



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 502-518 W. Washington Avenue
Application Type: Mixed-Use Proposal in a Planned Development PD district
Initial/Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID # [60100](#)
Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Doug Hursh, Potter Lawson, Inc./David Keller, Keller Real Estate Group

Project Description: The applicant is seeking initial/final approval for a new 6-story mixed-use building with 103 residential units, ground floor lobby & commercial uses, and lower level parking that can be entered off of both W. Washington and Bassett Streets.

Project Schedule:

- The Urban Design Commission received an informational presentation on April 29, 2020.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this project on July 27, 2020.
- The Common Council is scheduled to review this project on August 4, 2020.

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. As with any **Planned Development**, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code sections 28.098(1), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval.

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

In addition to the PD standards, Planning Staff request that the Commission provide feedback on how the proposed development relates to the recently adopted [Mifflandia Neighborhood Plan](#). That document, approved in 2019, includes detailed design guidelines. "Design and Sustainability" guidelines on Page 15 include recommendations related to materials, entrances, articulation, porches, balconies, resilience, and sustainability.

Mifflandia Neighborhood Plan - Height Setback and Stepbacks, p. 10:

The site has two key street frontages on the northwest corner of West Washington Avenue and North Bassett Street. (See page 15 for details on setbacks/stepbacks.)

- **Height:** Four (4) Stories, with Two (2) Additional stories allowed, when meeting setbacks/ stepbacks.
- **West Washington Avenue Setbacks:** 20 Feet from property line
- **North Bassett Street Setback:** 10 Feet
- **West Washington Avenue Stepback:** Floors 5 & 6 should be stepped back 30 Feet from Face of Building
- **Bassett Street Setback:** Floors 5 and 6 should be stepped back 10 Feet from Face of the Building

Setbacks, Stepbacks, and Height. The building itself appears to meet the setback, stepback, and height recommendations. (With the exception of projecting balconies, as noted below). The site has two key street frontages on the northwest corner of West Washington Avenue and North Bassett Street. The current site plan shows the new six (6) story building set back 20 feet from West Washington and the 10 feet from North Bassett Street, as recommended. The building will be four (4) stories on the West Washington Avenue street level with two (2) stories above. Note that there is a two (2) story minimum on West Washington – the current proposal includes a one story commercial space with a second level open air covered plaza above that first floor. There is a required 30 feet stepback above the fourth floor on West Washington and a 10 feet stepback above the fourth floor on North Bassett.

Massing and Articulation. Another key consideration relates to façade articulation. The plan recommends that a maximum building length be established at the time an Urban Design District is created for the area though no such standard currently exists. The plan recommends that buildings exceeding 33 feet in width should include vertical intervals and incorporate articulation, design and massing to respond to the historic 33 feet wide lot rhythm through the utilization of program elements such as storefronts, cafes, porches or balconies, arcades, awnings, window bays, and other methods. As part of their recommendation, staff request that the UDC provide comments related to façade length and articulation.

Balconies. Staff also request that the UDC give careful consideration to the proposed balconies. As proposed, these are not consistent with the Mifflandia Plan’s design guidelines nor the General Regulations of the Zoning code that do not allow these as encroachments into prescribed stepback areas. While the Common Council could waive this requirement as part of its review of the PD application, staff note concerns regarding the inconsistency with plans. Staff have concerns that the features largely “hang” off the face and that they are within the prescribed setback area. Staff recommends the UDC provides clear feedback in order for this to be evaluated.

Second Level Patio Wall. Staff also request that the UDC give specific feedback regarding the second level street-facing wall that lines the edge of the rooftop patio. While this is not a zoning compliance issue, Page 16 of the plan recommends a minimum two-story mass and staff had previously raised concerns whether this design feature could be found to meet the intent of this requirement.

West Washington Driveway and Garage Door Opening. Page 19 of the plan recommends that for corner development properties, driveways should only be accessed from the North-South Streets, not West Washington Avenue. The current concept includes driveways on both Bassett and West Wash, which lead to the same parking level. **Staff raised concerns regarding the West Washington garage vehicle entry and that it does not meet the plan recommendation. The UDC should provide specific feedback in regards to this item,**

In conclusion, this project is the first redevelopment proposed under the recently adopted [Mifflandia Neighborhood Plan](#). Staff urges that the Commission give careful consideration to those adopted guidelines, as plan consistency is an important consideration in the ultimate evaluation of this request. UDC should also comment on the general PD standards and include comments related to building placement, bulk, articulation as well as comments related to the pedestrian experience for BOTH West Washington and North Bassett Street frontages.

Staff further recommends the UDC refer to their comments from the April 29th informational presentation:

- Plan seems to be nice, a creative use of this site.
- Overall composition, massing and design seem appropriate to the dense urban site.
- Support for building H-shaped design. Fits within the context.
- Rear yard very narrow and will rely on creative landscaping and access.
- The garage door on W. Washington is unfortunate, are two vehicle entrances necessary. Can they eliminate the W. Washington garage door? Does not meet neighborhood plan. The 5’ setback along the SW side seems so close to the existing residence.

- It looks like there may be pedestrian access next to the garage door on W. Washington, but that is the connection to the sidewalk?
- Second floor community room terrace – good amenity, but consider noise issues and confirm lighting meet dark sky.
- Second story “pillars” fronting the rooftop terrace do not appear to comply with the 2 story massing requirement. Trellis also looks out of scale.
- Concerns regarding 6th floor balcony - both visually jarring and appears to extend into the setback space.
- Would be nice to see some surface or color effects on the masonry on floors 1-4.
- Concerns regarding upper level vertical board & batten approach to metal cladding on top two floors.
- Concerns regarding unit layouts and natural light. Unit Type N really only have one window/patio door? When it faces to the North, this unit will not get much natural light, and no direct light? Does the patio for Type N come up against the window of Unit Type T? Unit types H, L and K also only have one window?
- The exterior entry space for the first floor units on the W. Washington façade look very similar to the public commercial entry area – maybe they should suggest more privacy? Maybe be setback a little?
- Landscaping comments - really hope the mature trees on this site can be preserved. Would like to see both green roof and seasonal planters on the rooftop terrace areas. Confirm 5’ area in SW area width ok for trees.