

From: Michael Herring
Sent: Saturday, August 25, 2018 1:23 PM
To: Stouder, Heather
Cc: T Harrington John
Subject: Proposed Provenance Hotel

Heather: Sorry for the delayed response. Was finally able to contact Dr. Harrington and he and I both agree that we'd like for my email below to be included in the public record for the Plan Commission to review prior to their 9/17 meeting. If you have any questions or need any further clarification, please let me know. Thanks, again! Mike Herring, [REDACTED] W. Main, [REDACTED]

From: Michael Herring
Date: Fri, Aug 24, 2018 at 9:44 AM
Subject: Proposed Provenance Hotel
To: Stouder, Heather <hstouder@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: T Harrington John

Heather: As you know, the proposed Provenance Hotel has now been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Landmarks Commission, the UDC, the DCC and, most recently, the Transportation Commission. With the exception of the Transportation Commission, Dr. Harrington and I (and others) have attended each meeting, to offer our support.

As you'll recall, the majority of the Steering Committee voted in favor of the proposed redevelopment and did not support the minority-held position, in opposition. Having said that, both Dr. Harrington and I took it upon ourselves to review the "Downtown Plan" (PLAN), specific sections of which have been used, by those so-inclined, to oppose this proposed redevelopment. Surprisingly and very gratifyingly, our reading of the PLAN supports the desirability of case-by-case consideration and provides a formal mechanism for granting approval via the planned development process, which we discussed in your office. It is far more nuanced and flexible than represented to us, by the opponents.

To begin with, we looked at the section dealing with "Building Heights", specifically pages 36-37 (I've added the **bold highlights** below, as well as additional comments [[in brackets](#)]):

"Parts of Downtown have had maximum building heights for years through requirements of the C-4 Zoning District and Downtown Design Zones. In these areas, establishing absolute building heights has clarified expectations for new development and contributed to a more consistent and predictable development review process. **However, the trade-off was the perceived lack of flexibility to consider taller buildings in these areas and this plan recommends that the Zoning Ordinance eliminate Downtown Design Zones and allow proposals for buildings taller than the recommended height limit to be considered through the conditional use and/or planned development process. The proposed height limitations are not intended to**

perpetuate the status quo, or unreasonably restrict redevelopment potential....Out-of-context sites with building types recommended for redevelopment (see Key 2) should be allowed to be redeveloped at taller heights than may be indicated in the plan...." [Heather: The height being requested, according to the development team, is a function of stepping the elevations back from the 4-story uniformity on State Street and the total number of rooms needed by the hotel to be economically viable. As I learned from my years in local government, the "flexibility" noted above actually makes the plan STRONGER. When the right project is presented, at the right location, as is the case in this instance, this plan allows the City to embrace what is clearly an opportunity for a transformative re-development.]....**"Rooftops can provide valuable open spaces, such as gardens and patios, in dense urban environments. This Downtown Plan encourages the development of such amenities for use by residents...."** [I couldn't help but smile at this specific reference to "encouraging" rooftop development. It's not height, for the sake of height, but what the hotel plans to do with that height, by providing a gathering place, with spectacular views of Lake Mendota, the Capitol and westward toward the University. No single amenity, as recognized by the PLAN, gives us all a chance to celebrate all that is MADISON. Again, right place.....right project!]

Next, we looked at the section dealing with "State Street" (P 44). (Again, I've added the **bold highlights** below, as well as additional comments [in brackets]):

"The vibrancy and intimacy of State Street is largely attributable to the rhythm of its buildings, with their typically narrow, small first floor commercial spaces that accommodate a wide variety of small businesses; and it is essential that both the scale and the rhythm of the buildings and the diversity of uses be retained.... However, **development of some larger retail spaces in the State Street district could provide additional opportunities for new businesses, as well as accommodate the expansion of successful established businesses.** This Downtown Plan supports limited development of some larger commercial spaces in the State Street district, but **only if the buildings are carefully designed to maintain the prominent small-scale rhythm of the street frontage.** [Heather: In our opinion, the developers have done a wonderful job of limiting height to their entire State Street façade to four stories and have even taken the opportunity to reduce the existing 6-story building (on State) to that same 4-story elevation. Additionally, as recommended by the UDC, they are proposing a State Street presence that actually makes the buildings more appealing and eye-catching.] Potential techniques include limiting the amount of block frontage devoted to a single user, **providing multiple street entrances for larger establishments,** and **articulating both the ground and upper story façade of larger buildings** to reflect the narrower width characteristic of the street...." [This redevelopment provides entrances on State, Dayton and Carroll and, where the proposed building is tallest, its visual and vertical articulations actually complement the existing downtown skyline.]

Thanks, again, for your time and consideration. As always, if you have any question or would like any additional input, please let us know. Mike Herring