



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development
Planning Division

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TO: Urban Design Commission

FROM: Bradley J. Murphy, Planning Division Director

DATE: July 16, 2010

SUBJECT: Request for Comments on City Development Review and Approval Process

The Urban Design Commission has received a memorandum (included in your packet) from Tim Cooley, Economic Development Director, requesting comments on possible improvements to the development review and approval process. While the communication has been placed on the Commission's agenda for your meeting of July 21, given the number of items on your agenda we suggest that it may be appropriate to refer your discussion until the next meeting on August 4, 2010.

Also included in your current packet are two memos: one from an ad hoc group dated June 11, 2010, and another from Downtown Madison Inc. dated June 28, 2010. These are two of the documents referred to in Tim Cooley's memo. Staff would be happy to provide printed copies of any other information requested by Commissioners in advance of the August 4th meeting.

In order to prepare for your discussion, staff felt that it would be appropriate to ask the Commission to consider several questions related to the development review and approval process to help focus the discussion. Those questions are:

1. How does the UDC review process fit into the larger development review process when complex projects require multiple reviews and overlap with the Plan Commission, Landmarks Commission and the Common Council? Is there any unnecessary overlap? What would be the best order to review projects that need to navigate through multiple commissions?
2. What elements of the process do not work well, in your opinion, and how would you like to see them changed? (Please think of examples of projects where you believe the process was not efficient, predictable, or resulted in a poor outcome).
3. What elements of the current process do you believe are working well and would not want to see changed?
4. What specific changes would you recommend to make the UDC process more efficient, predictable and uniform while maintaining high development standards? Should a pre-application conference with staff be required? Should the UDC grant initial approval and delegate final approval to staff (staff could still have the option of returning projects to the Commission if issues are unresolved)?

If there are other questions which Commission members believe would help focus this discussion, please feel free to suggest them and staff will forward all comments to the UDC members before the August 4th meeting.

It would be helpful for Commission members to have given these questions some thought prior to the meeting of the August 4th and to write suggestions as bullet points to share with other Commission members.

c: Mayor Dave J. Cieslewicz
Mario Mendoza, Assistant to the Mayor Dave J. Cieslewicz
Tim Cooley, Economic Development Division Director
Mark A. Olinger, Director, Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development
Rebecca Cnare, Planner III
Amy Scanlon, Preservation Planner
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