

May 13, 2024
Updated July 1, 2024



Mr. Bill Fruhling
Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

Re: Letter of Intent
306 N. Brooks St.
KBA Project # 2379

Mr. Bill Fruhling:

The following is submitted together with the plans and application for the staff and Plan Commission's consideration of approval.

Organizational structure:

Owner:	LZ Ventures c/o Angie Black Carlson Black O'Callaghan & Battenberg 222 W. Washington Ave., Suite 705 Madison, WI 53703 angie.black@carlsonblack.com	Architect:	Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC 8401 Greenway Blvd. Ste 900 Middleton, WI 53562 608-836-3690 Contact: Duane Johnson djohnson@knothebruce.com
Engineer:	Vierbicher Associates, Inc. 999 Fourier Dr., Suite 201 Madison, WI 53717 (608) 821-3970 Contact: Justin Zampardi jzam@vierbicher.com	Landscape Design:	Figure-Ground LLC Middleton, WI 53562 (608) 345-5101 Contact: Joe Porter jporter@figureground-design.com

Introduction:

This proposed project involves the redevelopment of the current site at 306 N. Brooks Street on the corners of W. Johnson Street. and N. Brooks Street; it is the current Porchlight nonprofit organization's administrative and long-term affordable housing facility. The proposed redevelopment would be a 15-story private student housing building with 189 units ranging from studio to five-bedroom apartments as well as 118 enclosed parking stalls on 2 ½ levels and 11 surface parking stalls.

The site is currently zoned TR-U2. It is composed of one parcel with a lot area of approximately 0.78 acres.

This application requests demolition of the existing structure and rezoning from TR-U2 to RMX as well as conditional use approval for building height *and a reduction in automobile parking stalls*. An application

for a Certified Survey Map is being submitted contemporaneously to remove the underlying lot lines to complete the building parcel.

While this project will provide necessary student housing, this project is also pivotal in securing a site and new building for the relocation of Porchlight to 521 E. Washington Avenue. This is an incredible opportunity for Porchlight to substantially improve its housing and services and therefore ultimately fulfill its mission of reducing homelessness and providing affordable housing. LZ Ventures is excited to be a part of the solution. This would be life changing for the residents and greatly reduce Porchlights operational and maintenance commitments.

This central location at 306 N. Brooks Street. is an ideal location for UW campus students, as it is within an all-day transit area and within a quarter mile of both a bike sharing station as well as a car sharing station. In addition, it is steps away from the UW Madison campus, and near a plethora of retail and restaurant establishments.

Comprehensive and Neighborhood Plans

The Comprehensive Plan designated this site as Special Institutional (SI). The property is in the Campus Area Neighborhood (formerly the State-Langdon and South Campus Neighborhood Associations). There is not an applicable Campus Area Neighborhood Plan that applies to the property.

Conditional Use requests

As noted above, under the requested RMX zoning, conditional use approval would be required for the building height and a reduction in automobile parking stalls.

All portions of the proposed building would be below the Capitol View Preservation height of 1032.8' above sea level. A survey was recently conducted to measure adjacent existing building heights: the UW Grainger Hall tower peak is approximately 2' lower than the proposal building height and the parapet of the UW Chemistry building is approximately 3'-8" lower than the proposed building. We feel that the proposed building is appropriately scaled to the neighborhood and fits within the surrounding context.

The proposed automobile parking quantity of 128 is below the required 189 stalls. A vehicle reduction greater than 20 spaces and 25% or more of the required parking requires a conditional use. The project is at the heart of campus and the vast majority of the tenants will be UW students who would be walking or biking to nearby classes. The site is within close proximity to multiple bus stops including BRT route options. In addition, there are many options for bike and pedestrian travel, including established bike paths and routes. Furthermore, the project will be owned and managed by LZ Management, who owns and manages two student housing projects on the same block; Grand Central and X-01 have a combined 211 parking stalls, which have proven over the years to be more than adequate, and many of these are leased to non-students. If viewed cumulatively between all three buildings, the parking ratio would be .78 stalls per unit. Shared parking between all these buildings would be available.

Existing Structures and Proposed Deconstruction

The site is currently occupied by a 4-story, 50,513 SF office and shared living building. The building was constructed in 1952, with the University YMCA occupying the structure for many years, but has been the home for Porchlight for the past 21 years and has helped countless people by providing low-income housing and services.

The building is not on the National or State Register of Historic Places; however, there was a survey conducted in 2019 called the “Wisconsin Underrepresented Communities Historic Resource Survey Report” which highlighted 306 N. Brooks Street as the Women’s Center of the University YMCA from the 1970’s-1990’s and housing the Lesbian Switchboard beginning in 1974. Other possibly significant events in this building include the Teachers Assistance Association office. We would like to honor the history of this building by highlighting the cultural significance this property has with the Women’s Movement, Gay Liberation Movement, Teacher’s Assistance Association, and more recently, Porchlight. This would be done by creating a legacy history wall or exhibit, *in an interior common space of the building*, that visually shows this history in a creative and engaging way.

Although the building has positively impacted many lives, it has become outdated and obsolete and has become a financial and maintenance burden to its users. The facility has not seen significant updates for many years: it has its original windows, insulation, and mechanical systems and is very inefficient. In addition, the building does not have a fire sprinkler system, which is unsafe and no longer allowed for a building of this type. Therefore, it is our opinion that the that the standards for demolition can be met and a Re-use and Recycling Plan will be submitted prior to the deconstruction of the existing structure. This building would not be a good prospect for relocation.

Project Description:

The proposed development is a 15-story residential building with units ranging from studios to five-bedroom apartments.

The apartments are designed primarily for student housing. Adequate parking is provided on-site, with additional parking available by two neighboring projects also owned and managed for LZ Ventures. The proposed redevelopment will not be requesting residential parking permits.

The proposed building design is a contemporary interpretation of Art Deco styling. Drawing on imagery from that era of innovation and prosperity, this project echoes these ideals in both form and material. A massing scheme that reflects the zoning practices established in New York City a century ago has been utilized to maximize the building footprint at grade, while stepping back uniformly on the tower portion. This building form creates a desirable and engaging streetscape with the additional use of planters. We are accentuating the verticality of this building with the use of precast ornamental fins contrasting the darker void forms created by the windows and metal paneling. This speaks to the vertical forms of the neighboring building, Grand Central Apartments. The color selected for the masonry features align with the color palette of X01 Apartments, but with more classical detailing. The crown of this project invokes the use of gilded metal with more subtle, modern materials and detailing. The lighter color of the metal cladding lifts the top of this structure blending towards the sky and reflecting light, adding to the perceived brightness. In contrast, darker textured reveal metal panels have been included at the capital of the window banks to further empathize the vertical nature of the style.

Site Development Data:

Densities:

Gross Lot Area	34,269 sf or .79 acres
Dwelling Units	189 DU
Lot Area / D.U.	181 sf / Unit

Building Height	15 stories
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Lot Coverage	28,859 sf (84%)
Usable Open Space	N/A

Dwelling Unit Mix:

Studio	8
One Bedroom	14
Two Bedroom	56
Three Bedroom	74
Four Bedroom	29
<u>Five Bedroom</u>	<u>8</u>
Total Dwelling Units	189

Vehicle Parking:

Surface	11 stalls
<u>Underground</u>	<u>117 stalls</u>
Total	128 stalls

Bicycle Parking:

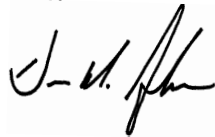
Garage	222 stalls
Surface	45 Stalls
<u>Surface – Guest</u>	<u>19 Stalls</u>
Total	286 stalls

Project Schedule:

It is anticipated that the construction will begin upon completion of the new Porchlight facility on East Washington Avenue. The anticipated start of construction is December 2025 with final completion in June of 2027 for occupancy in time for the 2027-2028 school year.

Thank you for your time reviewing our proposal.

Sincerely,



Duane Johnson, AIA, Partner