

**From:** [Ron Shutvet](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#); [Albouras, Christian](#); [cjharper@tds.net](mailto:cjharper@tds.net); [cliffgoodhart@outlook.com](mailto:cliffgoodhart@outlook.com); [craigweisensel@gmail.com](mailto:craigweisensel@gmail.com); [jklehr@madisoncollege.edu](mailto:jklehr@madisoncollege.edu); [shane.bernaeu@smithgroup.com](mailto:shane.bernaeu@smithgroup.com); [tdmadtown@charter.net](mailto:tdmadtown@charter.net); [district13@council.ci.madison.wi.us](mailto:district13@council.ci.madison.wi.us); [district14@council.ci.madison.wi.us](mailto:district14@council.ci.madison.wi.us); [Glaser, Janine](#)  
**Subject:** 222 - 232 E. Olin Avenue  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 14, 2021 2:25:32 PM

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No one should be allowed to construct a building more than 160 feet tall in Madison. It has long been the intent of previous government administrations and elected officials to preserve the view of the Capitol from a distance so that it will always be the most prominent building on the Madison skyline.

With a proposed height of 201 feet, the proposed 18 story building at 222 – 232 E. Olin Avenue is too tall. Furthermore, even a building that is only 160 feet tall should not be adorned with lighting on the upper levels that detracts from the nighttime view of the city skyline. We don't need or want all the future tall buildings to be shouting out after dark: 'Here I am. Look at me! Look at me! We don't want each new building competing with the Capitol and with each other to be the most noticeable object on the horizon. These tall buildings should only be illuminated by the ambient light emanating from the apartment units themselves. No illuminated translucent panels, string lights or any other additional lighting should be allowed on rooftop or any part of the exterior of these tall buildings.

I would think most Madison residents would rather watch the rising full moon without a huge illuminated translucent panel or any other lighting system mounted on this proposed building interfering with the view.

Think also of our night migrating feathered friends who would prefer to migrate using the moon and the stars to help guide them and not be confused by a huge white illuminated square on the horizon. How many dead birds piled at the base of this proposed building will it take to make people realize after the fact that this proposed building was designed to be a bird killer.

I also feel strongly that this property should be redeveloped as part of a larger master plan for all the parcels of property on the North side of Olin Avenue between Wingra Creek and John Nolen Drive. Incorporate some decent real greenspace as part of this master plan. A public right of way through these land parcels from the Aliant Energy Center to the Wingra Creek ped/bike trail should be incorporated into the master plan. This public right of way could be designed as a grade separated overpass or underpass at Olin Avenue. The Wingra Creek ped/bike trail also needs to be improved and widened to allow for larger numbers of trail users to use the underpasses at Wingra Creek to safely cross under John Nolen Drive and the railroad corridor.

Ron Shutvet  
Madison WI

To: Urban Design Commission

From: Janelle Munns, Daina Zemliauskas-Juozevicius, Colleen O'Dea Potter, Carrie Rothburd, Daniel Thurs, Lisie Kitchel, Stefan Westman, Dave Davis

Re: Proposal for Redevelopment at 222 East Olin Avenue

Date: July 14, 2021

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The McGrath Group's proposal for development on land between Bay Creek and Capital View neighborhoods is on land not included in either neighborhood association's domain. Because of this, the city's best practice for engaging with community in the design of a development was not followed. Residents of Bay Creek, the development's closest neighbors (despite the fact the site for the building is in District 14) did not receive 30-day notice of McGrath's intent to submit this proposal. They did not, in fact, learn about the proposal until it was already fully planned and then only from an article in the local newspaper.

It was only at the request of the chair of BCNA's Planning & Economic Development Committee that an informational session took place at Bay Creek Neighborhood Association in June. Mr. McGrath informed neighbors there of his already submitted designs for an 18-story luxury apartment building. The feedback he received at this meeting is not reflected in the designs before you for review today. Another informational session took place in District 14 at neighbors' request. What follows is an overview of feedback from some members of the community:

- 1) The building does not relate in appearance to the other buildings along Olin Avenue. Its height and massing are too large, and it stands out in an unpleasing manner from its nearest neighbors.
- 2) The building does not respond to the affordable and family housing needs of residents of South Madison.
- 3) The building could harm the area's resident wildlife and interfere with their habitat needs, both highly valued by the community. The light from the building's many apartments, exacerbated by the glass exterior and the beacon at the building's apex, will pollute the night sky and disrupt wildlife and avian migration patterns.

We understand that the UDC is not the commission that considers Land Use or Zoning. However, we think it important in considering the proposed design for 222 East Olin that the UDC take note that this site is zoned Suburban Employment (SE), and its intended use, according to the Generalized Future Land Use (GFLU) map, is Employment adjacent to Low-use Residential. As such **it is clear that City of Madison planners did not intend a building of the scope or appearance of that proposed by the McGrath Group for reasons including design, scope, and neighborhood infrastructure, which are issues relevant to the UDC.**

According to the current municipal Zoning Code, **SE's intent is not explicitly residential and allows for buildings of up to 5 stories—4 stories if a residential use is included**—with additional stories added only with Conditional Use. According to the most recent Comp Plan (p. 25), "commercial and employment areas are recommended locations for businesses, corporate and government offices, medical facilities, retail, services, and other commercial land uses. Compared to mixed-use districts, commercial and **employment areas are not generally expected to include a residential component, although limited residential uses may be present in some areas...**[S]uch uses may be considered as part of a conditional use under relevant zoning districts... **Depending on specific uses, the districts may require significant buffering from adjacent land uses. Employment (E) areas generally do not include retail and consumer service uses for the wider community,** but may include limited retail and service establishments that primarily serve employees and users of the area... **[Residential uses] may be considered as part of a conditional use under relevant zoning districts. While there are no fixed limits on size of an establishment or development intensity within E areas, all uses should be compatible with the density and scale of surrounding development.**

The McGrath Group's design would appear to appeal to the AEC's Destination District Plan vision in requesting rezoning. We find this appeal specious. McGrath's 18-story building (one of four in the Destination District Plan drawings) may be the type of redevelopment the Destination District documents envision, but at this point that plan is just a concept that assumes that the public and private land around the AEC should be developed to the benefit of the AEC. It also presumes that the surrounding neighborhoods will benefit from the AEC's expansion.

While the Comp Plan does allow for re-envisioning land uses, it requires prerequisites for such changes, which in this case, have not been met. There is a map note (8) on the AEC campus, which says: "The Alliant Energy Center is shown as SI, but may include restaurant, entertainment, and hotel uses if a Master Plan for the area that includes those uses is adopted by

the City. Such a plan may include land use changes to surrounding properties, such as the Employment-designated uses to the north.” However changing the land use designation for the McGrath site can't happen until the city adopts the AEC's master plan, which won't happen until after the Town of Madison attachment in October 2022.

Furthermore, neither the AEC, nor the developer, the County, nor the City has consulted with any of the neighborhoods in the area to consider the impacts of the Destination District on those communities. This is galling as the City has recently pledged itself to address the gentrification that luxury development, such as this 18-story building, stands to bring to South Madison.

As the new kid on the block, the McGrath Group should take its cue from what already exists in the area where it proposes to build. We ask that the UDC evaluate the plans for 222 East Olin in terms of its fit with its surrounding communities as currently laid forth in the Comp Plan and the GFLU map. We believe that the UDC should require that the developer rethink its design on a more modest scale for a better fit with the surrounding area, both natural and developed. During this process, the City should address the fact that neighborhoods adjacent to those fringe areas not included in any neighborhood association need to be included in the conversation and that the McGrath Group should engage the community as laid forth in the city's best practice guide, *Participating in the Development Process*, which can be found at: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/best-practices-guide.pdf>.

**From:** [Danny Edgel](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#)  
**Subject:** 222-232 E Olin Ave  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 14, 2021 9:49:32 AM

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Hello,

I am writing to urge the UDC to give final approval to the proposed mixed-use development on 222-232 E Olin Ave. Madison is in dire need of new housing supply, and developments such as the proposed development are key to ensuring that Madison remains affordable for many and, ultimately, becomes newly affordable for those who currently cannot afford to live here. Furthermore, this dense development near some of the city's most heavily-used bike paths, within bike commuting distance of the city's employment centers will ensure that many residents, like the majority of Madisonians including myself, will choose to commute primarily by bike.

Best,  
Danny Edgel

115 N Blair St  
Madison, WI 53703

**From:** [Jim Winkle](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#); [Evers, Tag](#)  
**Subject:** 18 story building on Olin Ave, 64920  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 13, 2021 10:20:23 PM

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Dear members of the UDC,

In general, I support the 18 story building on Olin Ave. We desperately need more housing of all kinds in Madison, and this is a good place to put this kind of density. I live in the Bay Creek neighborhood; one house on our street sold for 24% more than assessment and another house on the bay sold for 40% more than assessment (and it was already expensive at \$650k; it sold for \$900k). Madison is quickly becoming a city for the rich, and gentrification will speed down Park Street if we don't build more housing. I will see this building often and be proud that we're building up and not out.

One suggestion I have is that I wish there was some way of reducing the light emanating from the building for the safety of birds (since they are attracted to light), given that it's so close to Olin/Turville parks. Perhaps provide light-blocking drapes in the apartments? And eliminate the beacon at the top.

There was much talk in Bay Creek about requiring bird-safe glass on all stories of the building, but here's a quote from the BIRD/GLASS COLLISION FAQs at [http://www.glassmagazinedigital.com/publication/?i=570932&article\\_id=3318671&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5](http://www.glassmagazinedigital.com/publication/?i=570932&article_id=3318671&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5)

*Is bird glass necessary on all stories of a building?*

*Collisions generally occur in the lower stories of a building. "Bird-friendly glass is typically specified on the first three floors/up to 60 feet on the building," says Sarah Wansack, Guardian Glass, [guardianglass.com](http://guardianglass.com), marketing manager, interiors, North America. If a building is surrounded by taller trees, bird-glass protections should extend to the height of the trees.*

If the Wonder Bar can be saved -- especially if it could house Madison history -- perhaps in Olin/Turville park, that'd be great. But if nobody wants it, then I'm ok with it being demolished (though I would hope the bricks could be offered up to City residents).

I'd also like to see some affordable housing within the building.

Finally, we went solar in 2007 and I think it would be great if this building (and all new buildings) had solar panels.

Not sure which of the above falls into your purview.

Thanks!

-- jim winkle

813 Emerson St

**From:** [Daina Zemliauskas-Juozevicius](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#)  
**Subject:** 222 Olin Ave. Project, agenda item #3 , 64920  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 13, 2021 7:40:51 PM

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Greetings,

I am writing to vehemently oppose the 18 story McGraff development proposal, for several reasons:

The height.

If approved, an 18 story apartment building will set a dangerous precedent for future projects. Our capitol is 284.4 feet high. While this project is over a mile from the capitol and the city's height restrictions, the development is not so far away that it won't spoil the view of our most precious state house from a fair distance.

The impact on the neighborhood.

Though this development lies just outside of District 13, it is very near the Bay Creek neighborhood where I have resided as a homeowner for 21 years. I don't know if you do, but I hope you realize how many developments have gone up in just the past 10 years in this area (Park St. corridor and the future destruction of the VFW Hall on E. Lakeside St. to make way for more apartments, just a block away from the McGraff proposal). It's my feeling that we are already saturated with housing and more cars (often speeding on residential streets).

The impact on wildlife.

The developer has stated that it is cost prohibitive to add "bird glass" above the 5 story requirement by the city. That's 13 stories of height where birds will fly into windows and die. Turville-Olin Park is just across the street and many migratory birds fly in and out of that area.

Light pollution.

Not only will it affect the nearby neighborhoods, but the city as a whole, not to mention the wildlife again. The proposed lighted "beacon" at the top of this building will do nothing but compound the problems of an already artificially lit up sky, reeking havoc for humans and nocturnal animals.

Would you like to see this 18 story (architecturally uninteresting) monolith from your home? This is not the place for it.

Thank you for your consideration and service to the city.

Respectfully,  
Daina Zemliauskas-Juozevicius  
701 South Shore Drive  
Madison, WI 53715  
608-334-2086  
[auradain@tds.net](mailto:auradain@tds.net)

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Allen Arntsen](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Evers, Tag](#); [tdmadtown@charter.net](mailto:tdmadtown@charter.net)  
**Subject:** McGrath Olin Avenue project  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 13, 2021 12:20:44 PM

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Greetings. I live in the Bay Creek neighborhood around ½ mile from the proposed McGrath Olin Avenue project. Overall, I support the project, as I believe that this is a good location for density, given its proximity to downtown and multiple transportation modes.

I believe that two changes are necessary to the project as proposed. First, I think there have to be substantial measures to mitigate light pollution, especially from stairwells. Given its height and location, this building will be visible from many directions for a long way, especially over the lakes.

Second, its height and location require that the building have a substantial and sophisticated plan to minimize damage to birds, both local and migratory. Across from my house, on Monona Bay, we see pelicans, eagles, herons, loons, hawks, owls, many kinds of ducks, martins, swallows, and the list goes on. Even though we put decorations in our windows to dissuade birds, we still suffer from bird collisions, which sometimes kills the bird. I shudder to think of the number of bird collisions that are possible with this building given its height, mass, and proximity to parks and waterways.

I'm not sure if these are appropriate UDC considerations, but if so, I hope they find your way into your recommendations and conditions.

Allen Arntsen  
821 South Shore Drive

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** [Mitchell Nussbaum](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#)  
**Subject:** 18-Story Building Proposal  
**Date:** Monday, July 12, 2021 3:54:48 PM

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Dear alders,

I have concerns about such a tall building going up. First, it may start a trend toward taller and taller buildings. But also, much of Madison is former marsh, and in-filled land, with a high water table. Especially after the condo collapse in Florida, this should be of concern. I would hate to see a similar event happen here.

Sincerely,

- Genie Ogden  
1615 Madison St.  
Madison 53711