April 28, 2025

Mr. Colin Punt
Planner
City of Madison Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Suite 017
Madison, WI 53703

Re: Letter of Intent- 501 E Washington Avenue Land Use Application

Mr. Punt:

Wash Franklin, LLC c/o Bear Development, LLC ("Bear") is pleased to submit this Land Use Application for our proposed project at 501 E Washington Avenue. This application package includes the required development plans, LND-A, LND-B, Demolition Permit, Urban Design Commission, Landmarks and Subdivision/CSM applications.

Introduction:

Bear is proposing to acquire and redevelop 501 E Washington Avenue into a seven-story multifamily building containing 223-dwelling units. The existing, vacant commercial building and site improvements will be demolished as part of the project, and we anticipated starting construction in January 2026. The approximately 0.94-acre site has frontage on East Washington Avenue, South Franklin Street and South Blair Street.

The proposed building will have its pedestrian and vehicular entrances located along South Franklin Street. The unit mix consists of 196 one-bedroom units and 27-two-bedroom units. On-site parking will be provided in a lower-level parking deck containing 68-parking stalls. The building includes several resident amenities such as a co-working space, community room, fitness center, on-site management office, resident storage lockers and a dedicated bike storage area.

Project Team:

Applicant/Developer:
Wash Franklin, LLC
c/o Bear Development, LLC
4011 80th Street
Kenosha, WI 53142
Contact: Nick Orthmann
Phone: 262-308-2656
Email: northmann@beardevelopment.com

Architect:
JLA Architects
800 W Broadway, Suite 200
Monona, WI 53713
Contact: Marc Ott
Phone: 608-442-3867
Email: mott@jla-ap.com

Civil Engineer/Landscape Architect/Surveyor:
JSD Professional Services, Inc.
161 Horizon Dr Suite 101
Verona, WI 53593
Contact: Matt Haase
Phone: 608-893-0085
Email: matt.haase@jsdinc.com

Project & Site Details:

- Parcel ID: 251/0709-133-1601-8
- Zoning: Urban Mixed-Use (UMX)
- Land Use: Downtown Core (DC)
- Urban Design District: Urban Design District 4
- Aldermanic District: District 6
- Neighborhood: Capitol Neighborhoods
- Business Association Central Business Improvement District (BID #1)
- Lot Area: 40,784 SF / 0.94 acres (per GIS)
- Building Gross Square Footage: 229,673 SF
- Building Height: 7-stories (complies with zoning & height map)
- Dwelling Units: 223 units
    - 1 Bedrooms: 196 units
    - 2 Bedrooms: 27 units
    - Density: 237 units / acre
- Parking Stalls: 68 stalls (all in lower-level parking structure)
    - EV Ready: 14 stalls
    - EV Installed: 3 stalls
- Bike Parking: 223 stalls
    - Long-Term 223 stalls

Requested Approvals:

Conditional Use Permit: the property is zoned UMX; per table 28E-2 of the Zoning Ordinance a Conditional Use Permit is required for multi-family buildings with >8 units.

Demolition Permit: we are requesting approval of a Demolition Permit to raze the existing commercial building on site, which would be done as part of the overall construction of the newly proposed multifamily building. The site was filed on the City's Demolition List Serv on November 19, 2024 and reviewed by the Landmarks Commission on December 9, 2024. No known historic value was found.

Urban Design Commission: the property is in Urban Design District 4 therefore we are requesting the Urban Design Commission review the plans as part of this Land Use Application. Prior to submission of the full Land Use Application, Bear made an informational presentation to the Urban Design Commission on March 5, 2025.

Landmarks Adjacency: The project is located adjacent to 512 E Main Street which is a designated landmark, and we have provided the information necessary for the adjacency review.

Subdivision / CSM: the site is currently a single tax parcel and we are requesting the approval of a Certified Survey Map to combine underlying lots.

Proposed Meeting Schedule:

- Application Submittal April 28, 2025
- Landmarks Commission (adjacency review) June 2, 2025
- Urban Design Commission (initial & final) June 11, 2025
- Planning Commission June 23, 2025
- Common Council July 1, 2025

Project Phasing & Schedule:

Demolition of the existing building and construction of the proposed building will be completed at once with no phasing contemplated. Construction/demolition is expected to commence in January 2026 and is anticipated to be completed in the first quarter of 2028.

City & Neighborhood Input:

During the pre-submittal process the development team met with a variety of stakeholders whose input has helped shape the proposal:

- City of Madison Staff- Bear has consulted with City Staff several times during the pre-submittal process including a pre-development meeting, a Development Assistance Team Meeting, and several informal consultations.
- Urban Design Commission- The development team gave an informational presentation to the UDC on March 5, 2025.
- Aldermanic, Neighborhood, and Business Association Outreach- Bear has provided all necessary notice emails for the approvals requested in this application. Additionally, we participated in two neighborhood meetings hosted by the District 6 Alderperson on January 8, 2025, and April 3, 2025.

Management / Operating Plan:

The project will be financed primarily with Tax-Exempt Bonds and 4% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits issued by WHEDA. All 223 units will be rent- and income-restricted with an average AMI of 60%, which will be evidenced by a Land Use Restriction Agreement. Bear, via Wash Franklin, LLC will be the long-term (minimum 15-years) owner. Bear will be responsible for asset management of the property and Bear Property Management, Inc. (part of the Bear Real Estate Group of Companies) will handle day-to-day property management activities. Construction of the project will be managed by Construction Management Associates, Inc. (also part of the Bear Real Estate Group of Companies).

A detailed management plan can be provided upon request.

Public Subsidy:

Bear has requested Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) assistance for the project. The project is located adjacent to TID 53 and we have completed the City's "free look" process and have been working closely with staff on the approval process.

Loading Zone:

Bear is requesting a dedicated loading zone in the right of way along South Franklin Street as shown on sheet C300 of the submitted plans. The loading zone is intended to facilitate package drop off and resident move-ins and move-outs. Prior to submission we had preliminary discussions with Traffic Engineering Staff who were supportive of this concept.

Reuse & Recycling Plan:

Bear acknowledges that approval of a Reuse & Recycling Plan will be required prior to the issuance of permits. We plan to complete this during the Site Plan Verification stage.

Transportation Demand Management Plan:

A Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan has been provided with this application.

Tree Report:

A Street Tree Report has been provided with this application.

Stormwater Report:

Bear acknowledges that a Stormwater Management Report will be required prior to the issuance of permits. We plan to complete this during the Site Plan Verification stage.

Urban Design District 4:

The project is located in Urban Design District 4. An explanation of how the proposal addresses each of the required design criteria is below:

- Public Rights-of-Way: Public rights-of-way will include appropriate trees and shrubs and provide a degree of visual continuity per UDD 4. A Street Tree Report has been provided with this land use application.

- Off-Street Parking: All parking is structured within the building footprint in the lower-level garage and compliant with UDD 4.

- Signs: Sign plans need to be developed but will conform to Madison Ordinances and be integrated with the architecture of the building per UDD 4 requirements.

- Building Design: Design is consistent with UDD 4 requirements. Exterior building materials are low maintenance and harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood. Materials include a mix of masonry, fiber cement lap siding, fiber cement panel, and metal panel. The proposed color palette is a mix of charcoal, white and beige colors. The brick is used primarily at the lower level to anchor the building with a mix of materials at the upper level providing variation in the façade. Street facing building facades have been broken up, or oriented to reduce the massing per UDD 4 requirements. A section of the building on the east side adjacent to the single-family homes has been setback above the precast level to further break up the facade. Balconies are included to further create variation in the elevations. The development will be high-quality that creates and sustains long-term economic vitality while blending in with neighboring buildings in the First Settlement District.

- Lighting: The photometric plan will comply with UDD 4 guidelines, and the provided lighting will be adequate but not excessive and provides functionality to serve the development.

- Landscaping: The landscape plan complies with UDD 4 guidelines. The landscaping is functional and decorative, and provided via a mix of planter boxes along sidewalks, foundation plantings and more vertical landscape elements in front of the townhome units along South Franklin Street.

Downtown Core & UMX:

The building has been designed to incorporate principles from the city's Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. The building is sited per the setbacks required by zoning with active spaces and walkup units along the street level on East Washington Avenue and South Franklin Street, with the entry lobby creating a strong corner element. Access to the lower-level parking garage has been located based on staff feedback and placed away from the intersection of East Washington and South Franklin. Site landscaping and lighting are provided at an appropriate scale and intensity to enhance the building and its interface with the right of way. The building's mass and scale is consistent with the downtown height map and adjacent developments along the East Washington Avenue Corridor, and at the pedestrian level along South Franklin Street the walk-up units read as townhomes which create a welcoming street scene. Exterior materials have been selected to be contemporary, yet simple, and also appropriate for the

urban setting while blending with the neighboring historic district and each side of the building has been designed with high quality materials and articulation as the shape of the site provides visibility from multiple streets.

Landmarks Adjacency:

The proposed building is consistent with the downtown height map, zoning ordinance and similar in bulk and scale to nearby developments along the East Washington Avenue Corridor. Additionally, design choices have been made so that the building is not overly large and visually intrusive as to adversely affect the character of the adjacent Landmark at 512 E Main Street, as well as the balance of the First Settlement District which borders the project site.

Based on early feedback from stakeholder and staff, the "U" portion of the building was reorientated from the East Washington façade to open up towards the First Settlement District along the southeast elevation of the building. Additional stepbacks above the precast level of the building have been incorporated on the southeastern façade to pull the upper floors of the building away from the adjacent landmark. Balconies along the southeastern façade have been included only on units located closer to Blair Street away from the adjacent landmark, to provide visual relief in the façade but also maintaining privacy by placing outdoor resident space away from the landmark. The building's exterior materials have been selected to blend with the First Settlement District which also provides a sense of visual continuity in the area. Foundation plantings have been provided along the southeast façade of the building as well.

Our team is excited about the prospect of providing much-needed quality workforce housing in a prominent location in the City. We look forward to working with City staff and elected officials to bring the project to fruition. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Nick Orthmann
Project Manager
Bear Development, LLC