

CAPITOL

NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.
MADISON, WISCONSIN

October 19, 2009

Mr. Al Martin
Planning Unit
City of Madison
215 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

Re: 115& 117 S. Bassett – UDC application

Dear Al,

The Bassett District of Capitol Neighborhoods has met with the applicant and his design team and also had a presentation of this proposal at our October monthly meeting. The proposal has generally been well received though there are a couple of concerns which have been raised by residents.

The neighborhood is supportive of the restorations and additions to the existing buildings at 115 & 117 S. Bassett. The exterior renovations appear to be in keeping with the spirit of the *Bassett Design Guidelines*. The additions to the buildings are appropriate for the size and scale of these buildings and provide enhancements to the existing floor plans. The stairwell addition at 117 in particular will make this a more functional and safe access route for residents.

The enhancements shown on the site plan for landscaping and removing one of the driveways are also well received as contributing in a positive manner to the neighborhood.

The concerns expressed by residents are in regards to the apparent lack of sufficient infrastructure to support the proposed density. In particular there are concerns that provisions for parking of bicycles and scooters does not appear to be adequate. These concerns have been raised repeatedly with the applicant.

The current plans show 6 exterior bike parking stalls and some unspecified number of bike parking stalls within the new building. No provisions for scooter parking appear to be incorporated into the plans. The applicant has stated that they will provide the minimum number of bike parking stalls that the City requires. (i.e. one stall per unit) We have found that this standard falls woefully short of providing adequate parking spaces. The neighborhood has consistently suggested that a ratio of one bike stall per bedroom is much more appropriate and reflects the reality of downtown living. These additional stalls would not need to meet the size requirements of the City required stalls for there are other methods of providing for bike storage which require less overall space.

The lack of any planned provisions to accommodate scooters appears to us to be a shortfall in the design. Car parking is heavily regulated and tenants requiring spaces will need to work within that system. If adequate provisions for bikes and scooters is not provided the result tends to be bikes chained to porch railings, trees or signs and scooters randomly parked around the property or in the street terrace and front yards. This condition is a detriment to the overall character of the neighborhood and one that a sound design can avoid. The applicant is obviously restricted in space with which to provide for this sort of infrastructure. This is

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directly related to the proposed density of about 60 du/ac. Virtually all other recent proposals at this density in the Bassett neighborhood have included provisions for underground parking. This provides additional alternatives for bike and scooter parking as well as the ability to store trash indoors. While we are not suggesting that the applicant should be required to provide underground parking we are suggesting that the problems associated with parking are directly related to the proposed density.

Cordially,

Peter Ostlind
Chair Bassett District
Capitol Neighborhoods

Cc: Brandon Cook
Mike Verveer, 4th District Alder