

November 1, 2021

Mr. Kevin Firchow  
Principal Planner, Planning Division  
City of Madison Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development  
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Ste 017  
Madison, WI 53703

**RE: Letter of Intent – Combined Land Use/UDC Initial/Final and Subdivision Applications**  
Verve Madison – Subtext Development  
**(JSD Project #: 21-10219)**

Mr. Firchow,

On behalf of Subtext Development, JSD Professional Services, Inc. is pleased to submit the enclosed application materials for review and consideration at the December 15, 2021, Urban Design Commission meeting and the January 10, 2022, Plan Commission meeting.

Overall, we anticipate the land use entitlement review and approval process to include:

- Conditional Use Permit for new buildings in excess of 20,000 square feet and in excess of four stories,
- Demolition Permit to demolish the existing site improvements and buildings,
- Urban Design Commission Initial/Final, and
- Certified Survey Map to combine the existing parcels into one cohesive development site.

#### **Development Team Introduction**

<b>Owner:</b>	Subtext Development Attn: Mitch Korte, Dev. Manager 3000 Locust Street St. Louis, MO 63103	<b>Architect:</b>	ESG Architecture & Design Attn: Neil Reardon, Assoc. AIA, LEED AP 500 S Washington Ave Minneapolis, MN 55415
<b>Survey &amp; Engineer:</b>	JSD Professional Services, Inc. Attn: Jessica Vaughn, AICP 161 Horizon Drive, Suite 101 Verona, WI 53593	<b>Landscape Design:</b>	Damon Farber Landscape Architects Attn: Jesse Symynkywicz, ASLA 310 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue S Suite, 750 Minneapolis, MN 55415

#### **Project Site Location and Background**

The project site is generally located at the northwest corner of W Johnson and N Bassett streets in the heart of downtown Madison. Overall, the project site is comprised of eight parcels totaling roughly 0.65 acres in size and is zoned Urban Mixed Use. The project site is also within the City of Madison Downtown

Plan Planning Area and subject to the design guidelines and building stepbacks and height limitations noted therein.

**Development Summary**

- Site Area: 28,515 square feet (approx. 0.65 acres)
- Building Coverage: 25,206 SF (including green roofs)
- Building Gross Square Footage: 278,581 SF
- Proposed Lot Coverage: 22,001 SF (site paving plus building coverage (27,722 SF), minus green roofs (5,469 SF))
- Proposed Impervious Area: 27,722 SF (building coverage, site paving)
- Proposed Pervious Area: 793 SF
- Building Height: 12 stories, with rooftop terrace
- Northeast Corner: 130 feet
- Proposed No. Units: 144 (1-5-bedroom units)
- No. of Bedrooms: 540
- Open Space: 6,230 SF
- FAR: 9.8
- Garage Parking Spaces: 110 (77 standard, 15 compact, 11 EV Ready, 2 EV installed, 5 ADA)
- Short Term Bike Parking: 28 (10 on W Johnson, 4 on Conklin Place, interior 14 covered)
- Long Term Bike Parking: 268 (secure, key fab access)

<b>Verve – Madison Zoning Analysis</b>			
<b>Development Standard</b>	<b>Required per Code</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Standard Met (Y/N)</b>
<b>Site Area</b>	Min. 3,000 SF	28,515 SF	Y
<b>Lot Width</b>	30 feet		Y
<b>Setbacks</b>	Front: 5 feet Side: 0 or 5 feet Rear: 10 feet	Front: min. 5 feet along W Johnson and min. 6" along N Bassett Side: min. 0 feet Rear: min. 10 feet	Y
<b>Building Gross Square Footage</b>	N/A	278,581 SF	Y, conditional use required for buildings in excess of 20,000 SF and four stories
<b>Lot Coverage</b>	90% 25,663 SF	22,001 SF	Y
<b>Building Height</b>	Min. 2 stories Max. 12 stories per Downtown Height Map	12 stories	Y, conditional use required for buildings in excess of 20,000 SF and four stories
<b>Usable Open Space</b>	10 sq. ft./bedroom 1,440 SF	6,230 SF	Y

<b>Bike Parking</b>	1 per unit up to 2-bedrooms, ½ space per add'l bedroom (271 required); 1 guest space per 10 units (14 required)	Total: 298 Long term: 270 (90%) Short term: 28	Y
<b>Vehicle Parking</b>	N/A	Total: 112 Standard: 79 Compact: 15 ADA: 5	Y
<b>EV Ready and EV Installed</b>	10% Ready (11) and 2% Installed (2)	EV Ready: 11 EV Installed: 2	Y

**Site Access and Circulation**

The project site is located at a highly visible corner within the heart of downtown Madison, at the northwest corner of the intersection of W Johnson and Bassett streets. The site's location in proximity to UW- Madison Campus, service-oriented and entertainment amenities, as well as multi-modal opportunities, including Madison Metro transit routes and bike paths, lends itself of a high-level of walkability. Accommodations have been made, however to satisfy parking demand and the day-to-day functions of the proposed development, as well as support multi-modal transportation opportunities, including:

- Secure, below-grade, structured parking for personal vehicles,
- Covered visitor parking,
- Excess bike parking, both public short- and long-term secured parking,
- Secure moped/scooter parking, and
- Covered dedicated temporary parking for delivery, drop-off, and loading (i.e., Amazon, Uber, Lyft, move-in/out, EatStreet, etc.).

Primary vehicular access to the development will be provided from Conklin Place. The multiple points of access that exist today along W Johnson Street and N Bassett Street will be removed, which will undoubtedly improve the current condition from both a traffic flow and pedestrian conflict perspective.

Given the site's urban setting, there was a desire to incorporate multiple points pedestrian access into and through the site and building. Multiple common building entries have been located along W Johnson Street and N Bassett Street with the primary building entry located at the corner. In addition, multiple walk-up units with porches and active entries at-grade have been located along W Johnson Street, which will contribute to creating an enhanced pedestrian urban environment, as well as benefit from the improved streetscape design as noted below. While W Johnson Street is recognized as a major thoroughfare, the proposed streetscape improvements and the unit entry setbacks (varying from approximately eight to 14 feet from the back of sidewalk) along W Johnson Street will provide an adequate buffer for the residential units located along the street (22 to 28 feet buffer from W Johnson Street).

**Streetscape Improvements**

With the primary goal of creating an enhanced pedestrian environment that not only provides for pedestrian safety measures and adequate buffer from vehicular traffic, but that also enhances the urban

streetscape and forest, streetscape improvements have been incorporated into proposed development both along W Johnson and N Bassett streets.

The current streetscape along W Johnson Street is a limited with regard to plantings, and terrace and sidewalk widths. Streetscape improvements have been incorporated into the site design that are aimed at creating a safer and softer pedestrian environment the provides an adequate buffer from vehicular traffic, as well as the ability to accommodate multi-modal users. The proposed improvements include:

- Widening the sidewalk from roughly five feet to six feet;
- Increasing the terrace width from approximately three feet to eight feet; and
- Providing street trees, 40-foot separation on center.

In addition, enhanced landscaping along N Bassett Street is proposed (currently there is only one tree and turf grass), including providing additional street trees and ground perennial/ornament grass plantings. The proposed improvements will further delineate the bike and pedestrian zones, as well as soften the urban environment.

### **Architecture and Building Materials**

Overall, the proposed design borrows from the tried-and-true principals of quality urban design that is positively oriented towards the street with numerous active openings both doors and windows. Storefront glazing at street offers activation at the residential lobby on the two major frontages of the building. The building's orientation is intended to maximize natural light on the site while balancing the necessary building code and zoning code setbacks offering massing relief and optimal views via a large south facing courtyard.

A key component that played a role in the building's shape and form, is the unique context of the "bend" in W Johnson Street. The proposed building design utilizes the curve as a design opportunity that allows for individual walk-up units to be located at grade. Along this frontage and curve, building indentations and permutations were incorporated to create an interesting and active frontage along W Johnson Street.

Overall, the primary exterior building material palette is comprised of masonry and metal panel to compliment and modern architecture, as well as maintain a human scale. The material palette of the upper levels of the building uses two primary materials to break the massing, effectively simulating two buildings with the gray brick component and the dark gray/charcoal metal panel component.

The primary material on the main corner and along N Bassett Street is a gray brick. It being the softer and lighter material of the two main materials; and the metal panel at the courtyard and south and west wings being a more dynamic material that changes appearance with light levels varying shiny-ness depending on sunlight and time of day. A medium gray metallic metal panel is used to accent parts of the façade where breaks or massing changes happen between the two major material areas.

### **Open Space Amenities**

With the intent of providing a diverse open space and recreation program, the development will include a variety of shared open spaces and common amenities, both indoor and outdoor, that will provide year-round recreation opportunities for residents, both active and passive. The open space program will generally consist of shared roof top patios and decks, private porches and balconies, and indoor common elements. A detailed list of the open space and recreation program is provided below.

Second Floor Roof Top Courtyard:

- Private patios for units on the second floor,
- Multi-purpose turf space and lush landscaped area, and
- Cabanas and movable lounge seating.

12<sup>th</sup> Floor Roof Top Deck:

- Social lounge with fire pits,
- Grilling stations,
- Pool,
- Hot tub,
- Multi-purpose turf space, and
- Sun loungers and cabanas.

Indoor Recreation Amenities:

- Coffee Bar,
- Fitness center and weight room,
- Long-term, access-controlled bike storage and repair station,
- Private group and individual study rooms, and
- Club room with TB area and lounge seating.

**Stormwater**

Given the site's urban setting, the stormwater management system for the proposed development will be designed utilizing green infrastructure to reduce and delay peak flow and volume of runoff, encourage infiltration, and enhance evapotranspiration. Generally, the proposed stormwater management system includes a combination of multiple green roof areas and an underground storage chamber.

Green roof systems will be located on the second- and 12<sup>th</sup>- story roofs and at grade, above the structured parking. All of these areas will be designed and landscaped with a dual purpose; to not only serve as a stormwater management facility meeting applicable requirements, but to also serve as an open space amenity within the development. These rooftop areas total roughly 5,469 square-feet in size.

In addition, an underground storage tank will be located west of the building beneath the proposed dog run area, to satisfy the remainder of stormwater requirements not met by the green roofs, and allow for the timed release of runoff from the project site.

**Sustainability Measures**

Recognizing that sustainability is a key component of both the City's and developer's land use goals and policies, a variety of sustainability measures have been incorporated into the building and site design. Generally, key sustainability measures are focused on reducing utility usage, encouraging multi-modal transportation opportunities and reducing vehicle trips, and promoting active, healthy communities. Please refer to the detailed list of the sustainability measures provided below.

- Utilizing green features, including energy star appliances and HVAC, LED lighting, low-flow plumbing fixtures, and occupancy sensors,
- Incorporating drought tolerant plants into landscape design,
- Providing electric vehicle charging stations and electrical vehicle ready stalls,

- Unbundling parking from unit leases,
- Providing contactless package delivery system,
- Providing excess bike parking, both long- and short-term and bike repair station, and
- Providing a variety of parking spaces, both long- and short-term, to accommodate and support a variety of vehicles and household functions, including scooters, mopeds, compact vehicles, loading, and delivery.

### **Consistency with Downtown Design Guidelines**

As noted in the Purpose statement of the Downtown Design Guidelines (the “Guidelines”), the intent of the Guidelines is to provide guidance on the desired design aesthetics of buildings in the city’s downtown and mixed-use zoning districts. The guidelines are intended to focus on compatibility at multiple scales, including block, neighborhood and citywide, as well as encouraging an active and vibrant urban pedestrian environment relative to building orientation, open spaces, landscaping, and architecture (massing, materials, ornamentation, fenestration, etc.).

Overall, the proposed development is generally consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines, including those that speak to:

- **Creating a positive street presence:** active uses and architecture located at street level, building presents a strong corner presence, and service-related uses are located behind the building;
- **Minimizing the visual impact of motor vehicles:** site access located behind the building off lowest category street frontage, vehicle parking is located beneath the building, and uninterrupted pedestrian access maintained along major street frontages;
- **Providing a variety of interesting and diverse useable open spaces:** a diverse open space/recreation program is proposed that includes both outdoor and indoor passive and active recreation opportunities, including rooftop decks, private balconies and porches, gym, lounge area and gathering spaces;
- **Providing landscaped areas that soften and buffer:** various landscape and streetscape improvements have been incorporated into the development proposal to soften and create a more positive pedestrian environment along both N Bassett and W Johnson streets, canopy trees have been incorporated into the streetscape. All plantings to be native, salt and drought tolerant with year-round color interest;
- **Presenting a building design and material palette that is “welcoming”, provides visual interest, and that is human scale:** active unit and building entries have been located at-grade, the main pedestrian building entrance maintains corner presence, architectural artistic feature located at street-level, storefront window system at street level, human scale exterior fit and finishes.

**Project Schedule**

Construction is expected to commence Fall of 2022 with completion in Fall of 2024.

Thank you for your time and consideration in review of this development proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding this matter or otherwise.

Respectfully submitted,



Jessica Vaughn, AICP  
Senior Planner