

# Stakeholder Concerns 1954 E. Washington Ave. Development Proposal

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Owners of [REDACTED] E. Washington for  
over 10 years

# Urban Design Commission MISSION

To assure **the highest quality of design** for all public and private projects in the city; protect and **improve the general appearance of all buildings, structures, landscaping** and open areas in the city; encourage the protection of economic values and proper use of properties; encourage and promote a high quality in the design of new buildings, developments, remodeling and additions so as to maintain and **improve the established standards of property values** within the city; **foster civic pride** in the beauty and nobler assets of the city and, in all other ways possible, **assure a functionally efficient and visually attractive city in the future.**

# Is the current design of high quality?

- Aesthetics & landscape integration
- Cheap materials
- No 1920's design elements
- Not cohesive with current buildings on site
- Developer has acknowledged this, but used the excuse of "limited budget" and non-profit status for design compromises
- Scale / setbacks / height = priority of developer for income generation over aesthetics?

Does current design improve the general appearance of all buildings, structures, landscaping on the site?

- The rehabilitation of existing buildings is not planned, prioritized, or included
- Cluttered, non-cohesive “campus”
- 4 buildings with different designs
- Trees being cut down
- Site plan doesn't prioritize landscaping
- Long term aesthetics?

# Does this project help assure a functionally efficient city / neighborhood?

Safety issues compounded and exaggerated

- Setback issues –residents entering E.Wash
- Traffic flow – East Wash Intersections & Mifflin
- Parking –onsite, but up to \$120 per month
- Unsafe for pedestrians – neighborhood segregation
- Bus stop, elementary school, east high school, access to schenks corners
- Not in the neighborhood plan, not part of east wash corridor plan

# Will this project maintain and improve the established standards of property values?

- Unknown, but won't add value
- Safety issues
- Height & Scale will create unnatural shading
- Disjointed, non-integrated landscape
- Removing large trees & natural shade
- Hard enough to have east washington residences be attractive to future home-owners due to safety/traffic/pollution (especially for families)
- Potential for long term destabilization

# Will this project foster civic pride?

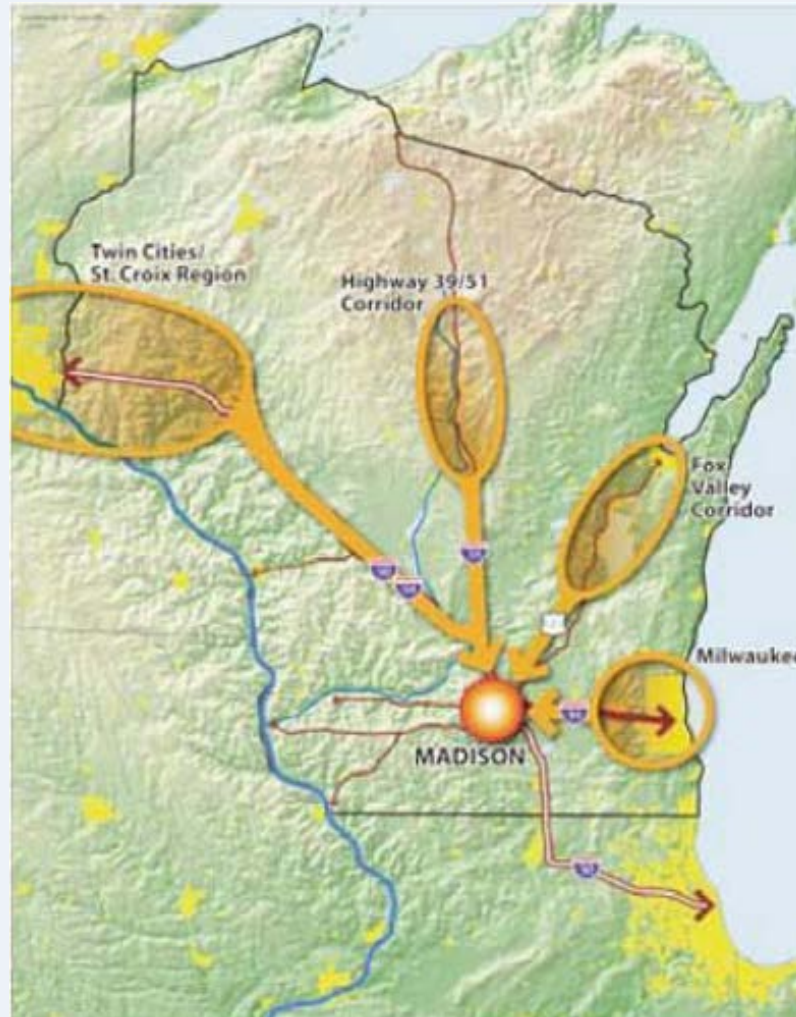
- “East Washington Corridor” as a civic asset
- Visibility & Aesthetics
- Long Term aesthetics
- Not Environmentally conscious
- Developer transparency & trust
- With the developer’s plans to leave the current structures and add townhomes on the Mifflin side, this site will resemble a “campus” of disjointed architecture without a commitment for cohesion

# East Washington Corridor

- “The East Washington Avenue Corridor is the primary transportation spine and eastern gateway into the city of Madison, and plays a prominent role in the economic and cultural life of the city.”
  - City of Madison



# East Wash Corridor



# East Wash Corridor

- For many visitors to Madison, East Washington Avenue is the first opportunity for them to make a first impression.
- Additionally East Washington Avenue serves as the front lines of the Emerson East Neighborhood and current proposal provides an aesthetic misrepresentation of the surrounding neighborhood.

# East Wash Corridor

- The proposed development is 54 feet tall, nearly 2x the height of the neighboring properties.
- Site is already highest land elevation point in this neighborhood
- Additionally, the properties on the 1900 block of East Washington have an average setback of 24 feet whereas the proposed 30 unit is 33.3% closer to the street with a setback of only 16 feet.
  - This will create an enhanced perception to passerby's that the height is more imposing than the estimated scale and height
  - As proposed, this apartment building will aesthetically dominate the current landscape and surrounding blocks.
  - The lack of set back creates safety issues for residents entering east wash.

# East Wash & Emerson East Neighborhood

- Tax payers already invested millions in improving the aesthetics of East Washington which attracted homeowners like myself
- Many homeowners have made significant personal investment to upgrade these properties while maintaining original time-period design elements which would be devalued via this proposal
- These trends demonstrate the pride, passion, and value the Neighborhood residents have placed on tasteful and period-specific design elements.
- we fear the current design will act as a catalyst in the reduction of civic pride of Emerson East residents which would be detrimental to the overall charm and economic stability of one of Madison's hallmark neighborhoods.





# Initial UDC Recommendations

Comments from the Commission were as follows:

- Consider providing an interior community space for the residents.
- Preferable design solution would reflect the town home style for all buildings
- Consider taking the neighbors on a bus tour of existing similar town house projects.
- Alleviate the neighborhood concerns. Give it a sense of place.
- Need to make sure that there is that engagement with the community.
- Do not put any utilities on the front of the building.
- If the neighborhood really liked the corner park versus a pocket park, I'd be inclined to listen to your neighbors on that one.



# Conclusions

- The design and aesthetics of this plan are inadequate and be carefully thought through. The design and aesthetics should not be driven by cost or time constraints.
- By the developer's own admission, MDC owns this property free and clear, already is generating income from the 40 current units, has over \$25,000,000 in assets, and a current net worth exceeding \$5,000,000 despite their non-profit status.

# My Unresolved Questions

- What is driving the sense of urgency and aggressive project schedule?
- Why has there been a lack of transparency and proactive notification to neighbors?
- Why has the developer not done more to address the neighborhood concerns?



Your Questions?

Thank you for your time