



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 222-232 E. Olin Avenue
Application Type: New Mixed-Use Building in UDD No. 1 – Informational Presentation
Legistar File ID # [64920](#)
Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Lance McGrath, McGrath Property Group; Joseph Lee, JLA Architects + Planners

Project Description: The applicant is providing an informational presentation for a mixed-use building containing approximately 291 residential units and 12,450 square feet of commercial/retail space.

Project Schedule:

- The applicant intends to submit a joint land use application in May for July UDC and Plan Commission hearings and an August Common Council hearing.
- Landmarks Commission provided advisory comments to the Plan Commission regarding the demolitions (*see comments below.*)

Approval Standards:

Upon filing a formal application, the UDC would be an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 1 (“UDD 1”), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(14).

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

Staff recommends that the UDC review the project against the requirements and guidelines UDD 1. Staff notes that while the property is within the boundaries of the ongoing South Madison Area Plan, only plans adopted at the time of application should be considered in evaluating a proposal. In regards to height, the existing zoning allows height above five stories to be approved with Conditional Use approval.

Only the design of the proposed building is before the UDC, as considerations related to demolitions are not under the purview of this Commission. As a reference, staff note that the Landmarks Commission provided advisory comments to the Plan Commission regarding the demolitions. Related to the building at 232 E Olin Avenue, the Landmarks Commission recommended to the Plan Commission that the building at 232 East Olin Avenue “had no known historic value” however the building at 222 E Olin Avenue “has historic value based on historic significance due to its Prohibition-Era history and as an intact or rare example of a certain architectural style or method of construction as a Prohibition-Era roadhouse.”

Urban Design District 1 was established to make John Nolen Drive, the South Beltline Highway and adjacent properties a most visually attractive approach to the City of Madison. Code excerpts are included below. During this informational review, staff request that the UDC include comments related to these excerpts and the following points.

- **Building Prominence and Long Views.** The proposed development is located at highly visible location along an entryway into Downtown and it will be a prominent structure due to its height. Considering the

site's multiple long views, including those from John Nolen Drive and Olin Avenue, staff request that the UDC provide feedback how this development and its composition responds to its prominent location.

- **Articulation of John Nolen Drive Façade.** Staff requests that the UDC provides feedback on the building elevation facing John Nolen Drive and the façade treatment of the parking garage podium and also consider how upper level design elements relate to the lower levels.
- **Articulation and Activation along Olin Avenue.** Staff requests that the UDC provides feedback on the building elevation facing Olin Avenue regarding visibility of residential and commercial entries, as well as loading zone area locations.
- **Rooftop Mechanical Screening.** The current concept utilizes lighting and a design that appears to emphasize the rooftop screening as a design element. Staff have previously raised comments and concerns that such not feature become a dominating element of the building and skyline and believes that the screening element should not visually compete with long views of the Capitol. Staff request that the UDC provide comments on this feature.

Please see the following excerpts from the UDD #1.

Building Relationships.

The siting of structures on public and private land in the district shall meet the following requirements and conform as much as possible with the following guidelines:

- New development shall consider activities on adjacent properties with relation to access from abutting streets, parking areas, service areas, building setbacks, height of structures, and color and materials of adjacent or nearby buildings.
- The relationship of any buildings to the public right-of-way should be completed in a manner that presents an attractive, properly located structure.
 - Relating attractively to abutting roadways and the lakes.
 - Recognizing the views of the city skyline, Lake Monona, and the Exposition Center.
 - Providing landscaping treatment for open areas which are highly visible from John Nolen Drive and which complement the building forms.

Building Design.

Buildings shall meet the following requirements and conform as much as possible with the following guidelines.

- Structures should be designed to be compatible with the structures that are adjacent to them.
- Large unbroken exterior facades should be avoided.
- All building elevations are of importance and should be carefully designed. Buildings should avoid blank facades. When visible from roadways or adjoining properties, roof surfaces should be considered as part of the overall design.
- Any building of exceptional height or prominence shall be integrated with the surrounding development and topography.