

When CoreSpaces returned to our neighborhood committee with a new plan for developing 126 Langdon, I was curious what adjustments they may have made, given that they received a lot of rather clear and sensible feedback that they spoke over or ignored the first time. Suffice it to say that they left with a wealthy fund of suggestions for doing things differently.

Upon seeing their new presentation, I see that they chose not to make an investment in the raw stock of lessons they had learned: they slightly re-arranged the still-too-bulky intrusion, piling things further back and ignoring such concerns as responsible and accountable onsite management, and the neighborhood's strong desire that they not include a swimming pool—anything like that was roundly ignored.

As such, I cannot ignore their past and current conduct in other towns, demonstrating that the bland indifference they have shown to our neighborhood committee is simply standard operating procedure with them. I do see fit to repeat my former findings, without modification. I openly brought these concerning items forward and, on the record, was dismissed without much comment.

What follows is the results of our investigation into the actual record and reputation of CoreSpaces in other communities. We uncovered serious causes for concern about the quality and integrity of this company, and find reason to doubt any promises or claims they might make.

We found that their willingness to get what they want over the protests and concerns of local citizens, their greatly distorted self-presentation, and the dysfunctional quality of their eventual product, however it ends up getting built, show that this is not a company with whom Madison should ever do business.

First, we need to consider the very bad behavior that we have witnessed recently and locally. They are on record as having promised to keep and maintain their first two madison projects, The James and Hub I, both of which were flipped in short order, have been a source of ongoing police contact, and have entered into a seemingly-unbreakable pattern of musical-chairs management changes.

Their counter-assertion that their initial strategy was to flip buildings to gain the capitol to enter into a phase of more permanent management simply serves to conceal the initial, and duly recorded falsehood they first uttered.

More recently, we have seen what appears to be either outright bribery or, perhaps the just-barely-legal cousin of it, with an offer to the Greek letter communities to receive financial advantages for their members to rent at the Hub, and the promise of “philanthropic donations” the the organizations itself. This should be legally scrutinized.

Even if this attempt at politically-useful incentivization manages to skirt the law, it is unethical and damaging—should college communities everywhere start to look at Fraternities and their charities as a means to facilitate pay-for-play political co-ordination?

Next, let's look at a couple of attempted coercion by CoreSpaces versus other towns.

Upon having a proposal rejected by the town of Amherst, New York Town Board, CoreSpace opened a lawsuit versus Amherst, according to the September 7th 2017 edition of the Buffalo News.

Is this the free market—is it even decency? It may well be that Madison has not seen CoreSpaces at their worst only because just now they think they will get what they want.

Just this year, according to the Lawrence Journal-World, CoreSpaces lost a similar lawsuit versus Lawrence, Massachusetts that attempted to force the town to accept a large development project it had rejected on the basis of being mis-fit to the historical district that CoreSpace had chosen for its proposal.

This proves that in three years, CoreSpaces has not chosen to rethink its relationship to coercion.

Corvallis, Oregon, in 2015, declined to permit CoreSpaces to build a Hub because the project, due to size, were deemed to be bad for the protected wetlands that had been sited for the project. Their codes, and the relationship to Wetlands protection appear to have saved them from a lawsuit.

Flagstaff, Arizona had a similar experience, minus a full lawsuit. CoreSpaces lawyers had found

a provision in the now-overturned development codes for Flagstaff for an area slated for renewal, that allowed them to by-pass concerns for the scale, parking affect, and aesthetic effect of their overs-zed project. There was ongoing organized protest by many community members, and the collective anger at the local administration that advocated for the project directly caused three city council seats to be overturned, and the then-existing laws to be reformed such that their experience with the forced-development of the Hub could not be repeated. Feeling about this issue remains so strong that the Friends of Flagstaff maintain a web-page specifically devoted to keeping this history visible. They willingly recontacted our committee in Madison by phone to answer all questions and actively encourage us in resisting the plans of CoreSpaces as best we can.

CoreSpaces has permanently entered the living history and cultural memory of Flagstaff.

The Hub built for the University of Kentucky in Lexington has been troubled by a lack of electricity, and by central air so inconsistent that the apartments could be baking in one room and freezing in another room, and with windows that substantially leaked during rain, all according to the November 11th 2019 Lexington Herald-Leader. It was further reported that the tenants had to spend well over a week constantly trying to contact the management to get anything done.

The Hub on Purdue in West Lafayette, Indiana, likewise was not ready for residents to move into, due to electrical and elevator issues, according to the West Lafayette Exponent, resulting in a class action lawsuit versus Core Spaces. In at least 4 cases, the fire department had to rescue people from stuck elevators. This is also the site where a local teenager fired a gun and injured a pair of residents as an intruder at the poolside.

The Hub in East Lansing, Michian, according to the East Lansing Info, also experienced elevator shut-downs and excessive dust problems, with CoreSpaces being confronted on this issue befo the city council in 2019. The chief building inspector stated that he regretted having declared the building ready to open.

The Hub in Tuscaloosa, Alabama also faced a class-action lawsuit in 2018 for false advertising, flooding, exposure of raw sewage and mold issues according to the ABC news affiliate there, and as repeated by the Exponent.

On what becomes a more minor note in comparison, Tempe Arizona, and Tuscon Arizona have all experienced ongoing complaints with residents throwing bottles off their balconies, even with Cameras installed, according to the Arizona Daily Star. This problem was so serious that the Fire Department in Tempe required a police escort to go to that Hub. Especially with the proposed swimming pool, this raises serious concerns about the actual quality of both initial screening, and ongoing management in comparison to the glowing promises that CoreSpace has made. This, in itself, should raise red flags, despite the yet-more alarming issues raised above.

According to the South Columbia, North Carolina newspaper the State, the Hub there has increased parking difficulties, in contrast to the optimistic picture for Langdon Street expressed by CoreSpaces. In light of the above, quite serious problems that have had to be independently discovered, this becomes a matter of greater-than-apparent concern, as must any claim made by CoreSpaces regarding any concern expressed and dismissed.

If they would just possibly sue us, and if they cannot be bothered to properly open and manage their buildings why would they not lie to us about parking?

Finally, we need to consider their ostensible award-winning reputation: Their “top-5” award, taken to the wen, proves to be a report paid for by CoreSpaces by a publicity firm that has fluffed up some internet meta-dats, and their other encomia are from a laudatory article in a small-circulation industry journal that does not publish any negative or exploratory articles. Given their history of failure and legal coercion, what actual award committee would dilute that award by delivering it to such a recipient? By itself, this is the least complaint to be made—but it serves to highlight that none of their failures are honest failures, including any eventual clean-up. The paste-over is of more concern.

In summary, this is not a company that Madison should consent to doing any kind of business

with.

From: [Jane Ripp](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: 126 Langdon Street
Date: Monday, March 8, 2021 5:21:29 PM

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I strongly suggest and hope that this proposed dense housing project for 126 Langdon Street not be constructed at a huge scale that is basically out of character with this residential area that also contains historical structures.

Delta Delta Delta was founded at the University of Wisconsin in 1898, we have called 120 Langdon Street our chapter house and home since the early 1920's. We purchased from the family the Moseley Mansion, as in the Mosley book store on the capital square. In 1925 renovations were designed by well known Madison architect, Frank Riley. As sisters, we love this house.

The 1960's were not kind to this historic neighborhood and we endured the Victorian homes on each side of our property being torn down, one being replaced with a moderate sized housing unit. On the 126 Langdon property an office building that would hold the Department of Public Instruction. It was a big, blank building with no character. Decades later when the building was vacated as an office building, it was converted to student housing. Our problems began for Tri Delta, with only the width of two driveways separating the two building.

More people were added to a dense area, more cars, more garbage, more noise, more pranks against our historic home.

Our property at 120 Langdon has only ten parking spaces. If this new building proposes 373 beds and only 20 parking spaces, this is very out of balance and may very well make our spaces look inviting. We have two street spaces in front of our house and street parking is habitually tight. If there is a function at the house our alumnae that join with the collegiate chapter already find parking nearly impossible.

Additionally to have a seven floor structure with a three story building on each side of it is very unappealing- with rooftop features of hot tubs, etc hanging over each of us.

As pledges, collegiate, and alumnae members we take great pride in our historic sorority house at 120 Langdon Street. Please help the street remain as in scale and historic as possible. Please do not repeat the mistake that was made with the building that was torn down. One structural mistake is enough.

Give the street a structure that is an enhancement to the neighborhood, not another dense high rise. Please, don't repeat the mistake.

Jane C Ripp,
Alumna member of Mu Chapter of
Delta Delta Delta
UW, Class of 1975

Sent from my iPhone