, or building/parking placement, required landscaped areas may be used to meet the usable open space requirement, provided that said landscaped areas are a minimum of five (5) feet in width.

6. Bicycle parking for the residential dwelling units shall comply with the requirements of MGO Sections 28.141(4)(g) and 28.141(11) and shall be designated as short-term or long-term bicycle parking. A minimum of 47 resident bicycle stalls are required plus a minimum of 4 short-term guest stalls. Up to twenty-five percent (25%) of bicycle parking may be structured parking, vertical parking or wall mount parking, provided there is a five (5) foot access aisle for wall mount parking. NOTE: A bicycle stall is a minimum of two (2) feet by six (6) feet with a five (5) foot wide access area. Submit a detail showing the model of bike rack to be installed.
7. Show the refuse disposal area on the plans. All developments, except single family and two family developments, shall provide a refuse disposal area. If the refuse disposal area is located outside the building, it shall be screened on four (4) sides (including a gate for access) by a solid, commercial-grade wood fence, wall, or equivalent material with a minimum height of six (6) feet and not greater than eight (8) feet. Submit a detail of the trash enclosure if provided outside the building. Note that City issued trash containers are not required to be screened.
8. Per Section 28.186(4)(b), the property owner or operator is required to bring the property into compliance with all elements of the approved site plans by the date established by the Zoning Administrator as part of the site and building plan approval. Work with Zoning staff to establish a final site compliance date.

City Engineering Division (Contact Tim Troester, (608) 267-1995)

9. Submit, prior to plan sign-off but after all revisions have been completed, digital PDF files to the Engineering Division. Email PDF file transmissions are preferred to: bstanley@cityofmadison.com (East) or ttroester@cityofmadison.com (West).

City Engineering Division – Mapping Section (Contact Jeff Quamme, (608) 266-4097)

10. This building is currently subject to the Alchemy Condominium. The defined unit boundaries in the Condominium do not correlate with the revisions proposed within the building. The owner of the condominium unites shall terminate the condominium or shall provide amendment to the condominium by recorded instrument prior to sign off by Engineering Mapping for this project.
11. Submit a site plan and a complete building Floor Plan in PDF format to Lori Zenchenko (lzenchenko@cityofmadison.com) that includes a floor plan of each floor level on a separate sheet/page for the development of a complete interior addressing plan. Also, include a unit matrix for apartment buildings. The Addressing Plan for the entire project shall be finalized and approved by Engineering (with consultation and consent from the Fire Marshal if needed) PRIOR to the verification submittal stage of this LNDUSE with Zoning. The final approved Addressing Plan shall be included in said Site Plan Verification application materials or a revised plan shall provided for additional review and approval by Engineering. Per 34.505 MGO, a full copy of the approved addressing plan shall be kept at the building site at all times during construction until final inspection by the Madison Fire Department. For any changes pertaining to the location, deletion or addition of a unit, or to the location of a unit entrance, (before, during, or after construction), a revised Address Plan shall be resubmitted to Lori Zenchenko to review addresses that may need to be changed and/or reapproved.

Parks Division (Contact Kathleen Kane, (608) 261-9671)

12. Park Impact Fees (comprised of the Park Infrastructure Impact Fee, per MGO Sec. 20.08(2)), and Park-Land Impact Fees, per MGO Sec. 16.23(8)(f) and 20.08(2) will be required for all new residential development associated with this project. This development is within the Central Park-Infrastructure Impact Fee district. Please reference ID# 20042.1 when contacting Parks about this project.

Metro Transit (Contact Tim Sobota, (608) 261-4289)

13. Metro Transit operates daily all-day rapid transit service along University Avenue and West Johnson Street near this property - with trips at least every 30 minutes (every 15 minutes or less during the day on weekdays and Saturdays).

14. Metro Transit would initially estimate the following counts of potentially eligible trips towards US Green Building Council/LEED Quality Access to Transit points: 160 Weekday & 96 Weekend. Please contact Metro Transit if additional analysis would be of interest.

Parking Utility (Contact Trent Schultz, (608) 246-5806)

15. The agency reviewed this project and determined a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan is not required, based on the ratio of parking stalls per dwelling unit.

The Traffic Engineering Division, Fire Department, Forestry Section, and Water Utility have reviewed this request and have recommended no conditions of approval.