

# CAPITOL

NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

December 14, 2009

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

Re: 115& 117 S. Bassett – Plan Commission application

Dear Brad,

The Bassett District of Capitol Neighborhoods has reviewed the supplemental information provided by the applicant and the Staff Report to the Plan Commission. As the Staff report notes the neighborhood has been generally supportive of the proposal, in particular the renovations of the buildings at 115 & 117S. Bassett.

Our October letter to the UDC, which is cited in the Staff report, focused only on items of interest to that Commission. In particular we noted that the proposal was not providing adequate infrastructure to support the proposed density. Of particular concern were issues of bicycle and scooter parking.

Changes were made to the proposal to provide additional parking, though at levels below that which we believe are desirable. The end result is that the two existing buildings are now surrounded by bikes and scooters. We suggested to UDC that this was not a solution that enhances the neighborhood and not the sort of standard we would like to see extended to other proposals.

During the neighborhood review of this proposal concerns were raised regarding the extent to which the new rear yard building fills that space. The neighborhood was initially presented with the concept of a 'carriage house' in the rear yard though no plans or specifics were provided. That concept was well received and the applicant was encouraged to pursue the idea. The current proposal seems to have strayed considerably from the carriage house concept. This proposal appears to be an attempt to cram as many units and bedrooms as possible onto the site without adequate consideration of other amenities.

An example is the desire of the neighborhood to have the exterior fire escape removed from the front of the 117 building as part of the renovations. This sort of scar on the facade of the building speaks to an earlier time when the concerns of neighborhood aesthetics were seen as a much lower priority than the enhanced economics of rental properties.

The neighborhood is supportive of the restorations and additions to the existing buildings at 115 & 117 S. Bassett. When the proposal first came to us this was the full scope of the proposal and nothing was planned for the rear yard. Since then the proposal has morphed into something much different which has raised a number of concerns.

The neighborhood agrees with the conclusion of Staff that the bulk and mass of the rear building is

December 14, 2009

inconsistent with the PUD requirements that the character and intensity of use be compatible with the physical nature of the site and produce an aesthetic of significant community benefit in addition to the benefits to the owner.

Likewise we agree with the recommended conditions of approval noted in the Staff report.

We have heard that consideration is being given to separating the two phases of the proposal to allow the renovations of the two existing buildings to proceed prior to final approval of the rear yard building. The neighborhood is supportive of this idea.

Cordially,

Peter Ostlind  
Chair Bassett District  
Capitol Neighborhoods

Cc: Brandon Cook  
Mike Verveer, 4<sup>th</sup> District Alder

## Firchow, Kevin

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**From:** Frank Staniszewski [Frank@mdcorp.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 10, 2009 2:26 PM  
**To:** Firchow, Kevin  
**Subject:** 115-7 S. Bassett

Mr. Firchow.

I am with Madison Development Corp., owner of the property at 442 W. Doty. This is adjacent to the major portion of the new building being constructed at 115-7 S. Bassett.

I received the postcard on the Planning Commission meeting next Monday. But will be unable to attend.

From the site plan, I was wondering what impact the new construction may have on drainage on the site and impact on adjacent properties. We do have some water issues in our rear yard from time to time, and have recently completed some improvements to remedy that.

Has the owner paid any attention to drainage?

Please pass this along to the applicant for response if you wish.

Otherwise, we are in favor of the improvements on their site. You must be aware of the condition of the garage adjacent to our property, and we welcome the improvement.

Thanks,  
Frank

Frank Staniszewski,  
President, MDC  
256-2799 ext. 212