



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 223-225 W Gilman Street

**Application Type:** Informational Presentation - Building Addition in the Urban Mixed Use (UMX) District  
**UDC will be an Advisory Body**

**Legistar File ID #:** [81421](#)

**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Hamid Noughani, Assemblage Architects | Mendel Matusof, Rohr Family Chabad at the University of Wisconsin

**Project Description:** The applicant is proposing a four-story addition to the existing building to accommodate program and event space, as well as housing. Structured parking will be provided.

**Approval Standards:** The Urban Design Commission (“UDC”) will be an **advisory body** on this development request when a formal application come forward. Pursuant to Section 28.076(4)(c): All new buildings and additions greater than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet or that have more than four (4) stories obtain conditional use approval. In addition, the Urban Design Commission shall review such projects for conformity to the design standards in [Sec. 28.071\(3\)](#), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.

Staff notes that, as part of the Commission’s review, consideration should be given to the Conditional Use Approval Standards, in particular Standard No. 9, as noted below:

*Conditional Use Standard No. 9, which, in summary states: “When applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an addition to an existing building the Plan Commission shall find that the project creates an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose for the zoning district...”*

**Related Zoning Information:** The project is zoned Urban Mixed Use zone. As a reference, the design related zoning standards outlined in the UMX zone districts are included as an attachment to this report, including, but not limited to those related to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, height, fenestration, and materials. Staff notes that the Zoning standards may not be applicable depending on the existing and proposed floor areas.

The applicant is advised that the existing and proposed floor areas will need to be confirmed in order to determine the full applicability of the design-related zoning standards.

**Design-Related Plan Recommendations:** The project site is located within the [Downtown Plan](#) planning area, within the State Street neighborhood. As such, development on the project site is subject to the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#). The Plan recommendations for development in this neighborhood generally speak to maintaining and enhancing the district as a premier designation for a variety of commercial and civic uses, the unique sense of place, the diverse and vibrant mix of uses, encouraging human-scale developments that actively engage the street, and creating pedestrian oriented streetscapes. As noted in the Downtown Plan, Downtown Height Map, the maximum recommended building height is six stories.

## Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests that the UDC review the proposed development and provide feedback regarding the aforementioned standards related to the items noted below.

- **Building Massing and Composition.** Recognizing that the existing building has undergone transitions/additions over time, the proposed improvements should visually tie into the existing building composition, creating a cohesive or complementary expression. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the proposed addition, especially regarding the relationship between the addition and original building. Consideration should be given to the overall proposed mass, scale, and proportions.

In addition, staff requests feedback on the overall building composition as it relates to the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, including those related to the overall massing and proportions of architectural components (top, middle, base), the appropriateness of the use of stepback/setbacks, balancing vertical/horizontal lines and datum, size and rhythm of windows and doors, creating positive termination at the top of the building, etc.

- **Street Orientation.** As designed, the proposed addition is located proud of the existing building. In addition, the design of the street-facing wall is primarily blank, including a stairwell and garage door. Pursuant to the Zoning Code, door and window openings for ground story residential uses shall comprise a minimum of 15% of the façade area. In addition, as noted in the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, *"The street level of a building should be designed with active uses and architecture that engages the street/sidewalk in a contextually appropriate manner and integrates the building architecture and the landscape architecture."*

Staff requests the UDC provide feedback related to the design of the street-facing elevation, including as it relates to creating an active streetscape, minimizing blank walls, incorporating the garage door into the façade, maintaining positive orientation to the street, etc.

- **Building Materials.** The building material palette, both existing and proposed, appear to be comprised of masonry, metal panels, terracotta columns. The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines generally speak to utilizing high quality materials and four-sided architecture, as well as using a palette that is simple. Staff requests that the Commission provides feedback on the proposed material palette and composition, especially as it relates to creating a cohesive building design.

**ATTACHMENT:  
28.071 (3) DESIGN STANDARDS FROM ZONING CODE**

(3) Design Standards.

The following standards are applicable to all new buildings and additions, within any ten- (10) year period, exceeding fifty percent (50%) of existing building's floor area for non-residential buildings, mixed-use buildings, lodging houses, and residential buildings with 8 or more dwelling units.

(a) Parking.

1. Parking shall be located in parking structures, underground, or in surface parking lots behind principal buildings. Parking structures shall be designed with liner buildings or with ground floor office or retail uses along all street-facing facades.
2. For corner lots or through lots, rear yard surface parking areas abutting any street frontage are limited to fifty percent (50%) of that frontage, and shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from the street property line.
3. Parking garage openings visible from the sidewalk shall have a clear maximum height of sixteen (16) feet and a maximum width of twenty-two (22) feet. Garage doors or gates shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from the front property line. Doors to freight loading bays are exempt from this requirement.
4. No doors or building openings providing motor vehicle access to structured parking or loading facilities shall face State Street, King Street, or the Capitol Square.

(b) Entrance Orientation.

1. Primary building entrances on all new buildings shall be oriented to the primary abutting public street and have a functional door.
2. Additional secondary entrances may be oriented to a secondary street or parking area.
3. Entries shall be clearly visible and identifiable from the street, and delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping, or similar design features.
4. Within ten (10) feet of a block corner, the facade may be set back to form a corner entry.

(c) Facade Articulation.

1. The facades of new buildings more than forty (40) feet in width shall be divided into smaller vertical intervals through techniques including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Facade modulation, step backs, or extending forward of a portion of the facade.
  - b. Vertical divisions using different textures, materials, or colors of materials.
  - c. Division into multiple storefronts, with separate display windows and entrances.
  - d. Variation in roof lines to reinforce the modulation or vertical intervals.
  - e. Arcades, awnings, window bays, arched windows, and balconies to reinforce the vertical intervals.

(d) Story Heights and Treatment.

1. For all buildings, the minimum ground story height is twelve (12) feet, measured from the sidewalk to the second story floor.
2. For ground-story residential uses, landscaping, steps, porches, grade changes, and low ornamental fences or walls or similar treatments shall be located between the sidewalk and the front door to create a private yard area.

(e) Door and Window Openings.

1. For street-facing facades with ground story non-residential uses, the ground story door and window openings shall comprise a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the facade area.
2. For street-facing facades with ground story residential uses, ground story openings shall comprise a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the facade area.
3. For all buildings, upper story openings shall comprise a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the facade area per story.
4. Garage doors and opaque service doors shall not count toward the above requirements.
5. Glass on all windows and doors shall be clear or slightly tinted, allowing views into and out of the interior. Spandrel glass may be used on service areas on the building.

(f) Building Materials.

1. Buildings shall be constructed of durable, high-quality materials. Table 28 E-1 below lists allowable building materials.
2. All building facades visible from a public street or public walkway shall use materials and design features similar to or complementary to those of the front façade.