



## Report to the Plan Commission

March 22, 2010

**Legistar I.D. #17392 & 17827**  
**717 West Johnson Street**  
**Demolition, Conditional Use, and Rezoning**

Report Prepared By:  
Kevin Firchow, AICP  
Planning Division

---

**Requested Action:** Approval to demolish the existing Gordon Commons facility to construct a new Gordon Commons facility and a park.

**Applicable Regulations & Standards:** Section 28.12 (12) provides the guidelines and regulations for the approval of demolition permits. Section 28.12 (11) provides the guidelines and regulations for the approval of conditional uses. Section 28.12 (10) provides the process for zoning map amendments.

**Summary Recommendation:** The Planning Division recommends the Plan Commission find that the applicable demolition, conditional use, and zoning map amendment standards are met and forward zoning map amendment ID 3476, rezoning 717 West Johnson Street to the R6 district and allowing the demolition of the existing Gordon Commons building and conditional use for the purpose of constructing a new Gordon Commons facility and park, to the Common Council with a recommendation of **approval**. This recommendation is subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions from the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies.

### Background Information

---

**Applicant:** Gary Brown, University of Wisconsin-Madison; 610 Walnut Street; Madison, WI 53726

**Contact:** Doug Hursh, Potter Lawson, Inc; 15 Ellis Potter Court; Madison, WI 53711

**Property Owner:** Board of Regents; 1860 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive; Madison, WI 53706

**Proposal:** The applicant proposes to demolish the existing Gordon Commons facility for the purpose of constructing a new Gordon Commons facility and a park. The new facility would be constructed close to the West Dayton Street frontage, in the area formerly occupied by Ogg Hall. The applicant proposes to complete the project in two phases. The first phase is the construction of the new Gordon Commons facility, scheduled to begin in December 2010. Construction of that building would be complete by April 2012. The second phase of work includes the demolition of the existing structure and construction of the new green space. Demolition work would begin in September 2012 with project completion anticipated in June 2013.

**Parcel Location:** The subject site is 4.07 acres in area, generally bounded by West Johnson Street, West Dayton Street, and North Lake Street; Aldermanic District 8; Madison Metropolitan School District.

**Existing Conditions:** The property now includes the existing Gordon Commons facility, sport courts, and other University open space. The former Ogg Hall previously occupied the lands proposed for the new Gordon Commons facility.

**Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:** The subject property is located in the southeast campus area, surrounded primarily by the UW-Madison campus including offices, classrooms, dormitories, recreational facilities, and athletic facilities. The surrounding area is predominantly zoned R6 (General Residence District) and PUD-SIP (Planned Unit Development-Specific Implementation Plan).

**Adopted Land Use Plan:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends campus uses for the subject site and the surrounding area.

**Environmental Corridor Status:** The subject site is not located in a mapped environmental corridor.

**Public Utilities and Services:** This property is served by a full range of urban services.

**Zoning Summary:** The property is proposed for R6 Zoning (General Residence District).

Bulk Requirements	Required	Proposed
Lot Area	6,000 sq ft	177,500 sq ft
Lot width	50 feet	405 feet
Usable open space	n/a	n/a
Front yard	20 feet	Adequate
Side yards	5 feet	Adequate
Rear yard	30 feet	Adequate
Floor Area Ratio	3.0	Less than 3.0 of total site
Building height	*	3 Stories
Number of Parking Stalls	Universities- 1 stall per each 2 employees	5
Accessible Stalls	1	TBD
Loading		Adequate
Number of Bike Parking Stalls	(1)	122 (See Comment # 29)
Landscaping	As Shown	Adequate
Lighting	As Shown	Adequate
Other Critical Zoning Items	Utility Easements, Barrier Free (ILHR 69)	
<i>Prepared by: Pat Anderson, Asst. Zoning Administrator</i>		

## **Project Review**

---

The applicant, the University of Wisconsin, proposes to demolish the existing Gordon Commons dining facility for the purposes of constructing a new Gordon Commons facility and a park. There are three requests before the Plan Commission: 1) Demolition permit for the existing Gordon Commons facility; 2) Rezoning of the site from PUD-SIP (Planned Unit Development-Specific Implementation Plan and R6 (General Residence District) to R6; and 3) Conditional use approval for college and university uses in the zoning R6 district. This project is subject to the standards for demolition permits, zoning map amendments, and conditional uses.

The applicant's plans and other supporting materials are available for online viewing from the following link: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/planning/projects/rezoning/717wjs.html>

### Demolition Request

The applicant first seeks approval to demolish the existing Gordon Commons building. The existing facility is a two-story, 74,000 square foot structure constructed in 1965. This facility was designed to accommodate a "traditional, all-you-can-eat cafeteria operation." The letter of intent indicates this does

not reflect the current service needs of UW students. While some renovations have occurred to the facility's dining rooms since its construction, the kitchen and serving areas have changed very little. The applicant has provided interior and exterior photos of the existing building. These can be viewed from the following site: [http://www.cityofmadison.com/planning/projects/reports/717wjs\\_photos.pdf](http://www.cityofmadison.com/planning/projects/reports/717wjs_photos.pdf)

The structure appears to be in at least average condition for building of its age. Staff have not conducted a formal inspection of the interiors of the structures and do not have any information indicating that the buildings are not structurally sound or capable of being rehabilitated. Considering building and operational details, The University previously considered renovating the existing facility, but concluded it would be more feasible to construct a new structure. As noted in the letter of intent, rehabilitating the existing structure would have been a very difficult undertaking that would have resulted in a less than optimal structure.

The City's Preservation Planner has reviewed this request and did not provide objections to the proposed demolition.

### Zoning Map Amendment and Conditional Use

The second request before the Plan Commission is rezoning the subject site to the R6 district. The site is currently zoned a combination of PUD-SIP and R6. The SIP, approved in 2005 as part of the demolition and rebuilding of Ogg Hall, covers a portion of the subject site along with properties on the opposite side of West Dayton Street. Permitted uses on the subject site currently include sport courts and open space.

The proposed Gordon Commons facility is a 98,000-square foot building that will be utilized for student dining, food preparation, office, and meeting space. The proposed building will be sited on the south side of the property, close to the West Dayton Street frontage. The building is two stories in height and includes a partially exposed lower level.

The building features a stone base with a combination of glass, brick, and metal panels defining the exterior of the structure. The "North" façade is the front of the building that will ultimately open onto the proposed green space. The "West" elevation fronts a proposed extension of the East Campus Mall. The "East" facade features the building's underground loading dock entrance and fronts onto North Lake Street. The back of the building is its "South" façade, facing West Dayton Street.

The primary entrances to the facility are located along the future park ("North" elevation) and the East Campus Mall sides ("West" elevation). The first floor of the building features food preparation areas, dining areas, and the "market place" comprised of several different food stations. The storage and preparation areas are generally located along the West Dayton Street side of the building. The second floor includes two large meeting rooms, storage areas, and mechanical facilities. The lower level includes truck and van loading bays and trash and recycling areas. The western side of this level includes office and storage areas.

After demolition, the existing Gordon Commons facility will be replaced with a park. The area features a large "great lawn" and a walkway providing access across the site. A variety of university uses are proposed for this open space including outdoor movie nights, concerts, and outdoor seating.

As part of this project, the University will add a missing segment of the developing East Campus Mall between West Dayton and Johnson Streets. The design will be similar what has already been constructed between Regent and West Dayton Streets. The University also indicates the existing pedestrian bridge across Lake street will be removed.

In addition to the zoning map amendment, consideration of a conditional use is also before the Plan Commission as colleges and universities are identified as conditional uses in the R6 district.

### Project Phasing

The project will be implemented in two primary phases. The first phase is the construction of the new Gordon Commons facility. Completion of the new building is anticipated in Spring 2012. The second phase includes the demolition of the existing facility and development of the new park. Demolition is scheduled to occur in September 2012 with park completion anticipated in Spring 2013.

## **Project Analysis**

---

### Conformance with the Adopted Plans

The following proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's recommendation for campus uses for the subject site and surrounding properties. Staff note that the State's "Consistency Requirement", effective January 1, 2010, requires zoning map amendments to be consistent with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

### Design and Character Considerations

Staff believe the proposed facility and park will be a significant aesthetic improvement compared to the current condition. The "North" elevation fronting the future park and the "West" Elevation lining the East Campus Mall feature a strong pedestrian orientation and, in the opinion of staff, are especially attractive and well-designed. The East and South elevations, however, include some design issues noted by staff, the Joint Southeast Campus Area Committee, and the UDC (Urban Design Commission).

One concern is the orientation of the loading bay on the East façade, sited very close to the Lake Street sidewalk. The loading bay features a one-story projection and a 30-foot wide overhead door that leads to the underground loading area. Staff's preference would be to have the loading dock moved further back. In discussing the project with staff, the architect indicated that with the building and loading as designed, it would not be possible to further recess the loading bay or overhead door within the opening. The applicant indicated further landscaping could be added and that alternative garage door treatments could be explored to improve the appearance. The applicant noted that the plans before the Plan Commission have been redesigned to incorporate additional windows and a green roof on this projection, as previously recommended by the UDC. If approved, these specific modifications should be approved by Planning Division staff.

Another design issue that has been discussed throughout this process is the appearance and articulation of the highly-visible West Dayton Street façade. A design challenge is that the interior includes storage and other "back-of-house" type functions in this portion of the building. Information provided by the University indicates there are limitations on where windows could be placed from an operations standpoint. The original proposal provided a limited amount of articulation with five two-story windows evenly centered along the western side of this façade. The building's exterior has since been revised and the plans before the Commission show the tall windows clustered towards the eastern side of this façade. Horizontal rows of smaller windows surrounded by metal panels have also been added, though the "mid-block" portions of this wall remain somewhat unarticulated. While the redesign greatly improves the eastern portion of this elevation, the resulting design is less symmetrical. In addition to

building changes, the addition of new planters along the West Dayton Street façade should improve the design character and pedestrian orientation at the street level.

As a final design clarification, staff request details be submitted for the outdoor table area and any fence enclosure south of the loading bay for approval by Planning Division staff.

Approval of the UDC was not required for this submittal. The University did attend a UDC meeting in December 2009 for informational purposes. A copy of that report is attached. The University has indicated that the revised building plans and landscape changes (included in the Plan Commission packet) have been approved by the UW Campus Design Review Board. The applicant has also attended two meetings of the Joint Southeast Campus Area Committee in which design issues were discussed. Approval was recommended at their January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, conditioned upon revisions to the South and West facades. The committee met on March 15 and received a presentation on the revisions to the West Dayton and Lake Street elevations and the landscape plan. No additional action was taken.

### Right of Way Clarifications

Several reviewing agencies provided comments requesting clarifications on the location of the right-of-way and potential improvements proposed within the right-of-way. A meeting was held between staff and the University to clarify questions. The University indicated that no portion of the building encroached within the right-of-way and revised plans will be provided to better depict the property lines. These are included in the Plan Commission packet.

### **Conclusion**

---

Staff believe the University's request to demolish the existing Gordon Commons building for the purpose of constructing a new Gordon Commons facility and a park can meet the applicable demolition, conditional use, and rezoning standards. Information provided by the University indicates that the construction of a new building is a more feasible than renovating the existing facility to meet the University's current and emerging needs. Staff believes the project is attractive and well-designed. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's recommendation for the area.

Staff note that there are two design issues that have been raised in regards to this request. One issue is the location of the loading dock entrance, proposed close to the North Lake Street sidewalk. The project architect has indicated that different options were originally considered. Based on the overall building design, the architect has indicated it isn't feasible to further recess the loading dock projection away from the sidewalk. As an alternative, he indicated the overall appearance could be improved through increased landscaping and alternative garage door treatments.

The second design issue is the articulation of the West Dayton Street façade. The plans before the Commission related to the West Dayton Street façade have been revised and are improved compared to early plans provided to staff.

The University has indicated that the revised building plans and landscape changes (included in the Plan Commission packet) have been approved by the UW Campus Design Review Board. Staff note that the plans have also been recommended for approval by the Joint Southeast Campus Area Committee.

## **Recommendation and Proposed Conditions of Approval**

---

Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

### **Planning Division Recommendation** (Contact Kevin Firchow, 267-1150)

The Planning Division recommends the Plan Commission find that the applicable demolition, conditional use, and zoning map amendment standards are met and forward zoning map amendment ID 3476, rezoning 717 West Johnson Street to the R6 district and allowing the demolition of the existing Gordon Commons building and conditional use for the purpose of constructing a new Gordon Commons facility and park, to the Common Council with a recommendation of **approval**. This recommendation is subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions from the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies.

1. That the applicant provides additional detail on the loading dock entrance and adjacent outdoor seating area. Plans should be revised to incorporate additional landscaping and some glass or other decorative treatments on the overhead garage door, for approval by Planning Division staff. Plans should also clarify and provide details on any planters, walls, and fencing proposed along the adjoining outdoor table for approval by Planning Division staff.

***The following conditions have been submitted by reviewing agencies:***

### **City Engineering Division** (Contact Janet Dailey, 261-9688)

2. NOTE: The approved address that shall be used for this proposed site plan build out is 770 W. Dayton St.
3. City/Developer Agreement shall include all utility work (storm, sanitary, water) within the public right-of-way.
4. Clearly show the existing property lines on drawings.
5. The proposed plan shall require easements, encroachment and/or maintenance agreements for sidewalks constructed and the existing right-of-way lines and on private property. The proposed sidewalk and terrace plan, if not addressed, will make it difficult for the City to maintain the sidewalk. This issue shall be resolved prior to the issuance of any permits for work in the right of way.
6. The applicant has been providing offsetting greenspace areas in lieu of stormwater detention for new developments in this area. Provide a current accounting of the "greenspace trading" that allows for this development without detention. Acknowledge that the newest remnant greenspace cannot be further developed without detention.
7. The construction of this building will require removal and replacement of sidewalk, curb and gutter and possibly other parts of the City's infrastructure. The applicant shall enter into a City / Developer agreement for the improvements required for this development. The applicant shall be required to provide deposits to cover City labor and materials and surety to cover the cost of construction. The applicant shall meet with the City Engineer to schedule the development of the plans and the agreement. The City Engineer will not sign off on this project without the agreement executed by

- the developer. The developer shall sign the Developer's Acknowledgement prior to the City Engineer signing off on this project. (MGO 16.23(9)c)
8. The approval of this Conditional Use does not include the approval of the changes to roadways, sidewalks or utilities. The applicant shall obtain separate approval by the Board of Public Works and the Common Council for the restoration of the public right of way including any changes requested by developer. The City Engineer shall complete the final plans for the restoration with input from the developer. The curb location, grades, tree locations, tree species, lighting modifications and other items required to facilitate the development or restore the right of way shall be reviewed by the City Engineer, City Traffic Engineer, and City Forester. (MGO 16.23(9)(d)(6))
  9. The Applicant shall provide the City Engineer with a survey indicating the grade of the existing sidewalk and street. The Applicant shall hire a Professional Engineer to set the grade of the building entrances adjacent to the public right of way. The Applicant shall provide the City Engineer the proposed grade of the building entrances. The City Engineer shall approve the grade of the entrances prior to signing off on this development. (POLICY)
  10. The Applicant shall replace all sidewalk and curb and gutter which abuts the property which is damaged by the construction or any sidewalk and curb and gutter which the City Engineer determines needs to be replaced because it is not at a desirable grade regardless of whether the condition existed prior to beginning construction. (POLICY)
  11. The Applicant shall obtain a privilege in streets agreement for any encroachments inside the public right of way. The approval of this development does not constitute or guarantee approval of the encroachments. (INFORMATIONAL)
  12. The Applicant shall provide the City Engineer with the proposed soil retention system to accommodate the restoration. The soil retention system must be stamped by a Professional Engineer. The City Engineer may reject or require modifications to the retention system. (POLICY)
  13. All work in the public right-of-way shall be performed by a City licensed contractor. (MGO 16.23(9)(c)5) and MGO 23.01)
  14. All street tree locations and tree species within the right of way shall be reviewed and approved by City Forestry. Please submit a tree planting plan (in PDF format) to Dean Kahl, of the City Parks Department [dkahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:dkahl@cityofmadison.com) or 266-4816. (POLICY)
  15. Prior to approval, this project shall comply with Chapter 37 of the Madison General Ordinances regarding stormwater management. Specifically, this development is required to complete an erosion control plan and complete weekly self-inspection of the erosion control practices and post these inspections to the City of Madison website – as required by Chapter 37 of the Madison General Ordinances.
  16. The applicant shall submit, prior to plan sign-off, a digital CAD file (single file) to the Engineering Program Specialist in the Engineering Division (Lori Zenchenko). The digital CAD file shall be to scale and represent final construction. The single CAD file submittal can be either AutoCAD (dwg) Version 2001 or older, MicroStation (dgn) Version J or older, or Universal (dxf) format and contain only the following data, each on a separate layer name/level number: a) building footprints, b) internal walkway areas, c) internal site parking areas, d) other miscellaneous impervious areas (i.e. gravel, crushed stone, bituminous/asphalt, concrete, etc.), e) right-of-way lines (public and private), f) all underlying lot lines or parcel lines if unplatted, g) lot numbers or the words "unplatted", h)

lot/plat dimensions, i) street names, and all other levels (contours, elevations, etc) are not to be included with this file submittal.

NOTE: Email file transmissions preferred [addressing@cityofmadison.com](mailto:addressing@cityofmadison.com). Include the site address in the subject line of this transmittal. Any changes or additions to the location of the building, sidewalks, parking/pavement during construction will require a new CAD file. (POLICY and MGO 37.09(2) & 37.05(4))

17. The applicant shall obtain all necessary sewer connection permits and sewer plugging permits prior to any utility work. (MGO 10.05(6)) and MGO 35.02(4)(c)(2)) This permit application is available on line at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/permits.cfm>.
18. Prior to approval of the conditional use application, the owner shall obtain a permit to plug each existing sanitary sewer lateral that serves a building that is proposed for demolition. For each lateral to be plugged the owner shall deposit \$1,000 with the City Engineer in two separate checks in the following amounts: (1). \$100 non-refundable deposit for the cost of inspection of the plugging by City staff; and (2). \$900 for the cost of City crews to perform the plugging. If the owner elects to complete the plugging of a lateral by private contractor and the plugging is inspected and approved by the City Engineer, the \$900 fee shall be refunded to the owner. (POLICY) This permit application is available on line at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/permits.cfm>.
19. All outstanding Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) and City of Madison sanitary sewer connection charges are due and payable prior Engineering sign-off, unless otherwise collected with a Developer's / Subdivision Contract. Contact Janet Dailey (608-261-9688) to obtain the final MMSD billing a minimum of two (2) working days prior to requesting City Engineering signoff. (MGO 16.23(9)(d)(4))
20. The site plan shall be revised to show all existing public sanitary sewer facilities in the project area as well as the size, invert elevation, and alignment of the proposed service. (POLICY)

**Traffic Engineering Division** (Contact John Leach, 267-8755)

21. If the applicant requests metered parking space to be removed on North Lake Street to accommodate truck access. The applicant will need to work with the City to resolve issues related to the removal, replacement or payment for the existing) metered public parking stalls. The applicant shall contact William Knobeloch or Bill Putman, Parking Utility at 266-4761 for there removal and if you have questions regarding the above items:
22. The developer should be aware that plan sheet EL011 (Photo metrics) is in error by listing existing roadway lights in Johnson Street right-of-way adjacent to this site. The existing City lights mid-block on Johnson Street are on the north side, next the University Square. Therefore, the Johnson Street sidewalk will have much lower light levels than is shown on this plan sheet.
23. The applicant shall show the property lines on West Johnson Street, West Dayton Street, and North Lake Street. In additions, no obstructions shall be in the street right-of-way. The applicant should revise west side of North Lake Street terrace treatment as proposed on West Johnson Street with trees and planters along the curb terrace area. The terrace area should be a minimum of 5 ft with trees buffering the pedestrians from parking and vehicle traffic lane. The City requires this area for snow storage, parking meters, signs etc. In addition, the public sidewalk should be min. of 10 ft wide to accommodate Kohl Center event pedestrian traffic using public sidewalk. The site and GDP



shall clearly denote a minimum of 10 feet wide direct and unobstructed public pedestrian sidewalk on North Lake Street as shown on West Johnson Street, and West Dayton Street.

24. The final design and/or improvements to West Johnson Street, West Dayton Street and North Lake Street shall be reviewed and approved by the City Traffic Engineer and City Engineer. The applicant shall need to obtain separate approval by the Board of Public Works and Common Council for the restoration and/or reconstruction of the public right-of-way including any changes requested by the developer. The applicant shall note on the site plan, " All work proposed in the right-of-way is not being approved as part of the PUD (GDP/SIP). All work in the right-of-way is approved separately by the Board of Public Works, City of Madison."

25. The applicant shall enter into a subdivision contract or developer's agreement for the reconstruction of the streets and sidewalk adjacent to the development, including Randall Ave. The reconstruction of the streets and sidewalk shall be subject to the plans and specifications of the City Traffic Engineer and City Engineer.

26. City of Madison radio systems are microwave directional line of sight to remote towers citywide. The building elevation will need to be review by Traffic Engineer to accommodate the microwave sight and building. The applicant shall submit grade and elevations plans if the building exceeds four stories prior to sign-off to be reviewed and approved by Keith Lippert, (266-4767) Traffic Engineering Shop, 1120 Sayle Street. The applicant shall return one signed approved building elevation copy to the City of Madison Traffic Engineering office with final plans for sign off.

27. The Developer shall post a deposit and reimburse the City for all costs associated with any modifications to Traffic Signals, Street Lighting, Signing and Pavement Marking, and conduit and hand holes, including labor, engineering and materials for both temporary and permanent installations.

28. Public signing and marking related to the development may be required by the City Traffic Engineer for which the developer shall be financially responsible.

**Zoning Administrator** (Contact Pat Anderson, 266-5978)

29. If bike parking is provided it should comply with City of Madison General Ordinances Section 28.11. There is no predetermined requirement for bike parking, University Transportation assessments has revealed a need for 70 stalls. Adequate bike and moped parking have been proposed. NOTE: A bike-parking stall is two feet by six feet with a five-foot access area. Structures that require a user-supplied locking device shall be designed to accommodate U-shaped locking devices.

30. Parking requirements for persons with disabilities must comply with City of Madison General Ordinances Section 28.11 (3) 6.(m) which includes all applicable State accessible requirements, including but not limited to:

- a. Provide a minimum of one van accessible stall 8' wide with an 8' striped out area adjacent as per State requirements.
- b. Show signage at the head of the stalls. Accessible signs shall be a minimum of 60" between the bottom of the sign and the ground.
- c. Show the accessible path from the stalls to the building. The stalls shall be as near the accessible entrance as possible. Show ramps, curbs, or wheel stops where required.

31. Provide a reuse/recycling plan, to be reviewed and approved by The City's Recycling Coordinator, Mr. George Dreckmann, prior to a demolition permit being issued.
32. Sec 28.12(12)(e) of the Madison Zoning Ordinance requires the submittal of documentation demonstrating compliance with the approved reuse and recycling plan. Please note, the owner must submit documentation of recycling and reuse within 60 days of completion of demolition.
33. Provide a survey prepared by a Registered Land Surveyor showing an accurate location of all existing and proposed improvements as they relate to the City of Madison right of way.

**Fire Department** (Contact Bill Sullivan, 261-9658)

34. The fire lanes shown on the site plans do not comply with MGO Chapter 34; the owner must revise the plans or apply for and receive approval of a Petition for Variance from the Board of Building Code, Fire Code and Licensing Appeals prior to construction of the project. If the Board does not approve the Petition for Variance, then the owner must submit a new application for approval of revised plans. Please contact Bill Sullivan at 608-261-9658 for alternatives and approval.

**Water Utility** (Contact Dennis Cawley, 261-9243)

35. The Madison Water Utility shall be notified to remove the water meter prior to demolition. This property is not in a Wellhead Protection District. All wells located on this property shall be abandoned if no valid well operation permit has been obtained from the Madison Water Utility.

**Parks Division** (Contact Tom Maglio, 266-6518)

This agency did not submit a response to this request.

**Metro Transit** (Contact Tim Sobota, 261-4289)

This agency did not submit a response to this request.