

URBANWORKS

March 6, 2020

City of Madison
Urban Design Commission
215 Martin Luther King Blvd.
Suite 017
Madison, WI 53703

Re: Urban Design Commission: Letter of Intent – Mid Town Center Multifamily Residential - Revised

Dear Commission Members:

On behalf of Mid Town Center and JCap Realestate, UrbanWorks Architecture LLC is submitting this and application for Concept Site and Building Plan Submittal for the development of the remaining undeveloped properties located on the block bounded by MidTown Road, Carns Ave., Waldorf Ave, and Mayo Drive. We are seeking an update to the original GDP and PD for the subject properties to allow the development of three multifamily buildings and associated site improvements as indicated on the attached documents.

We have presented our concept to the City of Madison Planning Staff on September 26th for initial feedback and subsequently modified the plans. An additional meeting was held with Planning Staff on October 24th to share the modifications and solicit additional feedback. A meeting was held with the DAT on November 21st. The project team has worked to address the items noted by all departments in this meeting. We met with Alder McKinney and the neighborhood surrounding the project on November 21st receiving positive feedback. We have meet with The UDC on December 11th, receiving overall very favorable comments and constructive input on several areas. We are continuing to incorporate these comments.

Existing Conditions:

There are two multifamily buildings currently on the block in which the proposed development is located. The buildings are 88 units total. The existing multifamily buildings are 56 Units per Acre. The proposed project will have a density of 56.7 Units per Acre. The proposed project matches the existing density.

The block the project site sits on is steeply sloped with a grade change of over four stories from corner to corner. Internal site slope is greater in some locations. The buildings are designed to address this grade change with walk up units on Mid Town Ave to create a pedestrian scale and engage the street. The proposed development matches the neighborhood building scale on Carns Drive, Mayo Drive, and Waldrof Boulevard.

Design Attributes:

The project design incorporates the goals and concepts defined and outlined in the Amendment to the High Point – Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan as adopted by the Common Council on August 1, 2017. We have worked to create a project with relatively high density consistent with the goal and concepts of the New Urbanist approach in the Mid Town Commons subdivision. The project carefully scales the buildings to be consistent with the surrounding site context and neighborhood building scale. The proposed residential density closely matches the DU per acre of the existing housing developed on adjacent properties on this block.

The building aesthetic will be contemporary using high quality materials including brick, fiber cement panels, aluminum balconies, and stucco and be well scaled to the pedestrian experience consistent with the neighborhood. Public transit will be integrated into the project site planning at Waldorf and Mid Town. Ease of bicycle access will be provided in the building amenities. The Mid Town frontage will include walkout units to further engage the street front and pedestrian experience as well as appropriately scale the building to the neighborhood. The residential units at the Waldorf entry will also include walkup units to continue this street engagement and improving the pedestrian experience.

As noted in the Amendment to the High Point – Raymond Neighborhood Development Plan as adopted in August 2017, neighborhood scale mixed-use buildings with commercial elements are desirable and allowable but not required. We have not included retail space in the project. Our exploration of potential neighborhood scale retail tenants included reaching out to multi-location tenants such as coffee shops, restaurants, small convenience stores. The intent was to find neighborhood scale active retail vs. limited traffic retail in order to activate the street front and provide longer term tenants. There was no interest in this location. This exploration has lead us to the conclusion that both the short and long term market feasibility would be very challenging.

The existing neighborhood context already includes four adjacent or near buildings within the Neighborhood Mixed Use zoning with no retail. They include 8253 Starr Grass Drive, both buildings at Waldorf Midtown on Mayo Drive, and a very recently entitled building at 1848 Waldorf. The retail on Mayo between Waldorf and Starr Grass Drive consists of small destination retail spaces that do not contribute to an active street front.

The feedback we have received at our November 21, 2019 meeting with the neighborhood was clear. They did not want empty retail in the development. The specific example of was made of the existing retail along Mayo west of Waldorf.

Project Data:

The currently the plans consist of three buildings with the following square footage, number and type of units, parking counts, and bike parking.

	Building A	Building B	Building C	Project Total
Studio	15	23	33	
One Bedroom	28	49	55	
Two Bedroom	15	20	26	
Three Bedroom	4	4	4	
Total Units per Bldg.	62	96	118	276
Gross S.F	80,034	152,968	173,114	406,116
Structured Parking	42	102	130	274
Surface Parking	19	42	37	98
Long Term Bike	83	104	156	343
Guest Bike	8	10	14	32

Stormwater:

Storm water will be addressed with onsite bioretention basins and underground detention systems. The stormwater management plan will be designed to meet City of Madison, Dane County, and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources stormwater management standards. The system will be designed to treat stormwater as per the current City of Madison standards.

Utilities:

The sanitary sewer and water service will be tied into the existing infrastructure primarily via connections to existing access structures. If required new access structures will be added to meet the City of Madison construction requirements. Coordination and approval by City of Madison Engineering requirements will be ongoing.

Fire Truck Access:

Fire access will be designed and coordinated to comply with City of Madison Fire Apparatus Access and Fire Hydrant Worksheet requirements. Coordination and approval by the City of Madison Fire Department is ongoing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Wessling', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rick Wessling
Senior Project Manager
UrbanWorks Architecture LLC