

Members of the Council:

As an opponent of this version of this project, there is nothing that I would rather see than an outright refusal to overrule the Landmarks Commission. I believe there is no proof of hardship, and even if there were, it would be clearly self-created. But I also think there is a bigger issue here. There has been a debilitating loss of civility to our less than perfect but nonetheless eminently workable democratic system. This is not the way to shape the future of our city.

Consequently, I am in favor of a referral, if for no other reason to give us all a chance to let cool heads prevail, and turn this back into a dialogue and not some political version of the Super Bowl.

However the issues remain; we still have distorted and incomplete documents, and a long list of unsubstantiated claims. The Urban Design Commission has twice provided a list of documents and studies that they require; the Landmarks Commission has also provided a list. We are yet to see any of those.

We have also seen throughout this process a frequent practice of submitting documents at the very beginning of the meeting in which they are to be reviewed. The public doesn't get a chance even to see, much less review, those documents until days after the hearing.

Also, we hopefully have learned from recent unfinished major projects that financing shortages and/or over optimistic cash flow projections can easily stop a project leaving the public high and dry. Professional analysis has raised serious questions as to the overall financial feasibility of this project.

I therefore request the following attachments to the motion for referral:

- require all items requested in the minutes of Urban Design Commission and Landmarks Commission hearings to be provided prior to the next hearing;
- require all committee submissions to be made public a minimum of three days before subsequent hearings;
- require a review and a report of financial feasibility of the complete project by an independent accounting firm from outside of the City of Madison

Respectfully Submitted,

John D Martens  
4118 Hegg Ave.  
Madison, WI 53716