



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

Planning Division

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TO: Urban Design Commission

FROM: Timothy M. Parks, Planner

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SUBJECT: ID [43556](#) (UDC) and [45036](#) (Plan Commission) – Consideration of Zoning Map Amendment ID 28.022–00260 and 28.022–0021, amending a PD (Planned Development District) General Development Plan and Specific Implementation Plan to allow construction of a mixed-use building with 1,965 square feet of commercial space, 156 apartments and 5 live-work units at 1004-1032 S. Park Street; Urban Design Dist. 7; Ald. Dist. 13.

The applicant, Terrence Wall, is requesting approval of a major amendment to the (PD) General Development Plan and Specific Implementation Plan for 1004-1032 S. Park Street to revise plans approved in June and September 2015 for the construction of a mixed-use building at the intersection of S. Park Street and Fish Hatchery Road.

The approved mixed-use building called for 6,000 square feet of first floor commercial space located at the intersection of S. Park Street and Fish Hatchery Road, 5,000 square feet of first floor live-work space in units located south along the project's S. Park Street frontage, and 164 apartments in a predominantly five-story building with two levels of structured parking containing 174 auto spaces. The proposed revisions call for a predominantly four-story building with 1,965 square feet of commercial space, 156 apartments and 5 live-work units, with one level of parking below grade for 156 stalls. The building placement remains the same in both versions of the project. However, a second floor landscaped courtyard for building residents in the five-story plan moves to the first floor in the four-story version now proposed, and a driveway serving the project from S. Park Street is eliminated. Sole access to the underground parking will be provided by from the east-west private drive shared between the site and adjacent Wingra Clinic via a ramp that will parallel the southerly, rear wall of the building.

The Planning Division has carefully considered the proposed revisions to the mixed-use building and does not believe that they meet standards and criteria for approval. In particular, the four-story, predominantly residential version of the plan does not appear to be consistent with the applicable provisions of Urban Design District 7 or reflect the type of development envisioned for the site in various adopted plans.

Redevelopment of the subject site and adjacent Wingra Clinic project (together, the site of the former Bancroft Dairy) was first discussed in the 2002 [Park Street Revitalization: Possibilities to Reality](#) report, with general recommendations included in the 2005 [South Madison Neighborhood Plan](#). While acknowledging that major land use and urban design principles for the 65-acre "triangle" formed by S. Park Street, Wingra Drive and Fish Hatchery Road would be addressed in the then forthcoming [Wingra Market Study and Conceptual Redevelopment Plan Summary Report](#), the [South Madison Neighborhood Plan](#) generally recommended that redevelopment activities in the triangle emphasize business retention

and expansion, increased connectivity, street-oriented development with an emphasis on urban building forms, and the placement of parking to the side and rear of buildings.

The subsequent 2006 Wingra Market Study and Conceptual Redevelopment Plan Summary Report (“BUILD Plan”) studied the market potential for redevelopment of the triangle and provided a series of broad planning and urban design recommendations to guide future redevelopment activities. With regard to the subject Planned Development properties, the BUILD Plan recommended redevelopment of the former dairy along S. Park Street with high-density residential or lodging uses with first floor commercial uses, with less specific commercial uses recommended further south along S. Park between the dairy and Copp’s grocery store. In order to accomplish these recommendations, the BUILD plan specifically recommended that the former dairy site be redeveloped as a single master-planned development, noting that the site is “the keystone property in the Wingra BUILD project area and should be developed as a single development with a landmark, flatiron structure that takes full advantage of the prime location, access and visibility.”

These recommendations are generally reflected in the Comprehensive Plan, which recommends the entire triangle for Community Mixed-Use development, with a map note that acknowledges the recommendations in the aforementioned plans to increase residential density, improve connectivity through the block, provide workforce housing for area employers, and create a Transit-Oriented Development pattern.

The General Development Plan first approved in 2011 for the subject site and adjacent clinic called for the subject site to be developed as a mixed-use project of one or more buildings at a maximum height of seven stories and floor area ratio (FAR) of 5.0, which would allowed approximately 357,192 square feet of gross floor area to be developed on the 1.64-acre (71,647 square feet) subject site. The mixed-use building approved in 2015 proposed approximately 212,400 square feet of floor area, which includes the floor area devoted to ground-level parking, for a 2.97 FAR. The approved 2011 General Development Plan and 2015 Specific Implementation Plan were both found to be consistent with the myriad planning recommendations, including the more detailed recommendations in the BUILD Plan.

In addition to being a Planned Development, the subject site and adjacent clinic are located in Urban Design District (UDD) 7. UDD 7 was established to improve the appearance and function of the Park Street corridor between Regent Street and the Beltline Highway and to acknowledge its importance as a major gateway corridor to downtown and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and to allow it to evolve as a distinctive place that builds on the strengths of its culturally diverse businesses and adjacent neighborhoods. UDD 7 specifically notes that the “Wingra Creek Area” has been identified in aforementioned plans as possessing numerous large parcels that represent potential redevelopment opportunities that would improve the use mix, character, density, and activity within the District. Design requirements in the district generally apply, although recommendations included in subsequent adopted plans for this area take precedence over the area requirements and applicable provisions of District. Staff determined that the 2011 General Development Plan represents a “subsequent adopted plan” for the purposes of the implementing the requirements and guidelines in UDD 7.

During its consideration of the General Development Plan in 2011, the Urban Design Commission emphasized the need to maximize the future development of the subject 1.64-acre property, including the construction of a flatiron building on the northern tip of the site adjacent to the S. Park Street-Fish Hatchery Road intersection. The UDC also encouraged the future building(s) to include a strong presence

along S. Park Street with active entrances from the public sidewalk, and encouraged the developer to explore opportunities to share parking with the Wingra Clinic project to the south. The emphasis on the flatiron treatment of the S. Park-Fish Hatchery intersection continued during the review of the Specific Implementation Plan for the five-story building approved in 2015, with multiple versions of the project reviewed by the Urban Design Commission before final approval was granted in September 2015.

By comparison, Planning staff does not feel that the proposed four-story version of the project measures up to the previous version and represents a significantly reduced vision for this important gateway site at the intersection of S. Park Street and Fish Hatchery Road. The reduced scale of the building and its commercial component feel out of place on the subject site, which as noted, has been planned for higher density development for more than a decade. In particular, the reduction in commercial space will result in less orientation of the proposed building to and activation of S. Park Street, with much of the first floor now devoted to residential use. In staff's opinion, the gap between the proposed commercial space at the prow of the site and the live-work units along the S. Park frontage also lessens the viability of those five units for future non-residential use, since they appear to be more isolated and have less critical mass of dedicated commercial space to build upon. Further, staff questions the proximity of first floor residential units to S. Park Street and notes that other new projects proposed along this corridor in recent years have placed most of their residential units above the first floor and the attendant noise created by traffic on the street. The proposed revisions call for 180,738 square feet of floor area without the underground parking, which was not included in the FAR for the previously approved plan, for a resulting FAR of 2.52.

The four-story version of the mixed-use project for the site also results in a pallid building at the significant S. Park Street and Fish Hatchery Road intersection. Whereas the five-story version approved in 2015 did an effective job of varying building heights and materials along S. Park to give the impression of multiple smaller buildings, which resulted in a well modulated façade for that building highlighted by a well-designed flatiron treatment at the prow, the four-story version appears to be more monotone, with less variation created between the three-story section of the building and adjacent four-story sections along S. Park Street, which is further exacerbated by less variety in materials along that side.

Staff is also concerned with the access to the underground parking proposed with the revised plans. As noted earlier, the lone access to that parking will be provided by a two-way driveway from the shared private drive between the subject site and adjacent clinic. Upon entering the drive, vehicles—including bikes—will be required to turn sharply to the left before proceeding down a 16% ramp and turning sharply again to enter the parking level. Due to the steep slope and angle of approach to the private street, the Traffic Engineering Division expects a high probability for vehicular crashes. This configuration also makes squaring a vehicle exiting to the private street a near impossibility which makes the operators ability to view oncoming traffic difficult and makes the ramp usable in only one direction at a time. This limitation also has a high probability of causing the undesirable situation of vehicles queuing onto the S. Park Street right of way. These concerns will be amplified during inclement weather.

It is for these reasons that staff recommends that the proposed amended General Development Plan and Specific Implementation Plan not be approved.

cc: Terrence Wall & Jon Hepner, Wingra Creek Residences, LLC.
Ald. Sara Eskrich, District 13