



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 122 State Street
Application Type: Informational Presentation for a New Planned Development (PD)
UDC will be an Advisory Body
Legistar File ID #: [93475](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Joe McMormick, JD McCormick Properties | Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing to renovate the existing building located at 122 State Street to accommodate 35 residential dwelling units and a 1,500 square-foot commercial space on the ground floor. The proposed renovations include a building addition to add a seventh story to the existing six-story building, as well as changes to the exterior building material palette.

Approval Standards: The UDC will be an **advisory body** to the Plan Commission on this request when a formal application is submitted. For Planned Developments the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in the PD Standards for Approval (attached for reference), but including, more specifically:

PD Standard (e), which generally speaks to coordinating “...*architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.*”

PD Standard (h), which outlines conditions that apply to requests for excess height, including:

1. The excess height is **compatible with the existing or planned** (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) **character of the surrounding area**, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.
2. The excess height allows for a **demonstrated higher quality building** than could be achieved without the additional stories.
3. The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the project and create a pleasing visual relationship with them. [Staff note that this is **not applicable** as there is not an adjacent landmark.]
4. For projects proposed in priority viewsheds and other views and vistas identified on the Views and Vistas Map in the City of Madison Downtown Plan, **there are no negative impacts on the viewshed as demonstrated by viewshed studies prepared by the applicant.**

Zoning Related Information: Staff note that project site is currently zoned Planned Development (PD), which was originally approved in September 2018. That approval included the redevelopment of the project site and the adjacent parcels, 118 and 124-126 State Street, with a nine-story hotel. The hotel project did not proceed, and the adjacent parcels have since been rezoned back to their previous zoning designation Downtown Core (DC). The project site has since remained in the PD zoning district.

While the application materials do not indicate that this is a Planned Development project, staff believe that maintaining the PD zoning would be the only way for a building in excess of the Downtown Height Map limitations to move forward. Staff have referenced the PD standards in this report.

The project site is subject to the height requirements as specified in the Zoning Code pursuant to MGO 28.071, Downtown Height Map. The Downtown Height Map includes the project site in two different height zones, including four stories (60 feet) for the portion of the project site that is closest to State Street, and six stories (88 feet) for the portion of the project site that fronts along W Dayton Street and N Carroll Street. The proposed building is seven stories as determined by the Zoning Administrator based on the building shown on the submittal materials. Additional heights can be requested as part of a Planned Development, which is the current zoning designation. [Note: Planning and Zoning staff have determined that a Planned Development district to renovate and expand the building at 122 State would effectively be a new PD district, since the current zoning PD reflects the now defunct hotel project approved in 2018.]

Additionally, along the State Street frontage, there is also a requirement to step the building back 30 feet above the fourth story. The existing building **does not** meet the stepback requirement and is considered a legal nonconforming building. While nonconforming buildings can be modified, pursuant to MGO 28.192, any additions or enlargements shall conform to the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, including, in this case, the building stepback requirement.

Finally, as proposed the building **does not** comply with the required building stepback along the State Street frontage. To do so, the building stepback at the seventh floor would need to be increased from 16' 6" to 30 feet. This has been communicated to the development team. Staff note that this stepback requirement **cannot be modified** as part of a Planned Development request pursuant to MGO [28.098\(2\)](#): **For the development proposal to move forward, the seventh-floor building addition will need to be modified to meet this requirement.**

Adopted Plan Recommendations: The project site is in the [Downtown Plan](#) planning area, in the State Street Neighborhood. Generally, the recommendations included in the Downtown Plan speak to encouraging a diverse mix of uses, and creating a unique sense of place, an enhanced design at the pedestrian level and human-scale development.

The Downtown Plan also includes recommendations that are intended to *"...preserve and enhance the identified priority viewsheds and corridors"*, as well as encourage variations in building height and design to *"...create a varied and interesting skyline."* More specifically, the Downtown Plan identifies State Street as a premiere view corridor, where careful consideration was given to building setbacks, height and stepbacks to protect terminal views within the corridor. This includes the maximum building heights, setbacks and building stepbacks within the State Street corridor as enumerated in the Zoning Code, [MGO 28.071](#).

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommend that the UDC provide feedback on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards and the following design-related considerations.

- **Building Design and Composition.** First, staff commends the applicant team for pursuing a building renovation versus demolition. Renovating an existing building ensures not only that some of the history in the built environment is being maintained but also that the city's larger sustainability goals are being furthered. Historic preservation efforts are also encouraged in PD Zoning.

While the scope of the proposed work does not constitute full redevelopment of the project site, it does reflect a significant transformation of the existing building. In addition, the project site location is highly visible with frontage on multiple streets, including State Street, W Dayton Street, and N Carroll Street. As such, careful consideration should be given to the overall design and composition of the building, including as it relates to:

- Using four-sided architecture and maintaining the same level of design, detailing and materials across all elevations,
- Maintaining a positive building orientation towards each street frontage with active uses and entries as well as pedestrian scale materials and details that add interest and breakdown mass and scale (i.e., standard masonry, awnings, canopies, changes in plane where materials/floors transition, etc.),
- Minimizing blank wall expanses, including those along N Carroll Street,
- Designing with a sensitivity to context in terms of materials, rhythm and datum lines,
- Creating positive termination at the top of the building (i.e., incorporating a decorative cornice element versus a building cap), and
- In addition to modifying the seventh floor to comply with the building setback requirements, consideration should be given to how that element fits into the overall building composition versus introducing a different roof form or design details and materials.

Staff request the UDC's feedback on the proposed building design and composition.

- **Building Materials.** While the exterior materials are not labeled on the elevation drawings, the exterior material palette appears to be primarily comprised of two types of masonry, including a larger format brick on the ground floor and a standard size brick on floors 2-5, and some sort of composite panel on floors 6-7. Consideration should be given to whether simplifying the materials and detailing presented could result in a more cohesive, stronger architectural expression (i.e., one masonry type and eliminating the composite material on the top floor to create a cohesive building design from sidewalk to cornice).

Staff request the UDC's feedback on the proposed material palette.

- **Long Views.** As indicated in the Downtown Plan, State Street is a premier view corridor providing termination views of both the State Capital and UW Campus. The Downtown Plan noted the importance of protecting certain vantage points in the city, as well as encouraging variation and creativity in the design of buildings, especially in the top building component. Within the State Street corridor, and throughout downtown, careful consideration has been given to the building height, setback and setback requirements enumerated in the Downtown Plan and Zoning Code. While additional height has previously been approved on this site, careful consideration should be given to the impacts of the current proposal.

Given the building height and location, the existing building is currently highly visible and will continue to be so, including as viewed from various locations within the State Street corridor, from a distance along W Dayton Street and N Carroll Street. As such, careful consideration should be given to overall building design and composition as part of the overall cityscape and how it will read from a distance, especially the finish at the top of the building and upper floors.

Staff request the UDC's feedback on the design and finish at the top of the building.

- **Architectural/Mechanical Louvers.** Architectural/mechanical louvers are not shown on the elevation drawings but are commonly associated with residential and commercial development. It has been the current practice to locate architectural/mechanical louvers so that they are not located on street-facing

or on highly visible facades, although they have been approved in some situations when found to be well-integrated into the façade's design.

Given the highly visible location of the project site, adjacent to multiple street frontages, staff request the UDC's feedback on the design and finish detailing of any architectural or HVAC louvers.

- **Skywalk Pedestrian Connection.** Currently, there is an existing enclosed pedestrian bridge that spans over W Dayton Street, providing a connection from the State Street-Capitol Parking Ramp to the existing building. The pedestrian bridge was constructed in the 1970s and is governed by a 40-year lease between the owners of 122 State and the City executed in 2004. The lease is administered by the City's Office of Real Estate Services (ORES). Typically, while elements in the public right-of-way typically do not come before the UDC, in consultation with ORES, staff believe that the design of the pedestrian bridge plays an important role in overall design and composition of the proposed development, as well as its impacts on the terminating views at the end of the W Dayton Street of the Overture Center and State Street. As such, consideration should be given to the design and materials of the skywalk as it relates to creating a cohesive architectural expression that is complementary, but ancillary, to the proposed building, maintaining a higher level of transparency to limit viewshed impacts, and/or creating an artistic expression. In making this determination, the UDC may consider whether any changes to the exterior of the pedestrian bridge, which was reclad in 2004, are necessary or if the existing materials/design on crossing should remain in its current state.

Staff request the UDC's feedback on the overall design of the skywalk pedestrian bridge.