



May 18, 2018

Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development
Planning Division
Landmarks Commission and Preservation Planner
126 South Hamilton Street
Madison WI 53701-2985

Subject: Narrative Description/Letter of Intent -
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness
Madison Gas and Electric Company (MGE) Temporary Office Space at 601 and 623 East Main Street

Dear Commissioners:

MGE is proposing a project to install a compact short-term modular office space ("Temporary Office") in the parking lot of its primary campus between Main Street and Railroad Street. As MGE has been planning this component, we have met with City staff to ensure the project meets all City requirements. Importantly, the Temporary Office will meet all of the applicable Historic District standards. In addition, as part of the project, MGE will bring this part of its campus up to modern City zoning and planning requirements, thereby improving the overall aesthetic features and functionality of this parcel in the district. Please allow us to share the background of the project and the general details of the Temporary Office.

Project Background

The Temporary Office will provide dedicated space for a critical computer systems upgrade called Enterprise Forward. Enterprise Forward will update and consolidate all of MGE's current computer systems with more efficient technologies to better serve our customers. These technologies will provide MGE with flexibility and scalability to respond to industry and customer demands as we strive to become a digital, integrated utility of the future. Enterprise Forward will help MGE with new products and services, to become an employer of choice, refine and consolidate business processes, increase operational efficiency, improve customer engagement, reduce operational costs over time, and ultimately to facilitate growth and adaptability in the ever-changing energy industry.

In order for MGE to build and implement Enterprise Forward over the estimated five-year project time horizon, MGE will need to bring in a significant number of additional human resources. These workers will need to meet daily with our permanent staff to perform the work, install and test the technologies and processes, and train our staff. Additionally, MGE staff will need to be accessible to these outside resources while still performing their daily jobs at MGE. Outside staff will scale up to as many as 50 people or more over the course of the project, making it very challenging to secure alternate space. It is necessary to have these additional staff resources located in the center of our main campus where they can have direct and easy access to our headquarters and permanent staff.

The Temporary Office itself will be located on what is now MGE's Good Neighbor parking lot at 623 East Main Street. The Good Neighbor parking lot is behind MGE-owned buildings that front Blair Street, located on lots at 601 East Main Street and 602 Railroad Street. As part of a CSM, MGE will combine the lot on 601 East Main Street with the Good Neighbor parking lot on 623 East Main Street for the Temporary Office. The Temporary Office will have two stories, and is designed to host up to 100 people large enough to house all outside staff, as well as MGE employees needed throughout the project. The Temporary Office will not be visible from Blair Street.

The Temporary Office will be directly connected to the building on the 601 East Main Street parcel via an enclosed connector. This will provide direct access to the space for MGE employees that support Enterprise Forward. The Temporary Office will be comprised of a 10,610-square-foot first level. There will be restrooms; conference rooms; a kitchenette; offices; and open areas for offices, kiosks, and tables on the first level. The second level will be 2,885 square feet and will be comprised of conference rooms; offices; and open areas for offices, kiosks, and tables.

Applicable Standards Under MGO 41.18 and 41.23

As stated above, the Temporary Office will meet applicable Historic District standards. The total gross volume of the proposed Temporary Office is approximately 170,000 cubic feet. This compares quite favorably with the total gross volume of the historic resource building located at 602 Railroad Street, which is approximately 240,000 cubic feet. Based on these figures, the new Temporary Office will be visually compatible with respect to gross volume.

The City ordinances require the structure to have a minimum height of 22 feet. The Temporary Office is planned to be 27 feet tall, which includes the height of the screening next to the roof-mounted HVAC system. Again, this compares quite favorably with the height of the historic resource building located at 602 Railroad Street, which is approximately 30 feet, as well as the building on 601 East Main Street which is approximately 24 feet. The Temporary Office will be visually compatible with respect to height as well.

Based on the above, this project will be a net benefit to the district. As it stands today, the primary parcel is an asphalt parking lot. As part of this project, MGE will bring this parcel up to code in terms of landscaping, bike parking, and other modern City planning requirements. As such, we believe this project will add value to the overall district, and will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this Historic Preservation ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.

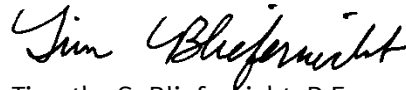
Additionally, the lot sizes in the new CSM, which will consolidate two current parcels, will be consistent with the lot sizes for MGE's current campus and the immediately surrounding lots adjacent to Main Street and Railroad Street. As such, the proposed lot sizes do not adversely impact the historic character or significance of any landmark, will not be incompatible with adjacent lot sizes, or fail to maintain the general lot size pattern of the historic district.

Finally, it is important to note, that at the end of the Enterprise Forward project, MGE will remove the Temporary Office. As part of that process, MGE will return to the City and the Landmarks Commission to obtain a demolition permit for removal of the structure. During this process, MGE will again be required to ensure the site meets all City standards and obtains the Landmark's Commission approval.

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As your Community Energy Company, MGE values its commitment to partnering with the City to ensure it is meeting all applicable requirements. This includes our previous work with the Commission on a variety of issues over recent years. We look forward to your consideration of MGE's Temporary Office project at your next meeting, to answering any questions you may have about it, and to receiving your approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Bliefert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy S. Bliefert, P.E.
Director - Facilities Management

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