

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2013 11:36 AM
To: Martin, Al
Subject: 900 John Nolen Drive

October 23, 2013

To Members of the Urban Design Commission:

Quoting from the September 4, 2013 letter submitted with the application for Urban Design Commission review and approval, this project is--

--- "a mixed use development---providing most units with exceptional views of the City skyline and Lake Monona. Located adjacent to the upcoming redevelopment planned for the entire Coliseum/Alliant Energy Center complex the new 900 Nolen Residences project supports the intent of creating a higher density mixed-use area along his[*spelling error in original document*] main corridor into the Madison Central Business district."

Here is my view of this proposed project--

In order to provide exceptional views of the City skyline and Lake Monona this building would have to be at least 15 stories tall. And then only the uppermost floors of a 15 story building would be able to see the Downtown Isthmus skyline at this location. At a height of 5 stories, the proposed building will have exceptional views of the endless parking lots in this area of the city. The higher elevations of the hills and trees in Turville Park will totally block any chance to view the Capital, Monona Terrace, or any part of the central Isthmus area. The trees in the park will be nice to look at until another large building gets built next door and blocks the view. Though it will be close to Lake Monona there is no lake access. Tenants in units facing Turville Bay will have a view of the lake but the 99 foot wide railroad corridor blocks all direct access to the lake. With a pair of binoculars a few lucky tenants will be able to see the location where the Yahara River enters Lake Monona and east of that point on the isthmus.

Many but not all units of this proposed building will have views of the many mansions along the lakeshore in the City of Monona. However, unlike the tranquil settings of the mansions the apartment units at 900 JND will be surrounded by the dust and noise of a busy city. The near constant din of the traffic on John Nolen Drive and the Beltline will force occupants to never open their windows. The average of six freight trains a day rumbling right past the building and blowing the whistle for nearby crossings will surely wake all but the most sound sleepers more than once each night.

The perspective views of this proposed building look so nice - but they are deceiving. The full Daytime Rendering perspective shows in the background on the right the State office buildings at 1 West Wilson and adjacent properties. In reality, there is no way that this part of the isthmus will be visible at all. Not even for the unlucky tenants who get talked into renting a unit on the top floor!

The Evening Rendering perspective shows downtown lights in this part of the rendering but again what will really be visible will be the distant streetlights and porch lights of the tranquil Lakeland Avenue residential area where the future sad tenants of 900 JND will wish they were living instead. The rising full moon in the Evening Rendering looks pretty but it is shown in the northern sky - which is impossible. The full moon will rise in the East and fall in the West and often will be beautiful for many future tenants of this building to see. I think that the full moons will help to appease these tenants as they count down the months until their lease is up so they can move somewhere that will feel like it can be a nice place to live. Then, as they found out when they moved into this poorly thought out apartment building, they will look forward to the endless trips in the one tiny elevator shared with 80 other tenants to get all their belongings out of this place.

If the members of Urban Design Commission truly think that this mixed use building is right for this area and approve this proposed building, they will be making a sad mistake. Perhaps in the future as this apartment building ages and becomes avoided by all sane renters, the building can be sold to Dane County and used as a Huber jail facility until it can be finally torn down and replaced with a well thought out mixed use building that will fit with a vision of a grand gateway to Madison that comes from a unified planning process that involves all the commercial properties in this area along with the entire Alliant Energy Center Complex.

With a visioning process just starting for the Alliant Energy Center Complex, I believe this property and others surrounding the AEC Complex have vast potential to be part of a unified master plan for the entire area. I ask that the City of Madison, the Town of Madison, and Dane County declare a moratorium on any new construction in this area until a visioning and master planning process is complete.

Sincerely,

Ron Shutvet
Madison WI

P.S. At the very least, if you approve this project, could someone please make sure the signs on the building are placed in an appropriate location. For example, the street address sign at the top of the new Wingra Clinic cannot be read by anyone traveling along Park Street because it is partially blocked from view by the building. Who approved that?