



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION AND PLAN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 633 N. Henry Street  
**Application Type:** PD-SIP Alteration  
**Legistar File ID #** [35160](#)  
**Prepared By:** Timothy M. Parks, Planning Division  
Report includes comments from other City agencies, as noted.

## Summary & Background Information

**Applicant & Property Owner:** Chris Houden, Palisades Apartments, LLC; 6417 Normandy Lane; Madison.

**Contact Person:** J. Randy Bruce, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC; 7601 University Avenue, Suite 201; Middleton.

**Requested Action:** Approval of an alteration to an approved Planned Development–Specific Implementation Plan to allow the installation of exterior decorative lighting to the northerly and westerly facades of a six-story, 71-unit apartment building located at 633 N. Henry Street.

**Applicable Regulations & Standards:** Section 28.098(6) states that “No alteration of a Planned Development District shall be permitted unless approved by the Plan Commission, provided however, the Zoning Administrator may issue permits for minor alterations that are approved by the Director of Planning and Community and Economic Development and are consistent with the concept approved by the Common Council.” According to Section 28.098(6), the Plan Commission is authorized to approve alterations to a Planned Development zoning district using the review standards in Section 28.098(2).

**Review Required By:** Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission

**Existing Conditions and Land Use:** The overall Planned Development district comprises an approximately 0.9-acre area generally located at the southeasterly corner of N. Henry Street and Iota Court, and consists of the recently completed six-story, 71-unit apartment building at 633 N. Henry Street, the 37-unit Cliff Dwellers Apartments at 140 Iota Court and a 13-unit apartment building at 150 Langdon Street. The site is located in the Langdon Street National Register Historic District; Aldermanic District 2 (Zellers); Madison Metropolitan School District.

### Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

**North:** Chi Psi Fraternity (“The Lodge”), zoned DR-2 (Downtown Residential 2 District); Lake Mendota;

**South:** Multi-family residence at 615 N. Henry Street; Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority at 601 N. Henry Street; Kappa Ch. Alpha Chi Omega Sorority at 152 Langdon Street, all zoned DR-2;

**West:** Multi-family residences, Chi Phi Fraternity, zoned DR-2;

**East:** Private easement driveway; Nottingham Cooperative, Theta Delta Chi Fraternity, and boarding house, zoned DR-2.

**Adopted Land Use Plan:** The Comprehensive Plan identifies the subject site within the Langdon Downtown Residential Sub-district, which recommends development of mixed-use buildings, small-scale neighborhood-oriented commercial uses and multi-family housing at densities up to 60 units an acre as recommended in more detailed neighborhood plans. The recommended building height in this sub-district ranges from 2-8 stories, with

the tallest buildings in the State Street transition area. Historic preservation and neighborhood conservation were identified as issues to be addressed as properties in the sub-district are redeveloped.

The subject site is also included in the Langdon District in the Downtown Plan. The Plan recommends that Langdon neighborhood build on its history as a traditional student neighborhood that can accommodate a limited amount of higher-density residential redevelopment on selected sites while maintaining the area's historic and architectural integrity.

**Zoning Summary:** The subject property is zoned PD with a conditional use for waterfront development. The proposed alteration will be reviewed in the following section.

Other Critical Zoning Items	
Yes:	Urban Design (PD zoning), Utility Easements, Barrier Free, Waterfront Development, Adjacent to Landmark
No:	Floodplain, Wellhead Protection
<i>Prepared by: Pat Anderson, Asst. Zoning Administrator</i>	

## Alteration Description, Analysis and Conclusion

On February 3, 2013, the Common Council approved a conditional use for waterfront development and a request to rezone 619-625 N. Henry Street, 140 and 145 Iota Court and 150 Langdon Street from R6 (General Residence District) to PUD-GDP-SIP (Planned Unit Development-General Development Plan-Specific Implementation Plan) [1966 Zoning Code] to allow construction of a six-story, 71-unit apartment building following the demolition of 3 existing apartment buildings at 619 and 625 N. Henry Street and 145 Iota Court, and the renovation of 2 other apartment buildings at 140 Iota Court and 150 Langdon Street. On November 18, 2013, the Plan Commission approved an alteration to an approved Planned Development-Specific Implementation Plan and conditional use to allow plans for a fifth-floor terrace for the six-story apartment building at 633 N. Henry Street to be revised to include a pool, and for balconies to be added to the lake-facing façade of an existing apartment building at 140 Iota Court. The six-story apartment building is substantially completed and is now occupied.

On or around May 22, 2014, the applicant submitted an alteration to the specific implementation plan for the six-story apartment building that included the addition of decorative lighting fixtures primarily along the westerly and northerly facades facing N. Henry Street and Iota Court, respectively. The fixtures include sconces to be mounted on the first full floor above grade on the westerly façades adjacent to the entry to the building from a recessed courtyard (2) and at the edge of the courtyard adjacent to N. Henry Street (2). The majority of the additional lighting proposed will consist of a series of 21 down lights to be mounted below the cornices of the brick-clad sections of the building, including 8 on each portion of the building closest to the 2 streets. Four of the down lights will be mounted in the courtyard, with the last light to be located on the southerly façade adjacent to the N. Henry facade. Details of the down lights and a rendering of the envisioned impact of the light on the facades are included in the materials for this request.

No alteration of a Planned Development is permitted unless approved by the Plan Commission, provided however, the Zoning Administrator may issue permits for minor alterations that are approved by the Director of Planning and Community and Economic Development (or his/ her designee) and are consistent with the concept approved by the Common Council. In this case, however, the Director did not believe the proposed lights should be approved administratively, and the district alder also expressed an unwillingness to support the minor alteration.

The Planning Division has no concern with the four sconces proposed in the courtyard adjacent to N. Henry Street and generally supports the illumination of that area at the primary entrance to the building. However, staff cannot support the down lighting of the facades proposed by the applicant and does not believe that the proposed alteration can meet the standards for approval for the Planned Development zoning district, most notably standard (2)(e), which states that the "PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses." As noted in the preceding section, the development is located in the Langdon Street National Register Historic District, where few if any of the historic structures have exterior illumination of the façade. Staff believes that there is nothing that differentiates the subject building's use from its context to necessitate the down lighting of the two facades and is also concerned about the potential impacts from the down lighting on the local landmark Chi Psi Fraternity "Lodge" located directly across Iota Court from the northerly wall of the subject building.

## **Recommendation**

### **Planning Division Recommendation** (Contact Timothy M. Parks, 261-9632)

The Planning Division recommends that the Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission find that the proposed PD-SIP alteration to add down lighting to the exterior of the six-story apartment building does not meet the standards for approval for Planned Developments and place the request on file. In the event that the Plan Commission can find that the proposed alteration to add the requested down lighting meets the standards, it should approve the request following a recommendation by the Urban Design Commission and subject to input at the public hearing.

The alteration was circulated to reviewing agencies, who did not submit any comments or conditions for this request.