



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 322 East Washington Avenue
Application Type: New Development in UMX Zoning and Urban Design District (UDD) No. 4 Informational Presentation
Legistar File ID # [68154](#)
Prepared By: Kevin Firchow, Acting UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Mark Binkowski, MRB Holdings | St. John’s Lutheran Church

Project Description: The applicant is providing an informational presentation regarding the redevelopment of the St. John’s Lutheran Church site with a 10-story mixed-use building. The ground floor would include worship and community space with 126 residential units located on the upper nine (9) levels. The development is currently planned to have an affordable housing component.

Project Schedule:

- The applicant anticipates filing a formal land use application in the near future.

Approval Standards:

Upon formal submittal, the UDC would be both an **approving and advisory body** on this request. As an approving body, the UDC would be reviewing this as new development in Urban Design District 4 (“UDD 4”). This requires that the Urban Design Commission to review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(11).

As an advisory body, Section MGO 28.076(4)(c) requires that all new buildings greater than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet or more than four (4) stories shall obtain conditional use approval by the Plan Commission after UDC review for conformity to the design standards in Sec. 28.071(3) and the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#). This proposal also includes a request for two bonus stories as allowed by the Zoning Code as described in Section 28.071(2). Further information on those standards is described below.

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

Staff recommends that the UDC provide feedback based on the aforementioned standards.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests that the UDC include feedback on the following considerations as part of this informational review.

- **Bonus Stories.** The [Downtown Plan](#) includes this area within “Additional Height Area H” which extends along the north side of East Washington Avenue, Between Blair and Webster Streets. The plan notes, in part, that while tall buildings are appropriate here, the area also functions as a transition area to some extent. In order to encourage taller buildings that provide continuity with the Capital Gateway Corridor and further enhance this important approach to Downtown, up to two bonus stories (beyond the base eight (8) stories) may be considered.”

Such the “bonus” stories must be evaluated by the Plan Commission against the following standards:

- a. *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.*
 - b. *The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.*
 - c. *The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the projects and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.*
 - d. *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.*
- **Ground Level Activation.** Staff requests that UDC provide feedback regarding the ground level activation along East Washington Avenue, especially near the North Hancock Street corner.