

# CAPITOL

NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.  
MADISON, WISCONSIN

November 3, 2017

Janine Glaeser  
Planning Unit  
City of Madison

Re: 122 State St. Hotel Proposal – UDC meeting November 8, 2017

Dear Ms. Glaeser,

A Capitol Neighborhoods steering committee has met several times with the development team for the proposed hotel at 122 State St. These meetings have been informative and productive. The proposal has evolved positively over this time though there remain some issues which the steering committee would like to bring to the attention of the members of the Urban Design Commission.

### Request for Height in Excess of the Limit in the Downtown Plan

The applicant is requesting a change to allow for a 9 story building along N. Carroll St. in an area currently zoned for 6 stories. This 6 story zoned area runs the length of both sides of State St. stepped back from the 4 story height limit along State St.

There are differences of opinion among steering committee members with regards to the compatibility of a 9 story building in this location with the surrounding area. While some feel that the Concourse Hotel and 30 on The Square buildings provide a backdrop for this height others feel that this height is inappropriate adjacent to the landmark building on the corner at the Square. Concern has also been expressed with how the proposed 9 stories loom over the two story building at the corner of State and Dayton at the other triangle corner of this block. (Image on page 42 of the *Dayton Carroll Hotel Project* booklet.)

A larger concern is the precedent that approval of this proposal will set for future applications in the downtown and particularly along State St. The applicant has suggested that this site is so unique that it could not serve as a precedent. We have not found their argument to be persuasive.

There are other similar thru block conditions all along State St. that could just as easily make a request for greater height. Some of these have taller buildings beyond the 6 story zone and many have zoning for greater height adjacent to the 6 story zone.

The committee notes with interest that in their *Dayton Carroll Hotel Project* booklet the applicant titles one section Relevant Precedents. (p. 50) The applicant clearly feels that precedent is an appropriate consideration in considering their request for additional height. The buildings shown are all several blocks away and were constructed decades prior to the current zoning adopted from the more recent Downtown Plan. If these older buildings are a precedent for their request now, how could their new building not be a precedent for future applications along State St?

The current height limits were intentionally created to maintain the ambiance along State St. The intent is to allow for new development that will enhance the urban environment while maintaining the connection between the Capitol and the University. Alterations to the existing allowed heights should not be taken casually.

Carroll St. cul-du-sac: Cars, Trucks, Congestion:

The Carroll St. cul-du-sac currently has 8 perpendicular parking stalls along the site frontage, serves the loading area of the Concourse Hotel, the alley behind Mifflin St. properties on the square and businesses on the 100 block of State St.

The applicant proposes to remove the 8 parking stalls and make the entire frontage a loading zone and a driveway to their loading dock. The applicant has stated that no changes are being requested for the metered spaces along Dayton St.

There are concerns about how the valet parking program will work. There is no off street parking available at this site unlike the recently opened AC Hotel which has onsite valet parking and an off street loading area. The applicant advised the committee that they would be able to park 6 cars along Carroll St. though Plan Sheet C301 indicates only 2 cars will fit without blocking either the pedestrian crosswalk or the loading dock entry. Cars are also shown along the Dayton St. entry though this is currently metered parking. Taxis would also be vying for this limited space.

The loading dock is designed to accommodate up to a 30' truck. The Truck Turn Exhibit. Plan Sheet C103, requires the full drop off zone to be able to back into the loading dock. So no cars or taxis could be along the curb if the truck is going to be able to access the loading dock. The exit path requires the full east side of the cul-du-sac. This side is currently posted no parking but is regularly used by delivery vehicles servicing surrounding businesses. If the access to the loading dock is not functional, the city has found trucks will not use it and this will add to the congestion.

Many deliveries are made with vehicles much longer than 30'so where this would occur remains unknown. Garbage trucks would not use the loading dock. Trash receptacles would be rolled out to the street. The truck would apparently be using the drop off zone or double parking.

Congestion already occurs on this block and the new proposal will add significantly to that. This compounded congestion does not enliven the street in a positive manner.

Other Items:

The plans, C200, indicate that the 4 trees along the property on State St. will be protected and remain. The committee appreciates this and suggests that detailed tree protection plans be incorporated into the approval documents. On Carroll St. the two large trees are noted for removal. One occurs at the loading dock drive. The second tree does not appear to be impacted by the new construction. The neighborhood places a very high priority on maintaining the urban tree canopy. Removing a tree simply for ease of construction is not an acceptable proposition. No information is provided with regard to installation of a new tree to replace the one removed on Carroll St.

The 5<sup>th</sup> floor outdoor terrace is accessible only from the 4 adjoining guest rooms. No information is provided on how this space will be configured or used. The current plans suggest that a guest would be able to walk to the edge where direct interactions with pedestrians would be possible which is not a desirable feature.

As part of this approval consideration should be given to revoking the current air rights easement for the walkway connection to the public parking ramp across Dayton St.

Thank you for your consideration.

Capitol Neighborhood Steering Committee

Samantha Haack – co chair

Peter Ostlind – co chair

Maria Milsted

Dan Milsted

Samantha Negrin

Fred Mohs

Tim Kamps

Tim Harrington

John Palmer

Karla Stoebig

Franny Ingebritson

Peggy LeMahieu

## Glaeser, Janine

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**From:** Michelle Jolly <[REDACTED]@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 08, 2017 8:32 AM  
**To:** Glaeser, Janine  
**Subject:** Proposed Hotel - 100 block of State St

Hi Janine,

I attended the public meeting about the hotel last night and wanted to give you a couple comments for UDC tonight.

First the revisions they made are a great improvement. Not sure why they didn't do that the first time. Sounds like a nice addition to the top of State St and much improved building for 122 State.

I'm still concerned about the height. I like that it gives another rooftop venue for residents of Madison and understand they want to be higher to have a better view of the Capitol. It's a shame the 30 on the Square bldg was built so high. Crazy idea here, but wondering if the top mechanical partial floors on top of that building can be integrated into the rest of the building on the top floor. I'm sure anything can be done, depending how much you want to spend. Maybe if the city offers to take those off then having the new building one floor lower would be a ok deal for them.

Also on the height issue. Why did we set the limit of 6 stories if we aren't going to adhere to it? Seems like a waste of time that people spent all that time on zoning.

I'm also not sold on the reasoning that every new building site is unique and each future one is judged individually. Sounds like it's judged by the surrounding buildings, so if this goes up 9 stories that raises the height around other buildings around it so they have the ok to go that high. It's about the buildings around any proposed building, not the specific site or we could say now, nothing over 6 stories and stick to it.

Thanks, Michelle

**Glaeser, Janine**

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**From:** William Morgan [REDACTED]@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 08, 2017 9:09 AM  
**To:** Glaeser, Janine  
**Subject:** Proposed Hotel Development 118-122 State St

Dear Ms. Glaeser:

I attended the presentation on the proposed hotel development of 118-122 State Street last evening.

Although I think that the proposed design for the hotel looks ok, I am strongly opposed to granting a height variance for the project and do not think that the hotel should exceed the current regulations for the area of six stories. As proposed, the hotel would be too tall for the site and would set a precedent for future tall buildings in the area.

Sincerely,

William Morgan  
[REDACTED] W. Mifflin St Unit [REDACTED]

## Glaeser, Janine

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**From:** Michael Herring <casadeherring@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 08, 2017 9:44 AM  
**To:** Glaeser, Janine  
**Subject:** Urban Design Commission (UDC) mtg - September 8, 2017

Janine: I would like the following entered into the record, for tonight's UDC meeting:

RE: ID 46482 (UDC) and 49166 (Plan Commission), a proposal to demolish an existing 6-story commercial building and construct a 9-story, 110-120 room hotel, with first floor restaurant/tavern and rooftop lounge, at 118-122 State Street:

----My wife and I reside at [REDACTED] W. Main, [REDACTED], Madison - 53703, having purchased our condo 4 years ago and moved here, full-time, approx. 1.5 years ago. Our first visit to Madison was on vacation and we stayed at a downtown hotel;

----I am a retired City Administrator/City Manager, with 39 years of experience in 4 different communities, in different parts of the country;

----Most recently, I managed a suburb in Western St. Louis County (Missouri) which, during my 28-year tenure, grew from approx. 27,000 people to approx. 50,000 people;

----Our investment in downtown Madison and subsequent move, following my retirement, was prompted by the BEAUTY that we saw and the VIBRANCY that we perceived throughout the downtown area. We have not been disappointed in our decision and are excited by the continued interest of those who wish to invest in our community. Madison is definitely on an upward trajectory!

----My wife and I, as well as many of our friends and neighbors, **fully-support the above-referenced proposal**. This proposed development will, in our opinion, greatly enhance an otherwise unsightly and non-distinctive area, bordering on State, Dayton and Carroll;

----In my role as City Administrator/Manager, I supervised Planning Departments of various sizes and actively participated in Staff review of development proposals;

----In my personal/professional opinion, this project should be endorsed by the UDC, for a variety of reasons:

1. This proposed hotel will support/encourage the growing tourism, office and convention aspects of our local economy. People are coming to Madison, in increasing numbers, to recreate, to conduct business in downtown office buildings and/or to attend regional conventions. This proposed hotel, with its track record of customer service, will enable every visitor to experience Madison in a positive way.....positive experiences, like our own, likely lead to repeat visits and, possibly, a permanent move to Madison. The demand for additional hotel rooms has been quantified by the development team.

2. This project will enhance our property values, will provide additional revenue to the City, in the form of property taxes, sales taxes and room taxes and will greatly support businesses located throughout downtown and, in particular, to those in close proximity. Providing an economic boost to surrounding businesses is critically important, especially in this block of State St.;

3. As currently designed, this project will provide VISUAL and VERTICAL ARTICULATION.....not a monolithic structure.....creating visual and vertical interest, from all directions. The proposal is not to add height, just for height's sake. It is incredibly attractive

and will greatly ADD to the downtown skyline. Additionally, the views from the rooftop will create yet another CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/DMI/VCB moment, for all visitors, much like the AC-Marriott, just off the Square, to the east;

4. The proposal would retain the building at 118 State and the Michaelangelo's coffee house, on Carroll, effectively framing both with the new development. In so doing, both buildings would POP, from a visual perspective, while currently both buildings are virtually unnoticed;

5. Like the PRESSMAN development (ULI), in the flatiron block of S. Carroll and S. Hamilton, which was granted the ability to exceed the current 6-story height limitation, this project will extend, in a very appropriate manner, the growth/excitement of the Capitol Square to areas in close proximity, which, from a planning/development perspective, just makes sense.

6. There is NO PRECEDENT set by the review/approval of this proposal for this site, since, if approved, the zoning would be unique to it. The argument of PRECEDENT-SETTING ignores the function/role of the UDC, Planning Commission and Board of Aldermen in considering every project on its unique merits.

7. Madison is in the middle of a tremendous BOOM and I am told that upwards of 7500 people now live in downtown. Just since we've owned our condo, at least 5 different apartment developments have been built (several more are under construction) and are now occupied with residents, MANY OF WHOM are new to downtown. On a recent visit to EPIC, I learned that fully 60% of its employees live in downtown. Even though they work miles away, they are attracted to the convenience of downtown living and the vibrancy that they, too, perceive. As my wife and I can attest, downtown's new residents, in particular, are excited by positive change and enhancements, like those offered by this proposal.

Thank you, again, for the time and consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, either in response to this email, or by phone, at [REDACTED]. I would appreciate your acknowledging receipt of this email. TY! Mike Herring, [REDACTED] W. Main, [REDACTED], Madison, 53703

## Glaeser, Janine

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**From:** T Harrington John <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 08, 2017 9:59 AM  
**To:** Glaeser, Janine  
**Subject:** State Street Hotel Project

Dear Ms. Glaeser:

At last night's neighbors meeting, you were identified as the person we should submit comments to prior to the Urban Design Committee meeting tonight.

Please include the following:

I am a life-long Madisonian who moved downtown post-retirement, a resident of Ovation 309 off upper State Street for over 2 years, and a steering committee member for both the State St Hotel and Madison College site projects. These committees are divided between a small group of long term residents who have negative opinions about these projects and a group of newer residents who support re-vitalization of upper State Street similar to what has happened in other areas around the Square. The negative report submitted last week by the steering committee chair did not reflect my views, those of other committee members, or of those of many other neighbors expressed last evening.

First, the process for gathering neighborhood input is not reflecting the views of many newer and younger downtown residents. The same small group of activists control the steering committees, and others' views are not being welcomed.

One group views State Street as an iconic area of Madison to be preserved by opposing change and new development. The other sees lots of decay and failing businesses, brings experiences from other more vital downtowns, and views new responsible development as critical opportunities for saving State Street and supporting business and neighborhood growth and contemporary lifestyles.

The opposition to the State Street Hotel has become focused on the requested variance from the six floor height zoning at the back of the block on the Dayton-Carroll St. corner. Many of us view the rooftop food and beverage facilities as a neighborhood asset, like the AC Hotel has become across the Square and the top of Ovation provides for residents and the community. Limiting the Hotel to 6 floors would negate this advantage. The downtown plan has provisions for considering individual site variances, and in fact a variance was granted for the Pressman Apartments in the South Hamilton-Carroll St. block already, as I understand. So there is precedent for doing this when the merits support it. I urge the City to do the same for this upper State St. hotel project. The negative group cite the development plan, interference with sight lines along State St., and precedent-setting for other future exceptions further down State St. The attorneys explained instead that any variance is a one-time exemption. The developers have responded to these concerns with excellent design alternatives. I find none of these concerns to be compelling in comparison to the advantages of granting this one-time variance.

Many neighbors also differ with the negative historic preservation staff opinion regarding the adjacent historic building on Carroll St. being negatively impacted by a nine story hotel tower next door. How would this differ from a six story building? In fact, many other downtown historic buildings are framed by higher adjacent buildings, these adjacencies have been approved, and they seem to work well esthetically.

Finally, this hotelier has a track record of successful infill hotels in other urban downtowns, such as New Orleans and Portland OR. Madison deserves the same visionary re-development, and leadership that supports these opportunities. The present building is an eyesore with no public or neighborhood advantages. This hotel offers an exciting alternative that would bring new activities and customers to upper State St. If not this project, then what?

Timothy Harrington, MD  
Ovation 309, [REDACTED]