

Reasons for changing the report as stated in the resolution

The fact that Council, in 2021, “considered, but did not approve, a proposed amendment to the Downtown Height Map in the Zoning Code to reflect the recommendations in the Report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee” is not a strong basis for amending the report.

- That event happened almost 4 years ago. Council changes and opinions change. After all, Council adopted the report in 2014 and in 2019 Council commended Alder Zellers for initiating “a planning process for the block on which the heritage Frank Lloyd Wright Lamp House resides which resulted in a plan that will protect it for future generations.”
- The Council’s reasons for not changing the Downtown Height map varied. One Alder voted against the change because he believed a balanced approach was better - a balanced approach being to put the amendment on file and see how any proposal moves forward with the Landmarks Commission. Another Alder spoke to how the resolution to preserve the view of the Lamp House so that the ghost of some dead rich white man can look at the lake reeks of white elitism. Another Alder wanted to be sure that a ‘no’ vote would not put the Lamp House in jeopardy. An Alder in favor of the change spoke to historic preservation being something that the City values. Staff supported the change.

Nor is the other rationale in the resolution compelling: “... providing some flexibility in these recommendations may support new construction while preserving the Lamp House site.” There already is flexibility. Reports and other plans, such as Willy BUILD, are often ignored when redevelopment decisions are made. (For example, 306 S Brearly was recently approved at 6 stories when Willy BUILD provided a maximum of 4 stories.) While developers might have to tolerate residents citing these other plans and reports, these documents do not control the redevelopment process.

Views of the Lamp House

If this amendment to the report is adopted, views of the Lamp House will be almost nonexistent. Being able to view the Lamp House is important - the purpose statement of the Historic Preservation ordinance speaks of how historic resources serve as a source of great interest to the City's residents and visitors.

The staff report, page 3, reproduces page 15 of the Lamp House report with proposed amendments. Currently, four views preserved.

- If the report is amended, only “View 1” has any chance of enduring (at least until the next amendment) and this is a view from 100 feet or more down a 12’ wide driveway.
- Views 2 and 3 would only be preserved if feasible, as determined by Plan Commission. If the Landmarks Commission does not consider these views important enough to save, why should Plan Commission?
- View 4 is easily dismissed in the proposed amendment by claiming: “View 4 has been partially accommodated in a redevelopment project undertaken after the adoption of this report.” Two things make this statement misleading.

- This redevelopment is only 5 stories, plus a smaller loft story. At some point, whether in the near future or farther into the future, this site will be redeveloped. If the report is amended, this view needs to be addressed.
- The claim that the redevelopment was undertaken after the report was adopted is technically true. However, the staff report (Legistar 32101) made clear that the Lamp House report could not have any impact on the project because the application for the redevelopment was submitted prior to adoption of the report. Thus, this partial accommodation was not necessarily the intent of the report.

### Process

From a process standpoint, the Report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee should not be amended. This is a report, not a neighborhood plan. Neighborhood plans help guide redevelopment and these plans are sometimes modified to clearly allow for redevelopment projects. In contrast, reports and other plans, such as the Williamson Street BUILD plan, are products of their time. Such plans are prepared with the support of the City to address specific goals. The Lamp House ad hoc committee was created to "advise the Plan Commission and the Common Council about an appropriate vision and special area plan for this important heritage block." In 2014, the report was accepted by Council and was adopted as a supplement to the Downtown Plan.

The Report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee is, as its title states, the report of an ad hoc committee. This committee consisted of 8 individuals, as named on the first page of the report. Amendment of this report would mean that future readers would assume that the named individuals were in favor of the amendment's extremely limited protection provided to the Lamp House. If anything, the changes should be a supplement to the original report, not a replacement of existing language.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Lehnertz

## Bailey, Heather

---

**From:** John Holzhrueter <holzhrueter@uwalumni.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 9, 2025 9:26 PM  
**To:** Bailey, Heather; Latimer Burris, Amani; jmorrison@knothebruce.com; knkaliszewski@gmail.com; Taylorm@firstweber.com; rba@stonehousedevlopment.com; Madison Landmarks Commission  
**Subject:** Feb 10 mtg: Lamp House

You don't often get email from holzhrueter@uwalumni.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

February 9, 2025

To the Landmarks Commission:

As the historian who wrote the account of the Lamp House Development (two properties by Wright, only one built, and a remodeling by Wright of a large brick house that was executed at 18 North Butler) for the 1988 Elvehjem Museum exhibition, I am very concerned that the City of Madison not tamper with the 2014 plan that suggests protections of views of the house, particularly from East Mifflin Street. That view corridor provides the public the best glimpses of Wright's work. No ordinance protects this view, but the plan recommends protection. Please let the recommendation stand.

Since his acquisition of the Lamp House about 20 years ago, Bruce Bosben has been seeking ways to undermine its integrity. While I was employed by Isthmus Architecture in its Capitol office on the Capitol Historic Structure Report, my phone rang. One of Mr. Bosben's employees was on the line. He wondered if it would be all right to create a parking lot in the front yard of the Lamp House, or, alternatively, to create underground parking in front of it with some sort of lawn on top. I said no, that such ideas did not conform to Wright's landscape plan.

After hanging up I immediately telephoned Kitty Rankin, then the city's historic preservation officer, and told her what Mr. Bosben was thinking about. She said, "Over my dead body." I hope you will let the old report stand, over your collective bodies. And let Mr. Bosben deal with existing realities. His ideas for development do not begin to parallel Wright's, nor would the rents he would charge for his new apartments constitute affordable housing for the underserved in Madison, a population of little interest to him, or so it appears to me.

Jack Holzhrueter  
608-767-2280

To the Madison Landmarks Commission:

**The Lamp House has an important story to tell** -- about the city of Madison, the physically disabled man who had it built, and his boyhood friend who imaginatively accommodated his interests through architecture. By insisting that views to the Lamp House are preserved, the Landmarks Commission can ensure that this story can continue to be told.

The Madison Landmarks Ordinance recognizes that historic resources “serve as a source of great interest to the City's residents and visitors.” It follows that that designated landmarks should be visible from the public right of way. With the intense development pressure in Madison, especially downtown, the Lamp House will be minished if it is almost entirely hidden behind buildings that rise to the permissible height limits.

.....

**Views 1 and 2 as described in the 2014 Ad Hoc Plan Report should be treated equally as the top priority.** The two additional views are much less important. The Landmarks Commission should not support the revised priorities as proposed on page 3 of *Amendments to the Report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee* (January 28, 2025, ID # 86824).

An important note: It was clear to me during last week’s meeting of the Urban Design Commission that the information and illustration on Page 3 of the Staff Report were misunderstood by several of those present. The material on this page describes views to the Lamp House from public rights of way; it does NOT show view sheds from the Lamp House.

The 2014 *Report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee* says this about the importance of preserving public views of the Lamp House:

There are currently four direct views to the Lamp House from the street. These view corridors provide opportunities for the public to see the house and are important in helping visitors and passersby understand the Lamp House’s unique context. [Emphasis is mine.] The yellow volume within the model of the block illustrates the existing view corridors into the Lamp House from the street.

I revisited the block last week to refresh my memory and see the current state of the four view corridors. **Views 1 and 2 be treated equally as top priorities** or they can remain as ranked in the 2015 Plan Report.

*View 1 to the Lamp House*



(Photo: 7 Feb 2025)

View 1 should remain a top priority. It is the only frontal view of the house, though it is diminished by the detritus that has accumulated in the driveway that leads to the Lamp House. It is a private right of way. The city's landmark plaque is affixed to the brick wall that flanks the steps to the entry porch and is not readable from the public sidewalk. It should be move

*View 2 to the Lamp House*



(Photo: 7 Feb 2025)

View 2 should be given equal priority to View 1. This view affords the clearest understanding of the form of the house and the importance of the rooftop, even though it was long ago enclosed. This view has been unimpeded since the Lamp House was built. In 2009 Apex presented an illustration for a large apartment building with a "portal" that would have preserved this view.



### *View 3 to the Lamp House*



(Photo: 7 Feb 2025)

View 3 should remain the third priority. This view of a rear corner of the house does not offer much sense of house's design or siting despite the private marker. Still, this view should be preserved if possible.

### *View 4 to the Lamp House*



(Photo: 7 Feb 2025)

What remains of View 4 is an accomplished fact. It is now of little value in understanding the house.

.....

10 February 2025  
Michael Bridgeman  
608-334-8051

TO: Landmarks Commission

FROM: Nan Fey, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee in 2013-14

RE: Legistar #86824 Changes to Lamp House Block Report

DATE: February 10, 2025

Alder Bennett proposes “amending” the report of an official City committee that was adopted by the Common Council as a supplement to the Downtown Plan in 2014. Changing any language in the report would not only alter the public record and obscure the actual conclusions of the committee at the time, it could mislead future readers of the Lamp House Block report. Given its procedural problems, I recommend the Landmarks Commission move to **Place the Resolution on File With Prejudice** and **Request an Addendum** to the Report that updates the public record.

Speaking as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, the “challenges for future redevelopment of adjacent parcels” were the primary reason for studying the Lamp House block, and the report addresses them directly. The Committee, its members and process are described on page 3 and even a cursory review of the whole document reveals the level of detail considered in its recommendations. The landowner who now seeks “flexibility in these recommendations” was aware of the committee’s work ten years ago, although he never shared the drawing of redevelopment he was considering at the time for his properties on the East Mifflin Street side of the block until the report was complete and being discussed by the Common Council. He chose not to engage constructively with the committee during its public input process when he had the opportunity to influence its conclusions, yet now he asks you and Common Council to “amend” the committee’s recommendations to make redevelopment easier.

As it stands, the Lamp House Report provides a thorough analysis of clearly defined issues at a moment in time. Efforts to “amend” it by striking language and diagrams that explain its recommendations would misrepresent the work of the committee and tamper with an adopted supplement to the Downtown Plan. If the goal is to improve the public record and educate decision makers about subsequent actions, an Addendum using official public records of all meetings at which the Lamp House block has been discussed, including this Resolution, would provide important background and clarity for the upcoming Downtown Plan update process.

## Bailey, Heather

---

**From:** Bruce Bosben <BBosben@apexrents.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2025 10:21 AM  
**To:** Madison Landmarks Commission  
**Cc:** Bennett, Juliana  
**Subject:** Lamphouse plan  
**Attachments:** 230427-LAMPHOUSE APARTMENTS -options 1-4.pdf; LAMPHOUSE APARTMENTS-Plan Options (1).pdf

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

Committee Members:

Alder Bennett suggested that I send you an email in advance of tonight's LC meeting, explaining my interest in modifying the recommendations in the Lamp House Block Plan.

My concern is that while the plan does set forth requirements for a conforming design, such a design is not actually buildable. Attached are four concepts which would conform to the plan. The need to preserve the views and build only 60 feet wide results in buildings where the exterior surfaces don't contain enough units to pay for themselves. I'm familiar with the critique that developers always want to maximize profits, which is usually true, but this issue goes beyond that. Most developers need to get financing to fund their projects. The numbers on the project, as shown in our drawings, are so bad that the project cannot be financed. Under current entitlements, there is no use for the property where it would pay to remove the existing buildings on 209, 215, 219 and 223 Mifflin.

Unfortunately, these properties have many functional deficits. They are woefully energy inefficient, they lack handicap accessibility, they provide zero off-street parking and they lack many amenities which are desired by modern residents. They provide only 17 housing units and generate less than \$25,000 in annual property taxes. A new project could provide 70-80 housing units and generate over \$500,000 in annual property taxes.

In 2021, the City Council soundly rejected an effort to reduce the allowable height on our Mifflin Street properties. Since that time, we have made various proposals to city staff, for 6-story projects, conforming to the zoning height entitlement, only to be told that they do not conform to the recommendations of the Lamp House Committee plan. Since no viable project can conform to the plan, we request that its requirements be modified. We have owned the properties for nearly 20 years and have submitted at least a dozen development proposals over these years. It's time to meaningfully address this impediment to constructing much-needed housing.

Any development on this site would definitely respect the Lamp House. In fact, our plan is to incorporate the house into the overall development, using it as community space and/or guest accommodations for residents. I have conferred extensively with the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, and I believe they support our idea of building a single 6-story apartment building on our Mifflin Street sites, wherein the Lamp House becomes an integral part of the project, thereby assuring its long-term preservation as a working component of a functioning property.

I ask that the committee recommend modifying the Plan to allow for development as described above.

Bruce Bosben  
Chairman of the Board  
Apex Real Estate Holdings LLC  
608-255-3753



OPTION # 1



OPTION # 2



OPTION # 3



OPTION # 4





A



B



C



D



E

