



City of Madison

Minutes - Draft

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Economic Development Committee Subcommittee on Downtown Plan

February 1, 2012

5:00 pm

Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Room LL130

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Zimmerman at 5:02 pm.

Present: Alfred Zimmerman, Ed Clarke, Alder Mark Clear, Sandra Torkildson. Julia Stone arrived at 5:07 pm..

Also attending: Peggy Yessa, Matthew Mikolajewski, Office of Business Resources; Brad Murphy, Bill Fruhling, Planning Division; Ken Opin, member of Economic Development Commission; Aaron Oliver, Economic Development Division; Steve Cover, Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Torkildson, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2012 meeting.

The motion passed by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

Mr. Clarke said he is DMI Board President and has worked with DMI for 2 or 3 years on the Downtown Plan. He has no financial interest in the Downtown.

DISCUSSION ITEM

2. #24468: A Resolution Adopting the Downtown Plan as a Supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 4.1. There were no changes suggested to it.

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 4.11.

Alder Clear asked where are the key sites for redevelopment located in the First Settlement Neighborhood?

Julia Stone arrived at 5:07 pm.

ROLL CALL @ 5:07 pm.

Present: Alfred Zimmerman, Ed Clarke, Alder Mark Clear, Sandra Torkildson, Julia Stone

Mr. Fruhling said they are located:

- Along Main Street
- The reservoir on Wilson Street
- The Brayton parking lot.

There were no changes suggested to Objective 4.11.

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 4.12.

Alder Clear said this recommendation does not say much. He asked who owns most of the property in this area?

Mr. Murphy said the University owns almost all of it except for some properties along the 700 block of the State Street Mall.

There were no changes suggested to Objective 4.12.

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 4.13. He said this is important to discuss.

Mr. Clarke referred to page 2, item 6 of his handout. This is a broad statement of the objective with recommendations 66, 67, 68, and 69 having greater specificity.

He also referred to the suggested rewrite of Objective 4.3 submitted by Downtown Madison Incorporated (DMI).

Alder Clear and Mr. Clarke said the two versions of Objective 4.3 are not in conflict.

Ms. Stone asked for an overview of the Mifflin area alternatives.

Ms. Torkildson said the difference is keeping the Mifflin area as it is today or changing it to allow for multi-use, not just residential uses.

Ms. Stone asked what Downtown districts are predominately residential now?

Mr. Murphy listed the following as primarily residential neighborhoods:

- First Settlement
- James Madison
- Langdon
- Mansion Hill
- Mifflin

He continued to explain the land use perspective of the Mifflin area staying a residential district and determine the scale of redevelopment and the amount of density.

Mr. Murphy reviewed the Mifflin plan included in the report and the alternative Mifflin plan in the draft report transmittal letter.

The DMI proposal suggests buildings up to 12 stories in height. He said the Metropolitan Place building is 15 stories tall.

Mr. Clarke said at the last subcommittee meeting the needs of retailers were discussed. Greater density is needed to drive the development of more retail uses in the Downtown.

Ms. Torkildson said land values are high and building taller buildings can make rents more affordable.

Ken Opin, EDC member, mentioned a book by Harvard Professor Ed Glaser, in which he stresses higher density as more environmentally friendly, and brings more people to the streetscape, and promotes more density resulting in cheaper rents per square foot.

Chairperson Zimmerman said more people are needed to share a multi-use area.

Ms. Torkildson said there was pushback when higher buildings were proposed. This area is already higher density and if not continued as such, where will development occur and not create urban sprawl?

Mr. Opin added that years ago there was a lot of discussion on creating a greenbelt around Madison. It did not go anywhere and now it is no longer possible to create one. It is difficult to know where one city ends and another begins.

Ms. Stone has the following concerns:

- Does higher density create vertical, gated communities?
- Density does not always equate to building height, how to make more density?

- She thinks student housing will be built in the Mifflin area.

Ms. Torkildson said she is on the UW Housing Committee and they say there is enough housing for students. She sees this area as workforce housing.

Ms. Stone asked who could afford it?

Mr. Clarke said the market now is for rentals not condos.

Alder Clear said the area could turn into student housing. The task is to create a vision and objectives to keep it going.

Mr. Opin said when project applications come into the Planning Department it is obvious what the intended market is. The City can specify the type of development.

Ms. Stone likes the vision but struggles with the reality of it.

Mr. Clarke said to look at the proposals for the East Washington properties submitted by the Rifkin Group. Their use is obvious.

Ms. Stone said her experience is there are no month-to-month leases available. People are willing to commute 20 minutes for cheaper housing outside of the Downtown area.

Ms. Torkildson said it is a market driven society. If student housing is maxed out the market will adjust.

Ms. Stone said 10 stories are not needed to attract non-students.

Chairman Zimmerman said mixed uses create dynamics, different venues and new enclaves of interaction.

Ms. Stone asked if the DMI Plan has proposed building heights?

Alder Clear said this is about not telling the market what to do on the first floors of a high rise building.

Ms. Stone is trying to determine the significance of mixed use in the Mifflin area.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Alder Clear, to change Objective 4.3 to the proposed language submitted by DMI.

Mr. Clarke and Alder Clear agreed to a friendly amendment to delete the last sentence.

Objective 4.3 would read:

The Mifflin District is an area that offers the opportunity for significant growth in downtown Madison. Because of its proximity to UW-Madison, State Street, government, and cultural amenities, it can evolve into a multi-use district that consists of residential and commercial/employment uses that allow for a dense, dynamic, urban district.

Chairperson Zimmerman likes the last sentence. He suggested adding the following text: " accompanied with this the plan should incorporate a marketing plan. "

Alder Clear asked if this would be a BUILD plan like on East Washington Avenue?

Mr. Murphy explained the E Washington BUILD plan was funded by a County program no longer in existence. It is really a special area plan with specific land uses.

Mr. Olver said the Capitol East District has the following items:

- A plan
- TIF District # 36 in place
- Staff and consultants working together on implementation
- City-owned land bank property to spur development

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if a special area plan would create an area like Georgetown with housing, offices and joggers?

Mr. Clarke said it is a good suggestion but not to be included in the objective.

Ms. Stone does not agree with the mixed use. She would like the area to be predominately residential with mid-height buildings.

Alder Clear said there is more opportunity for economic development if mixed-use and higher density. He would like to add a recommendation calling for a special area plan.

Chairperson Zimmerman called a vote on the motion:

Aye: Alder Clear, Chairperson Zimmerman, Mr. Clarke Ms. Torkildson

Nay: Ms Stone

The motion passed.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked to continue discussion on the Mifflin recommendations.

A motion was made by Alder Clear, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to replace recommendation 66 with the following:

Develop a special area plan to provide more detail on the types of development and economic opportunities for the Mifflin district.

A friendly amendment by Chairperson Zimmerman to add 'Including a marketing plan.' was accepted by Alder Clear and Mr. Clarke.

Alder Clear said this would most likely be a neighborhood plan with more details than the Downtown Plan. He said there are special area plans for the following areas:

- Capitol East District
- Union Corners
- Wingra Creek.

These were driven by the City not the neighborhoods.

Mr. Murphy said these vary in purpose, shape and size to identify the needs of a specific area.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if they include a marketing plan?

Mr. Murphy said they could.

Alder Clear said the current recommendation maintains today's character of the area.

Chairperson Zimmerman called the question.

Aye; Mr. Clarke, Ms. Torkildson, Alder Clear, Chairperson Zimmerman

Nay: none

Abstain: Ms. Stone

The motion passed.

Chairperson Zimmerman called for comments on Recommendation 68.

A motion was made by Ms. Stone, seconded by Ms. Torkildson, to delete Recommendation 68.

Mr. Opin asked if this makes it harder to get rid of backyard parking?

Alder Clear said this might permit larger developments.

Ms. Stone said garages and yards are less dense uses of land.

Mr. Cover suggested changing it to "Investigate the potential of mid-block access."

Ms. Stone withdrew her motion.

A motion was made by Ms. Stone, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to replace recommendation 68 with:

Establish this area as pedestrian friendly.

Chairperson Zimmerman called the question.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Chairperson Zimmerman, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to delete recommendation 69.

Chairperson Zimmerman said a new plan may call for something different.

Mr. Clarke said the market will say what happens first.

Chairperson Zimmerman said how do we prioritize development?

Mr. Murphy said the Bassett Neighborhood TIF was very successful.

Chairperson Zimmerman made a friendly amendment to keep the recommendation and change prioritize to encourage.

The friendly amendment was accepted by Chairperson Zimmerman.

Recommendation 69 would read:

Encourage the redevelopment of 1960s era “zero lot line” residential uses.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Alder Clear left the meeting at 6:10 pm.

ROLL CALL @ 6:10 pm.

Present: Alfred Zimmerman, Julia Stone, Ed Clarke, Sandra Torkildson

Excused: Alder Mark Clear

Chairperson Zimmerman asked for any discussion on the following Objectives:

- 5.1
- 5.2
- 5.3
- 5.4
- 5.5
- 5.6
- 5.7

The subcommittee members had no changes to these objectives.

Chairperson Zimmerman called for discussion of Key 6 and Objective 6.1.

Mr. Clarke said he read the recommendations of the Transportation and Parking Committee and they suggested waiting for the Transportation Master Plan to be completed.

Mr. Cover said the Transportation Master Plan will have suggestions for the Downtown area.

Chairperson Zimmerman said the objectives in Key 6 seemed high level.

The subcommittee had no changes to Objectives 6.1 and 6.2.

Mr. Clarke asked for an explanation of the term “complete streets”.

Mr. Murphy said complete streets provide amenities for all modes of travel, including lighting and landscaping.

The Subcommittee had no changes to Objective 6.3.

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 6.4.

A motion was made by Ms. Torkildson, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to delete the word “motor” from the objective.

Ms. Torkildson withdrew her motion.

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 6.5

A motion was made by Ms. Torkildson, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to change Objective 6.5 to:

Improve and expand bicycle facilities through the creation and enhancement of bike routes, paths, parking and amenities as described in the Platinum Bicycle Committee report and the Bicycle transportation Plan for Madison Urban Area and Dane County.

The motion passed by voice vote.

The subcommittee had no changes to Objectives 6.6 and 6.7.

Chairperson Zimmerman read Objective 6.8.

Mr. Clarke noted that Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans cost the developers money. Has there been any pushback from developers on this?

Mr. Murphy said yes, there is some reluctance and this is not well received.

Ms. Stone said it seems like a natural extension for a business to do these to provide transportation for their employees.

Mr. Clarke asked if Recommendation 156 calls for a TDM as a requirement?

Mr. Murphy said currently the zoning code calls for TDMs. It is already in the Ordinances and Recommendation 156 needs to define “major”.

Chairperson Zimmerman said a TDM helps employers to get people to rideshare.

The subcommittee had no changes to Objectives 6.8 and 6.9.

Ms. Torkildson left the meeting at 6:30 pm. A quorum was still present.

ROLL Call @ 6:30

Present: Chairperson Zimmerman, Ed Clarke, Julia Stone

Excused: Alder Clear, Sandra Torkildson

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to change the word “Preserve” to “Encourage” in Objective 7.1.

Mr. Clarke questioned if a historic building is a landmark?

Mr. Fruhling said the recommendations provide specific definitions.

Mr. Opin is against the motion and said historic buildings contribute to the character of an area.

Ms. Torkildson returned at 6:33 pm.

ROLL Call @ 6:33

Present: Chairperson Zimmerman, Ed Clarke, Julia Stone, Sandra Torkildson

Excused: Alder Clear

Mr. Clarke said the word preserve is too strong.

Mr. Opin said to look at the entire sentence and the words essential character.

Mr. Clarke would like to clear up the ambiguity.

Mr. Clarke withdrew the motion.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked for comments on Objective 7.2.

Ms. Stone asked if this says the City will provide the incentives for preservation?

Mr. Fruhling explained if a property is listed on the National Registry it is eligible for tax credits. This is a carrot instead of a stick for preserving historic properties. The City has no regulatory authority for federal tax credits.

Ms. Stone said this provides awareness of the tax credits.

There were no changes suggested to Objective 7.2.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked for discussion on Objective 7.3.

Ms. Torkildson said some flatiron buildings are not worth saving. This is too broad and she asked how to deal with buildings in poor repair?

Chairperson Zimmerman noted the objective as worded uses "building forms".

Mr. Murphy said the building must extend to the corner to retain the flatiron building form.

Ms. Torkildson gave the Peace Park redevelopment as an example of a corner property that must be rebuilt as is.

Ms. Stone asked if there is a process to allow for an exception to this requirement?

The subcommittee did not have any changes to Objective 7.3.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if there were any changes suggested for Objective 8.1?

There were none.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if there were any changes suggested for Objective 8.2?

Ms. Stone said art is important for attracting the type of workers we want in the Downtown.

There were no changes to Objective. 8.2.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if there were any changes suggested for Objective 8.3?

There were none.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if there were any changes suggested for Objective 9.1?

There were none.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if there were any changes for the recommendations?

Ms. Stone said on page 74 she would like a free ride zone to encourage people not to drive in the Downtown.

A motion was made by Ms. Stone, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to add the following sentence at after the existing text to Recommendation 123:

"Look closely at providing a free ride zone to the circulator transit system to see if it is economically feasible."

Ms. Torkildson commented we had separate buses for this in the past.

Chairperson Zimmerman likes this concept and says Austin has special free buses in their Downtown.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Ms. Stone said on page 81 she would like to add a new recommendation.

A motion was made by Ms. Stone, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to add the following new recommendation on page 81:

Consider potential sites for close park-n-ride options. Ones that either do not require a transfer to get downtown or may have an express bus option.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Chairperson Zimmerman, seconded by Ms. Torkildson, to add the following new recommendation on page 81:

Consider the economic feasibility of opening parking lots and ramps for free parking on Friday nights and all day Saturday and Sunday.

Ms. Stone asked if the City makes money from parking revenue? We are lacking information in this section.

Mr. Clarke suggested the word "experiment" instead of "consider".

Ms. Torkildson said as a retailer she likes the concept of free parking for her customers. At one time there was free parking Downtown on Sundays. The goal is to get parking underground and this is a higher goal than free parking.

The motion was withdrawn by Chairperson Zimmerman.

Mr. Clarke noted he would not be able to attend the EDC meeting on Feb. 15th. He asked the subcommittee to finish their work tonight.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to add a new recommendation to page 31 as follows:

Support retention, expansion and recruitment of retail businesses that combine distinctiveness, a track record, and are best positioned for success in downtown markets of our size.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Torkildson to add a new recommendation on page 31:

Recognizing that food, entertainment, arts & culture and visitor destinations are the new retail anchors, foster strategic growth in innovative entertainment and "experience" offerings to develop downtown as an experience destination, particularly for young professionals and baby boomers.

Chairperson Zimmerman made a friendly amendment to include young families at the end of the recommendation.

Mr. Clarke accepted the friendly amendment.

Ms. Stone said this is a micro-detail and she struggles with balance in this motion.

Mr. Clarke said the BID's discussions of retail was not fully discussed and Downtown food establishments need recognition also.

Ms. Torkildson said Downtown retail is different than at the malls. A footprint for large retailers does not exist Downtown.

A friendly amendment was made by Chairperson Zimmerman and accepted by Mr. Clarke, to change the motion to read:

Recognizing the new retail anchors, foster strategic growth in innovative entertainment and “experience” offerings and shopping to develop downtown as an experience destination.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to change Recommendation 23 to read as follows:

Provide more convenient access to retail goods and services through business clustering and placement strategies to build critical mass of contiguous retail, encourage cross-shopping opportunities, avoid potential commercial conflicts, and reduce business turnover.

Mr. Clarke noted retail follows the market and not to put it in specific spots.

Ms. Stone asked if this is the core of city planning?

Mr. Clarke said the retail places on the map do not make sense.

Ms. Torkildson said retail does need to be concentrated.

Mr. Olver referred to the map on page 40 showing two existing nodes.

Chairperson Zimmerman said the density is not high enough to support the retail. We should not limit where retail goes.

Mr. Clarke referred to item 1.d on his handout.

Mr. Fruhling said the Downtown Coordinating Committee changed their mind on Recommendation 26 which talks about the map on page 40.

Ms. Torkildson said there is a difference between forcing and encouraging commercial locations.

A friendly amendment was made by Ms. Torkildson to change the word “Provide” to “Encourage”. The friendly amendment was accepted by Mr. Clarke. The motion reads:

Encourage more convenient access to retail goods and services through business clustering and placement strategies to build critical mass of contiguous retail, encourage cross-shopping opportunities, avoid potential commercial conflicts, and reduce business turnover.

Julia Stone left the meeting at 7:25 pm.

ROLL CALL @ 7:25 pm:

Present: Chairperson Zimmerman, Ed Clarke, Ms. Torkildson

Absent: Alder Clear, Julia Stone

A quorum is still present.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Ms. Torkildson, to change recommendation 24 to read:

Identify and support development of locations potentially suitable for retail uses requiring relatively large floor areas (7,000 to 10,000 SF) which could attract additional types of Downtown shopping opportunities including destination retail.

Ms. Torkildson said bookstore data from the Independent Bookstore Owners says bookstores need 6-10,000 SF to be profitable.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to delete recommendation 41 on page 39.

Mr. Fruhling said this was also discussed at the Downtown Coordinating Committee and they now support it.

Mr. Clarke withdrew his motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke to call for a BUILD study on West Washington Avenue.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked for a friendly amendment to focus the BUILD study on impacts of a Grand Boulevard Concept.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to change Recommendation 48 to read:

Incorporate both sides of West Washington Avenue into a Mifflin special area study and consider creation of a boulevard on West Washington Avenue.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Mr. Zimmerman, to eliminate Recommendation 70 on page 53.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked if proposed changes to a building in a neighborhood conservation district are denied, is there recourse?

Mr. Murphy said neighborhood conservation districts can take different forms, they are not a preservation district. Conservation districts contain elements such as setbacks and spaces between buildings.

Mr. Fruhling added conservation districts are allowed to be created by the current zoning code and none exist today.

Ms. Torkildson said consider is not a strong verb and not a problem.

Chairperson Zimmerman said his problem is with conserving "as is".

The motion passed by voice vote.

Ms. Torkildson asked about recommendation 59 on page 49. Does this mean the Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Madison will be expanded?

Mr. Murphy said, yes, these guidelines currently apply to the C4 zoning district and were produced in the 1980's.

Ms. Torkildson expressed caution about the term "guidelines".

Chairperson Zimmerman asked why these are in the Zoning Code?

Mr. Murphy said these could be the standards in the Zoning Code. They guide review of projects and provide directions to the reviewers and add additional predictability.

Ms. Torkildson said the guidelines stifle creativity and owners are afraid to change signage. How can the guidelines allow for creativity?

Mr. Murphy said the guidelines are for the C4 district. This might change with the new zoning districts.

Mr. Clarke would like to allow for creativity and flexibility in updating the guidelines.

Mr. Murphy said new developments shall comply with the code.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to change Recommendation 59 on page 49 to read:

Update the Urban Design Guidelines for Downtown Madison that currently apply to portions of the Downtown Core to encourage creativity and flexibility and architectural quality and incorporate them into the Zoning Ordinance.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Chairperson Zimmerman, seconded by Mr. Clarke, to change Recommendation 61 on page 49 to read:

Preserve “triangle (flatiron) blocks” at the corners of Capitol Square including flat-iron building forms for smaller-scale, active urban uses, such as entertainment, restaurants, shopping and cultural activities.

Chairperson Zimmerman said this would keep the blocks and forms.

Mr. Clarke said it preserves the form.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Chairperson Zimmerman, seconded by Ms. Torkildson, to change recommendation 62 on page 49 to read:

Preserve and rehabilitate landmarks.

Mr. Clarke said there would be no more potential landmarks.

Ms. Stone said to look at Recommendation 161.

The motion passed by voice vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Clarke, seconded by Chairperson Zimmerman, to change Recommendation 160 on page 92 to read:

Consider establishing local Historic Districts as identified and as described in this Downtown Plan.

The motion passed by voice vote.

Mr. Clarke said to look at page 6 Guiding Principles. There are no Economic Development principles and this should be discussed at the EDC meeting.

Chairperson Zimmerman asked for a staff meeting to discuss how he can present the work of the EDC Subcommittee to the EDC on February 15th.

**A motion was made by Chairperson Zimmerman, seconded by Ms. Torkildson to adjourn.
The motion passed by voice vote.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 PM.