

From: [Scanlon, Amy](#)
To: [Scanlon, Amy](#)
Subject: FW: SBA proposal - comments from MNA
Date: Monday, February 03, 2014 3:16:08 PM

From: Michael Jacob
Sent: Monday, February 03, 2014 3:13 PM
To: Rummel, Marsha; Scanlon, Amy; David McLean; Stuart Levitan; Jason Fowler; Michael Rosenblum; christina.slattery@meadhunt.com; Erica Fox Gehrig
Subject: SBA proposal - comments from MNA

2/3/14

Dear Urban Design Commission Members,

I write to you on behalf of the Marquette Neighborhood Association (MNA) Board of Directors regarding the Steve Brown Apartments proposal for 121-127 W. Gilman before you this evening. My intent was to bring this communication to you in person, but of course the January meeting was cancelled due to weather and I unfortunately have other obligations this evening.

This communication is less about the specifics of the project than it is about what some of its elements represent and the implications for neighborhoods faced with future developments. MNA's concerns relate to three issues: demolition of contributing buildings in a historic district, demolition by neglect and massing vis a vis the visually related area.

Some may question whether removal of 12% of the structures that contribute to a historic district is sufficiently large to raise concerns. We believe it is, for two reasons: 1) once they are gone they are gone for good and the overall historic district becomes that much "less historic"; 2) what remains becomes the new base, so if each individual project is considered acceptable in part because it "only" removes an eighth of the contributing buildings, it is not difficult to imagine a series of projects adding up to have a much larger impact over time.

The building at 127 W. Gilman appears to be a classic case of potential purposeful neglect. How you decide whether this building is in fact one of those situations will set an important bar for how other properties are treated by those with development interests in properties scattered throughout many parts of the city, especially in the area covered by MNA.

Finally, it appears that there are significant questions remaining about massing in relation to the visually related area around the development. Again, these are details and decisions with which you are tasked to navigate; how (much less whether) you do so will set an important bar for future developments that are certain to come before many of Madison's neighborhoods, especially the Wil-Mar area.

Sincerely,

Michael Jacob, President
Marquette Neighborhood Association