



Regent Neighborhood A S S O C I A T I O N

Date: December 10, 2010

To: Alder Bidar-Sielaff and members of the Urban Design and Plan Commissions

Subject: Comments on the Mullins Group's Proposed Development at the 2500 Block of University Avenue, Madison, WI

Background:

The Regent Neighborhood Association (RNA) Board, on behalf of the RNA, would like to provide to you with the following input on the proposed Mullins Group development at 2500 University Avenue. The Mullins project is a mixed-use development, which includes 130 residential rental units, 4 commercial/retail spaces and 152 spaces of indoor, on-site parking. We ask that you consider the following recommendations and conditions when making decisions about this project.

The RNA Board would like to thank the Mullins Group for the collaborative process that they engaged in to solicit input from the neighborhood and the city. The public engagement effort by the Mullins Group was viewed as a positive and constructive endeavor by almost all parties. It is an effort by a developer that we hope sets a positive example for other neighborhoods and other developers. We believe that it has resulted in a stronger project.

The RNA Board, in formulating its official response to this project, took into account feedback provided by the neighborhood as a result of a series of public engagement efforts. The Mullins Group sponsored four public listening/informational sessions from August to October 2010. This four-month effort concluded with an RNA- and Alder-sponsored final public feedback session on November 8, 2010 and an RNA Board meeting on November 17, 2010. As with any project of this magnitude, there were a wide variety of comments, both in support of and in opposition to the project. This letter therefore represents the input of the RNA Board; it is recognized that individual members of the Regent neighborhood may have different opinions on the project.

Further, the RNA Board considered the land use classifications associated with the project and adjacent areas, as laid out in the City Comprehensive Plan. In particular, the proposed, 130-unit residential rental housing project is in an area that has a land use classification of Community-Mixed Use (CMU). According to the City's Comprehensive Plan: "Net residential densities within a Community Mixed Use district generally should

not exceed 60 dwelling units per acre, but a neighborhood or special area plan may recommend small areas within the district for a higher maximum density if the development is compatible with the scale and character of the neighborhood."

Further, the project is adjacent to an area designated for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). This is described as: "Transit-Oriented Development is characterized by a compact, mixed-use development pattern that focuses the highest development densities and intensities in very close proximity to high capacity transit stops."

Recognizing all of this, the RNA Board has agreed to the following resolution, general comments about the project and specific conditions that should be placed on the project:

RNA Board Resolution:

This resolution represents the majority opinion of the RNA Board, but not the unanimous opinion of all Board members:

The Regent Neighborhood Association (RNA) Board believes that the Mullins Group has done a good job addressing neighborhood concerns about the proposed development on the 2500 block of University Avenue. There is strong support for the process of neighborhood involvement undertaken by the Mullins Group as well as for the project in general. There are lingering concerns that the height of the east and west towers as well as the total height and mass of the overall project may be too great for the area in which it is located. The RNA Board would appreciate the Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission taking into consideration the remaining neighborhood concerns about the height and mass of the project as part of their formal deliberations.

General Comments by the RNA Board:

1. **Materials and Colors:** The RNA Board has been presented with the building materials for the project and supports the choices.
2. **Parking:** The success of this building and particularly the commercial/retail space will depend on the success of the city, property owner and neighborhood working together through the University Avenue Corridor planning process. Additional on-street parking (e.g., 2500 to 2300 University Avenue) and off-street parking (e.g., DOT lot) is vital to the success of new and existing businesses. The RNA will need the city's support to achieve this through the efforts of its University Avenue Corridor planning process (in progress) and the resurfacing of historic University Avenue, which is planned for summer 2011.
3. **Traffic:** The RNA Board and neighborhood are concerned about bicycle and pedestrian safety, particularly on the Highland Avenue side of the development and at the Highland-University intersection. The city and developer need to work with the neighborhood, through the University Avenue Corridor Planning process to ensure that bikes, cars and pedestrians can safely co-exist in the area.
4. **Community Car:** We support the "green" components of the project, including the space for a community car. The Mullins Group has agreed to sponsor such a car to ensure that one is available to residents of the project and neighbors.

Conditions that should be placed on project by City:

1. **Retail/commercial tenants:** The RNA Board requests that if a business/tenant proposes to stay open later than midnight, that the RNA association and Board be made aware of this and be provided the opportunity to provide input.
2. **Demolition:** The developer/property owner should have as a goal the objective to recycle/reuse at least 50% of the materials associated with the demolition of the existing structures.
3. **Noise:** Significant concerns already exist among residents with respect to noise emanating from UW west campus buildings, Campus Drive and the UW Hospital helicopter. We appreciate that the building may attenuate the noise from Campus Drive. However, we expect that Mullins will implement the HVAC noise attenuation measures outlined in the sound study report from Audio Design Specialists. Noise measurements should be taken prior to and after construction to demonstrate that noise levels have not increased; those reductions should not be used to offset HVAC and other mechanical-related noise that the building may produce. Written documentation of achieving this condition should be provided to the RNA Board and members, through its listserv, no later than six months after the building is completed and open for occupancy.
4. **On-street Parking:** No residential parking permits should be allowed for this address. In addition, no person/business that is not a resident of or employee at the building should be able to lease or sub-lease a parking place. Neighboring streets may want to consider the use of residential parking permits only, in accordance with city guidelines.
5. **Rooftop Patio:** The RNA Board requests that the patio be closed by 9:00 pm each evening for use.
6. **Maintenance of Landscaping:** All landscaping and maintenance of the plantings, including those associated with the "flats" on the University Avenue side, are the responsibilities of the building's owner.
7. **Signage for the building:** The RNA Board requests that the property owner submit more detailed plans on signage and receive RNA Board approval before erecting signage. The neighborhood prefers low-key signage, especially non-lighted.
8. **Landscaping on street:** If the city finds that the Mullins' landscaping plan is insufficient in detail, the neighborhood requests the opportunity to review and provide comments on a more detailed plan from the owner/developer.

Thank you for your consideration of the recommendations, comments and conditions outlined in this letter.

Sincerely,

Darsi Foss, President
Regent Neighborhood Association

Re: Mullins Proposal for 2500 block of University

Sept. 12, 2010

Dear Brad Murphy, Planning and Development

I'm the proud owner of the little house on the southwest corner of Kendall and Highland. And I can boast one of the longest ownerships on our block—nearly 35 years!

I travel frequently to the Chicago area, and, unfortunately, my schedule has made it impossible for me to be in town for any of this recent series of meetings involving the proposed Mullins' building on University Ave. (I did make some meetings last year.) So several neighbors suggested that I send a letter instead.

I am extremely distressed and frightened at the possibility that something might be built on the 2500 block of University Avenue that's even taller than the Inntowner Hotel on the northeast corner of University and Highland. For me (and for most of us) it would totally destroy our neighborhood, and that would break my heart. I bought this little house in 1977, when my sons were twelve and nine. There's lots of family history here. And I planted every tree and shrub in the yard. But since it's the quiet home where I 'recover' from the Chicago area, there's no way I could bear to sit on my front porch and be in the shadow of a huge apartment building. Even the Inntowner makes me feel pressed by urban walls—especially at night, when its lights glare.

I've always disliked tall buildings—offices or apartments. When I was a little girl, my parents would drive us kids into "downtown" Chicago after dark. (We lived on the northwest edge of the city limits, surrounded in those years by open prairie and even little woods, believe it or not!). My parents thought my sisters and I would want to see "the real city" and "look at the lights." I found it horrible. I'd think of people living stacked up like that, and I told myself I would never live that way, and never live anywhere near buildings like that.

It's sixty years later, but I haven't changed my mind. Some people love that 'urban scene' and I'm happy they have a place to live. I hate it; and I'm happy that *I* have a place to live, too!

I bought my house on Kendall for the same reason everybody else here did: that genuine "Midwestern-small-town" feel. The houses near me were built in the late 'teens and twenties, after the farm that used to be here was sold to developers. (Before that, my house was a building on that farm and so was the house across Highland! And Mary Lou's house across Kendall was where the German man who ran the farm lived.) Big front porches. Dogs. Kids. Block party every year.

People in this neighborhood chose to live here precisely because they did NOT want to live near large, noisy commercial enterprises with their traffic and congestion--or near massive residential buildings, with anonymous lighted windows blocking the sky at night.

When you decide to change a neighborhood, you destroy what it *was*. No matter what advantages (financial, usually) that change might offer to some *other* people, the place called "home" will no longer exist for the people who currently call it that.

Thieves can steal a few possessions; but only developers and city planners can steal the *place* that is your *home*.

--Joyce Markle 233-3555 (machine always on) Email: Joyce.Markle@nl.edu

Joyce Markle

Frank Clover
2549 Kendall Ave.
Madison, WI 53705
August 18th, 2010

RECEIVED
AUG 16 2010
CITY OF MADISON

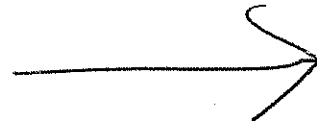
To: Mullins Group/401 N. Carroll St./Madison WI 53703
Mayor's Office/210 M.L.King Jr. Blvd. #403/Madison WI 53703
City Planning Office/215 M.L.King Jr. Blvd. #LL100/Madison WI 53703

Cc. Ald. Shiva Bidar-Sielaff/210 M.L.King Jr. Blvd. #417/Madison WI 53703
Transportation Office/215 M.L.King Jr. Blvd. #100/Madison WI 53703
Goldleaf Development/511 W.Johnson St./Madison WI 53703
Patrick O'Halloran/Lombardino's Restaurant/2500 University Ave./Madison WI 53705
Mary Lou Krase/2510 Kendall Ave./Madison WI 53705
Canon Family/2521 Kendall Ave./Madison WI 53705
Darci Foss/2533 Kendall Ave./Madison WI 53705
Parsen Family/2537 Kendall Ave./Madison WI 53705

Re: proposed changes at Old University Avenue, 2500 block

Some suggestions and concerns appear on the accompanying page.

Enc.



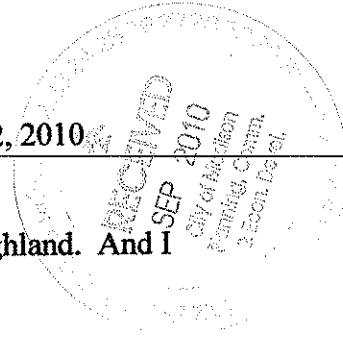
OLD UNIVERSITY AVENUE, 2500 BLOCK: SUGGESTIONS AND CONCERNS
ABOUT THE PROPOSED CHANGES

Before the 1968 construction of the Campus Drive bypass, the street now known as Old University Avenue had a string of single-story businesses extending from Walnut Street to Farley Avenue. The proposed changes to the 2500 Block will bring back a measure of the old business activity, while adding new residences. Following the most recent public meeting [August 16th], I offer here some suggestions and concerns.

1. An apartment complex, set alongside Campus Drive. Four stories instead of six. The new apartment will thus resemble the one located at 2355-2379 Old University Avenue. Many additional automobiles will come into the neighborhood – roughly two cars for each new residential unit. The traffic at Old University Avenue/Highland Avenue will be heavy but manageable. Traffic resulting from a six-story complex would resemble that of a football Saturday, the year around.
2. The north side of Old University Avenue, from Lombardino's Restaurant to Grand Avenue. No residences here. The four-story apartment building [see above, no. 1] will bring a sufficiency of newcomers into the neighborhood. Instead, a mall-like single-story complex, capable of being subdivided for small businesses. One of these subdivisions will be set aside as a neighborhood house, modeled on the Neighborhood House located on Mills Street. The city will rent this structure, and in turn rent out segments for meetings and programs of interest in the neighborhood.
3. Other changes to the area, especially among the small businesses located at or near the Highland/Old University intersection. Here again the city becomes involved: city-sponsored low-cost loans.

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--Joyce Markle 233-3555 (machine always on) Email: Joyce.Markle@nl.edu

Joyce B. Markle

Frank Clover
2549 Kendall Ave.
Madison, WI 53705
September 19th, 2010

To: Mullins Group/401 N. Carroll St./Madison WI 53703
Mayor's Office/210 M.L.King Jr. Blvd. #403/Madison, WI 53703
City Planning Office/215 M.L.King Jr. Blvd. #LL100/Madison, WI 53703
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Madison Public Library/201 West Mifflin St./Madison, WI 53703
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Darci Foss/2533 Kendall Ave./Madison, WI 53705
Parsen Family/2537 Kendall Ave./Madison, WI 53705

Re: proposed changes to Old University Avenue

The proposed changes along Old University Avenue, from Breese Terrace to Farley Avenue. Following the open house of September 16th I offer some observations and suggestions, on the accompanying sheet.

Enc.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO OLD UNIVERSITY AVENUE: OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. The present focal point of the proposed changes is the 2500 Block of Old University Avenue.
2. The proposed apartment building at that location, facing Campus Drive. The tallest existing structures near the Old University/Highland Avenue intersection [e.g. the Inntowner Motel and the apartment building at 2355-2379 Old University Avenue] are a proper guide, as to the height and general appearance of the new structure. Thus, the maximum height of the new structure is FOUR STORIES.
3. Proposed construction along Old University Avenue, north side, from Lombardino's Restaurant to Grand Avenue. The residents of the new apartment building [#2, above] will constitute a sufficient influx of newcomers in the neighborhood. Thus, NO TOWNHOUSES. Instead, 2-3 single-story structures, interspersed with pocket-style parking.
4. Models for the single-story structures suggested above, no. 3:
 - a. Monroe Street Library [pocket style parking].
 - b. The pre-Inntowner 2400 Block of Old University Avenue, north side. There, at that time, a single-story complex consisting of Parisi's Bar and Grill, Miller's Market, and 1-2 specialty shops.
5. Possible renters of the single-story structures suggested above, no. 3:
 - a. City of Madison – a neighborhood house.
 - b. City of Madison – a small library, similar in size and aspect to the one on Monroe Street.
 - c. Small business[es].