



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 3040 & 3046 Commercial Avenue  
**Application Type:** New Residential Building Complex – Initial/Final Approval is Requested  
**Legistar File ID #** [58983](#)  
**Prepared By:** Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Paul Cuta, CaS4 Architecture, Madison, WI

**Project Description:** The applicant is seeking initial/final approval for a proposed redevelopment of two properties to maintain two existing family residences and two existing 16-unit building and then construct four new apartment buildings and storage buildings.

### Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an informational presentation on February 12, 2020
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal on May 11, 2020

### Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. Section 28.151 of the Zoning Code requires that Residential Building Complexes be reviewed by the Urban Design Commission pursuant to the provisions in Section 33.24(4)(c). Section 33.24(4)(c), Residential Building Complexes, states: “The Urban Design Commission shall review the exterior design and appearance of all principal buildings or structures and the landscape plans of all proposed residential building complexes. It shall report its findings and recommendations to the City Plan Commission.”

## Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

The Planning Division staff requests that the UDC provide comment on the exterior design and appearance of all principal buildings or structures and the landscape plans of all proposed residential building complexes. Planning Staff also request that the Commission provide feedback on how the proposed development fits within the context of the neighborhood.

The Comprehensive Plan recommends “low residential” development which generally includes 1-2 story buildings with a density of up to 15 du/ac. While predominately a single and two-family designation, smaller two, three, and four unit apartment buildings may be compatible with this recommendation. Sites like this, which abut arterial streets are recommended to potentially have densities up to 30 du/ac under certain situations, including when similar building types are already present. In pre-application discussions, staff have requested that the applicant give consideration to the Commercial Avenue orientation of the buildings.

UDC Commission Comments from the February 12, 2020 informational presentation included the following:

- There is a height difference between this site and E. Washington Avenue. I like that you’re not aligning this with E. Washington.

- I like the 8-unit pinwheel effect, each unit has a face. I'm not crazy about the 4-unit, it seems like it could be more simplified in terms of materials and windows. That one is less cohesive.
- It appears there is a plinth, a narrow slab that the building sits on. It should be held up a little bit.
- When you come back show roof penetrations and venting.
- I applaud the creativity, this is really neat. If you make it affordable, don't make it look affordable, look at your materials.
- Consider visual screening on both E. Washington Avenue and Aberg Avenue. Think of wintertime, tall Evergreens and/or Arborvitaes for a visual and sound cushion. Those are two busy parts of those roads.