

*RECOMMEND DENIAL OF
CONDITIONAL USE
*RECOMMEND RETURN
FOR SUBSTANTIAL REVISION

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Comments to the Urban Design Commission on the Proposed W. Broadway Development in Urban Design District #1

December 9, 2015

Dear Members of the Urban Design Committee,

I am writing in regard to the proposed development at 2230 W. Broadway. As an adjacent homeowner, I have concerns about the proposed design and size of the project and its impacts on the aesthetics of both our property and our neighborhood.

I have attached photographs to help familiarize you with the site from a homeowners' point of view.

The undeveloped lot in question was once the site of three modest single-family homes, consistent with the modest single-family homes in on the west end of Lake Point Dr. (ours, for example, in approximately 660 sq ft). The site serves as a transition between the hustle and bustle of the Beltline, Broadway Ave., and the apartment complexes to the west on both Broadway and Lake Point Drives, to the cute houses and large, well-kept frequently used backyards that abut the property on the west end of Lake Point, Waunona Park, and the rest of the Bridge Lake Point- Waunona neighborhood. This summer we had the pleasure of watching a red tail hawk fledge two nestlings on the site in one of the many mature trees, and right now you can sit outside and listen to a great horned owl calling there.

That said, we've known that the site would be developed at some point, but expected that it would be in a way the embraced and meshed with the character of the setting- that it would bring much-needed small commercial amenities to our neighborhood without being ostentatious. Thoughtful development would try to fit into the area rather than radically change its lovely character as an entry to the city and path to Monona.

The height of the proposed building is of great concern. Again, while infill is not inappropriate, installing a 3-story building in an area characterized by one-story small homes, giving new neighbors a birds' eye view into the gardens and yards of the long-term residents is unsettling. I don't believe there is any amount of setback that can mitigate the towering, overbearing effect on adjacent property owners. The bucolic transition I described becomes harsh, unwelcoming, and abrupt.

- **Recommend limiting the structure to a maximum of 2 stories, with no conditional use permit allowed to address height inconsistent with the entire surrounding area.**

Second, the bulk of the building could be likened to a fortress wall along Broadway- I am not sure if it's meant to pen neighborhood residents in, or to hide us from drivers on Broadway. It's more suited for an urban corridor such as East Washington- where such designs do not abut the backyards of adjacent homeowners than it is for this site. A design that breaks up that façade and allows light and through-view will substantially improve its aesthetic and look less like a unattractive monolith plopped into the location.

An additional problem with the proposed bulk and high-traffic use is the limited amount of off-site parking. No parking is allowed on Broadway, and limited on-street parking is available on Fayette

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and Lake Point. For example, Waunona Park activities in summer and ice fishermen routinely use all Fayette on-street parking between Waunona Way and Lake Point Dr.

- Reducing the bulk-including reductions in overall square footage and attempting to *fit* the neighborhood rather than lord over it is recommended
- This may also alleviate some of the serious inadequacies of parking for the development.

Consistent with this reduction in bulk is the sites' location one block south of Lake Monona. The 1.1 acre parcel currently provides excellent infiltration of stormwater in an area that is substantially hard-scaped to the south of the site. The amount of hard-scaping proposed by the building square footage and surface parking is the type of development that continues to plague our lakes, which are, the only reason Madison was sited where it is.

- A reduction in bulk of the building would decrease the significant amount of impervious surface proposed. Further, pavement and land scaping should be required that allow greater infiltration (e.g. "thirsty" driveway/ parking areas)
- As a related environmental consideration, the site is a glorious unobstructed south-facing location with little risk of being shaded by any additional development- I suggest that the developer be required to install solar panels on whatever building is sited to take advantage of its geography.

As mentioned earlier, the site has a number of large, mature trees that provide the soft transition between quite neighborhood and urban corridor. While there is certainly some scrub in the lot, the large trees are valuable, and not easily replaceable in a timeframe meaningful to current residents. There is one tree in particular that I have utmost interest in protected, and request that its preservation be required. It is to the south edge of the lot, where the site abuts the alley and near the south-east corner of our property. My tree identification is poor in winter, but I have an experienced, licensed arborist examining the site's trees today. It is invaluable and irreplaceable in providing screening between our yard and the development.

- Insist on preserving the large tree on the development site that is adjacent to SE corner of 2221 Lake Point Dr. lot
- Recommend that developer make every effort to preserve and accommodate other mature trees in the site, and examine current plan shifts that would meet this goal
- Tree plantings should also include species that will in time be very large canopy trees
- Further, replace the planned gingko trees framing the driveway to Fayette. While certainly tolerant of salt and exhaust, they are still a short, ugly, scraggly, non-native species and the "lazy landscaper's" way out. For the love of Adam, find a replacement for all gingkos on site.

Ingress and egress to the site are also worth reconsideration. Broadway is a limited access road. As presently designed, and driver who leaves the site via Fayette can only head west on Broadway. A driver who wants to head east will be shunted onto Lake Point Dr., which is a street that has no sidewalks and a considerable amount of in-street pedestrian traffic as residents walk to-and-from our popular PDQ or the Broadway/Fayette bus stop. While it is perhaps outside this committee's prevue, if that Fayette Driveway is preserved in the design, a stopsign should be added at Fayette and Lake Point (it should be, anyway), and residents should be consulted about placement of speed control humps on lake Point between Fayette and Hoboken. East of Hoboken, sidewalks resume. The southernmost entrance to the PDQ on Fayette is already a dangerous site because of driver leaving Broadway "exit-ramp" style and cutting across Fayette. Any increase in traffic at this point will lead to collisions, especially with non-local drivers who aren't savvy to the risk.

But better than trying to use the driveway at Fayette, consideration should be given to making the direct Broadway access the only point of ingress/ egress to the site. It will remain an uncontrolled

intersection, but drivers would be able to head either east or west from that point with impacting or endangering the children and other residents on Lake Point Drive. Such a reconfiguration may require removal of the proposed playground, but as Waunona Park (less than one block away) was approved for a new playground this week, the amenity would still exist.

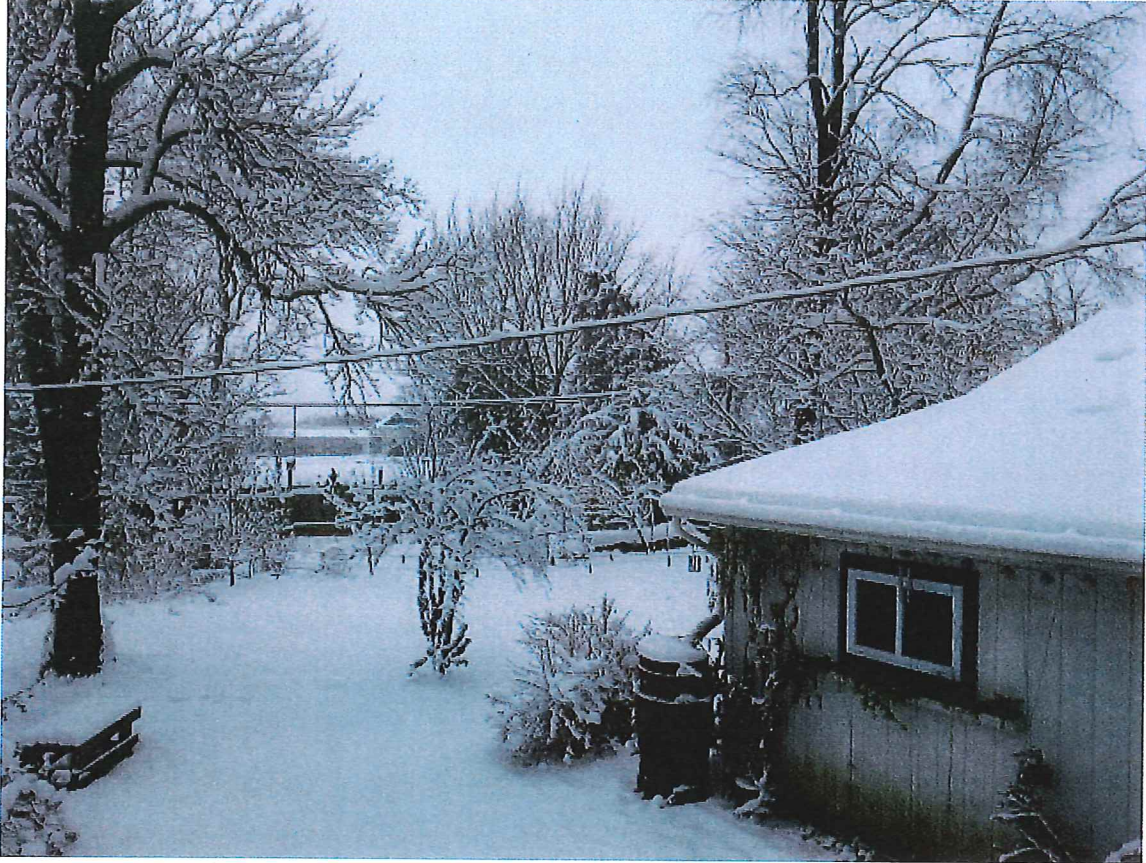
- Remove Fayette Ave access driveway and reconfigure parking and green space to both move ingress/egress to Broadway driveway only, and also to provide more flexibility for preservation of existing mature trees.
- Add sidewalk on Fayette between Broadway and the stretch of existing privately-built sidewalk

The attached photos are taken from our home, and represent homeowner's view of the site. Note the absence of height anywhere in view.

October 24, 2015- from our rooftop, across our yard (boundary at fence) and across proposed development site. The tree indicated is of great importance to us.



November 21, 2015- view from our deck (which is also the view from our kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom). Gives some sense of the "soft" transition the site provides between neighborhood homes and Broadway development. Keeping as much green and with substantial tree placement is important to preserving quality of life for neighbors (and any new residents in the development). The trees in the center-back are on the lot, as are the two large trees in background-left.



Street view from Antler's drive, facing west- the lovely tree-lined corridor that provides transition between South Towne and the neighborhood. Again, note the attractive, and decidedly low-profile nature of this area.

