

From: Evelyn Atkinson < >
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2018 11:07 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin; Zellers, Ledell
Subject: comments on 700 block E. Johnson Proposal

Dear Commissioners,

I'm writing to offer my thoughts on the Houden proposal to develop the 700 block of E. Johnson St. I live two blocks away from the proposed development site and served on the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association's Steering Committee to review the Houden proposal.

As a young working professional who recently bought a home in Tenney-Lapham, I am in favor of creating more commercial spaces along Johnson St., which would enliven our neighborhood and provide more local spots for recreation, shopping, and dining. I am also in favor of promoting more medium-density housing in the neighborhood in designated areas. Unfortunately, our neighborhood has a number of run-down houses that landlords do not keep in good shape, and so I am also in favor of projects that restore old homes or build new ones that are in keeping with the neighborhood style.

For these reasons, there are aspects of the proposed development that I support: the commercial space, the density, the restoration of three of the houses, and the new construction.

However, there are also aspects I dislike. Firstly, the footprint of the development is too big. The developer insists that the buildings are 3 stories with a "loft", but they are clearly 4 stories. This is too high, and will cast too long of a shadow over surrounding buildings and loom over Johnson St. and the immediate vicinity.

My second concern is the design of the proposed development. During the course of Development Committee meetings, the Committee expressed concern that the building design deviated too strongly from the Queen Anne style of the neighborhood. In response, Mr. Houden and his architects slapped some pointed roofs on what otherwise remained a large block building. The design still looks much too similar to the huge apartment complexes going up on East Washington St., which is out of character with our neighborhood. I would much prefer to see something in line with the style of the City Row Apartments, which mimics the architecture of the other homes on the street.

Thirdly, I would like to have a formal, legally-binding commitment from the developer to guarantee at least 10% of the units be affordable housing.

I would also like to note that I am not in favor of the part of the proposal to move two of the houses from the 700 block to Gorham St. These two houses are in terrible shape. My house faces the empty lot where these houses would go, and I would rather have a new home that matches the neighborhood style built there than two decrepit old houses jammed into one lot. I understand that this was a compromise Mr. Houden made in response to the Steering Committee's concerns about tearing down so many houses, but to be frank in my opinion most of the houses on the 700 block of Johnson are not worth saving.

In sum, I support the development in theory, but there are some important aspects of the plan I would like to see changed before I can fully support it - the footprint of the buildings, the design, and the affordable housing component.

I would also like to note that there seems to be a very stark demographic divide among neighborhood residents in terms of their feelings about the proposal. From my participation on the Steering Committee and my conversations with neighbors, it is clear that the younger demographic (working professionals in their 30s-40s) by and large favor the idea of a mixed used commercial-residential development on Johnson St. They/we would love to see Johnson St. become more of a recreation and dining destination for both residents and non-residents of Tenney-Lapham.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,

Evelyn Atkinson
■ Washburn Pl.

From: Cameron Field
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2018 1:06 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: katie@urbanassetsconsulting.com
Subject: 700 East Johnson

Hi Kevin,

This is just a quick email to voice my support for the redevelopment of the 700 block of East Johnson St. as a resident of the neighborhood. I live around the corner with my wife in our house at [REDACTED] at East Dayton St.

I serve on the neighborhood council and found that the opposition to the project was largely based on the fact that the project did not guarantee affordable housing units and removed older homes from the neighborhood. As an individual, I think the council was off base and failed to understand the economic impact of more high quality housing in the neighborhood. I have friends who live nearby and commented when a newer development was constructed down the block from them last year, their rent didn't increase for the first time in many years because of the increase in dwelling units and competition. The project, by adding significant amounts of housing, will help increase vacancy rates, which lower rent on a macro-scale. This project will also remove eye sore properties and bring increased density and street-level vitality to this block. Moreover, the neighborhood plan calls for converting to mixed use in the future.

I can't speak for the council, because we have already voted on the matter, but I think a lot of the neighborhood has hopes that rental homes will be renovated into single family homes, and the fact that the market demand for those renovations has been sluggish, to say the least, is disappointing to many residents, but I do not feel it is a reason to oppose what the market is demanding—mixed use commercial/residential spaces such as the Houden proposal.

The developers have done a great job of scaling the proposal and implementing a nice aesthetic to the block. I am thankful such a proposal exists and I encourage you to support it.

Best,

Cameron

November 28th, 2017

Dear Plan Commission Members and Alders,

It's rare of late that I formally dip my toe directly into pressing city affairs (retirement has its perks!), however, as a former resident of the 700 block of E Johnson Street, and as a current resident of the neighborhood, I would like to register my polite, respectful opposition to the Houden proposal for 717 to 753 E. Johnson Street, even in its revised form.

Certainly, during my time as District 2 Alder, I was a frequent proponent of thoughtful redevelopment. However, I believe that the properties in question as they currently exist provide several important values to the neighborhood. (1) The properties provide relatively spacious housing options at an affordable price, given the market. (2) The unique building fronts, with similar but distinct built forms provide an important cadence to the street and its residents both day and night. (3) The properties have a great potential for viable and profitable renovation, especially if the council chooses to reintroduce a home-ownership renovation assistance program similar to the area's Small Cap TIF program that I sponsored as Alder.

The Houdens have provided high value projects to the city in the past. Even with its controversy at the time, I believe their Henry Street project off of Langdon Street has on the whole improved the neighborhood, compared to what existed previously. With true respect for them, I must disagree with their proposal for this block. The 700 block is a transition block in both the building forms, ownership structures, and tenant patterns underlying the neighborhood.

With the ongoing redevelopment at the other end of the block that Michael Matty has pursued, and given the thorough conversations I was a part of for the comprehensive rewriting of the City's zoning code and remapping of the neighborhood, I cannot at this juncture support their proposed concept. On the whole, in my opinion, the block is not well suited to increased development, especially first floor retail, due to parking considerations and the traffic patterns and speed of traffic. Additionally, it has been a struggle at times to fill the storefronts the street does have, with cheap rents one of the few motivating factors for commercial tenants. I cannot imagine that with new construction, this project could match or rival existing building rents on the 800 and 900 blocks.

There has been hundreds of market rate units in a variety of forms added to the neighborhood over the last 5+ years. (Hooray!) I am excited to see more investments continue to be introduced to the neighborhood in a way that balances rent and market dynamics. I believe that this site is better served in a form nearly identical to its existing design (backyards and sideyards to structures, especially) than under what's proposed. Also, the new large-scale housing units that have been constructed in the vicinity of this site had my support because they have largely occurred on vacant or underutilized commercial lots that were in need of repositioning.

I have found on the whole, the members of the Tenney Lapham Neighborhood Association Council to be thoughtful, reasonable individuals who have been balanced and productive representatives of the neighborhood's opinions and interests. The fact that they have chosen not to support the project, is something I hope you'll respect and put great weight in. I certainly do.

Cheers!

Bridget Maniaci
District 2 Alder, 2009-2013

-----Original Message-----

From: Joe Davis [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 11:26 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: support for 700 east johnson st development

Hi, joe davis here [Joseph L. Davis, [REDACTED] Sidney Street -- [REDACTED]

My wife, Connie, and I have lived in the 2nd District for nearly 50 years -- we have waited, all that time, for the surrounding area to reach its potential and become a vibrant and exciting center for jobs and energy --

We have seen the bad past: and were part of the group that secured the reopening of Lapham School (which I daughter attended) . . .

I want to make it clear that the opposition to the the much needed development of the 700 block was and is the product a a tiny group of people, with a stranglehold on the Neighborhood Association -- really 8

- 10 people who have consistently opposed ANY AND ALL deveopmneet in the nighborhood -- their arguments about Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing are duplicitous --

Indeed, two of the active opponents are landlords in the neighborhood, who got their properties by taking advantage of city programs to promote single family housing; two others run a local Bed & Breakfast [which was intended to be turned into a single family dwelling] --

The area near the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood has the potential for become a job-generating center of Madison in the coming years and the parochial views of a handful of naysayers ought not be allowed to stifle the City's last and best chance for ensuring a stable economy for the future.

From: Madeline Stone Kutis [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 2:56 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>; Stouder, Heather <HStouder@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Mitchell Kutis [REDACTED]; gregg@urbanassetsconsulting.com; katie@urbanassetsconsulting.com
Subject: Support for 700 East Johnson project

Hello Kevin & Heather,

My husband and I are proud residents of the growing Cap East neighborhood and would like to share our support of the 700 E Johnson project proposal. The project keeps the spirit of the neighborhood at the forefront without sacrificing progressive and community-focused design, and that's the sort of project I'd like to see more of. It's very important that the housing stock in Madison is continually increased to meet growing need, and I love that this project does that while respecting the feel of the current neighborhood.

On another note -- one of my favorite parts of my neighborhood is the lovely walkability. We spend whole weekends without taking the car out -- in fact, we moved to the area because we were able to downsize to just one household car. It's so important that we foster spaces and projects that allow neighborhood businesses to enter and grow alongside residential spaces, because those shops and restaurants and services grow a strong and vibrant community. I can easily see myself walking over to this area and enjoying the businesses that join the neighborhood.

We're also in strong support of the proposed BRT line on East Washington. Madison's public transportation needs a great deal of love and expansion to better serve the rapidly growing East Cap area and allow more folks the chance to get around to work and play without needing to own a vehicle. This project would mesh very well with those plans as well.

Please let me know if you have any questions. We won't be able to attend the open house on the 12th, but please know that we are in full support of the project and can't wait to see it develop.

Thanks,

Madeline Stone Kutis & Mitchell Kutis
[REDACTED] E. Washington Ave

From: Andrew Stern [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 3:00 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>; gregg@urbanassetsconsulting.com
Subject: Fw: Voice your support for 700 East Johnson - Open House Tomorrow

Hello Kevin,

I DO NOT support this demolition and redevelopment of the 700 block of East Johnson. The properties on the 700 block are not beyond rehabilitation. The East Johnson corridor does not need more terrible cookie-cutter apartments like those being proposed or the terrible City Row development. These types of developments are eroding the historic character and charm of the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood and introducing buildings that are out of scale and design with the existing building stock. I urge the City to deny the destruction and redevelopment of an entire block of East Johnson.

Thank you,

Andrew Stern
[REDACTED] S. Hancock Street
Madison, WI 53703

From: Kevin Luecke [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 3:57 PM
To: Zellers, Ledell; Firchow, Kevin
Cc: Patty Prime; Patrick Heck
Subject: 700 Block East Johnson Proposal

Mr. Firchow & Alder Zellers:

I am writing in strong support of the proposal for new housing in the 700 block of East Johnson Avenue. The City of Madison needs to be doing everything it can to develop and grow in a more sustainable manner - this means pushing for denser development in areas of the city that are already good places to walk, bike, and use transit, and are proximate to employment areas. The Tenney-Lapham, Marquette, Regent Street, Dudgeon-Monroe, and Midvale neighborhoods are the prime examples of where new development should be occurring, and this project is a good example of positive change.

It is disappointing to me that TLNA, on which I previously served, has pushed back against this proposal, and that the push back has resulted in a smaller development proposal. I do not believe TLNA is representative of the neighborhood as a whole when it comes to this project. Based on discussions with neighbors, most are either indifferent to this proposal, or are supportive of denser development in the neighborhood, even when it means demolishing older structures. Very few oppose this project, but as with all "controversial" projects, those are likely the folks you will hear from.

While the neighborhood association has been largely supportive of the development in the neighborhood that occurred on vacant or blighted lots along East Washington Avenue, they have fought nearly every proposal for development on currently occupied sites to the detriment of the city. The only legitimate concern the neighborhood association raises, is the potential loss of affordable housing in the neighborhood, which is a significant concern for the neighborhood, if not this project specifically. However, TLNA only raises this concern when it involves the replacement of existing structures with new buildings; this concern wasn't raised when Ray Peterson's properties were being flipped for outrageous amounts (I live next door to two, and at least two of the former residents are now homeless).

Could this development proposal be better? Yes. It could include defined affordable units for rent and it could be larger and denser. Despite these shortfalls, the project is good for Madison, and I urge the Plan Commission to support it.

Thank you,
Kevin Luecke
[REDACTED] N Ingersoll St

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Kevin Luecke
Sent from my phone, please excuse any typos

From: Jacobs Cooperage [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 6:46 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: 700 East Johnson Project

Hi Kevin

I am the property owner at [REDACTED] East Johnson Street and I just wanted to send an email in support of the 700 block development project. I was able to view the plans and site mock up at an open house hosted by Urban Assets last week and I think the finished project would be a great addition to the East Johnson neighborhood.

Thank You,

Eric Jacobs
Jacobs Cooperage, LLC

From: Elizabeth Avenius [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2018 8:29 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: 700 East Johnson

Hello,
I am a Tenney-Lapham resident and have been an active participant on the steering committee for the 700 Block Mixed Use development. I feel that I am well informed on the current situation of the site, the proposed project, and how the current proposal has evolved through neighborhood discussions. I am writing to show my support for the 700 Block development on East Johnson.

Through the steering committee process, there were multiple meetings where the developer's team presented the project and then there would be an open discussion. Each meeting the project evolved and responded to many of the important concerns expressed by the neighbors. Some of these concerns resulted in the developers pushing to save more of the existing houses, they helped set the current height and look of the project, and they influenced the ratio of housing and commercial spaces. The developer listened to the neighborhood and worked hard to make sure this project fit into people's vision for the future.

One of the most convincing aspects of this process, for me, was to go and see the existing housing that is currently located on the 700 block of East Johnson. Of the houses on the site, only two will actually be demolished the others will be saved or relocated. A walk through of these two specific houses unfortunately showed be that they were basically unsalvageable. There were foundation issues, significant settling, and updates needed to be made the MEP systems. The houses had many added walls that were made to create the maximum amount of apartments, and as a result it has eliminated all of the houses original character. The other houses I feel are salvageable and still possess elements of their original character but these houses will be saved and have a future within the neighborhood.

In conclusion, the developer has worked hard to preserve the existing housing and character of the neighborhood while simultaneously developing a project that will help the future of our neighborhood thrive. I support the 700 Block development on East Johnson and hope that it will become a precedent for future.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Avenius
[REDACTED] E. Johnson St. apt. [REDACTED]
Madison, WI 53703

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 11:18 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: Feedback Re: 700 Johnson Street Proposal

Dear Mr. Firchow:

I am writing in support of the 700 E. Johnson Street development. I am a homeowner in the neighborhood, and I have planted roots here to raise my family. My wife and I purchased a house on Washburn Place last spring, and our first child was born in our home in the fall. I also work in the neighborhood, as an attorney at Foley & Lardner, in Verex Plaza, an eight-minute walk from home.

I am committed to the continued prosperity and success of our local community, and I believe that the type of mixed-use development proposed for Johnson Street strikes the right balance between keeping the historical character of the neighborhood (a strong part of why we purchased our particular home), and also embracing the healthy trend of urban revitalization and densification, which will help ensure the neighborhood remains a vibrant and livable place for decades to come.

My only criticism relates to the proposed relocation of two of the Johnson Street properties (725 & 737 Johnson Street) to 827 East Gorham Street. I am strongly opposed to that relocation. Those two properties are in an irreparable state of decay, as passersby can observe from the outside, and as my wife can attest about the inside. (She has been a regular participant on the neighborhood planning committee for the project and seen the houses' interiors.) It would be shameful to simply kick this problem down the road, both figuratively and literally.

The lot at 827 East Gorham Street occupies a prime location at the base of the hill up which Washburn Place extends. It could be put to much better use that would enhance the community than being a junkyard for dilapidated buildings being shuffled off of Johnson Street. For example, new houses could be built upon it, in the historic style of the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this matter. If you have any questions for me or if I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to email or call.

Regards,
Joe

Joseph S. Harper
Foley & Lardner LLP
Suite 5000 | 150 East Gilman Street
Madison, WI 53703-1482
P 608.258.4310

Visit Foley.com

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From: Patrick Heck [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 10:33 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Cc: Zellers, Ledell
Subject: Fwd: 700 block of E. Johnson St.

Hi Kevin,

Here's the email to you from Sandy Ward that bounced - she ask that I forward it to you since it bounced a second time. Who knows why - perhaps something on her end?

Ledell - wasn't sure if you got it originally, so I'm including you.

Thanks,

Patrick

----- Forwarded message -----

From: SANDRA E WARD [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Apr 16, 2018 at 9:00 AM
Subject: 700 block of E. Johnson St.
To: "KFirchow@cityofmadison.com" <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>, "Zellers, Ledell" <district2@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Patrick Heck [REDACTED]

Dear City of Madison leaders,

I am writing to express my opposition to the plan for a building on the 700 block of E. Johnson St. I am in full agreement with the concerns raised by the Tenney Lapham Neighborhood Association (TLNA) regarding this project and sincerely hope that the city will respect the position of that body. In particular I am concerned about the scale of the proposed buildings; they are simply too large compared to the homes that are adjacent to the proposed site. The proposed buildings are also too tall and conform neither to the TLNA Neighborhood Plan nor to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sandra Ward
[REDACTED] N. Paterson St

From: Jason Batton [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 4:33 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: Houden Project: 700 E Johnson Block

Hi Kevin -

I am writing to express my personal and total support for the Houden project on East Johnson.

For many decades, the Palisade team has demonstrated an unrelenting support for development in downtown Madison and a willingness to remain personally/locally involved in the long-term management, success and accountability of said properties. I am certain that this project will be no exception.

Best,

Jason Batton
Sheridan Dr
Madison, WI

From: WILLIAM SAMUEL DEAN [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 10:10 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: In support of Urban Assets' 700 East Johnson Project

Hi Kevin,

I am reaching out to your office because I would like to see the City of Madison approve the 700 E Johnson project proposed by Urban Assets. The proposed project satisfies numerous criteria for sustainability, smart growth and improved density. The proposed development will be consistent with the neighborhood character while preserving and/or renovating older homes to improve the area both aesthetically and functionally.

Thank you for your time.

All the best,

William S. Dean
M.S. Candidate, Urban and Regional Planning
Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture
University of Wisconsin- Madison
[REDACTED]

4/11/2018

Memorandum

TO: Plan Commission
Common Council

I am writing this memorandum in support of the proposed mixed-use development on the 700 block of East Johnson Street.

I see this as a very straightforward issue – balancing the needs of an entire city against the parochial interests of a small group of individuals trying to block a project which is of a piece with long overdue economic development for the near eastside. The small group of opponents (which claims to represent the will of the neighborhood) has consistently opposed any and all development in and around Tenney-Lapham: for instance, the now lauded City Row project, the first iteration of the Sylvie Building, the T Wall project on East Mifflin Street, the expanded use of Breese Stevens Field and on and on.

My wife and I have lived in the neighborhood nearly 50 years and the key issue at stake (on what otherwise would seem to be a stand-alone housing project) has major implications for Madison's future – recent development along the East Washington corridor (abutting the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood), not only has breathed new life into a long ignored area – it is, more significantly, the first step in building a new city-within-a-city; a vibrant economic and entertainment hub ensuring the city's economic health, its jobs, its tax-base, the quality of its schools and its overall livability.

My wife and I lived here when we had no neighborhood school – our daughter was in the first class to enter the newly reopened Lapham School – I do not want to see a return to a collapsing central city and a shrinking tax base.

The stakes could not be clearer: writing about a major new Philadelphia neighborhood revitalization, the author [who could be writing about Madison] talks about the need “to create a livable neighborhood that will attract an educated work force, one that increasingly demands walkable access to offices, shops and homes in a dense urban environment. . . you create a place where people want to be.” [NYT, Philadelphia's First Step to a Platform of Innovation, Square Feet -- By JON HURDLE FEB. 20, 2018]. Our neighborhood already has that – we just need to accommodate growth and change.

In a similar vein, the Wisconsin State Journal got it right (writing about the effect of a newly active Breese Stevens Field on the city's economic viability) noting that “Some neighbors in the busy, urban area along East Washington Avenue . . . are understandably concerned about more noise, traffic and limited parking . . . But the positive benefits Madison and the region will reap from a more vibrant Breese Stevens far outweigh the less compelling and narrow interests of nearby residents . . . [by] attracting many of the young professionals our city and state need more of.” [Wisconsin State Journal, editorial board, Jan 26, 2018]

Arrayed against that reality we see the same myopic parochialism at play as in the 700 block opposition: – as one of my neighbors said “It just bugs me that a company can take away your peace of mind for

profit.” That’s the way to put others’ interests before your own. [DEAN MOSIMAN and LOGAN WROGE Wisconsin State Journal Jan 25, 2018]

SOME KEY POINTS:

NEIGHBORHOOD OPPOSITION

The notion of widespread neighborhood opposition to the 700 block project is a myth – as soon as a Steering Committee got picked to ‘oversee’ neighborhood review, the outcome was clear. The chair of that committee [Patrick Heck] consistently operated in such a way as to mute support, including intimidating and yelling at regular folks who had audacity to ignore the party line. And, on March 10 this former ‘impartial’ chair of the Steering Committee sent out a memo to the neighborhood Listserv trying to marshal the forces opposing the project:

He began the memo with this: “The city is beginning its consideration of the Houden proposal for the 11 properties at 717 through 751/753 E. Johnson Street. The developer is pursuing this proposal **despite the opposition of TLNA Council.**” [Heck added the bold text for emphasis] – the audacity of the city!

There is no neighborhood consensus opposing the proposed development – no plebiscite occurred – most residents surely don’t even know what transpired. What passed for a neighborhood process produced a Steering Committee heavily skewed towards opponents of development (including two neighborhood landlords with axes to grind – who have used City programs – ideally designed to promote transition to single family homes – to purchase structures used for rentals.) Moreover, the Steering Committee’s specific concerns and points of opposition kept changing over the committee’s life.

THE STRAWMAN OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In his summary of the Steering Committee report Heck attacks the proposal as conflicting with the Neighborhood Plan’s “many Calls for preservation of existing housing stock and neighborhood fabric in the established portions of the neighborhood.” Moreover, as the press reported at the time: “opponents of the project have consistently touted ‘historic preservation,’ and support for single family homes in objecting to new apartment buildings.” Well, these ideas have a problematic history:

“as whites adopted biased policies like economic zoning that banned apartment buildings in areas designated for single family homes” expressly to exclude Blacks -- “economic zoning was in effect exclusionary, accomplishing much of the same results as racial zoning.” [The Walls We Won’t tear Down, NYT, 8/6/17]

Economic, social and racial diversity require housing density – and, in a world of shrinking natural resources, this is also the only way to minimize the impact of people in an urban setting. To claim THAT Tenney-Lapham is an ‘affordable’ area is patently absurd!

MISUSE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

It is curious that there is now citywide acclaim for the City Row apartments which the same people opposing the 700 block development opposed some years ago, for the very same reasons. This is not the story of an avaricious developer looking to cash in – the houses to be replaced are marginal at best and in no way ought to be considered historically significant; despite vacuous claims to the contrary. Heck’s

memo argues that “The potential demolition of 4 homes and moving of 3 others (2 offsite and 1 onsite) contribute to the loss of historical context in an established portion of Tenney-Lapham.” That portion of the neighborhood already has retail.

No one on the steering committee, nor anyone opposing the project, has any background in historic preservation – when I pointed this out to the Alder, she referred me to an individual upon whom she relied – she informed me that that person had expertise in the field and, as justification, that she worked for the Historical Society. Untrue on both counts: the person in question has a design master’s (not a history degree dealing with the essence of what should be preserved) and works not for the Society, but for its fundraising arm. And, despite the Alder’s long acknowledged avocational interest, she has no expertise in Historic Preservation, or the history profession. I do.

The loss of some of the buildings along the 700 block would be minimal – with a few of the houses retained and others made available for purchase and movement to another area – and, most importantly the overwhelming majority area of the neighborhood would remain as it is. We are talking about a block already containing commercial property and designated as a natural site for further mixed-use construction.

THE CITY VERSUS A NEIGHBORHOOD

Over the past decade plus, Madison has lost job generators to surrounding communities; think EPIC and others – while it’s true that Madison has benefitted from Epic’s growth, Verona recently passed the largest school referendum in state history – isn’t it obvious that Verona wants Epic employees to live close by – to have families – to build on the economic growth? In the years to come Madison will have to battle other cities for economic viability – think Portland, Denver, Austin, Oakland, Boston, downtown Brooklyn and on and on.

Tenney -Lapham is a downtown neighborhood and needs to act in the overall City’s best interests. The project’s opponents are oblivious to the big picture —housing density is the only way to promote economic, social and racial diversity and attract new jobs and cut down on sprawl and commuting. If, Madison is to grow jobs and attract individuals to fill those jobs [think of the unlimited promise of the Oscar Mayer 50+ acres near an airport, a rail line and the interstate] it needs for Isthmus-centered neighborhoods to step up and help Madison meet its potential.

Joseph L. Davis

■ Sidney Street

■

From: Max Coleman [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 15, 2018 5:58 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Cc: Zellers, Ledell
Subject: Opposition to 700 Block E. Johnson Proposal

Dear Mr. Firchnow,

I wanted to let you know of my opposition to the development proposal on the 700s block of E. Johnson St. I believe the proposal is harmful for several reasons:

* It would further erode the character of Johnson Street, one of the few streets on the isthmus that have not yet been radically altered by cookie-cutter glass buildings designed mostly for Epic residents

* It would not provide affordable housing and would in fact increase the cost of housing on Johnson Street in general (something that, as a graduate student making about \$15,000/year, I already struggle with)

* It would reward companies like Palisade Property for unethical landlord behavior (I was forced to leave my apartment at 727 E Johnson, despite being given a signed statement that I could stay, because the company claimed the development was moving forward and there was nothing anyone could do).

* The significant costs of this proposal, both financial and cultural, would not be outweighed by the benefits

Best,

Max Coleman
Graduate student, UW-Madison

From: Jessica Becker [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 10:01 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin; Zellers, Ledell; Ledell Zellers; Patrick Heck
Cc: Mark Scalf
Subject: Opposition to Development Proposal on 700 block of East Johnson

Dear Kevin,

I am a neighbor in the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood. I would like to express my opposition to the development being proposed for the 700 block of East Johnson Street. The neighborhood association takes these proposals very seriously, weighs the costs and benefits to the neighborhood, and strives to work well with the city and developers. In this case, the TLNA board does not support the proposal and I agree with their sound wisdom.

The proposal:

- does not follow many aspects of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan related to protecting and enhancing the built portions of the neighborhood. The potential demolition of 4 homes and moving of 3 others (2 offsite and 1 onsite) contributes to the loss of historical context in an established portion of Tenney-Lapham. The scale of the proposed 2 new buildings is too large compared to the adjacent homes and other structures and their depths are nearly double the depth of any other building on that block. Neighbors have welcomed more than 1,000 new luxury apartments in recent years and shouldn't sacrifice existing housing for more.
- lacks an affordable housing component and therefore further contradicts TLNA's 2016 statement on affordable housing in new apartment buildings. Note that in 2009, City Row on E. Johnson was supported by TLNA Council despite the demolition of 11 older rental houses due primarily to it being a 100% affordable housing development.
- contributes to the inflation of neighborhood land values. If teardowns proliferate, this will further negatively impact the fabric of the neighborhood.

Thank you for taking these concerns seriously.

Jessica Becker
[REDACTED] E. Dayton St.
[REDACTED]

From: Eric Johnson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2018 7:43 AM
To: Firchow, Kevin <KFirchow@cityofmadison.com>
Cc: Stouder, Heather <HStouder@cityofmadison.com>; Zellers, Ledell <district2@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: 700 East Johnson project

Good morning. While I am not a resident of Madison, I am a lifelong resident of Dane County. I have lived in Madison, Monona, Middleton and Waunakee. I have witnessed lots of redevelopment. The redevelopment project proposed in the 700 block of East Johnson seems to be a very practical project and certainly within the spirit of the neighborhood. I support the project as I think it will continue to enhance the neighborhood and improve the quality of housing in the Isthmus.

Regards, Eric

Eric A. Johnson
Johnson Bank
[REDACTED]

From: Tyler Lark [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 16, 2018 4:25 PM
To: Firchow, Kevin
Subject: New comments about Houden 700 Block E Johnson redevelopment

Dear Planning commission,

I'd like to offer my comments on the proposed development for the 700 Block of E Johnson by Houden properties. I live about 1 block away ([REDACTED] E Dayton) and am on the TLNA council so have been following the development throughout its iterations and processes over the last 2 years. I haven't previously sent any comments to the planning commission. I don't have any connections to the developers, competing properties, or other potential conflicts of interests that I am aware of.

I generally like the direction of the proposed changes, and remain relatively neutral or slightly in favor of the project overall. However, one major remaining shortcoming I'd like to highlight (that isn't prominently featured elsewhere) is that I see a dearth of commercial / retail space, which is a key part of the TLNP vision for this block's future and a key part of the developers' argument for their project. If the design team is unable or unwilling to accommodate more commercial space within the new building, they could convert at least one or more of the ground level floors of the houses remaining on site into commercial space. In their original proposal long ago, they called for converting the house on the corner of Livingston to commercial. That component (as well as additional commercial in what was going to be the 3rd new building) is now gone.

That type of small-scale remodeling and forced improvement of the existing deteriorating buildings seems:

- 1.) Much more in line with our neighborhood plan (compared to the tear-down and build new approach)
- 2.) Would help add more features and services to the neighborhood, and
- 3.) Would also provide some---how did they phrase it..."de-facto affordable"--or lower cost commercial space, rather than only brand new and expensive commercial space, which makes it extremely hard to attract the type of smaller Mom & Pop or burgeoning businesses many hope for in that area.

Thanks for considering this key component about commercial space, and any opportunities to ask or advocate for more. I think it's a chance to improve this controversial proposal, and make the project more tolerable and adaptable to the neighborhood in the long-run.

Thanks for your time,

Tyler Lark

[REDACTED] E Dayton St

On Mon, May 7, 2018 at 10:55 AM, Patrick Heck pwheck@gmail.com [tlna] <tlna-noreply@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

[Attachment(s) from Patrick Heck included below]

To: Interested Neighbors, TLNA Steering Committee, etc.

From: Patrick Heck, TLNA Development Chair

The Houden development team for the 700 block of E. Johnson has submitted another proposal revision to the city. Due to large file sizes I've attached a subset of their slides, but the full set can be obtained here: