



**Agenda Item #:** 2

**Project Title:** 619-699 W Mifflin Street - Land Division/Combination, Demolition, and New Construction on a Designated Madison Landmark Site (Wiedenbeck-Dobelin Warehouse - 619 W Mifflin) (District 4)

**Legistar File ID #:** 85180

**Prepared By:** Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

**Members:** Present: Richard Arnesen, Edna Ely-Ledesma, Molly Harris, Katie Kaliszewski, and Jacob Morrison  
Excused: Ald. Amani Latimer Burris and Maurice Taylor

## Summary

*Jesse Symynkywicz, registering in support and wishing to speak*  
*Kurt Stege, registering in opposition and wishing to speak*  
*John Rolling, registering in opposition and wishing to speak*  
*Linda Irving, registering in support and wishing to speak*  
*Linda Scott, registering neither in support nor in opposition and wishing to speak*  
*Rick Chandler, registering in opposition and wishing to speak*  
*Burt Coffin, registering in support and wishing to speak*  
*Sandra Ward, registering in opposition and wishing to speak*  
*Jen Davel, registering in support and available to answer questions*  
*Patrick McDonnell, registering in opposition and available to answer questions*  
*Nathan Wautier, registering in support and available to answer questions*  
*Phil Hees, registering in support and available to answer questions*  
*Joseph Mayer, registering in support and available to answer questions*  
*Joia Wodarczyk, registering in support and not wishing to speak*  
*Nicholas Davies, registering in support and not wishing to speak*  
*Daniel Hance, registering in support and not wishing to speak*  
*Gary Shmerler, registering in support and not wishing to speak*

Kaliszewski opened the public hearing.

Bailey provided background information on the project.

The project team introduced themselves, including Linda Irving, Burt Coffin, Jen Davel, and Jesse Symynkywicz. Burt Coffin gave a presentation on their proposal.

John Rolling, Kurt Stege, and Rick Chandler, all representing the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation, and Patrick McDonnell spoke in opposition.

Linda Scott, representing the Mifflin Neighborhood/Capitol Neighborhoods Inc., spoke neither in support nor in opposition.

Morrison said the current proposal improved on the items the Commission had noted in the informational presentation. He said the podium is well-designed and has a nice relationship to the existing building to give it some contextual scale the way it is pushed back on the front with the 4-6' stepback. He said it would be nice to have a similar stepback on the rear side facing the Depot that was shown in previous design iterations because once you have a second or third floor

parapet, having the wall set back from that does impact how it is viewed by people. Relating to the detailing of the podium, he said that he could tell there was attention paid to it with the brick and windows, including their style and spacing, which will help to make it more sympathetic to the historic buildings. He liked the way the windows were now articulated, the style of window, and how they are spaced out because they are more sympathetic without being faux historic. He added that they have a cleaner appearance. He referenced comments from the neighborhood association about the rear with the stepback of the ten-story wall, noting they were similar to his comments. He pointed out that there is an equally tall building across the street, so this is not a uniquely large building in this neighborhood. He didn't think the density in and of itself was detrimental to historic buildings, but it is a careful examination of how the buildings are articulated next to these historic buildings; simply being tall isn't an issue if it is tall and well done. As far as colors, he appreciated the colors and they looked good, but the Urban Design Commission would need to weigh in on that. Regarding the separation of the lots, he did understand the sense of having the historic building on its own lot because it is easier to define and address. He asked about the gate between the historic building and new building and whether it was at grade. Burt Coffin said that the new gate is at grade so they can have an accessible route to the courtyard. Morrison said that it is better for the historic building because there is a cleaner separation and better sidewalk appearance, so that is an improvement from what is there now. He said that the only item he really had any pushback on was the rear setback toward the Depot because it seems appropriate to include.

Kaliszewski said she appreciated the changes that were made since the informational presentation, and this is a better product. She appreciated that the new building looks new and like its own resource as opposed to looking too close in proximity, color, and design to the historic resource, so it reads better now. She agreed with Morrison that the color choices give it a nicer appearance. She understood concerns raised about the visual intrusiveness to the Depot, which is a much smaller building, but she thought there was quite a bit of room in between them. Her only question was whether the black color being next to the Depot makes it stand out more or less on the horizon.

Harris agreed with Morrison about the rear setback, which was also brought up by the neighborhood association.

Arnesen requested confirmation that the courtyard will not be part of the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin property after the land division, if it is approved. Bailey said that it would not. Burt Coffin confirmed that the courtyard would be outside of the property line. Arnesen asked if the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin residents would have access to the courtyard. Coffin said they would, and it was the desire of the property owner that everyone in Wiedenbeck-Dobelin have full access to the amenities in the new building, including the courtyards, and it would operate as a single property. Arnesen asked if that would survive a potential sale in terms of access rights and easements. Coffin said yes. Arnesen asked if the properties would share utilities and HVAC. Joseph Mayer, an engineer on the project team, said the design intent is for the buildings to function separately with no cross connections, so they have their own utility services. They are still working through the interior building design, but the intent is to have separate building systems as far as HVAC, electric, telephone, etc. Arnesen asked the applicants to address the extent of the renovations to the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin building. Linda Irving said they have gone through physical assessments by various consultants, and there are substantial mechanical repairs and electrical that they are required to subdivide and relocate service. They added that they need to complete tuckpointing on the envelope, moisture infiltration to resolve, and some roofing elements. They said they won't know the full, detailed scope until they get further along with the subcontractors who will take a closer look at the property. Arnesen asked if there would be window replacements. Irving said they didn't think so other than where there is a failure. They said there are historic windows with a window on top of a window, and the consultants are evaluating them to make sure there is no deterioration of the historic windows. Arnesen asked if it was a full gut rehabilitation or if they were applying for tax credits. Irving said that it was not, and it was capital improvements, infrastructure, and repairs. Arnesen asked if it would also be a student-centric building, as the project team had said earlier. Irving said that was their intent because the amenities are complementary to that resident demographic. Arnesen asked if there would be a separate ownership. Irving said they intend to own and operate both as property managers.

Ely-Ledesma agreed with Morrison's comments and thanked the design team and property owners for listening to the feedback from the informational presentation, in particular the separation between the buildings moving from 5 to 10

feet. She referenced a comment she'd made previously about trying to understand the relationship sectionally. She said that while there are some sections in the submittal that give more sense of place and the relationship of the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin building transitioning through the courtyard and connecting to the new development, she appreciated Kurt Stege for introducing the section that she was looking for. It helped to understand the relationship of the full mass of the building and the sandwich of the historic structures. Going back to Morrison's comments about concerns of adjacency related to the Depot and the lack of stepback. From an urbanistic perspective and thinking about that edge, she had concerns. She noted Kaliszewski's comments that there is ample separation in terms of the placement of the buildings, but in terms of that edge, she thought there could have been the same consideration as was done on the front of the building. Looking at the plans, she said there was one row of units they would potentially be losing there, but there was concern noted from most of the commissioners.

Arnesen asked if parking was provided for residents of the Wiedenbeck-Dobelin building in the underground structure of the tower. Linda Irving said there were 68 parking spaces with this development, which is a couple less than they currently have, and the parking will be available to residents of both the historic and new properties. They said the positive of this location is the low need for vehicles. At their existing nearby property, Atmosphere, their current ratio is less than 14%, and of 681 residents they still have 20 parking spaces open out of 97 total spaces.

Morrison requested to look at the building separation slide (p34) from the applicant's presentation because he had a specific concern about the corner facing the Depot. He said that it is a tall building to go directly up, and it might be better on the bottom notched corner of the proposed building to go back to the fourth evolution of the design where there was a wall parallel to the Depot and the upper floors were stepped back. He thought that was more sympathetic relationship to the Depot because there would be a two-story podium with an amenity patio, so there would be a visual stepback from that point to the rest of the building. While it might move the building slightly closer, there would be enough separation there that a small gesture of being related to it and parallel to it might help reconcile what right now looks like the back corner of a building awkwardly next to the Depot. Burt Coffin said they heard strong feedback from the Urban Design Commission against that particular design. Morrison said that it is subjective, but in looking within the framework and filter of how it relates to a historic building, it is a better relationship than a sheer wall of ten stories. He said that he would like to at least propose this to the Urban Design Commission with the Landmarks Commission's input.

Ely-Ledesma asked if the pushback from the neighborhood association was related to form or the possibility of noise and activation on that platform.

Bailey said that when staff has been meeting with the project team, it has included the Secretary of the Urban Design Commission. The Urban Design Commission really did not like the chamfered corner. However, that is their purview, and the Landmarks Commission has their purview, so if commissioners think the chamfered corner at the podium level is going to make this work in terms of relating to the historic resource, they can make that motion. She said that the Urban Design Commission thought it was too busy with too much in and out, and a lot of busyness going on with all sides of the building. Their approach was to simplify and take the busyness out of that corner, but again, their purview is not about relating to the historic buildings. Morrison said that pedestrians generally perceive the bottom two or three floors of a building and the rest fades out until you get further back. People in this parking lot will relate to that lower section, and the chamfered corner would be a better condition than a ten-story straight up and down wall.

Ely-Ledesma asked about the 4' stepback on the whole edge that the applicant had mentioned. Burt Coffin said that on the previous design with the chamfered corner, there wasn't that big of a stepback there. Ely-Ledesma requested confirmation that the 4' stepback would be maintained, and Coffin confirmed that it would be.

Kaliszewski closed the public hearing.

## **Action**

A motion was made by Morrison, seconded by Arnesen, to Approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition, new construction, and land division/combination with the conditions that final courtyard fencing, landscaping, and hardscape specifications be approved by staff and the rear (southwest) corner of the building facing the Depot have a chamfered corner reintroduced to the masonry base level of the building with a setback at the third floor and above. The motion passed by voice vote/other.