



Statement on Proposed Development at 722 Williamson Street

Madison Gas and Electric Company (MGE) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to the Urban Design Commission regarding the proposed development at 722 Williamson Street.

For general background, MGE owns and operates the 100-megawatt gas-fired Blount Station power plant to the north of the parcels in question. We actively participated in the development of the Better Urban Infill Development Guidelines and criteria for the 600 to 1100 blocks of Williamson Street that were subsequently adopted by the Madison City Council in 2005.

We have been participating in the neighborhood meetings with the Baldwin Group where the concerns expressed by the Marquette Neighborhood Association and others related to this project have been discussed. Those discussions have not resulted in overcoming our original concerns with this proposal regarding the suitability of use in context with adjacent properties including our own, the Capital City bike path, the proposed building's mass and height, and traffic implications. We do not believe that placing residential units next to a working power plant is a good idea (i.e., imagine if the proposed building were already there and discussions were occurring in regard to locating a power plant next door). The power plant is and will remain critical for serving downtown Madison. Although we have discontinued coal use and taken measures to mitigate noise, it is still a working power plant. Should this project go forward, our experience would indicate that over time we will receive complaints from the new residents.

We believe a commercial-use building would be a better and more appropriate use of that property. In terms of what would be an acceptable project envelope, we'd have to look at specific proposals. We believe a building limited to five stories and more consistent with the existing buildings and mass on the block would be more appropriate.

December 17, 2013