

September 23, 2024

City of Madison
Planning Division
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
P.O. Box 2985
Madison, WI 53701-2985
(608) 266-4635

Re: **Mifflin Chapter Apartments – Land Use Application Letter of Intent**

Site Address: 418-446 West Washington Avenue & 413-417 West Mifflin Street, Madison, WI

Dear Planning Division:

This letter is to describe the intent of the Land Use Application for the properties located at 418-446 West Washington Avenue & 413-417 West Mifflin Street. The developer, CRG Acquisition, LLC, intends to raze the existing structures and develop the 1.5-acre site into a 6-story for-rent residential building with approximately 163 units and 511 beds, and approximately 80 parking spaces located in a single level of underground, structured parking. The project was designed to meet the goals and standards identified in both the Madison Downtown Plan and the Mifflandia Plan.

Project Team

Developer:	CRG Acquisition, LLC 35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 1300 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 658-0747 Representative: Alison Mills
Architect:	Lamar Johnson Collaborative 35 E. Wacker Drive, Suite 1300 Chicago, IL 60601 (312) 429-0409 Representative: Max Komnenich
Civil Engineer:	Vierbicher 999 Fourier Dr, Ste 201 Madison, WI 53717 (608) 826-0532 Representative: Johnathan Lilley

Existing Conditions

The existing properties include 2-3 story residential structures, paved and gravel parking areas, trees, shrubs, and other vegetation. There are five existing curb cuts onto West Washington and one existing curb cut onto West Mifflin. The properties are zoned DR2 (Downtown Residential 2). The existing buildings have been heavily used over the years and the overall integrity of the structures has been compromised. All existing street trees along West Washington are to be preserved.

Project Schedule

The development team has held several pre-application meetings with Planning and Zoning Staff, has met with the Miffland and Bassett neighborhood groups of Capital Neighborhoods Inc. on multiple occasions, and has also held a neighborhood "postcard" meeting on September 12, 2024 to discuss the development proposal and review concept plans. The project was also presented to the Urban Design Commission for an Informational Meeting on August 14, 2024. Having received and incorporated this feedback into the project, the developer plans to attend the UDC Meeting for Initial & Final Recommendations of Approval on November 6, 2024, the Plan Commission Meeting on November 18, 2024, and the Common Council Meeting for the Certified Survey Map on November 26, 2024. The developer anticipates starting construction in the late third quarter of 2025 to allow existing tenants to stay through the summer of 2025. The project is planned to deliver by Summer 2027.

Proposed Use

The developer intends to build a 6-story for-rent residential building. The lower level will feature approximately 33,000 GSF of parking, bike storage, and utility rooms, while the first floor at grade will feature a residential lobby and leasing office, mail and package rooms, residential amenity rooms, bike storage, utility rooms, and residential units that have front stoops and direct access to West Washington Ave to activate and maintain the residential nature of the street.

Access

To respond to concerns brought forth to the developer from the neighborhood, Alder, planning staff, and traffic engineering, the project is removing all 5 of the existing driveways onto West Washington Avenue, and all vehicular access to the garage and all service access to the building is accomplished through a single driveway along the northeast corner of the site on West Mifflin Street. Trash for the entire building is also managed from West Mifflin Street to maintain the distinctive walkable character and wide terraces of West Washington Avenue.

The project team also engaged KL Engineering to estimate the traffic volume impacts from the development to confirm that the impacts on West Mifflin Street would be of minimal impact to the neighborhood. In addition to improving both the pedestrian and vehicular safety along West Washington Avenue by eliminating the driveways and all left turns across several lanes of traffic, the project is expected to have a negligible impact on West Mifflin Street traffic flow. Currently at peak hour, there are approximately 4-5 cars every 1-2 minutes on West Mifflin Street, and the

project is only expected to generate up to 1 new car every 1-2 minutes during the peak hour (inclusive of deliveries, drop-offs, and estimated resident vehicular traffic). Further, there is currently space for approximately 81 cars to park behind the existing buildings on the site, thus the 80-90 new spaces located in the garage below grade are not expected to generate noticeable traffic or street parking demand.

Along the West Mifflin frontage, the project also has a 6' easement to the benefit of 409 West Mifflin to provide curb cut and driveway access to the rear of that neighboring property. That easement is planned to be preserved at grade for its length (approximately 100' into the project site). Beyond the easement the driveway into the garage is able to ramp below grade under the building to access the residential parking garage for the project. With this single curb cut on West Mifflin, the project is able to leverage the benefits of its site configuration and improve the streetscape on West Washington for the future.

Building Massing

In order to maintain the permeability of the block while improving the safety of the pedestrian experience for residents and visitors, the ground floor of the building erodes in several locations to provide additional access points to the building. The primary entrances to the building are from a residential lobby along West Washington Ave, and a secondary residential lobby along West Mifflin Street. There are two additional entrances to the building in the middle of the structure to provide more convenient access to the western residential units, and to provide essential access for fire protection and utility services. The building will be secured 24/7, and all parking is maintained below grade and active uses front all streets in order to enhance the vibrancy of streetscape. The through-block nature of the building has also allowed the project a unique opportunity to create a vibrant, pedestrian and bicycle path between West Washington and West Mifflin for the wider neighborhood to enjoy.

Building Design

The developer and project team recognize the importance of this block to the neighborhood and the Mifflandia Plan. The development has responded to the specific recommendations proposed in the Mifflandia Plan to create the kind of development envisioned by the neighborhood, as summarized below:

- Page 3&15: the development seeks to enhance the distinctive physical character of West Washington Avenue as a gateway to Downtown by creating an asymmetrical but rhythmic façade with additional semi-public outdoor space, while also providing new high-quality housing for the neighborhood. The project emphasizes the incorporation of porches and wide terraces to bridge the new development with the existing surrounding buildings.
- Page 7&10: the development has been designed to be consistent with the height, setback, and stepback guidelines in the plan. The building is setback 20' from West Washington Ave and 15' from West Mifflin Street, with upper level stepbacks of 30' on West Washington and 15' on Mifflin above the 4th floor. Balconies are added to the West Mifflin frontage to create a rhythm to the façade consistent with the outboard porches

along the block, and additional porches and stoops are created along the West Washington frontage. The modulation of the massing and stepbacks are intended to preserve the neighborhood character while also creating more welcoming semi-public spaces for the neighborhood. At the upper two floors, the color and materiality shift to reduce the mass and scale of those floors, consistent with the intent of the Mifflandia Plan.

- Page 7&13: the project team has a history in Madison of developing inclusive and creative opportunities for the arts and has planned for locations for additional public art in the project.
- Page 11: the project creates the opportunity for a fully complete, interblock path between West Mifflin and West Washington by creating a pedestrian and bicycle path through the building.
- Page 12: the project significantly increases the amount of available housing
- Page 16: material changes in the façade are done with plane changes and are intended to break down the façade visually to maintain the character and diversity of design in the neighborhood. Ground floor units have their own street entrance and building entrances are designed as focal points with canopies, stoops, and distinct pathways to improve the pedestrian rhythm of the street façade.
- Page 17: balconies are included to engage with the façade, and the materiality and color palette of the façade are designed to respond to the visual rhythm of the neighborhood
- Page 18: green roof is incorporated throughout the 4th floor roof to provide a visually appealing and sustainable rooftop
- Page 19&21: the historic trees and canopy along West Washington are all maintained
- Page 19: the project eliminates all curb cuts along West Washington, which also allows service for the entire building to be maintained exclusively from West Mifflin Street, while increasing the desired porosity of the site and the character of West Washington. Particular attention is paid to the patios, plazas, art, and landscape along West Washington.

Overall, the project team believes the design of the project is consistent with the guidelines of the Mifflandia and Downtown Plans, unifying the streetscape while enhancing the neighborhood and human scale of the project by introducing a vertical rhythm to the building. The approach to detailing the façade is rooted in the context and tradition of the neighborhood, but expresses the pedestrian scale of the neighborhood with texture and warmth.

As the population of Madison continues to grow rapidly, the demolition of the existing structures and related components on the property is a critical step to the ultimate redevelopment of the

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property into necessary housing and density for the neighborhood as called for in the Mifflandia Plan. Overall, the developer is excited to have worked collaboratively with the community and local stakeholders on the design and programming of the project and looks forward to a project that supports the needs of the neighborhood and Madison as a whole.

If you have any questions concerning the above information or attached plans, please contact Alison Mills with CRG Acquisition, LLC at millsa@realcrg.com or (314) 412-7390.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison K Mills". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.