

September 5, 2015

Dear Members of the Urban Design Commission,

I am writing regarding the design of the Ace Apartments Proposal, Legistar #52855.

The use of bright white in the exterior color palette is a stark contrast to the rest of the building. A cream tone would blend better with the other color shades. Further, the use of a richer and contrasting material such a smooth stone for some or all of the currently white section at the SW corner of the structure would significantly enhance the visual effect. A near-by example: Movin' Out's Pinney Lane Apartments incorporates a cream-colored stone on parts of its facade which adds a richness to the building's design.

Additionally the small white section at the SE end of the structure should either match the rust color of the adjacent sections or also be modified to a cream color. It is a rather odd terminus to a building along a major street.

Finally, the exterior design of the six townhouses seems dated, harkening back to the 1970s, and not particularly warm or welcoming for a townhouse row.

This prominent corner serves as an entrance to three eastside neighborhoods and will set the tone for future redevelopment. At four stories, the 64 unit building will be the most conspicuous structure along this section of the street. Residents very much appreciate this opportunity for the Commission's review of this proposal. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Beth Godfrey

November 4, 2018

To: Urban Design Commission

Re: Movin' Out development proposal for Acewood Boulevard and Cottage Grove Road location

As a resident of the Elvehjem neighborhood for nearly a quarter century, I am writing to express my opinion that the Movin' Out development proposal would not fit in well at the old Sentry location at the intersection of Acewood Boulevard and Cottage Grove Road. I do not think this development fits well with the heritage, character, style, or design of the neighborhoods at this location.

Though located in the city of Madison, these neighborhoods have a quiet, suburban character. The Elvehjem neighborhood, described in the recently released 50th anniversary documentary video as a "great place to raise a family," is a place where children ran out the door first thing in the morning, came home for lunch, then ran back out the door and played all day. The neighborhood is comprised of mostly single-story, comfortably spaced, ranch-style houses which allow for bright, open, sunny spaces, and create an environment conducive to pleasant family life and healthy outdoor living. There are well-maintained lawns, attractive trees, and neighborhood parks. The neighborhood as a whole seems reminiscent of a brighter era.

With many of the homes built in the 1960s, the neighborhood could be described as charming, vintage, or retro. The houses have an inviting, personal, walk-right-up-to-your-neighbor's-front-door approachability. Common architectural design elements include that the homes are modest in size and scale (i.e. the size of the buildings in relation to the size of the lot), the rooflines are angled, there are many large, bright windows, and many of the house exteriors feature light colors in cheerful hues of pale yellow, blues, and greens. The original houses were built with real wood and other natural materials. The homes and neighborhood appear to have been designed with time and care and exude a feeling of openness, warmth, and cheer. Yards are spacious, providing comfortable breathing room so that people are not literally living on top of one another.

In contrast, the proposed development appears very large in size and scale. It appears to contain none of the architectural design elements common during the time period in which the area neighborhood homes were built. It appears to have a much denser, more urban character and a contemporary style. Rather than a personal, home-like environment, this development appears impersonal, boxy and institutional. The colors appear to be primarily gray and brown, and the windows appear dark. Rather open spacious lawns, in this development, the buildings themselves appear to take up most of the lot. The tall building height appears as though it would cast long, dark shadows and create a darker, colder, more closed-in environment. Instead of real wood and other natural materials, this development calls for "engineered" and other synthetic building products. Whereas the colors of the neighborhood homes appear lighter and brighter, the colors of this development appear darker.

In all, this development would be better suited to an area attractive to people who prefer to live in a more urban, concentrated setting with a more contemporary style where it would better fit the heritage, character, style and design of the surrounding neighborhoods and be less likely to detract from their appeal.

Sincerely,

Kim

Elvehjem neighborhood

CITY OF MADISON

NOV 5 2018

Planning & Community
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