



Board of Directors

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December 7, 2015

To: Marsha Rummel
Alder, District 6

The Marquette Neighborhood Association (MNA) and the Schenk Atwood Starkweather Yahara (SASY) Neighborhood Association have formed a joint committee to respond to the proposal from Campbell Capital Group LLC (CCG) for the redevelopment of the Marling Lumber site located at 1801 E Washington Ave.

We view this site as a development of strong mutual interest and have decided to work together to emphasize its importance to both neighborhoods. We offer this document as preliminary feedback based on the plans presented in a public meeting on 9/30/15, and then submitted to the City of Madison on 11/23/15. A more formal recommendation will follow, and its substance will depend in part on CCG and city staff's response to the early concerns raised here.

First and foremost, the joint committee asks that the City of Madison delay any approval of the requested rezoning of the site from Industrial Limited (IL) to Traditional Employment (TE), along with the concurrent conditional use approval to accommodate residential units and commercial uses. The granting of rezoning and conditional use should be done only when it is based on a solid plan that has neighborhood and city support. There has been too little time and too little effort put into receiving community feedback so far.

The joint MNA and SASY committee have identified the following major concerns about various aspects of the proposed project:

1. Connection to the Yahara River Park: The CCG proposal states that it is providing a "public amenity" at its interface with the Yahara River. The current design falls far short of an amenity or a welcoming connection. It provides an exclusive-looking courtyard bounded mostly by fence and buildings with little to define what is public and what is private.
2. Connection to E Main St: This proposal leaves the existing walkway and hairpin connection from E Washington Ave to the Yahara River bike path, but does nothing to establish a more meaningful link. By connecting and extending the existing walkway to E Main St, the project would create a new traffic pattern that would bring many more people past the Yahara River interface. This increased traffic would be a key piece of making that interface a true public destination, especially if coupled with stronger treatment of the existing green space and the new building.



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3. Interface of the street with the public realm: Particularly along E Washington Avenue, there needs to be more explicit openings, doorway and window treatments. Simply abutting the sidewalk and providing lots of glass on the corner does not achieve this connection.
4. Building materials: The wide variety of building materials and colors evident on the current elevations is a cause for distaste among most of the people reviewing the plan. A simpler and more unified use of building materials would make a more harmonious structure.
5. Affordable housing: CCG stated that they want to, “provide additional housing diversity that complements the eclectic makeup of the neighborhood.” It is difficult to interpret this as meaning anything other than adding expensive apartments given the reference to “high-end” amenities and the complete omission of any affordable housing component. CCG has stated that they have made no attempt to even inquire about subsidies that could help finance an affordable housing component. Our neighborhoods believe that affordability needs to be a significant part of the mix in any development this size.
6. East Main St entrances: We strongly feel that all individual units along E Main Street must have their own entrance, stoop and stair. This part of the design will harmonize with the existing housing stock on the other side of the street. It will also generate more foot traffic. Reference Bedford Court in downtown Madison for an excellent example.
7. Traffic study: There has been no report of a traffic study, especially on how the already complicated intersection of Main and First Streets would be changed to accommodate this large increase in population.
8. Terrace trees: There should be a firm commitment to preserve every terrace tree aside from the 3 already marked with a yellow dot. CCG LLC has already expressed a strong interest in preserving these trees. MNA/SASY knows from previous projects that these trees are both savable and provide value to the community.

Other concerns may arise now that project plans have been submitted. We offer the items listed above as a starting point in a more serious discussion about neighborhood concerns – and the neighborhoods are very concerned.



MARQUETTE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
A Place for All People - Established 1968
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Our goal in raising these concerns is not to stop the project, but to make it better. For that reason we again emphasize the importance of not granting the rezoning request or the Landmarks Commission approval at this time.

In the spirit of negotiation, CCG has offered to meet with the joint committee later this month. We welcome this opportunity to meet with them to discuss our concerns directly.

Jesse Pycha-Holst
MNA Board
Preservation and Development Chair

Brad Hinkfuss
Chair, SASY Neighborhood Association

Cc: Michael Campbell, Heather Stouder, MNA board, SASY council