



Project Address: 203 N Blount Street
Application Type: Major Alteration to an Existing Planned Development
UDC is an Advisory Body
Legistar File ID #: [89581](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Tracy Mac Murchy, Dimension IV Madison Design Group | Michael Matty, Renaissance Property Group, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing a major alteration to an existing Planned Development (PD) that is comprised of four buildings. Modifications are proposed to two of the buildings. The applicant first requests to make several modifications to a new eight-unit building which was approved but never constructed. The plans call for increasing the building height from three to four stories and increasing the building size from eight to 16 units. The applicant also requests changing the siding material from vinyl to engineered wood lap siding on the existing two-flat house located at 710-712 E Dayton Street. As noted in the Letter of Intent, the trim, window, porch detailing and repairs will be consistent with the historic vernacular of the surrounding neighborhood.

Project Background: Originally approved in 2017, this Planned Development included the construction of a new 8-unit residential building (203 N Blount Street), the relocation of a house from E Johnson to E Dayton (710-712 E Dayton), and three existing houses, two, two-flat (207 and 213-215 N Blount Street) houses and one three-flat house (209-211 N Blount Street) (Legistar File ID #[46548](#)).

The original approval included conditions of approval specific to the relocated house (710-712 E Dayton Street), which is the subject of this proposal, that spoke to materials and details, as noted below:

- **Porches.** The existing building has two porches; a front porch and a side porch located on what is currently the north side of the building. Original porches and features shall be retained and rehabilitated unless that is not possible. If replacements in whole or in part are necessary, the replacements porch(es) shall be constructed in a manner that is consistent and compatible with the historic vernacular architecture of its time and reflect the existing detailing.
- **Window Trim.** Window trim shall be in like and kind with regard to materials, and shall restore the historic window frame detailing that is present on many of the existing windows.

With regard to the new 8-unit residential building (203 N Blount Street), the PD indicated that this building would be a three-story building clad in horizontal clap board fiber cement siding and trim. The PD Zoning Text set a maximum height of three stories/40 feet. The proposed building, which roughly occupies the same footprint, does not comply with elements of the existing PD Zoning and, thus, changes are being requested to accommodate the revised building plans.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation on September 3, 2025.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal at their December 15, 2025, meeting (Legistar File ID [90612](#)).

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **advisory body** to the Plan Commission on this request. For Planned Developments the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in the PD Standards for Approval (attached for reference), but including, more specifically:

PD Standard (e), which generally speaks to coordinating “...*architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.*”

As noted above, the UDC is an **advisory body** to the Plan Commission on this request. Staff recommend that as an advisory body, the UDC should structure a motion as a recommendation to the Plan Commission with or without specific findings and conditions. For example, such a motion may look like the following:

“The UDC finds that the development is consistent with the approval standards for Planned Developments, with the following conditions being met...and recommends that the Plan Commission approve the proposed development.”

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff request the UDC provide feedback and make findings as required for Planned Developments. While staff do not have specific concerns regarding the proposed development, potential design considerations are noted below.

203 N Blount Street Building

- **Building Design and Composition.** Staff request the UDC’s feedback and findings on the overall building design and composition as it relates to PD standards, including those that speak to designing with a sensitivity to context, including architectural styles and building forms, as well as aesthetics.

Generally, and in summary, the Commission’s Informational Presentation comments noted that while the proposed development appeared to be designed with a sensitivity to context, consideration should continue to be given to:

- Incorporating more articulation/decoration on the W Dayton elevation since it will be very visible,
- The design/detailing in the transition between the bay windows and the stacked porches and what that will look like,
- The porches having any cover from the roof overhang so that they feel more intentional and integrated into the overall building design, and
- Looking at the window spacing, which seemed off.

710-712 E Dayton Street Building

- **Materials.** While the actual material details were not included in the application materials, the applicant has indicated that the proposed recladding material is engineered wood siding and that the trim and window detailing will be consistent with the historic vernacular architecture found in the neighborhood. As noted above, the PD Zoning Text specifically identifies that replacement materials shall be in like and kind, consistent with and compatible with the historic vernacular architecture.

Summary of Informational Presentation Discussion & Questions

As a reference, a summary of the Commission's discussion and questions from the September 3, 2025, Informational Presentation are provided below:

The Commission inquired about the lower level units and the amount of daylight they will get with south-facing windows underneath a deck. The applicant noted they will revise the landscaping so it's not in front of the windows.

The commission clarified that the "south" elevation is the Blount Street elevation. The Dayton Street elevation is less decorative, but this is a corner lot and consideration should be given to more articulation/decoration since it will be very visible. The height is fine, it transitions well and fits well with the surrounding buildings.

The Commission thought the building fits in well with the neighborhood context, but questioned the black color of the porches where most in the area are white along with trim. The applicant thought black was a nice accent but agreed to study another color and to match trim and porch colors.

The Commission commented that the stacked porches fit with the context of much of our City, but not necessarily the context we should be matching; it screams college housing. Some of the other improvements as part of this PD look really nice, the format of the first-floor porch fits with the context of this neighborhood, but the stacked porches above it are awkward. The 3-story structures in City Row on Johnson Street are a nicer format at a similar scale and architectural style. Do we feel like the stacked porches are necessary to the project, or consider just having a first floor elevated porch, and different architectural expression and layout above that? The applicant noted it is intended to be workforce housing, aiming towards adults using this as outdoor living space, and trying to keep the character of the neighborhood, which do have porches on the upper floors, but it's something they could potentially look at.

The Commission noted that stacked porches like this are a common style in Chicago. The upper levels will get some nice Capitol views.

The Commission noted that they talk about appropriate scale of architecture on every other project. To see this, it's so familiar, it fits in without question, but it also goes against everything we've been talking about, like modernizing and not trying to replicate what was there. Having just a porch on the first floor is a very different language, having integrated porches as opposed to protruding, but agree this style is seen in bigger cities. This language is familiar and comfortable.

The Commission inquired about the transition between the bay windows and the stacked porches and what that will look like.

The Commission noted that as a PD, thought should be given to the context of this within the Planned Development, some of which is already completed. This is another layer to contemplate, not just the neighborhood or city context. Regardless of how you feel about the stacked porches, the comment about the side, it being a corner lot, it really needs more articulation.

The Commission inquired about the lower units, which are partially below grade, and accessed through the main entry doors. It was noted that the main floor level is aligned with the adjacent buildings.

The Commission confirmed that the main floor aligned with the datum line of the adjacent buildings.

The Commission inquired about the porches having any cover from the roof overhang, noting that they don't feel intentional or are integrated into the design; just being tacked on to the front of the building. The Commission noted that the roof line is very straight except for the notch, and the window spacing seems off and doesn't look quite right.

The Commission overall liked the general look of the building, noting it fits in with the neighborhood, but it needs a little more work.

ATTACHMENT
PD Zoning Statement of Purpose and Standards

28.098 (1) Statement of Purpose.

The Planned Development (PD) District is established to provide a voluntary regulatory framework as a means to facilitate the unique development of land in an integrated and innovative fashion, to allow for flexibility in site design, and to encourage development that is sensitive to environmental, cultural, and economic considerations, and that features high-quality architecture and building materials. In addition, the Planned Development District is intended to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.
- (b) Promotion of integrated land uses allowing for a mixture of residential, commercial, and public facilities along corridors and in transitional areas, with enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and amenities.
- (c) Preservation and enhancement of important environmental features through careful and sensitive placement of buildings and facilities.
- (d) Preservation of historic buildings, structures, or landscape features through adaptive reuse of public or private preservation of land.
- (e) Provision of more adequate, usable, and suitably located open space, recreational amenities, and other public facilities than would otherwise be provided under conventional land development techniques.
- (f) Facilitation of high-quality development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.

28.098(2) Approval Standards for Project

The standards for approval of a zoning map amendment to the PD District, or any major alteration to an approved General Development Plan, are as follows:

- (a) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other base zoning district can be used to achieve a substantially similar pattern of development. Planned developments shall not be allowed simply for the purpose of increasing overall density or allowing development that otherwise could not be approved unless the development also meets one or more of the objectives of (1) above. Conditions under which planned development may be appropriate include:
 - 1. Site conditions such as steep topography or other unusual physical features; or
 - 2. Redevelopment of an existing area or use of an infill site that could not be reasonably developed under base zoning district requirements.
- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (c) The PD District plan shall not adversely affect the economic health of the City or the area of the City where the development is proposed. The City shall be able to provide municipal services to the property where the planned development is proposed without a significant increase of the cost of providing those services or economic impact on municipal utilities serving that area.

- (d) The PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands. A traffic demand management plan may be required as a way to resolve traffic and parking concerns. The Plan shall include measurable goals, strategies, and actions to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at congested times of day. Strategies and actions may include, but are not limited to, carpools and vanpools; public and private transit; promotion of bicycling, walking and other non-motorized travel; flexible work schedules and parking management programs to substantially reduce automobile trips.
- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.
- (f) The PD District plan shall include open space suitable to the type and character of development proposed, including for projects with residential components, a mix of structured and natural spaces for use by residents and visitors. Areas for stormwater management, parking, or in the public right of way shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
- (g) The PD district shall include suitable assurances that each phase could be completed in a manner that would not result in an adverse effect upon the community as a result of termination at that point.
- (h) When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in Section 28.071(2)(a) Downtown Height Map, except as provided for in Section 28.071(2)(a)1. and Section 28.071(2)(b), the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans and no application for excess height shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The excess height is compatible with the existing or planned (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) character of the surrounding area, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.
 - 2. The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.
 - 3. The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the project and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.
 - 4. For projects proposed in priority viewsheds and other views and vistas identified on the Views and Vistas Map in the City of Madison Downtown Plan, there are no negative impacts on the viewshed as demonstrated by viewshed studies prepared by the applicant.
- (i) When applying the above standards to an application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks required by Section 28.071(2)(c) Downtown Stepback Map, the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans, including the downtown plan. No application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks may be granted unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The lot is a corner parcel.
 - 2. The lot is not part of a larger assemblage of properties.
 - 3. The entire lot is vacant or improved with only a surface parking lot.
 - 4. No principal buildings on the lot have been demolished or removed since the effective date of this ordinance