

November 14, 2025

Ms. Meagan Tuttle
Director, Planning Division
City of Madison Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Ste 017
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Re: Letter of Intent - Land Use Application Submittal

508-514 E Wilson St & 150 S Blair St
KBA Project #2042

Ms. Meagan Tuttle:

The following is submitted together with the plans and application for the staff and Plan Commission's consideration of approval.

Organizational Structure:

Owner:
Robert Worm
514 W. Wilson Street
Madison, WI 53703
Phone number
Contact: Angie Scott
office@essen-haus.com

Architect:
Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC
7601 University Avenue, Ste 201
Middleton, WI 53562
(608) 836-3690
Contact: Kevin Burow
kburow@knothebruce.com

Introduction:

This proposed application is for a property in the UMX zoning district that involves the shared parking lot at 508-514 E Wilson St & 150 S Blair St. This purpose of this submittal is to seek conditional use approvals for an outdoor eating area for a restaurant-nightclub with an outdoor eating area open after 9:00 PM and for outdoor recreation.

This submittal will also serve to establish standards for six large events held in the parking lot year each year, as well as to establish plans and procedures for utilizing this space throughout the warmer months for events with live music and performance on a stage that will be erected temporarily in the parking lot. Finally, this application will incorporate the plans and procedures for the use of the parking lot for sand volleyball and outdoor recreation, which have been previously approved by the Plan Commission on March 24, 2014 (Legistar File ID #: 33075); at the advice of Planning and Zoning staff, that approval is being incorporated herein to centralize all of the uses of the parking lot.

Management plan:

We will have a manager on location in the parking lot at all times during each event. We will also have a manager in each location inside (the Come Back Inn and Essen Haus) at all times during each event. Indoor managers will assist outside as needed.



Security plan:

Our staffing will be either in German attire or Come Back In T-shirts, both will be easily recognizable. Each staff member has an area outside they are responsible for during each event.

Fencing plan:

We use the existing barrels and expand the barriers to encompass the event space. For each event, the expanded areas are fully delineated with marked boundaries.

Standards for Six Events (Please refer to Event Plan Layout)

Hours of event operation

The outdoor events below will run from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm (10:30 pm for volleyball, as previously approved by Plan Commission). Music, activities, and service for these events shall not commence before 11:00 am and shall be completed and the area cleared of attendees by 9:00 pm. In this section, a “weekend” shall generally begin on Friday and end on Sunday, except for Memorial Day weekend, which shall end on Monday, and “Great Taste” weekend, which may begin on Thursday but end on Sunday.

Specificity on the eligible events

- Oktoberfest – One day in Mid-September
- Maifest – One weekend day in Early May (First Saturday in May)
- Bratfest – One day during Memorial Day weekend in May
- Great Taste-Related Event – One day event in Mid-August, timed to the weekend of the Great Taste of the Midwest Beer Festival
- Sangerfest – This is not an annual event, it comes to Madison every 5-10 years, and in 2023 it is going to be held in Madison. We would have a one day event for this festival.
- Sixth event – We would like to reserve this option for the following event types that are not annual event (all would be one day events), for example:
 - An outdoor wedding rehearsal / reception
 - An event such as an alumni party prior to a sporting event
 - Large birthday parties
 - Large family reunions

The understanding is that there would be six events total per year; for example, on years the Sangerfest would not be held in the Madison area, there could be two wedding events, but on years Sangerfest is in the Madison area, there would only be one private party event.

The Alder will be notified at the beginning of the summer of the scheduled (6) events, who will distribute the information to the surrounding neighbors.

Request for expanded use with outdoor music (Please refer to Seasonal Layout)

Use of the parking lot in this section would allow the Essen Haus, Up North and Come Back In to have music and live performance on a stage erected/ placed in the parking lot two evenings a week from May 15–September 15. This would be in addition to the volleyball leagues on Monday-Friday and on Sundays.

Hours of Event

4:00pm to 9:00pm; music and service in the outdoor area shall not start before 4:00 pm and shall be completed and the area cleared of attendees by 9:00 pm.

Days of the week

Sunday and Monday

Stage location

Per attached 'Seasonal Layout' plan

Parking lot modification

No modification, no reduction in parking stalls

Volleyball/ Outdoor Recreation Layout Hours of**Event**

5:30pm to 10:30pm Monday- Friday, and 12:00 pm – 9:00 pm on Sunday; events and service in the outdoor area shall not start before 5:30 pm and shall be completed and the area cleared of attendees by 10:30 pm

Days of the week

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday

Stage location

Per attached 'Seasonal Layout' plan

Parking lot modification

No modification, no reduction in parking stalls

The restaurant has had entertainment since opening in 1982. Since 1995 there had been outdoor entertainment on a regular basis. During and after COVID, only outdoor entertainment was allowed, so the outdoor schedule was expanded. There were no neighborhood complaints on file regarding the outdoor entertainment prior to 2021.

In June 2022, a notice of ordinance violation was received, stating the requirement to have site plans and zoning approvals. At that time, the outdoor dining, drink and entertainment use was approved through the PUD from 1995 and were noted on the liquor & entertainment licenses that were in place. Because a citation or ordinance violation had not been received in the 25 years the outdoor dining and entertainment had been operating, it had been understood that that the outdoor dining and entertainment were correct and compliant.

The approval for expanded outdoor entertainment was first granted at the May 23, 2023 Plan Commission meeting. Subsequent submissions to request this outdoor entertainment schedule have been approved on January 22, 2024 (for the 2024 year only) and January 13, 2025 (for the 2025 year only). The original 1-year approval stipulation was to ensure there would not be any noise complaints; to our knowledge, there have not been any complaints filed. Therefore, we are respectfully requesting a 2-year approval period with this request. The ongoing active liquor and entertainment licenses are still in effect as approved over 25 years ago.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our proposal. Sincerely,



Kevin Burow, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
Managing Member