



**Project Address:** 3302 Packers Avenue  
**Application Type:** Alteration to Approved Conditional Use  
**Legistar File ID #** 32132  
**Prepared By:** Katherine Cornwell, Planning Division Director  
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On June 17, 2013, the Plan Commission approved a demolition permit and four conditional uses to allow the demolition of an existing restaurant for the purpose of constructing a four-story, 61-unit apartment building. The plans submitted for final staff sign-off included façade alterations that were inconsistent with those approved by the Plan Commission. The requested alterations include the following:

- Removal of street-facing windows
- Addition of several sets of louvers that allow for the venting of in-unit “wall-pack” ventilation units
- Addition of a porch enclosure on the third floor of the building
- Removal of fourth floor windows
- Revision to balcony details

For comparative purposes, images of the approved and proposed elevation drawings are included in this report. Full size, color graphics of the requested alterations have been provided by the applicant.

While the Zoning Code allows the Director of Planning and Community and Economic Development (or designee) to approve “minor alterations” to conditional uses, the Director did not believe the proposed changes to the approved window pattern and proposed louvers should be approved administratively. Concerns were raised on both the modification’s aesthetic impacts and the precedent of administratively approving façades that were presented in one manner to the Plan Commission and in a different manner when permits were being sought.

In regards to changes resulting from the in-unit ventilation systems, staff notes that this technology is being increasingly utilized on larger residential buildings, such as this project. Staff understands this is a relatively cost effective way to heat and cool larger buildings. However, a significant down-side is the exterior aesthetic impact of the resulting grates/louvers, especially when their use is not architecturally incorporated into the building’s design. The Zoning Code currently lacks sufficient design standards for these units to address the negative impacts on the quality of Madison’s built environment. Other projects have minimized their appearance through a variety of ways. In some cases, the louvers have been side-loaded within recesses and projections so as not to face the street.

Upon not receiving administrative approval of the proposed plans, a second set of façade drawings were submitted. These drawings were closer in character to the approved drawings, though were still believed by the Director to be beyond what could be approved as an administrative-level minor alteration, given the difference compared to the renderings approved by the Commission. The applicant has chosen to proceed with the proposed modifications submitted in the Plan Commission materials.

The applicant has obtained building permits to proceed with footings and foundation based on approval of plans consistent with the original PC approval. Staff has advised the applicant that should the alterations not be approved, the building facades must match those approved by the Commission, which would likely result in changes to the HVAC system.

The Planning Division remains concerned on the louver’s aesthetic impacts. The Plan Commission should consider the requested alterations against the conditional use standards.

**Front (East) Façade – As Approved**



**Front (East) Façade – With Proposed**



**Londonderry Drive (South) Façade  
As Approved**



**Londonderry Drive (South) Façade  
With Proposed Modifications**

**Parking Lot (North) Façade – As Approved**



**Parking Lot (North) Façade – With Proposed Modifications**



**Rear (West) Façade – As Approved**



**Rear (West) Façade – With Proposed Modifications**

