



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 700 - 740 Regent Street
Application Type: Planned Development (PD) – Initial/Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID # [68730](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Linda Irving, Trinitas Development, LLC | Chris Sachse, BKV Group | The Alexander Company

Project Description: The applicant is seeking Initial/Final Approval for a new 12-story residential building with approximately 363 apartment units and 322 structured parking stalls to be shared with the adjacent office uses. The proposed development will also include a resident club lounge, fitness center, multiple outdoor landscaped terraces and a rooftop pool.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation on December 15, 2021.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal on March 21, 2022.
- The Common Council will review the CSM on March 29, 2022.

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on the PD request. As with any Planned Development, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code sections [28.098\(1\)](#), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval (PD Standards Attached).

Summary of Design Considerations

Planning Division staff requests that the UDC base its advisory recommendation on the aforementioned standards for Planned Developments. As part of its recommendation, staff recommends consideration be given to the following:

- **Building Composition, Massing, and Longviews.** While the adopted Downtown Height Map includes a maximum height of 12 stories, staff requests that the UDC provide feedback on the building's overall massing and composition, which is considerably larger than other buildings within this Planned Development. Due to the upper-level prominence of the façade, consideration should be given to how the composition "reads" from longer distances. Composition considerations were discussed by the UDC during the Informational Presentation. Staff requests UDC review those comments and believes consideration should be given to finding a balance between adequately articulating and modulating the large façade, while not creating unnecessarily complex elevations.

In regards to balconies, staff notes that the projecting balconies located along the north façade are projecting over City owned lands. The development team and the City are currently working on a lease. Permanently built structures, including balconies attached to a building will not be permitted.

- **Ground Level Activation.** During the Informational Presentation, some Commissioners raised concerns on the lack of activation along the multi-use path. Staff notes that while the project site is not directly situated along a street, there is a unique opportunity to engage the existing, heavily-traveled multi-use path along the site's north side, not only from an open space perspective, but from an architectural one.

Members of the UDC previously requested that building elements be modified to maximize the amount of lobby and other non-parking spaces along this frontage. The applicant has made some shifts to the ground level programming, though a substantial part of building's ground level remains as structured parking. Staff estimates that the percentage of parking vs. other uses is similar to the recently completed hotel to the north, though this building has a larger footprint along the path, leaving significant blank spaces along the path. Staff has met with the development team multiple times since the Informational Presentation and the applicant has provided detailed descriptions on how they are trying to address this through architectural detailing, lighting, programming, and landscaping.

As this has been a long-standing discussion point, staff requests the Commission's feedback on the overall ground level activation as part of the UDC's recommendation to the Plan Commission.

- **Courtyard/Light Well Oriented Units.** As noted in the previous report, several residences are oriented along an interior, enclosed courtyard feature. The applicant has noted that this feature may be programmed with projecting movies or other spaces. As part of the UDC's comments to Plan Commission, staff requests UDC provide feedback on this element.
- **Signage.** Potential sign areas and sign types are noted on the building elevations. Staff requests UDC review and comment on the proposed sign locations and types. Please note that separate review and approval will be required for all new signage.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

Staff refers the Commission to their comments from the December 15, 2021, Informational Presentation:

- I like this building. I'm not a fan of the way the materials are displayed. I do like the massing, but I struggle with the randomness of the balconies, more consistency, may not belong in all the locations shown. Once you develop your renderings the material will work itself out.
- That courtyard, I don't know that it will work well for you, unless I'm misunderstanding its purpose.
- Your plan says courtyard, which is a very different definition to me than light well.
- The jog along the tracks where you're breaking up the building is really successful, it looks dynamic, breaks up the façade as you go higher over the entrance, which is subtle and a point of interest.
- I have concerns about feeling safe at night along that dark bike path and having your entry there, this is a backside walk. During the day it is fine, but at night it helps if you can see your entrance. I would suggest a bump out or something like that and I would question people wanting to walk back there at night.
- I like the building, the textural effect of the cladding, long linear buildings need something like that. I don't mind the perceived randomness of the slots and set-ins, I would like to see more balconies.
- Would like to see a rendering of the experience of that light well, maybe a daylight or shadow study of that area.
- The entrance, right now it's going to need some kind of light element, not only to address the comment about safety, but it doesn't have an overhang or any other queue that it is the main entrance, it could use something.

- Look at this a bit more fundamentally as a piece of urban design, and remember our response to the hotel just up the bike path. Similarly, they turned their back on the bike path, this building is not on a street so the path becomes the defacto street. The applicant even indicated people would be coming in via the bike path. I'd like to challenge them to take that lobby and run it east-west. I know it effects parking but from an urban design standpoint that's what we should be looking at as a Commission.
- Not only how people are going to come and go but embracing and activating that north side. Design wise and form you've hit it, but the amenity space should be the outdoor space. Consider this to be the street. I would even challenge the roof, greenspace can be used all throughout the year. What is the actual usability of that swimming pool?
- Activating the bike path side, at least extending the lobby into the parking area, flipping it is an excellent idea. Taking the bicycle entrance and making a bike center like the one downtown, making a retail space with a storefront presence. I have a real concern about the amount of inactive space along the bike path. To the balconies, I actually love the randomness of them, it's part of the interest.
- They have to make sense, there's a little bit too much randomness that starts to detract.

ATTACHMENT
PD Zoning Statement of Purpose and Standards

28.098 (1) Statement of Purpose.

The Planned Development (PD) District is established to provide a voluntary regulatory framework as a means to facilitate the unique development of land in an integrated and innovative fashion, to allow for flexibility in site design, and to encourage development that is sensitive to environmental, cultural, and economic considerations, and that features high-quality architecture and building materials. In addition, the Planned Development District is intended to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.
- (b) Promotion of integrated land uses allowing for a mixture of residential, commercial, and public facilities along corridors and in transitional areas, with enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and amenities.
- (c) Preservation and enhancement of important environmental features through careful and sensitive placement of buildings and facilities.
- (d) Preservation of historic buildings, structures, or landscape features through adaptive reuse of public or private preservation of land.
- (e) Provision of more adequate, usable, and suitably located open space, recreational amenities, and other public facilities than would otherwise be provided under conventional land development techniques.
- (f) Facilitation of high-quality development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.

28.098(2) Approval Standards for Project

The standards for approval of a zoning map amendment to the PD District, or any major alteration to an approved General Development Plan, are as follows:

- (a) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other base zoning district can be used to achieve a substantially similar pattern of development. Planned developments shall not be allowed simply for the purpose of increasing overall density or allowing development that otherwise could not be approved unless the development also meets one or more of the objectives of (1) above. Conditions under which planned development may be appropriate include:
 - 1. Site conditions such as steep topography or other unusual physical features; or
 - 2. Redevelopment of an existing area or use of an infill site that could not be reasonably developed under base zoning district requirements.
- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (c) The PD District plan shall not adversely affect the economic health of the City or the area of the City where the development is proposed. The City shall be able to provide municipal services to the property where the planned development is proposed without a significant increase of the cost of providing those services or economic impact on municipal utilities serving that area.

- (d) The PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands. A traffic demand management plan may be required as a way to resolve traffic and parking concerns. The Plan shall include measurable goals, strategies, and actions to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at congested times of day. Strategies and actions may include, but are not limited to, carpools and vanpools; public and private transit; promotion of bicycling, walking and other non-motorized travel; flexible work schedules and parking management programs to substantially reduce automobile trips.
- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate 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.
- (f) The PD District plan shall include open space suitable to the type and character of development proposed, including for projects with residential components, a mix of structured and natural spaces for use by residents and visitors. Areas for stormwater management, parking, or in the public right of way shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
- (g) The PD district shall include suitable assurances that each phase could be completed in a manner that would not result in an adverse effect upon the community as a result of termination at that point.
- (h) When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in Section 28.071(2)(a) Downtown Height Map, except as provided for in Section 28.071(2)(a)1. and Section 28.071(2)(b), the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans and no application for excess height shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 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.
 - 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.
- (i) When applying the above standards to an application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks required by Section 28.071(2)(c) Downtown Stepback Map, the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans, including the downtown plan. No application to reduce or eliminate stepbacks may be granted unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The lot is a corner parcel.
 - 2. The lot is not part of a larger assemblage of properties.
 - 3. The entire lot is vacant or improved with only a surface parking lot.
 - 4. No principal buildings on the lot have been demolished or removed since the effective date of this ordinance