

Parks, Timothy

From: Melissa Berger [melissaberger2@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 11:30 AM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: Fwd: 149 E. Wilson opposition

And another one

Sent from my iPhone
Melissa Berger (608)213-4601

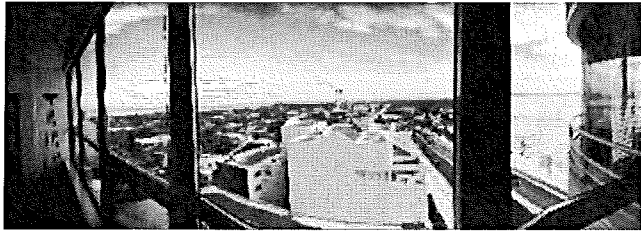
Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Lesgold <[REDACTED]>
Date: January 13, 2014, 10:38:44 AM CST
To: "melissaberger2@gmail.com" <melissaberger2@gmail.com>
Subject: 149 E. Wilson opposition

Ms Berger:

I'm writing to you to express my opposition to the approval of both the zoning change and conditional use of 149 E. Wilson St., a topic on this evening's agenda of the Plan Commission. As so much of the process to oppose specific developments in Madison remains a complete mystery to me (although I've already learned more than I ever wanted to), it's not clear to me if the photographs I passed out at the Urban Design Commission meeting last week are forwarded to the Plan Commission. Therefore, I'm attaching them to this message.





137 E. Wilson St., Unit 1212
Madison, WI 53703

13 January 2014

Mr. Ed Ruckriegel
Fire Marshal
325 W. Johnson St.
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mr. Ruckriegel,

The proposal to redevelop 149 E. Wilson St. violates multiple Madison ordinances and the International Fire Code regarding emergency staging of fire assets and access to the building by fire personnel. Unintentionally, it will compromise the fire lane serving the Marina Condominium and will leave the new building without an adequate, code-complying fire lane access of its own. Hence, it endangers fire safety in what could be the most densely occupied acre in the City.

Because of their location along a busy street in downtown, with three buildings massed against each other, the Marina and the proposed structure, along with the Union Transfer Condominium to the opposite side, comprise a public-safety sensitive area. The City should do everything in its power--indeed, take extraordinary precautions--to plan for emergency response in an area where 210 households would be concentrated on one acre of land. Outside of student housing this is the densest occupation of land anywhere in downtown Madison. It deserves special attention by City authorities and specifically by the Fire Department.

I outline below five principles and problem areas:

1. A capacious and well-designed fire lane is an essential safety element for both the Marina and the proposed building. As the surrounding area does not sufficiently accommodate emergency vehicles, a capacious, well-planned fire lane is essential for neighborhood safety and peace of mind.

1.1 The Madison Code of Ordinances (MCO) affirms that: "Fire access roads shall be established on public property or private property devoted to public use where the parking of motor vehicles or other obstructions may interfere with the ingress and egress of Fire Department vehicles, personnel and equipment for the protection of persons and property." <MCO 34.503(1)(c)>

1.2 The MCO also provides that "At least two (2) exterior walls of each building shall be available for Fire Department access." <MCO 34.503(1)(d)> Space to the side of both the Marina and 149 is limited; to the south it is restricted by a strict railroad easement.

1.3 The Developer recognizes that the fire lane must remain, not only for the safe occupancy of the Marina but also of the proposed new building. "An 18 foot wide by 141 feet deep

fire lane easement currently exists, and must be maintained..." <Developer's Application to Urban Design Commission, 6 6 November, 2013, Exhibit B, p. 1>

2. The width of the proposed fire lane (18 feet) does not comply with code.

2.1. The *International Fire Code (IFC)*, to which Madison adheres, requires that fire lanes be at least 20 feet wide. "Fire apparatus access roads shall have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet (6096 mm), exclusive of shoulders..."

3. The proposed fire lane, designed and built to give access to the Marina, will now be called to do four times as much duty. It will provide emergency access to the new building as well as ingress/egress to its underground parking garage. In addition, it will have loading bay and garbage collection functions which would keep it occupied frequently. In his plans, the Developer has actually designated a portion of the fire lane as a "loading bay."

3.1 "The site includes an 18-foot easement along it's <sic> western edge for a fire lane that serves the Marina --which will also serve as a fire lane for the proposed building and driveway access to our below grade parking structure." <Developers' Application to Urban Design Commission (DARDC), 6 November 2014, Exhibit B, p. 2>

3.2 "The loading bay is located at the south end of the Fire Lane Easement and allows off-street parking for a vehicle with access to the parking structure and elevator core serving all floor levels." <DARDC, p. 7>

3.3 "Fire apparatus access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles. The minimum widths and clearances established in Section 503.2.1 shall be maintained at all times." <IFC 2012 503.4> Clearly, this is not the Developer's intention, since he has designated a portion of the fire lane as a loading bay for long-term parked vehicles.

4. The City of Madison Traffic Division has expressed concern that the fire lane will be overloaded. Not only is the fire lane not compliant; not only will it be dedicated to four different functions and serve four times as many units, it's going to force heavy commercial traffic out onto the street. It is plainly evident that fire equipment would have a more difficult time responding promptly to an emergency.

4.1 "The 18-foot fire lane is unlikely to accommodate both a loading zone and ingress/egress from parking entrance. This may result in moving vehicles and garbage trucks staging within the Butler-King-Wilson street intersection. E. Wilson Street is likely to include a contra flow bike lane in the future, further complicating loading/unloading from E. Wilson Street." <Quoted in *Planning Division Staff Report (PDSR)*, January 3, 2014, p. 22>

5. The PDSR recognizes that the Marina holds an easement over stairs that lead from the building to its fire lane. Those stairs are a necessary part of fire evacuation from the Marina; now more so, since fire response capabilities will possibly be eroded. The condominium board will do everything possible not to change the easement.

5.1 "Existing stairs that serve 137 E. Wilson Street within the fire lane/parking/loading access will not allow for proper driveway operation of the proposed facility. Approval of the proposed site shall be contingent on the applicant providing an 18-foot wide drive aisle, clear of any obstructions, from E. Wilson Street to the parking facility entrance of 149 E. Wilson Street." <PDSR, p. 22>

In conclusion, this project, which has been on an inordinately fast-track for approval by City agencies, should not proceed without a detailed and coordinated assessment by the Fire Department the Traffic Division on what potential impact it would have on emergency responsiveness and effectiveness. The Fire Department's comments on this proposal, as reflected in the *PDSR* (pp. 23-24), are inadequate. They do not address some of the more critical shortcomings of the project.

Sincerely,

Francisco A. Scarano

Parks, Timothy

From: Zellers, Ledell
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 9:14 AM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: FW: Please do not approve 149 E Wilson as currently proposed

Please share with all members of Plan Commission.

Alder Ledell Zellers
608 417 9521

To subscribe to District 2 updates go to: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/council/district2/>

From: Mary Waitrovich <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 8:44 AM
To: Zellers, Ledell
Subject: Please do not approve 149 E Wilson as currently proposed

To Alder Leder Zellers regarding tonight's Planning Commission Meeting:

I am a Marina resident, a 5 year Marina Condo Association Board member and I was on Neighborhood Steering Committee member on this project (which in my opinion was a waste of time as Mr. McGrath did not participate in good faith).

The only way the Planning Commission should approve this project is by requiring a smaller footprint, farther set back from the Marina with cutoffs at the corners and setback of the upper floors, as well as proof of solution to the numerous problems regarding the driveway/firelane between the Marina and proposed building.

Mr. McGrath claims that these changes would make the project economically unfeasible, although we are all supposed to just take his word for that. A smaller building might cut into his profits but would be a much better design for this tiny lot for numerous reasons.

Marina has a concrete emergency access stairway jutting out into the firelane right now which developer wants to, must, remove, but the Marina Board position (on the advice of counsel) is that the easement agreement between the two properties prohibit him from removing the stairway without our permission, and we don't plan to give permission unless he redesigns the building. This matter should be resolved before his plan is approved.

The footprint and size of the building create a cramped, claustrophobic atmosphere in this area when some setbacks or breaks in the "massing" of the building would go a long way toward relieving that and relieving the feelings of animosity that the Marina neighbors now have for this building. We have asked and asked Mr. McGrath to avoid a creating an eternal grudge match between neighbors by tapering the corners to enhance the amount of light and the views for *both* buildings. Why is it good design to put an apartment building on the lake with only a small percentage of the units able to even see the lake? Why is it good design to have residents in both buildings with *nothing* to look out at but each others' living spaces less than 10 yards away or a brick wall 10 feet away? Every single unit in the Marina can see Lake Monona. Why can't the units in this building? It would be better for BOTH building if there was more space between them.

Everyone in the Marina knows a building is going to be built on that lot. Redesign as we have suggested would mitigate the huge negative effects on the neighboring building. The Planning Commission should not approve this project without sending it back to the developer for a serious redesign. Thank you.

Mary Waitrovich
[REDACTED] E Wilson, [REDACTED]
Madison
[REDACTED]

--
Mary Waitrovich
Media Plus You, LCC
[REDACTED]



From: Julie Van Cleave
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 2:58 PM
To: Parks, Timothy
Subject: 149 E Wilson

Plan Commissioners,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed mixed-use development at 149 E. Wilson Street. While technically mixed-use, it is primarily a very high density apartment project on a .37 acre highly visible Lake Monona lake-facing property. I am hoping that the Plan Commission completes a thorough review of these plans, which seem to be on an especially fast timetable given the importance of our lakefront to the Madison community and our downtown visitors and lake users. In attending the recent Urban Design Commission meeting, I was gratified to hear that the City of Madison would consider this a 'century' type of property which should be of the highest materials and quality. Unfortunately, the proposed project appears to have the equivalent of room air conditioners for the 127 individual units, no true common or public areas of note, minimalist balconies and other elements, any of which would take it out of contention for a building expected to be admired for 100 years.

My deepest area of concern is that the density of the building amplifies the building's largest Achilles heel – the fact that there is not a parking or stopping place in front of the building. In fact it is all yellow curbed in the entire front face of the building as it is effectively the top of the 'T' intersection of Butler, King and Wilson, and the traffic signal is right in the middle of the building. (This traffic signal was left off of the architectural drawings presented to the Urban Design Commission.) Technically the intersections of Wilson, King and Butler is not a 'T' intersection – it is actually more complex than that, and it has the added complexity of being the spot of convergence of the one- and two- way directional Wilson street. There is no place for a loading zone in front of the building and it is very likely that the moving vans and other construction and delivery vehicles will illegally stop within the intersection, and many will also spill over to block adjacent driveways. It will turn this already confusing little intersection into a bona fide nightmare. When this is coupled with a building that is designed to have high turnover with studio apartments and other small units (not a category of long-term housing), the Achilles heel is made so much worse.

I appreciate the difficulties in going through this process, but I respectfully ask that a very thoughtful approach be taken for this century location, and that the important care be taken to best match the development with the importance and limitations of the location.

Sincerely,

Julie Van Cleave
