



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 700 - 740 Regent Street  
**Application Type:** Planned Development (PD) – Final Approval is Requested  
**Legistar File ID #** [68730](#)  
**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Linda Irving, Trinitas Development, LLC | Chris Sachse, BKV Group | The Alexander Company

**Project Description:** The applicant is seeking Final Approval for a new 12-story residential building with approximately 363 apartment units and 322 structured parking stalls to be shared with the adjacent office uses. The proposed development will also include a resident club lounge, fitness center, multiple outdoor landscaped terraces and a rooftop pool.

### Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation on December 15, 2021
- The UDC granted Initial Approval on March 9, 2022
- The Plan Commission recommended conditional approval this proposal on March 21, 2022
- The Common Council conditionally approved this item on March 29, 2022

**Approval Standards:** The UDC is an **advisory body** on this PD request. As with any Planned Development, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code sections [28.098\(1\)](#), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval (PD Standards Attached).

## Summary of Design Considerations

Planning Division staff requests that the UDC review the project, make findings, and base their decision on the aforementioned review and approval standards for Planned Developments. In this case, this item has been specifically referred to the UDC for their final review to address the comments/conditions specified in the original UDC recommendation. These conditions are:

- A corrected and revised landscape plan.
- A revised northern façade showing the loss of balconies and any changes to the design.
- Visuals of the light well/3D renderings to give a sense that experience.

Staff provides the following comments related to these items:

- **Landscape Revisions.** As part of the Commission's Initial Approval conditions, a revised landscape plan that addressed the Commission's concerns pertaining to the general landscape design both in form and function, including plant quantities, plant selections with sensitivity to hardiness and light conditions along the multi-use path and within the interior courtyard, and the overall planting plan as it serves as a site amenity framing architectural features and softening hardscape areas. In addition, the Commission noted concerns for the turf grass area in terms of maintenance and viability in a heavily trafficked area given its size. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the revised landscape plan.

- **Revised Northern Façade Elevations – Balconies and Screening.** As part of their motion, the UDC also requested updated materials be provided to show the loss of balconies and other modifications to the northern facade. In regards to balconies, the projection of the balconies located on the northwest façade have been reduced to eliminate encroachment into the City owned lands per the terms of the applicant’s lease with the City. This resulted in the balconies being approximately two feet smaller in size. Staff requests UDC provide feedback on the design solution, especially in terms of usability and consistency in the treatment of balconies, particularly as it relates to those located in the recessed areas along the building facade.

Staff also requests UDC provide feedback with regard to the updated screening materials, garage screen architectural element, material, graphic design, and details.

- **Supplemental Light Well Details.** As part of the Commission’s Initial Approval Conditions, the Commission requested additional information regarding the programming and experience in the interior courtyard space. Staff requests the Commission’s feedback on the details provided, including programming, landscape, amenities, lighting, etc. This feature has generally been approved by the Common Council.

## Summary of UDC Initial Approval Comments and Conditions of Approval

As a reference, the Commission’s comments from the March 9, 2022, Initial Approval are provided below:

- Can you speak to the protruding balconies over City-owned property on the bike path side?
  - They cannot overhang in the right-of-way.
  - That portion of the building is on a zero lot line.
- What are the building materials?
  - We propose metal panel in two types of colors and patterns to be installed in a vertical manner. The masonry base wraps all the way around the building. There are recessed framed elements for the windows in a silver monochromatic tone to provide relief from the striated cladding, in addition to glazing for storefronts and punched openings on the residential pieces.
- The planting list and blueprints are quite a head scratcher, the list and numbers don’t jive with the plans. If you are looking to activate this area and the plaza, this list is way underdone. Norway Maple is not a top choice as an ornamental tree, and it shows up on the plant list but nowhere on plan. You show two American Lindens and two Autumn Blaze Maples, but only one of each appears anywhere on the plans. The planters in that lawn area show a beautiful palette of ornamental grasses and flowering shrubs, but the plants are nothing but a couple of Crabapple trees and Creeping Juniper. To sum up, this is an incomplete plant list that doesn’t match the plans with strange plant selections we would refrain from using. Much work needs to be done.
- The landscape plan needs to be reworked to be compatible with our climate and consistent with the quality of the building.
- Very happy to see the amount of open space and amount of terraces, really good design incorporated to have those accessible spaces.
- I struggle with the materials; it’s a different use of material that I welcome, and I appreciate this is not a standard material we see with other residential projects. I appreciate the reorganization of balconies, although if some are not allowed it will change the design so much by making them more cohesive.
- This is an exciting project, and interesting to see how people will flow in and out, particularly on the north side. For those arriving on bikes, have you looked at a gradual slope ramp vs. stairs? That might be challenging.

- We went with stairs to increase the landscaping planting edges. We will incorporate a ramp section adjacent to the steps so you can walk your bike up while using the stairs.
- Nice, that's an elegant solution.
- I'm happy about the parking solutions, but the ramps seem very tight.
  - (Staff) The land use application process works closely with City Engineering and Traffic Engineering for those issues. It is currently being reviewed, we can pass that comment on to the current project manager.
- Appreciate some improvements to the order of materials and exterior massing. I'm still struggling with the deep courtyard, that light well is so tiny. You have plants shown at the bottom and are planning for activity in there, but I don't know how much natural light those occupants are really going to get. You have potential movies being shown in there that would be disruptive to others. Doesn't seem like a very humane solution for those apartments around that.
  - The activities programming here is similar to what we've done with other courtyards. We have hours of operation for when TVs are on. We've had zero issues of folks renting along a courtyard that has a movie theater. We see this as being a combination of a game garden and a theater opportunity with certain nights showing movies on a 9' x13' screen, with Adirondack chairs or blankets, game day event opportunities, and in winter this is a weather protected zone for being outside. Looking at restaurant domes for indoor/outdoor amenity.
- It feels like some of this new housing in Madison is more like downtown Tokyo, I struggle with that.
- Are there mechanical units on the roof?
  - It will be a central plant with 90% of them within that enclosure. There will be some exhaust on the eastern end.
- As an infill project to a surface parking lot this is a huge win. I like the design concept of shifting trapezoids, void spaces, open and green spaces, it's really strong. I love this corridor and your main entry being situated along the bike path. The views from the bike path excite me the most, seeing that activation along the corridor, I almost want to see more of that. You could introduce more of that activity space in the middle as well.
- I wouldn't react to the planting quite as strongly, but I do think it could use another pass. Certainly to reiterate the Norway Maple and Barberry are non-starters. The Little Blue Stem is a sun-loving prairie plant, it'll get floppy and won't like that spot. I didn't notice bike racks at grade on the east end that would be very appropriate and necessary.
- The lawn on the north side along the bike path might get people tossing bags and such on game days. I'm not sure how many people will lay out on that lawn, I could see another pocket of trapezoid hardscape being more successful.
- I still think the building façade seems busy and unorganized to me. Not to say the randomness isn't the problem, I like the shifting rectangles but I still seeing places of order, places of shifting and squares and rectangles, it's throwing me off a little bit; that could still use another layer of refinement.
- To review from staff memo, we should comment on the ground level orientation, the courtyard light well and potential signable areas.
- Does the proposed signage include the flamingos vs. bikers themes? Are we talking about those in this presentation or is that a future signage presentation?
  - Signage would be separate and may or may not be a Comprehensive Design Review. We're looking at whether there been enough thought to where signage might go.

**ACTION:**

A motion was made by Asad for Final Approval. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Discussion was as follows:

- I'm comfortable with designated signage areas, comfortable with the light well, the materials, I would recommend approval given the comments about the landscape plans.
- This is an excellent project and exciting, but I do feel there would be great benefit to one more round of this discussion. The extra story is significant, the added density is an overall plus, the light well situation is a huge part of the overall greenspace presented and the questions raised are valid. I'd like to see a more realistic experience of that light well than what we're seeing today. The discussions about landscaping are important and worth exploring and seeing back.
- I'd vote initial based on the landscape issues. If those balconies are going to come off there will be significant design changes. We need visuals or 3D models to experience that light well.

On a motion by DeChant, seconded by Bernau, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).

The motion provided for the following:

- The proposed sign areas are acceptable, however the proposed projecting sign needs to be reduced in size.
- A corrected and revised landscape plan.
- A revised northern façade showing the loss of balconies and any changes to the design.
- Visuals of the light well/3D renderings to give a sense that experience.

## Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

Staff refers the Commission to their comments from the December 15, 2021, Informational Presentation:

- I like this building. I'm not a fan of the way the materials are displayed. I do like the massing, but I struggle with the randomness of the balconies, more consistency, may not belong in all the locations shown. Once you develop your renderings the material will work itself out.
- That courtyard, I don't know that it will work well for you, unless I'm misunderstanding its purpose.
- Your plan says courtyard, which is a very different definition to me than light well.
- The jog along the tracks where you're breaking up the building is really successful, it looks dynamic, breaks up the façade as you go higher over the entrance, which is subtle and a point of interest.
- I have concerns about feeling safe at night along that dark bike path and having your entry there, this is a backside walk. During the day it is fine, but at night it helps if you can see your entrance. I would suggest a bump out or something like that and I would question people wanting to walk back there at night.
- I like the building, the textural effect of the cladding, long linear buildings need something like that. I don't mind the perceived randomness of the slots and set-ins, I would like to see more balconies.
- Would like to see a rendering of the experience of that light well, maybe a daylight or shadow study of that area.
- The entrance, right now it's going to need some kind of light element, not only to address the comment about safety, but it doesn't have an overhang or any other queue that it is the main entrance, it could use something.
- Look at this a bit more fundamentally as a piece of urban design, and remember our response to the hotel just up the bike path. Similarly, they turned their back on the bike path, this building is not on a street so the path becomes the defacto street. The applicant even indicated people would be coming in via the bike path. I'd like to challenge them to take that lobby and run it east-west. I know it effects parking but from an urban design standpoint that's what we should be looking at as a Commission.

- Not only how people are going to come and go but embracing and activating that north side. Design wise and form you've hit it, but the amenity space should be the outdoor space. Consider this to be the street. I would even challenge the roof, greenspace can be used all throughout the year. What is the actual usability of that swimming pool?
- Activating the bike path side, at least extending the lobby into the parking area, flipping it is an excellent idea. Taking the bicycle entrance and making a bike center like the one downtown, making a retail space with a storefront presence. I have a real concern about the amount of inactive space along the bike path. To the balconies, I actually love the randomness of them, it's part of the interest.
- They have to make sense, there's a little bit too much randomness that starts to detract.

**ATTACHMENT**  
**PD Zoning Statement of Purpose and Standards**

**28.098 (1) Statement of Purpose.**

The Planned Development (PD) District is established to provide a voluntary regulatory framework as a means to facilitate the unique development of land in an integrated and innovative fashion, to allow for flexibility in site design, and to encourage development that is sensitive to environmental, cultural, and economic considerations, and that features high-quality architecture and building materials. In addition, the Planned Development District is intended to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.
- (b) Promotion of integrated land uses allowing for a mixture of residential, commercial, and public facilities along corridors and in transitional areas, with enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and amenities.
- (c) Preservation and enhancement of important environmental features through careful and sensitive placement of buildings and facilities.
- (d) Preservation of historic buildings, structures, or landscape features through adaptive reuse of public or private preservation of land.
- (e) Provision of more adequate, usable, and suitably located open space, recreational amenities, and other public facilities than would otherwise be provided under conventional land development techniques.
- (f) Facilitation of high-quality development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.

**28.098(2) Approval Standards for Project**

The standards for approval of a zoning map amendment to the PD District, or any major alteration to an approved General Development Plan, are as follows:

- (a) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other base zoning district can be used to achieve a substantially similar pattern of development. Planned developments shall not be allowed simply for the purpose of increasing overall density or allowing development that otherwise could not be approved unless the development also meets one or more of the objectives of (1) above. Conditions under which planned development may be appropriate include:
  - 1. Site conditions such as steep topography or other unusual physical features; or
  - 2. Redevelopment of an existing area or use of an infill site that could not be reasonably developed under base zoning district requirements.
- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (c) The PD District plan shall not adversely affect the economic health of the City or the area of the City where the development is proposed. The City shall be able to provide municipal services to the property where the planned development is proposed without a significant increase of the cost of providing those services or economic impact on municipal utilities serving that area.

- (d) The PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands. A traffic demand management plan may be required as a way to resolve traffic and parking concerns. The Plan shall include measurable goals, strategies, and actions to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at congested times of day. Strategies and actions may include, but are not limited to, carpools and vanpools; public and private transit; promotion of bicycling, walking and other non-motorized travel; flexible work schedules and parking management programs to substantially reduce automobile trips.
- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.
- (f) The PD District plan shall include open space suitable to the type and character of development proposed, including for projects with residential components, a mix of structured and natural spaces for use by residents and visitors. Areas for stormwater management, parking, or in the public right of way shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
- (g) The PD district shall include suitable assurances that each phase could be completed in a manner that would not result in an adverse effect upon the community as a result of termination at that point.
- (h) When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in Section 28.071(2)(a) Downtown Height Map, except as provided for in Section 28.071(2)(a)1. and Section 28.071(2)(b), the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans and no application for excess height shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
  - 1. The excess height is compatible with the existing or planned (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) character of the surrounding area, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.
  - 2. The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.
  - 3. The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the project and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.
  - 4. For projects proposed in priority viewsheds and other views and vistas identified on the Views and Vistas Map in the City of Madison Downtown Plan, there are no negative impacts on the viewshed as demonstrated by viewshed studies prepared by the applicant.
- (i) When applying the above standards to an application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks required by Section 28.071(2)(c) Downtown Stepback Map, the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans, including the downtown plan. No application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks may be granted unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
  - 1. The lot is a corner parcel.
  - 2. The lot is not part of a larger assemblage of properties.
  - 3. The entire lot is vacant or improved with only a surface parking lot.
  - 4. No principal buildings on the lot have been demolished or removed since the effective date of this ordinance