



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development  
**Planning Division**

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Randy Bruce  
Knothe and Bruce Architects  
7601 University Ave., Suite 201, Middleton, WI  
\*SENT VIA E-MAIL ONLY

Dear Randy-

Thank you for meeting with Brad Murphy and me on Monday to discuss the rezoning request for your clients' properties. We appreciated the conversation, and understand that your clients' intent is to move forward as scheduled with the request. As indicated at the meeting, each proposal has strong merits, and could likely be supported in some form following the adoption of the Downtown Plan, new Zoning Code, and the provision of more detail related to design of the project and implementation schedule, so as to be able to better evaluate the proposals against the PUD standards. However, staff has significant concerns about the proposal in its current form, and will not likely be able to recommend approval of the entire rezoning request. We would like to take an opportunity here to summarize our concerns which have been identified to date:

- 1) On the northern portion of the site, the proposal fails to effectively demonstrate the relationships between the proposed 12-story building and the buildings adjacent to it (the Doubletree Hotel and the existing single and two-story buildings on the corner of N. Bassett and W. Johnson Streets. Insufficient information has been provided to evaluate these relationships, and staff can only assume that the proposed building placement so close to all adjacent buildings may result in inappropriate transitions.
- 2) On a very closely related note, the lack of integration of the two small properties on the corner of N. Bassett and W. Johnson is a particularly problematic aspect of the proposal, as it would result in very limited options for the future redevelopment of these properties in a way that relates well to the proposed project.
- 3) Located in Downtown Design Zone 2, the maximum height allowed on the northern parcel is 10 stories, with an opportunity for 2 additional bonus stories if an applicant can meet design criteria for the additional stories. The GDP does not provide enough information to evaluate it against the design criteria for projects in Downtown Design Zone 2, including the desire to achieve a 2-story height bonus (please see attached). It is difficult to conclude that the design criteria are or will be met with the detail provided.
- 4) On the southern portion of the site, it seems clear that the intent of the applicant is to pursue a 6-story building in the future, assuming the Downtown Plan and new Zoning Code are adopted to allow for it. While the 3-story building itself is adequately situated so as to allow support for a PUD(GDP) for this portion of the site, it is important to reiterate that if a PUD(GDP) is approved for the 3-story building, a future rezoning request for a PUD(SIP) for a 6-story building would require an amendment to the PUD(GDP) to allow it.

5) It is unclear whether either of the two projects is ready to move forward in the near future. The proposal is for the property to be developed under two separate owners. However, if they are approved together as a single PUD(GDP), and one of the projects moves forward following PUD(SIP) approval, the PUD(GDP) for the other site would still be approved in perpetuity, regardless of changes that might take place over the course of the next several years on this and nearby blocks. This is a concern that has been mentioned by the neighborhood steering committee as well as staff.

Without a compelling reason to integrate the two projects, staff believes an alternative would be to pursue these redevelopment efforts separately, allow them to be evaluated when greater design detail can be provided and closer to the time they can feasibly be constructed. Thank you again for discussing these issues and sharing your perspectives with us. Please let us know if you have any questions as the review process continues.

Respectfully,

Heather Stouder, AICP

cc:

Al Martin, UDC Secretary  
Brad Murphy, Planning Division Director  
Alder Michael Verveer