



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

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TO: Plan Commission

FROM: Timothy M. Parks, Rebecca Cnare, Amy Scanlon and Bill Fruhling, Planning Division

DATE: February 7, 2014

SUBJECT: Accepting the report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee (Legistar ID 32645)

On September 3, 2013 the Common Council created the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee to advise the Plan Commission and the Common Council about an appropriate vision for the block bounded by E. Mifflin Street on the north, N. Butler Street on the east, E. Washington Avenue on the south and N. Webster Street on the west. The Committee was asked to create a special area plan for this important heritage block, which contains the landmark 1903 Robert M. Lamp House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, near the center of the block.

Beginning on October 22, 2013, the Committee met 7 times, including a public tour of the block and a public design workshop, prior to approving its final report on January 14, 2014. An overview of the Committee's work is included in the report. During its meetings, the Committee established goals and values to articulate a vision for the future for the Lamp House block as a thoughtful and vibrant built environment and developed recommendations to balance historic preservation and economic development by encouraging appropriate development around the Lamp House as described in the final report.

The Common Council referred the final report to the Plan Commission (lead), Landmarks Commission and Urban Design Commission for recommendations. The following section summarizes the recommendations made by the Landmarks Commission on February 3, 2014 and the Urban Design Commission on February 5, 2014. Following some of the commission recommendations, Planning staff has included a recommendation on how the Plan Commission should proceed as it makes its recommendation to the Council on the final report.

The Landmarks Commission recommended approval unanimously with the following amendments:

1. The preservation map on page 14 shall be removed and replaced by the map on page 9.

Staff comment: This proposed change would have the effect of undoing of a significant recommendation in the final report, which was effectively voted on when members of the Committee ranked their preservation preferences. Staff recommends that this recommended change not be made. The "significance" map on page 9 informs the "Proposed Preservation Area" map on page 14 and could be utilized in the future as a basis for exploring the establishment of a local and/ or national historic district on the block. A revised title/ legend for the preservation map on page 14 from "proposed" to "potential" could assuage this concern.

2. On page 14, remove the first two sentences in the second paragraph under Preservation relating to the removed map.

Staff comment: See comment above. The Committee strived to strike the correct balance between encouraging preservation and economic development on the block, and this recommended change could be seen as altering that balance in a fashion that could impact the intent of the planning study.

3. In the resolution, in the first whereas clause, add the language, “a designated City of Madison Landmark” after the words “Lamp House”.

Staff comment: Adding this language to the resolution is fine.

4. In the second to last clause to add “as a supplement to the City’s Downtown Plan” to the end of the clause.

Staff comment: Adding this language to the resolution is fine.

The Urban Design Commission recommended approval unanimously with the following amendments:

1. All of the Landmarks Commission recommendations as listed above.

Staff comment: None.

2. Add the Historic resources report as prepared by the Preservation planner attached as a physical amendment to the report.

Staff comment: Staff will add this report as an attachment to the final document when published.

3. Explore expanding the adjacent TID to cover this block.

Staff comment: This recommendation could be added as part of a larger implementation strategy to consider potential expansions of Tax Incremental Finance District 32 (Upper State Street) to include the block.

4. The Urban Design Commission notes that massing diagrams in the report are not approved as meeting design criteria but are suggestions of a future outside range for applications.

Staff comment: Staff will add a note to this effect to the final document prior to publication.

5. Change diagrams to show any potential bonus stories as transparent.

Staff comment: Staff does not feel that this change is necessary, but will accommodate this change prior to publishing the final document.

6. Present diagrams to the Plan Commission that show future development both with and without the bonus stories.

Staff comment: Staff will attempt to provide these revised drawings at the Plan Commission meeting Monday evening, and potentially add those diagrams to the final document pending its acceptance.

In closing, the Planning Division recommends that the report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee be accepted by the Plan Commission and Common Council subject to the above staff comments.

cc: Steven R. Cover, Director, Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development
Katherine Cornwell, Director, Planning Division
Maureen O'Brien, Assistant City Attorney
Members of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee
Anne Monks, Mayor's Office