



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 2902 East Washington Street  
**Application Type:** New Mixed-Use Development in UDD No. 5  
Informational Review  
**Legistar File ID #** [60546](#)  
**Prepared By:** Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Anne Morrison with 2902 East Washington Avenue, LLC

**Project Description:** The applicant is requesting Informational Review feedback for a new mixed-use development that includes a four to five story building that fronts both East Washington and North Lawn Street with a single story connector common area element. The building will contain a total of 135 residential units and 8,000 s.f. of retail fronting East Washington.

**Project Schedule:**

- The development team is submitting a land use application this May.

**Approval Standards:**

The UDC is an **approving body** as the site is also within Urban Design District 5 ([UDD 5](#)), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design requirements and guidelines of Section 33.24(12).

## Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

Staff recommends that the UDC review the project against the requirements and guidelines for UDD 5. Those standards require that development meet the requirements and conform as much as possible to the guidelines. UDD 5 was established to improve the appearance of a major transportation corridor east of the Capital Square which constitutes a major entrance to the City of Madison, to preserve and enhance the property values in the District, and to avoid a substantial depreciation of the property values in the District. Design requirements and guidelines were established for new developments in these corridors that are visible from the roadways.

Staff urges the UDC to give careful consideration and provide specific comments regarding the five-story mural element, which is among the proposal's more prominent features. Staff is not aware of a similar precedent in the City in terms overall scale or use as a primary façade. In addition to the mural itself, staff requests comments are provided regarding that feature's integration with the overall architectural composition. Further comments may be forthcoming from the Zoning Administrator related to this feature's compliance with related elements of the Zoning and Sign codes. If this element is presented as part of a formal approval, staff requests that the UDC specify the elements that are expected to be provided in order for UDC to fully evaluate this component for future initial/final submittals.

Staff further requests that UDC also comment on the overall architectural composition, materials, and open space design. Finally, staff advises the UDC to provide comment regarding the relationship of the proposed building to the commercial East Washington corridor as well as the more residential character of North Lawn Avenue.

## UDC Informational Review Comments

<p>Site Plan</p>	<p>Clever plan that manages to more or less successfully wrap around the unfortunately placed CarX building. Larger, taller E. Wash building seems to fit that corridor better while the N. Lawn building, I think, blends into the residential neighborhood really nicely.</p> <p>It's difficult to understand the one-story connection between the 2 buildings at this point.</p> <p>8</p> <p>Splitting building into two masses creatively addresses a difficult site that faces two very different urban contexts.</p>
<p>Architecture</p>	<p>Contrast of mural side of building on E. Wash and the side facing Moka is pretty stark. Could some of that color be added to this side?</p> <p>I like the restrained material palette and horizontal rhythm of the N. Lawn Bldg.</p> <p>The mural is a great idea. In contrast, the brick detailing and the cement fiber board currently looks like commercial space more than residential. The size and the way the windows are framed in the cement board, which is then set in voids in the brick without the detailing of sills and headers is more of a commercial look. It looks harsh in comparison to the playfulness of the mural.</p> <p>Very handsome buildings with especially nice articulation of the masonry around the windows and between floors. Appreciate the strong commitment to the mural, but curious about details. Stepbacks and setbacks from what is allowed are a pleasant change from most developers desire to max out their dimensions.</p> <p>8 – Mural dominates East Washington elevation and should be designed &amp; reviewed by UDC. It's the one element of this design that might feel dated in 15 years. Consider mural theme that recalls Ella's.</p> <p>Like simplicity of design, substantial use of masonry with cement board as <i>detail</i>, not primary surfacing on E. Wash. building.</p>
<p>Landscape Plan</p>	<p>Not a lot of detail yet but would like to see ambitious foundation plantings, courtyard details. Glad to see fence (make it a nice one) and landscaping on N. Lawn border with single family home.</p> <p>No landscape plan submitted at this time. Graphics show street trees on E. Wash., and that will be important to confirm.</p>
<p>Site Amenities/Lighting</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Lighting on N. Lawn Ave. building must be sensitive to residential character of that street.</p>
<p>Signs– if shown, do they complement the architecture? <i>(sign approvals will be a separate application.)</i></p>	<p>Signage not reviewed here, but details of mural will be important to review in future since it is a significant visual component of the larger building. Mural permanence and maintenance will be questions.</p>
<p>Pedestrian/Vehicle Circulation</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Façade set-back on N. Lawn maintains residential street 'feel' and should encourage pedestrian use. Garage access off N. Lawn seems appropriate, assuming cars turning right from west-bound Johnson aren't an issue.</p>

Urban Context	<p>As mentioned in site plan comments, I think this project works well in the tricky area where desired density, high traffic, compatibility with existing developments all have to find some kind of sweet spot.</p> <p>The reduction in scale and allowance for deeper setback are appreciated.</p> <p>10</p> <p>See site comments.</p>
<b>Overall Rating (1-10)</b>	8, 5, 8 & 8

\*Individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10. The scale is: 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding.