



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 119-121 North Butler & 120-124 North Hancock Streets

Application Type: Initial Approval

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The applicant is before the Urban Design Commission (UDC) for initial approval for a three-building residential building complex. Two existing buildings with four units will remain and a new four-story, 52-unit building is proposed. Please note, an earlier concept plan for the subject site was previously before the UDC for an informational presentation on February 24, 2016.

Background Information

A residential development was approved on the subject properties as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) in 2008. That project was never constructed and the approval has expired. Since that approval, the City has adopted its Downtown Plan (2012) and a new Zoning Code (2013). Today the property is zoned DR-1 (Downtown Residential- 1 District) and residential building complexes and multi-family dwelling buildings with greater than eight (8) units require conditional use approval.

The architect has made some modifications since the February 2016 presentation in response to previously-provided feedback. The building has been reduced in depth by approximately 15 feet. The applicant has revised the structure to further break up the street-facing massing. The material palette has been revised and now includes additional brick.

While several alterations have been made, the Planning Division continues to have ongoing concerns with aspects of the proposal that are not consistent with the City's adopted plans. Many of the below comments were noted in the previous report to the UDC. The Conditional Use approval standards state that the City Plan Commission "shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the recommendations in the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan and any applicable, neighborhood, neighborhood development, or special area plan..."

In summary, the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use chapter includes several general adopted goals, objectives, and policies related to infill development and established neighborhoods. Examples include:

- **Objective 22, Policy 4** recommends that redevelopment scale and density is reasonably compatible with established neighborhood character.
- **Objective 24, Policy 1** recommends that redevelopment incorporate or improve upon existing positive qualities such as building proportion, shape, and pattern of buildings and yards.

More specific recommendations are included within the Downtown Plan. (This is available online at: http://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/documents/Downtown_Plan.pdf):

- **Objective 4.11 and Recommendations 101-103** pertain specifically to the subject area. These statements and other recommendations state that redevelopment should reflect the scale and rhythm of surrounding structures, promote larger family-supportive and work-force housing in new developments, and provide ample on-site open space.

Approval Standards

The Urban Design Commission is advisory to the Plan Commission on this request. This request is subject to the approval standards for Conditional Uses [MGO §28.183(6)]. In order to approve the request, the Plan Commission must find that all of the conditional use standards are met. The Planning Division has concerns as to whether several of the conditional use standards can be met with this proposal. Specific concerns relate to:

Conditional Use Standard 4: The establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

Conditional Use Standard 5: Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, parking supply, internal circulation improvements, including but not limited to vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, public transit and other necessary improvements have been or are being provided.

Conditional Use Standard 9: When applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an addition to an existing building the Plan Commission shall find that the project creates an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose for the zoning district¹. In order to find that this standard is met, the Plan Commission may require the applicant to submit plans to the Urban Design Commission for comment and Recommendation.

Design-Related Comments

The Planning Division notes the following design-related comments:

- **Depth of the structure.** This structure, located within the middle of the block, is now proposed to have a depth of 113 feet. While reduced in size, the proposed building continues to extend deep into the site's existing rear yard and is not believed to be consistent with the surrounding development pattern, where most existing structures are between 50-70 feet in depth. This would be the first through-lot development within the subject block. While the structure meets the Zoning Code-required space between buildings on a through-lot development, this space is not centered upon the rear lot line as is found elsewhere in the subject block.
- **Driveway.** The under-building parking is accessed through an existing driveway between the 120 and 124 North Hancock properties. This driveway serves 23 automobile stalls and 59 bicycle parking stalls. At its narrowest point, there is just over 12 feet between buildings, narrower than the 18-foot width required by Madison General Ordinances for a two-way driveway. Comments from the Traffic Engineer include:
 - *The applicant shall modify the entrance and driveway to comply with MGO 10.08 which has a [required] minimum width of 18 feet for two way traffic.*
 - *The applicant's attempt to create a one-way operating entrance between the two existing structures on North Hancock will not operate as intended and will create the need for motor vehicles to back onto the North Hancock public Right-of-Way which is forbidden by MGO 10.08. The applicant shall alter the traffic control mechanism for the north Hancock entrance and the parking facility geometry to comply with MGO 10.08.*
- **Open Space and Balconies.** The applicant has added individual unit balconies along the building sides, providing an amenity that wasn't present in earlier versions of this concept. However, the Planning Division has concern on the design and desirability of these, which completely project outward from the exterior walls and are not recessed into the long side facades. The Planning Division recommends that consideration be given to better incorporate these into the façade in concert with ways to add modulation to the long building sides.

¹ **ZONING CODE EXCERPT- 28.077 DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS.**

(1) Statement of Purpose.

These districts are intended to recognize historic Downtown neighborhoods comprised of predominantly residential uses with some non-residential uses. The districts are also intended to:

- (a) Facilitate the preservation, development or redevelopment goals of the comprehensive plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (b) Promote the preservation and conservation of historic buildings and districts while allowing selective infill and redevelopment based on the recommendations of adopted City plans.
- (c) Ensure that new buildings and additions to existing buildings are designed with sensitivity to their context in terms of scale and rhythm, building placement, facade width, height and proportions, garage and driveway placement, landscaping and similar design features.