

CITY OF MADISON
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: November 7, 2011

TO: Plan Commission

FROM: Timothy M. Parks, Planner, Planning Division

SUBJECT: **ID# 24335 – Consideration of an alteration to an approved Planned Unit Development–Specific Implementation Plan for 2550 University Avenue to allow the addition of projecting balconies for the residential units on the six-story portion of a mixed-use building, including balconies overlooking Campus Drive**

On January 4, 2011, the Common Council approved a request made by Mullins Group, LLC to rezone 2508-2544 University Avenue and 516-518 Highland Avenue from C2 (General Commercial District) to PUD-GDP-SIP to allow the demolition of six buildings and the construction of a mixed-used building with 130 residential units and approximately 8,600 square feet of retail space. The Plan Commission recommended approval of the rezoning and approved the related demolition permit on December 20, 2010.

The approved mixed-use building will be constructed as a single structure comprised of three distinct vertical components that include a six-story wing that will extend parallel to Campus Drive and have frontage along Highland Avenue before stepping down to a five-story wing that will extend south to University Avenue parallel to the western property line. A three-story building section will extend along University Avenue between the five-story wing and eastern edge of the University Avenue project frontage adjacent to Lombardino's Restaurant, which is not part of the planned unit development. The 130 residential units were approved with a patio or balcony, though most of the units facing Campus Drive and some of the units on the south façade of the six-story building section overlooking an internal courtyard were approved with 9-inch deep French or "juliet" balconies.

On September 27, 2011, the developers submitted a request to amend the project plans to allow the addition of projecting balconies for certain residential units on the six-story portion of the mixed-use building, which is currently under construction. The developers propose to convert 12 French/ juliet balconies located on floors 3-6 of the south-facing façade of the six-story section into full balconies of similar size and configuration to 24 other balconies located on those floors. The converted balconies will join the full balconies that will overlook the courtyard on the three-story and five-story sections of the mixed-use building. The amended plans also call for 24 French/ juliet balconies on floors 3-6 of the northern façade of the six-story building section overlooking Campus Drive to be converted into full balconies.

No other changes to the approved planned unit development are proposed at this time.

The developers indicate that all 36 of the converted balconies proposed will be 5-foot, 9-inches in depth; the balconies on the northern façade will be 11-foot, 2-inches wide. The proposed balconies will be constructed of steel-reinforced poured-in-place concrete. Construction of some of the balconies has already commenced due to the project's schedule, which calls for the building to be completed and occupancy to begin in July 2012. The developers are aware that should the requested alteration not be approved, the balconies will need to be removed.

A portion of all 24 of the expanded balconies proposed along the north side of the building will project into the Campus Drive right of way. An exhibit included with the proposed PUD alteration details the degree of encroachment proposed for each 5.75-foot deep balcony, which will vary from approximately 2.5 feet to 4.7 feet depending where on the wall the balcony is located. The developers submitted a Privilege in Street request to the City's Office of Real Estate Services for approval in August. Final approval of the balcony encroachment will be conditioned on the approval of this proposed PUD alteration.

The Planning Division felt that the developer's proposal to convert the French/ Juliet balconies approved as part of the original planned unit development into full balconies was substantive enough to merit Plan Commission approval following a public hearing rather than approving the changes administratively. In particular, staff felt that the balconies that will overlook and partially project into the Campus Drive right of way warranted review at a public hearing. The proposed design changes were reviewed by Urban Design Commission staff, who recommend approval subject to the minor revisions noted at the end of this memo.

Planning staff believes that the conversion of the 12 French/ Juliet balconies overlooking the internal private courtyard into full balconies similar to the other patios and balconies already approved to overlook that open space represents a reasonable expansion of the open space provided for the future residents of this development and does not believe that the addition of the balconies will detract from the appearance of that facade.

Staff is also generally supportive of the conversion of the 24 balconies along the northern facade of the six-story building into full balconies. Though a portion of the balconies will project across the property line into the right of way of Campus Drive, the balconies will be at least 20 feet from the edge of pavement. A perspective of the northern facade showing the proposed full balconies suggests that they are well integrated into the architecture of the building. Staff also is not concerned about the livability of the dwelling units along the north side of the building with the addition of the full balconies. The existence of noise generated by Campus Drive is an acknowledgement in the residential lease per a condition of the 2010 PUD approval, and the northern wall was constructed to limit highway-generated noise in the adjacent dwelling units.

In closing, the Planning Division recommends **approval** of the proposed alteration to the PUD-SIP subject to the following plan revisions being approved by staff prior to recording:

1. That a typical detail on the construction, materials, and color of the balcony be submitted, and that the detail be more clearly integrated into the building elevations.
2. That a setback dimension be provided from each north-facing balcony to the edge of pavement for Campus Drive.
3. That the width and depth of the 12 balconies facing the internal courtyard be provided.

The proposed PUD-SIP alteration was provided to City Engineering, Traffic Engineering, and Zoning staff for comment. No comments or conditions of approval were submitted by those agencies.