

From: [Gary Tipler](#)
To: [PLLCApplications](#); [Rummel, Marsha](#)
Subject: Item 3. Landmarks Commission. 817-823 Williamson
Date: Monday, June 1, 2020 3:39:56 PM

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Item 3, Landmarks Commission
June 1, 2020

To: Madison Landmarks Commission, Alder Marsha Rummel

Dear Commissioners and Alder Rummel:

The proposed development at 817 Williamson doesn't currently meet the criteria for development of the Third Lake Ridge Historic District ordinance nor the Williamson Street Design BUILD II standards for development in the Madison Comprehensive Plan.

Simply put, it is too big.

In the BUILD II Design Standards, the south side of the street on the 800 block is to receive smaller scaled buildings than the north side for a reason. The north side was served by rail and many of its buildings also had shipping bays. This was not true on the 700 and 800 blocks of Williamson. If a false sense of history is approvable then the building type will do. But the rear mass is too much of a departure from the volume prescribed in both planning documents.

If this proposal were to be approved it will have a destabilizing effect on the neighborhood. By exceeding the prescribed mass prescribed by zoning and plans, then much of the neighborhood is opened up to speculation, which recognizably one aspect of how big buildings get proposed and often built. The purpose of the District ordinance and plans are to stabilize the neighborhood and not the opposite. Unfortunately, the minor tweaking proposed by the staff report overlooks this.

This effect was born out in an exchange with City appriaser, Mark Hanson on a related project a few years ago:

On Tue, Nov 19, 2013 at 12:56 PM, Hanson, Mark <MHanson2@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

Marsha,

Local zoning ordinances, and how strictly they are enforced, can influence value. Zoning ordinances limit the permissible uses of the land. If land use is limited, the value

may be affected by zoning unless the purchaser can easily get the zoning changed to permit other uses. State law requires assessors to consider the effect on the value of the property of any zoning ordinance. If a change in zoning for the Williamson Street project allows a higher use then that could result in a higher market value, and thus, a higher assessment.

Please adhere more closely to the zoning and plans and do not approve the project as it stands.

Respectfully,
Gary Tipler