

From: [Michael Bridgeman](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Lamp House (3 March 2025)
Date: Friday, February 28, 2025 11:16:13 AM

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To the Plan Commission:

For more than 12 years I have followed the ups and downs of the Lamp House and the block on which it is sited. That has meant commenting multiple times to the Landmarks Commission and the Urban Design Commission as well as attending all of the meetings of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee.

Much of this history -- and the present proposal for amendments -- could have been avoided had the city paid appropriate attention during the last round of comprehensive planning to the unique building Frank Lloyd Wright designed for his boyhood friend Robert Lamp. The Ad Hoc Plan was, in part, a delayed attempt to correct that oversight.

But no good deed goes unpunished and we are back again with an ill-conceived proposal to amend the plan. Please allow it to stand on its own merit as a record of the special committee's thoughtful and careful work. Do not diminish the plan.

The time to deal with the Lamp House Block is in the context of the new downtown plan to be created in about two years. I encourage the Plan Commission to place the proposed amendment on File without Prejudice, the sensible choice made by the Urban Design and Landmarks commissions.

Michael Bridgeman

From: [Nan Fey](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Legistar 86824 Amending the Lamp House Block Report
Date: Friday, February 28, 2025 12:11:03 PM
Attachments: [Fey Comments on Lamp House Report to Plan Commission 3-1-25.pdf](#)

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Please submit the attached comments to all members of the Plan Commission in advance of its 3/3/25 meeting and post them in Legistar File ID# 86824. Thank you.

FYI: The PC Agenda entry “Amending the Lamp House Ad Hoc Committee” is not accurate. The Alder’s Resolution, entitled “Amending the Report of the Lamp House Ad Hoc Plan Committee”, is slightly more accurate, but the actual title of the 2014 report is “Report of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Plan Committee”. Suggest making sure the Common Council’s Agenda entry for March 11 is complete and accurate for the public record when it acts on the recommendations of UDC, Landmarks and Plan Commissions.

Nan Fey, Chair of the Lamp House Block Ad Hoc Committee
444 West Wilson Street, Madison

TO: Plan Commission

FROM: Nan Fey, Chair of the Lamp House Ad Hoc Committee in 2013-14
Plan Commission Chair during Downtown Plan Process 2008-2012

RE: Legistar #86824 Changes to Lamp House Block Report

DATE: March 1, 2025

Alder Bennett's Resolution proposes "amending" the report of an official City committee that was adopted by the Common Council as a supplement to the Downtown Plan in 2014. Changing any language in the report would not only alter the public record and obscure the actual conclusions of the committee at the time, thereby setting an unfortunate precedent, it would also mislead future readers of the Lamp House Block report. Given its procedural problems, I strongly recommend the Plan Commission follow the Staff Recommendation – as both the Urban Design and Landmarks Commissions have done – to **Place the Resolution on File** considering the upcoming Downtown Plan process. To ensure this resolution is not renewed before that update process begins, it should be **With Prejudice**.

Alder Bennett has stated 2 goals for this important downtown block in her district, affordable housing and more community engagement with the Lamp House, both of which will be important topics of discussion for the Downtown Plan update and can currently be achieved without changing a word in the Ad Hoc Committee's report. The residences along East Mifflin Street currently provide "naturally occurring affordable housing" as well as preserving important elements of this historic block, and their owner (who also owns the Lamp House) has been in discussions with the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation on several occasions about the home's value as a community gathering space.

It is also important to note that, since the Lamp House Report was adopted as a supplement to the Downtown Plan, Wright's Taliesin home and studio has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This recognition will draw even more attention to his work in Wisconsin and Madison, where visitors can appreciate Monona Terrace, the Unitarian Meeting House and several private residences, the oldest of which is the nationally and locally landmarked Lamp House.

The Lamp House Report provides a thorough analysis of clearly defined issues at a moment in time that remain highly relevant. Efforts to "amend" it by striking language and diagrams that explain its recommendations would misrepresent the work of the committee. Please recommend the Resolution be **Placed on File With Prejudice**.

From: [John Holzhueter](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Lamp House amendment
Date: Friday, February 28, 2025 12:11:45 PM

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To the Plan Commission:

In the 1980s the University's art museum, then the Elvehjem and now the Chazen, presented a highly acclaimed exhibition about Frank Lloyd Wright's Madison work. Its catalog contained two essays by me--one that famously correctly re-dated his early work in connection with a boathouse design for the UW crew on the Yahara River, and one that less famously set forth the history of the Lamp House and a small worker's dwelling associated with it to provide housing and to increase downtown population density in Madison. Now you are being asked to improve on Wright for the benefit of a developer by discarding a well thought-through plan that had emanated from an earlier effort to amplify density on the Lamp House block. The developer, Bruce Bosben, is relentless. In the early 2000s, while I was working on the Capitol Building Historic Structure Report, he had an employee call me at my Capitol office and ask about the wisdom of putting a parking lot in the front yard of the Lamp House or putting underground parking there. I said both ideas were unwise and contrary to Wright's vision. I immediately telephoned Kitty Rankin, then the city's preservation officer, and reported Mr. Bosben's proposals to her. "Over my dead body," she said. I encourage you to say the same to this proposal to set aside the sensible plans recommended after long, careful deliberation years ago. Density already exists on the Lamp House block; Wright's original plan would have provided more low-cost housing in the first place had it been completely realized (something I do not recommend). Mr. Bosben would erect much higher-cost housing that would not aid the central city's under classes. Please do not set aside the wise existing plans to favor an elected official's idea that would not be realized by discarding them.

Jack Holzhueter