



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Building Inspection Division

Madison Municipal Building, Suite LL-100  
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard  
P.O. Box 2984  
Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2984  
Phone: (608) 266-4551  
Fax (608) 266-6377  
[www.cityofmadison.com](http://www.cityofmadison.com)

DATE: April 28, 2015

TO: University Hill Farms Ad Hoc Steering Committee

FROM: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

SUBJECT: Responses to Citizen-introduced concerns about Land Use and Zoning Issues for the Proposed Triangle Redevelopment Focus Area in the Draft University Hill Farms Neighborhood Plan (04-16-15).

The City of Madison Comprehensive Master Plan designates the Triangle Focus area as CMU (Community Mixed Use) with a TOD (Transit-Oriented Development) Overlay. See attachments. The Draft UHF Plan recommends a mixed use district (office and residential) with mid-to high rise buildings. (See pg 27-29). Neighborhood Plans can provide additional details on land uses, height, and design standards that can apply to the designated land use classification.

***Citizen Issue/comment:*** Buildings abutting University Ave should follow the same setback standard applied at University Crossing and should be limited to a 4-story height standard to prevent a canyon wall effect facing east-bound motorists.

At the time a proposal for redevelopment comes forward, the various City regulations that apply to private development will be reviewed. These include, but are not limited to: Zoning, Urban Design, Land Subdivision, Traffic Engineering, exterior lighting, and Stormwater Management. Adopted plans will also be reviewed relative to a development proposal and will play a role as a project is being reviewed by the various boards, committees and commissions that review and recommend on development entitlement requests.

### Canyon Effect

University Avenue is a 4-lane arterial with pavement widths in the range of 60-80 feet. The right of way adjacent to the triangle varies in width, from about 130' on the western end, to about 200' on the eastern end. The widening occurs more or less perpendicularly at two points as one moves to the east, with the north side widening about 30' and the south side widening about 40'. The rear yards of the single family homes on Flambeau Road become very deep as one moves to the east, provide additional spacing along the University Avenue Corridor from any development in the triangle area. Slope, on the subject lot, in right-of-ways and on the existing developed properties in the area will also play a role on how new development relates to the surrounding streets or neighboring property. The City of Madison zoning ordinance also establishes minimum, and in some cases maximum front yard, side yard, and rear yard setback requirements. These requirements, in addition to the development review process, will provide sufficient regulation to ensure mitigation of any canyon effect concerns.

***Citizen Issue/comment:*** Building height standards are also important in order to preserve an unblemished view of the state capitol from Old Sauk Road.

The distance between the crest at Old Sauk Road to the base of the State Capitol is roughly 5.3 miles. The view is currently obstructed by trees. To see the capitol, one must be in the park property. The crest of Old Sauk Road is approximately 1,050 ft. The highest point on the Triangle Focus Area (former Taco Bell) is at 910 feet. The base of

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the Capitol Dome is at 1032.6 feet. The Triangle Area Focus concept plan recommends up to a 10 story building on the lowest point of the site (eastern edge). The practical impacts of a development are unknown at this time. As stated above, the development process will allow for discussion, where this issue could be brought forth for more detailed analysis.

The latest draft version of the University Hill Farms Plan indicates the importance of the vista/view shed. The plan recommends that building height, setbacks and placement should be taken into account during the approval of site redevelopment.

Recognizing and protecting certain high-value vistas/view sheds was discussed as part of the zoning code rewrite process. Because of the complexity of establishing which view sheds could or should be regulated, writing enforceable regulations thereto, and the fact this issue is more of a planning matter than a zoning matter resulted in no regulation of vistas/view sheds within the language of the City's zoning code. This could be reviewed as part of the 10-year revision and update to the Comprehensive Plan, being started by the Planning Department in 2015.