

Note to Commission  
617-619 Mendota Court:

11/10/09

Informational presentation and advisory opinion to Plan Commission for the demolition of two existing houses, and their replacement with an 8-story apartment building.

The owner/developer has voluntarily come to the Landmarks Commission, as per the Commission's request. The development site is located in the Langdon Street National register District. A report on the houses proposed for demolition, written by the former Preservation Planner, Kitty Rankin, is attached. Also attached, is an October 27, 2008 e-mail from Ms. Rankin stating that she did not object to their demolition.

The previous staff report dated 10/27/09 and Downtown Design Zone ordinance Language and information are also attached to this packet for your information.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Cnare and Bill Fruhling  
November 10, 2009

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The site is located in the Langdon Street National Register District. As such, staff encourages the developers to consider having more modulated façades, and replace the EIFS material with a material that would be more appropriate within the Historic District. While staff does not expect that the building should look historic, it should use high-quality materials that are befitting its location within a historic district.

In addition, staff feel that it would be appropriate to take a few architectural cues including, window proportions, facade modulation, and base/middle/top building articulation from the adjacent apartment buildings on both Mendota Court and in the Historic District in general.

These design considerations are also consistent with the general building design criteria that are found within Downtown Design Zone #3, in which this building resides. The City's Design Zone criteria are also attached for informational purposes.

625 Mendota Court:



616 Mendota Court:



Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Cnare, 10/27/09

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617 and 619 Mendota Court:

According to an e-mail dated Oct 27, 2008, Ms Katherine Rankin did not object to the demolition of these two houses, but she did pass along a previous analysis of the two houses. Staff has attached both the e-mail and the write-up.

617 Mendota Ct Madison, WI 53703 – Wood frame multi-family building



619 Mendota Ct Madison, WI 53703 – Wood frame multi-family building



## 617 Mendota Court

The 1890s marked a period of explosive growth for the University of Wisconsin. Female students were required to live on campus at the time, but male students were free to find housing off campus. Langdon Street, which had been a street of large single-family houses, became known as the "Latin Quarter" due to the invasion of male university students. Many owners in the area began renting out rooms in their own houses to increase their income and male student groups, namely, fraternities, began to rent whole houses and soon build their own houses in the area.

One of the families that took advantage of this new need for housing were the Frawleys. I did not have time to trace down all of their activity in this area, but it is known that they built a large Queen Anne/Shingle Style home at 620 Langdon Street (gone) as their own residence and also as a boarding house. The property that they owned there had been the site of the Madison Manufacturing Company and soon they were building more houses along Mendota Court, which they may have developed themselves.

The house at 617 Mendota Court was built by the Frawleys as an investment property ca. 1895. It is a simple, frame Queen Anne house that has been much altered on the exterior by removing the front porch and changing the front entrance. It has little in the way of exterior features beyond a denticulated cornice. The interior retains some original woodwork, which is unremarkable and ubiquitous for mid-priced housing of the era. It also retains its original stairway, which is intact and worth retaining. At some point in the past a thick stucco finish was added to the walls. The house is in poor condition.

## 619 Mendota Court

Frawley building, 619 Mendota Court, 1893-1895. This house is one of the first examples of a simpler mass composed of a hipped roof with a smaller dormer projecting toward the front. The front two-story bay is still evident, but it is now less decorative, with shingles replacing the large central window on the second floor. The porch has a simple shed roof with pared down posts. The overhangs are wide with long thin brackets, and show that designers were beginning to experiment with details that would soon develop into the prairie school. Note also the pedestals for the front porch posts that are plain blocks of shingle siding. This is a shingle style element used often from this time onward.

10/27/2008 12:59 PM

## Rankin, Katherine

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**From:** patrickproperties [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 27, 2008 9:35 AM  
**To:** Rankin, Katherine  
**Subject:** Re: 617 and 619 Mendota Court

Thanks Kitty.  
It was nice to see you again.

Ptrick J Corcoran

----- "Rankin wrote:  
> Hi, Patrick -  
>  
> Here is the write-up I have done about these two houses. I do not  
> object to their demolition.  
>  
> Thanks,  
>  
> Kitty





**EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR DESIGN CRITERIA  
FOR  
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS IN DOWNTOWN  
DESIGN ZONES**

*(rev. 29.MAR.01 & 16.JAN.03)*

**Statement of Purpose.**

The Design Criteria serve to articulate community design principles, guidelines, and standards for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) in the near-campus Design Zones with the goal of enhancing the community's overall value and appearance. These criteria reflect the fact that the general development density and intensity of occupancy are expected to be relatively high in these Design Zones compared to other locations in the City. Planned Unit Development districts that have residential components may be considered which are significantly larger, taller, and more massive than would be allowed in the underlying zoning districts. Because it is recognized that design professionals, including architects, landscape architects, and land planners, are trained to strive for creative excellence, the design criteria are not intended to restrict creative solutions or to dictate design.

These criteria will serve as a tool for City staff, the Urban Design Commission, and the Plan Commission by providing a checklist of the primary elements to be considered when reviewing such PUD requests. This will also inform the design professionals of items that should be considered from the beginning of the design process. These standards will be used in addition to the standards in the zoning code which guide the review of PUD zoning requests. The requirements described in Section 28.07(6)(e) are intended to be the outer limits of what will be considered through this PUD process. The review process for the overall design of the proposed building shall consider the requirements in Section 28.07(6)(e), the Criteria for Approval in Section 28.07(6)(f), and the design criteria described herein.

**Exterior Building Design.**

The exterior design criteria were developed to ensure that such buildings are compatible on a City, neighborhood, and block level; have a pedestrian orientation; and have a design that reflects the residential use of the structure. The following criteria are guidelines for evaluating the exterior design of a proposed project.

1. **Massing.** The proportions and relationships of the various architectural components of the building should be utilized to ensure compatibility with the scale of other buildings in the vicinity. Appropriate transitions should be provided where a change in scale is needed to ensure this compatibility. Larger buildings should have their mass broken up to avoid any being "out of scale" with their surroundings and to provide a more pedestrian-friendly quality. Stepping back the upper floors of the street facades a substantial distance from lower floors may be appropriate to achieve this quality. The shape of the building should not detract from or dominate the surrounding area.
2. **Orientation.** Buildings create and define the public space (streets and sidewalks), and how the building faces this public way is important. Any building façade adjacent to a street should be oriented toward and engage the street. Buildings



should respect the orientation of surrounding buildings, existing pedestrian paths and sidewalks, and the orientation of surrounding streets.

3. Building Components. The building should have an identifiable base, body, and cap. The design and detailing of the base are critical to defining the public space, engaging the street, and creating an interesting pedestrian environment. Lower levels should be sufficiently detailed to “ground” the building. The top of the building should be clearly defined through treatments such as cornices or non-flat roof elements where appropriate. The middle of the building should provide a transition between the top and the base. Mechanical equipment (including rooftop) should be architecturally screened.
4. Articulation. Well-articulated buildings add architectural interest and variety to the massing of a building and help break up long, monotonous facades. A variety of elements should be incorporated into the design of the building to provide sufficient articulation of the facades. This may be achieved by having the variety in the mix of unit size and layout, or changes in floor levels, be reflected in the exterior of the building. This may also be achieved by incorporating the use of: vertical and/or horizontal reveals, stepbacks, modulation, projections, and three dimensional detail between surface planes to create shadow lines and break up flat surface areas. If large blank surfaces are proposed, they should be for some compelling design purpose, and the design should incorporate mitigating features to enrich the appearance of the project and provide a sense of human scale at the ground level that is inviting to the public.
5. Openings. The size and rhythm of building openings (windows, doors, etc.) in a building should respect those established by existing buildings in the area and the residential and/or mixed-use nature of the building. The street façade should incorporate a sufficient number of windows, doors, balconies, and other opportunities for occupant surveillance of public areas. Visibility should be provided to areas accessed when entering or exiting a building. Lower floor facades should be more transparent and open than upper floors to provide a more detailed and human scaled architectural expression along the sidewalk. Window glass should have a high degree of transparency and should not be dark or reflective. Garage doors should not be visible from the street. If a design is proposed in which garage doors (or other service openings) are visible from the street, they should be sufficiently detailed and integrated into the building.
6. Materials. A variety of materials should be utilized to provide visual interest to the building. Colors and materials should be selected for compatibility with the site and the neighboring area. All sides of a structure should exhibit design continuity and be finished with quality materials. Materials should be those typically found in urban settings. Durable, low-maintenance materials should be used-- particularly on surfaces close to the street.
7. Entry Treatment. Buildings with obvious entrances contribute to the definition of the public way and promote a strong pedestrian feel along the street. The building should have at least one clearly-defined primary entrance oriented towards the street. Entrances should be sized and articulated in proportion to the scale of the building. This may be achieved through the utilization of architectural elements such as: lintels, pediments, pilasters, columns, porticoes,

porches, overhangs, railings, balustrades, and others, where appropriate. Any such element utilized should be architecturally compatible with the style, materials, colors, and details of the building as a whole, as shall the doors.

8. Terminal Views and Highly-Visible Corners. The design of buildings occupying sites located at the end of a street, on a highly-visible corner, or in other prominent view sheds should reflect the prominence of the site. Particular attention should be paid to views from these perspectives and the structures should be treated as focal points by demonstrating a higher degree of architectural embellishments, such as corner towers, to emphasize their location.
9. Additional Criteria for Bonus Stories in Downtown Design Zone 2. Pursuant to Section 28.07(e)2.a., a structure may be allowed to have up to two additional stories (a maximum of 12 total stories), should it be determined that allowing such a bonus would result in a building design that makes an extraordinary contribution to the architecture of the area and the city as a whole. The bonus stories should serve as an incentive to creative building design, and not be viewed as the “permitted” height. This provision is intended to allow for increased design flexibility and not to simply allow for a bigger building. The bonus story(ies) should be stepped back and less massive than the floors below. The intent is to encourage buildings that appear less boxy at the top and provide more visual interest to the skyline. The appropriateness of allowing any bonus stories is at the sole discretion of the Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission.

**Site Design / Function:**

1. Semi-Public Spaces. The space between the front façade of the building and the public sidewalk is an important transition area. It can vary in size, but should be thoughtfully considered with a variety of textures in ground treatment-- particularly the area around the entryway. The emphasis should be on an urban landscape, incorporating elements such as raised planters which could also be used as seating, street furniture, lighting, and landscape materials. These features should be architecturally compatible with the styles, materials and colors of the principal building on the lot and those in the immediate area.
2. Landscaping. Landscaping should be integrated with other functional and ornamental site and building design elements, and should reinforce the overall character of the area. Landscaping can be effective in reducing the massiveness of a building and in creating a more inviting pedestrian environment. Landscaping should be provided in the front where the building meets the ground as appropriate in the context (maybe trees or planters depending on the setbacks, shape and size of the building) to anchor building to the ground and soften the edge. Plants should be selected based on their compatibility with site and construction features. Ease of maintenance should also be considered.
3. Lighting. Exterior lighting should be designed to coordinate with the building architecture and landscaping. Building-mounted fixtures should be compatible with the building facades. Exterior lighting levels should not be excessive and should provide even light distribution. Areas around the entryways should be lit

sufficiently. Overall lighting levels should be consistent with the character and intensity of existing lighting in the area surrounding the project site.

### **Interior Building Design.**

The criteria for determining the acceptability of a residential planned unit development within the Downtown Design Zones recognize the particular importance of building layout, functionality, interior design, and general level of amenity in ensuring that the living environment provided will be attractive, desirable and practical in an area where the intensity of development is relatively high, many potential development sites are relatively constrained in size and limited in configuration, and opportunities for on-site features and amenities outside the building envelope may be necessarily limited. Relevant factors for consideration include:

1. Mix of Dwelling Unit Types. A variety of dwelling unit types, as defined by the number of bedrooms per unit, should be available within the project. There should not be an over-concentration of either very small (efficiency and one bedroom) or very large (four or more bedrooms) units so as to maintain residential choice and provide flexibility for shifts in housing market demand.
2. Dwelling Unit Size, Type and Layout. The size and layout of each dwelling unit shall be adequate to allow for reasonably efficient placement of furniture to serve the needs of the occupants and create reasonable circulation patterns within the unit.
  - a. The sizes of bedrooms within the dwelling units should be designed to discourage multiple occupancy of bedrooms when that would result in more than five unrelated individuals living in a unit (the maximum occupancy allowed in the R6 General Residence District). The bedroom sizes should not be large enough to encourage multiple occupancy in units with three or more bedrooms. To the extent compatible with this consideration, having at least one bedroom in each unit sufficiently large for double occupancy makes the unit more suitable for households that include a couple.
  - b. The size and design of the living room within each unit shall reflect and be adequate for the intended number of occupants of the unit. It is generally expected that the living area be capable of comfortably seating at least the number of residents expected to occupy the unit; however, appropriate size shall be determined as part of the overall project review.
3. Interior Entryway. The interior entryway should create an inviting appearance and, when feasible, should include a lobby or similar area where visitors or persons making deliveries can wait. The entryway should be sufficiently transparent to see into or out of the building when entering or leaving.
4. Usable Open Space. Project designs should provide attractive, safe and creatively designed yards, courtyards, plazas, sitting areas or other similar open spaces for building residents. Usable open space on balconies or roof decks may be provided as long as they are sufficiently large (a suggested minimum size for a balcony is 4 feet by 8 feet) and are provided or accessible to all residents. Usable

open space on roof decks at lower elevations is preferred to rooftops. At some locations, side and rear yards sufficient to provide usable open space may be limited, and outdoor open space may not represent the most beneficial use of a limited site when the overall density of development is relatively high. Common recreational facilities and social activity spaces in the development may be considered toward meeting the need for usable open space.

5. Trash Storage. The trash storage area for the building should be located where it is reasonably accessible to the residents, as well as to disposal pick-up crews. In general, it is recommended that the trash storage area be located within the building footprint. Trash storage areas shall not be located in building front yards. Trash storage areas at any location shall be adequately screened to preserve an attractive appearance from the buildings on the site, from adjacent buildings and uses, and from public streets and walkways.
6. Off Street Loading. Adequate off-street loading areas shall be provided, as specified in Section 28.11. The Plan Commission may consider arrangements to provide off-street loading and access from adjoining properties to satisfy the requirement provided that continued use of these arrangements is assured. For all residential developments where the off-street loading area is not adequate to accommodate the anticipated needs of residents moving into or out of the dwelling units, and in particular when significant numbers of residents are expected to want to make these moves within the same limited time period (as with student-oriented housing), a specific resident move-in plan shall also be submitted with the application for a residential development in a Downtown Design Zone describing in detail how the moving needs of residents will be accommodated without creating congestion or traffic problems on public streets or unauthorized use of parking and loading areas that are not part of the development.
7. Resident Parking.
  - a. Vehicles. The adequacy of provisions for the off-street parking of residents' motor vehicles shall be evaluated as part of the review of the specific development plan. The Plan Commission may consider the likelihood that the types of residents expected will need or desire to keep private motor vehicles, the particular constraints of the development site and the resulting trade-off between the amount of parking provided and other potential site or building amenities, as well as alternate arrangements provided to accommodate the parking needs of residents, such as, provision of leased parking spaces at another location. Inadequate on-site parking may result in restrictions on residents' eligibility to obtain Residential Street Parking Permits. Underground parking is preferred to surface parking lots.
  - b. Bicycles. Adequate on-site bicycle parking shall be provided to meet the needs of all the residents and users of the developments, as provided by Section 28.11(3)(e). Bicycle parking may be shared or assigned to individual dwelling units and should be located where it is reasonably convenient to the residents and to the public street system. It is recommended that at least some bicycle parking should be provided inside the building or in another location protected from the weather. If it is intended or anticipated that residents will store bicycles within individual dwelling units, the design of

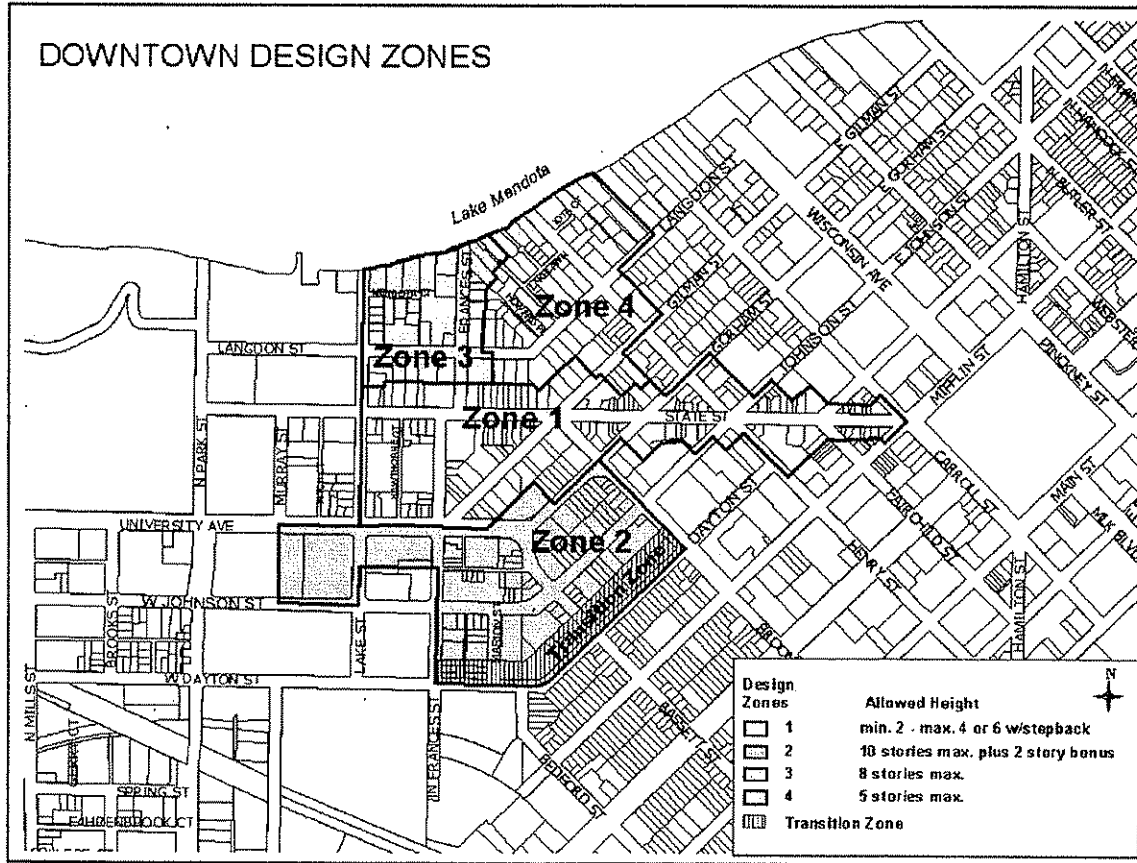
the units shall include provision for this storage, and hallways, elevators, and other building features shall be appropriately designed to facilitate the transport of bicycles to and from the units.

- c. Mopeds. Adequate parking for mopeds should be provided to meet the needs of the residents. Indoor parking spaces should be provided within the parking area provided for other motor vehicles. Outdoor parking for mopeds may be provided within the parking area provided for other motor vehicles or within bicycle parking areas. Mopeds shall not be kept inside the building except within designated moped or motor vehicle parking areas.

7. Building Security and Management. Building security and adequate resident access to building management shall be provided as necessary to ensure the safety of residents and to protect them from excessive noise and other nuisances that might be created in and around the premises. Depending upon the size of the building, intensity of occupancy, and type of residents anticipated, adequate security might also require on-site management. A management plan shall be submitted with each application for a residential development in a Downtown Design Zone describing in detail how the necessary security and access to management will be provided. The Plan Commission shall retain continuing jurisdiction over the management plan, and in the event that security problems occur in the future, the Plan Commission may review the management plan and may require that additional actions be taken by the building owner to address specific problems or deficiencies determined to exist.

- (c) Downtown Design Zones. Design Zones in the central area of the City of Madison are hereby established to ensure that developments with residential components within these zones are compatible with selected site and building design attributes that help define the essential character and identity of the individual zones. The Downtown Design Zones shall be as shown in the following Section 28.07(6)(c)i. These zones represent areas where the general development density and intensity of occupancy are expected to be relatively high compared to other locations in the City, and where developments may be considered that are larger, taller and more massive than would be allowed in the underlying regular districts. (Cr. by Ord. 12,866, 8-7-01)

i. Map Downtown Design Zones



- (d) Lot Area, Lot Width, Height, Floor Area Ratio, Yard, Usable Open Space Requirements, Signs And Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements. In the planned unit development district, except those with residential components located in a Downtown Design Zone, there shall be no predetermined specific lot area, lot width, height, floor area ratio, yard, usable open space, sign and off-street parking and loading requirements, but such requirements as are made a part of an approved recorded precise development plan agreed upon by the owner and the City shall be, along with the recorded plan itself, construed to be and enforced as a part of this ordinance. (Amended and Renumbered by Ord. 12,866, 8-7-01; ORD-06-00034, 4-22-06)



- (e) Lot Area, Lot Width, Height, Floor Area Ratio, Yard, Usable Open Space Requirements, Signs And Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements For Planned Unit Development Districts With Residential Components That Are Located In Downtown Design Zones. Requirements other than those specifically listed below shall be consistent with the Exterior and Interior Design Criteria for Planned Unit Development Districts with Residential Components in Downtown Design Zones (Design Criteria) adopted by resolution by the Common Council. The required setbacks for all yards in Planned Unit Development Districts with residential components in Downtown Design Zones shall not apply to any parking structure that is constructed entirely below the existing ground level, which shall mean the natural or existing ground level prior to construction. All such requirements are made a part of an approved recorded precise development plan agreed upon by the owner and the City and shall be, along with the recorded plan itself, construed to be enforced as a part of this ordinance. (Am. by Ord. 13,344, 6-21-03; ORD-06-00034, 4-22-06)

1. Downtown Design Zone 1.

- a. Height. No building or structure shall have fewer than two (2) stories, nor more than four (4) stories, except that six (6) stories may be permitted if all stories above four (4) are stepped back from any street facade by a minimum of thirty (30) feet.
- b. Yard Requirements.  
 Front Yard - Build to the lot line.  
 Street Side Yard - Build to the lot line.  
 Side Yard - None required; one (1) side of building or structure must be at the lot line.  
 Rear Yard - The rear yard shall be ten (10) feet, unless the building or structure has exposure to a street or alley on at least two (2) sides, in which case no rear yard is required.

2. Downtown Design Zone 2.

- a. Height. No building or structure shall have more than ten (10) stories unless an applicant meets the additional criteria for up to two (2) additional stories, as set out in the Design Criteria. Buildings or elements of buildings located in the transition on West Dayton Street, as shown on the map in Sec. 28.07(6)(b)i. shall not exceed three (3) stories or forty (40) feet.
- b. Floor Area Ratio. The floor area ratio shall not exceed 6.0.
- c. Yard Requirements.  
 Front Yard - The front yard shall be a minimum of fifteen (15) feet.  
 Side Yard - For lots greater than or equal to sixty (60) feet wide, the side yards shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet on one side and ten (10) feet on the other side. For lots less than sixty (60) feet wide, only one side yard is required and shall be a minimum of six (6) feet, except that an additional two (2) feet shall be added to total side yards provided for each story greater than one (1). As long as the combined size of both side yards meets the minimum total size required, one side yard may be reduced in size by up to twenty-five percent (25%) if:
- d. Accessory Structures. Accessory structures, which may contain up to two (2) dwelling units, may be located in the required rear yard of lots in the Transition Zone along West Dayton Street. No structure shall have more than two (2) stories and shall be located at least ten (10) feet from the rear lot line and at least three (3) feet from any side lot line. (Cr. by ORD-09-00048, 4-2-09)

- i. the subject lot is adjacent to a lot with a designated landmark structure, and shifting the position of the building on the lot will provide a better relationship to properties on both sides; or
- ii. the subject lot has a nonrectangular shape and reducing the size of one of the side yards will allow a superior building placement on the lot.

Rear Yard - The rear yard shall be a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet.

3. Downtown Design Zone 3.

- a. Height. No building or structure shall have more than eight (8) stories.
- b. Floor Area Ratio. The floor area ratio shall not exceed 5.0.
- c. Yard Requirements.

Front Yard - The front yard shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet.

Side Yard - For lots greater than or equal to sixty-six (66) feet wide, the side yards shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet on one side and ten (10) feet on the other side. For lots less than sixty-six (66) feet wide, the side yards shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet on one side and six (6) feet on the other side. As long as the combined size of both side yards meets the minimum total size required, one side yard may be reduced in size by up to twenty-five percent (25%) if:

- i. the subject lot is adjacent to a lot with a designated landmark structure, and shifting the position of the building on the lot will provide a better relationship to properties on both sides; or
- ii. the subject lot has a nonrectangular shape and reducing the size of one of the side yards will allow a superior building placement on the lot.

Rear Yard - The rear yard shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet or twelve percent (12%) of the lot depth, whichever is greater.

4. Downtown Design Zone 4.

- a. Height. No building or structure shall have more than five (5) stories.
- b. Floor Area Ratio. The floor area ratio shall not exceed 3.0.
- c. Yard Requirements.

Front Yard - The front yard shall be a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet on Langdon Street and twelve (12) feet on all other streets in the design zone.

Side Yard - For lots greater than or equal to sixty-six (66) feet wide, the side yards shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet on one side and ten (10) feet on the other side. For lots less than sixty-six (66) feet wide, the side yards shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet on one side and six (6) feet on the other side. As long as the combined size of both side yards meets the minimum total size required, one side yard may be reduced in size by up to twenty-five percent (25%) if:

- i. the subject lot is adjacent to a lot with a designated landmark structure, and shifting the position of the building on the lot will provide a better relationship to properties on both sides; or
- ii. the subject lot has a nonrectangular shape and reducing the size of one of the side yards will allow a superior building placement on the lot.

Rear Yard - The rear yard shall be a minimum of twenty (20) feet.

(Cr. by Ord. 12,866, 8-7-01)