

## AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** March 14, 2007

**TITLE:**    Accepting the Final Report of the East Washington Capitol Gateway Plan Advisory Committee and adopting the East Washington Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan and Urban Design Guidelines as a supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan, and other City plans to be used to guide future land use and development within the East Washington Capitol Gateway Corridor.

**REFERRED:**  
**REREFERRED:**  
**REPORTED BACK:**

**AUTHOR:** Alan J. Martin, Secretary      **ADOPTED:**      **POF:**

**DATED:** March 14, 2007      **ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Ald. Noel Radomski, Lou Host-Jablonski, Paul Wagner, Todd Barnett, Bruce Woods, Lisa Geer, Robert March and Michael Barrett.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of March 14, 2007, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED PROVISIONAL APPROVAL** of the East Washington Capitol Gateway Corridor. Registered and speaking in support were Rick Phelps, Ald. Judy Olson, Robert Horowitz, Brian Mullins, Ed Jepsen, Karen Mattedni, Kevin Pomeroy, Brad Mullins, Kevin O'Driscoll, Susan Schmitz and Beth Cannestra. Registered and speaking in opposition were Leslie Schroeder, John Schlaefel and Joe Lusson. Registered in opposition but not speaking was Ilse Hecht. Registered neither in support nor opposition were Will Warlick, Peter Wolff, Marsha Rummel and Patrick McDonnell. Beth Cannestra of the Emerson-East Neighborhood Association and member of the East Washington Avenue BUILD Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan Project Steering Committee summarized the planning process underlying the development of the plan, including activities at the steering committee meetings citing a handout relevant to the vote on building height within the corridor contained within the plan establishing that a majority of the members voted in favor of the various array of building heights supported within the plan. Mark Olinger, Director of the Department of Development and Community & Economic Development provided an overview of the plan objectives in providing for redevelopment of the plan area as a potential employment center, detailing its core development principles, land use, bulk standards, design guidelines and transportation and parking objectives. He emphasized that the plan tries to be as sensitive as possible to the needs of the neighborhood with setbacks, set-backs and variation building heights for one block area to another. Public testimony from various members of the Steering Committee, members of the business community, as well as the Emerson East, Tenney-Lapham and Marquette Neighborhood Associations, as well as concerned citizens was received on an array of issues as follows:

- DMI (Downtown Madison, Inc.), as well as the business community as a whole supports the planning process and the plan.

- Plan lacks real numbers relative to density, square footage, in addition to consideration for re-use of existing vacant and partially vacant properties.
- The plan did not take in enough of its impact on the neighborhood, maximum build-out and densities by utilizing maximum floor area ratios.
- Negative impact of adding traffic to nearby streets not addressed; plan did not reflect consensus of neighborhoods.
- The steering committee represented a fair cross section of neighborhood representatives and businesses, a diverse group where the plan document represents a compromise of neighborhood and business interests. In support of plan that does not allow height and flexibility.
- In support but plan doesn't allow enough height and flexibility. Plan is too restrictive in height and density recommendations; need plan to improve area as basis for supporting more economic growth and resolve existing problems.
- Oppose plan especially building heights on the south side of East Washington Avenue. Heights will cut neighborhoods off Marquette and Tenney-Lapham and become a barrier. Heights do not relate to the neighborhood.
- The plan threatens the validity of the East Rail Corridor Plan, traffic consideration is important. Plans provide no analysis of the number of jobs created with plan and associated traffic impacts.
- The Dane County BUILD Committee's interest was to establish basis of development of underutilized corridor/gateway, intensifying uses were appropriate to discourage urban sprawl; this document supports this goal.
- Opposed to 12-15 maximum heights, 8 stories sufficient per the Draft Tenney-Lapham Plan and is sufficient for attractive design and density.
- The plan needs to be respectful of the historic and residential character of adjoining areas. The plan doesn't respect the boundaries of neighborhoods, doesn't respect hierarchy of heights from Capitol to the Yahara as found within the East Rail Corridor Plan.
- The plan's objective as an employment center will create more jobs that will contribute to the health of the neighborhoods, support plan as a mechanism to maintain and encourage jobs and economic development.
- Plan fails to engage transit as part of the solution relevant to commuter/light rail lines with a target reduction in square footage in parking.
- The plan to provides density downtown and discourages urban sprawl.
- Employment in the area was the basis for residential development in the area, now gone. Need to re-establish employment to revitalize the area and City as a whole.
- The existing urban design district contains no "meaningful standards," the plan will provide a basis for "meaningful standards" for the district.

Discussion by the Commission was as follows:

- Problem with disconnect between this plan as it relates to other planning processes for the trolley and light rail, as well as objectives for the development of a "solar mile" along East Washington Avenue.
- Height bonuses should be connected to Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) provisions, green building, and support for sustainability.
- Plan needs to show a commitment to the limit flow of traffic into neighborhoods.
- Need to design for density to support transit (light rail/trolley), this is the area to start, need a plan. Area no longer manufacturing, need to move away, comfortable with direction of plan.
- The plan needs to coordinate development of density with transportation issues.
- Disappointed that East Washington Avenue will not be something other than a highway.
- Fear and trepidation of tall buildings is based on what has gone on before.

- Tie height to sustainability and green building.
- The City lacks a comprehensive transportation strategy, combined with support for additional densities. Keep plan in context, urban design district guidelines will determine standards to provide for plan's implementation.
- Aside from the future urban design district, the issues with the need for redevelopment within the area the plan represents what can be done to put a catalyst in place to make something happen and provide resolve for related issues.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Host-Jablonski, seconded by Geer, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED PROVISIONAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).

After the Commission acts on an application, individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10, including any changes required by the Commission. The ratings are for information only. They are not used to decide whether the project should be approved. The scale is 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding. The overall ratings for this project are 5, 6 and 7.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR:** East Washington Avenue BUILD Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7

General Comments:

- This is progress, but not enough by a long shot. The plan fails to integrate: a) a strong, comprehensive, isthmus-wide neighborhood-preserving transportation/transit plan; b) height allowance tied to green building; c) adequate urban street/building integration and articulation (the stylized artistic renderings are nice, but not reflected in the plan language); d) conservancy zoning for surrounding neighborhoods; e) traffic calming for surrounding neighborhood streets.
- A good start. Design guidelines need to be created that add teeth. Conservation district should be advanced in parallel with this. The four conditions added tonight need to be adopted by the City Council.
- This is the place where we need infill and redevelopment to create the density in a former industrial area. We need to start planning for density here to make mass transit such as rail or trolley feasible. Infill at the urban center is critical for the viability of downtown Madison to preserve our farms, natural and rural areas. Incentives for green and sustainable design as well as superior design should be tied to the height and density increase requests, the Urban Design Guidelines to be developed should define these. Transportation access needs to concentrate along East Washington Avenue and disperse from there. This includes mass transit options.