

Wingra II Advisory

Prepared by

Neighbors in the Vicinity of South Park Street and Fish Hatchery

Introduction

T. Wall Enterprises proposes to build a mixed-use 4-building, 164-unit, 220-bedroom development on the triangular site between South Park and Fish Hatchery. The shortest of these buildings will be 3 stories and the tallest will be 5 or 6.5 (currently under discussion are walk-up penthouse lofts at the “point” going to 6.5 stories). The first floor of 2 of the 3 buildings along South Park Street (all except the 3-story) will consist of 2 larger and 5 or 6 smaller commercial spaces, the smaller spaces to be used as live/work spaces by artists in the short-term before they become commercial spaces long-term.

Purpose of these Advisory Comments

The purpose of this advisory document is to lay out Bay Creek neighbors’ hopes, wishes, and concerns raised at informational meetings with T. Wall, at the Urban Design Commission (UDC), City Planning staff, and in neighborhood planning sessions. Neighbors, who are familiar with the day-to-day experience of driving, biking, walking, and shopping along South Park Street and Fish Hatchery, have direct experience of the area and have a valuable perspective on the anticipated impacts of the proposed development and contains valuable information for ensuring the positive integration of the proposed development into its surroundings. Neighbors may wish to bring this perspective forward by formulating conditions to bring before the UDC, the Plan Commission, and the Common Council when each of these bodies reviews T. Wall Enterprises’ plans this month and next.

Main Points

Hopes

Neighbors’ biggest shared hope is for a building that is an asset to the neighborhood—now and in the future. They recognize the importance of development in Madison as a whole and South Madison in particular and the role that South Park Street can play as a gateway to the University of Wisconsin campus, a conduit between the beltline and the downtown area, and as a business district that can reinvigorate South Madison.

We hope for a building that is:

- Distinctive and of a design that balances a highly modern (steel and glass) aesthetic and the older (brick, stone, and wood) aesthetic of the Bay Creek neighborhood
- Appealing at street level and of human scale (for many this is four stories at its tallest) inviting more pedestrian traffic and neighborhood use
- Of mixed use with target businesses that draw low volumes of auto traffic and enhance the range of businesses along the stretch of South Park from Wingra to St. Marys
- Sustainable financially
- Green with the possibility of a green roof that is open to the community
- Environmentally sound (i.e. does not cause storm water runoff problems during construction or long-term)

Concerns (generic in nature)

We are concerned that the current plans do not yet enhance the community. They do not invite neighbors to use or relate to the building as a neighborhood asset and they present the following challenges to nearby neighbors:

- Overflow parking due to inadequate interior parking to accommodate resident, commercial employee, and visitor parking (for resident and business guests). The current plans have 110 full-time residential spaces, 54 shared daytime business/nighttime resident spaces, and 10 daytime business/nighttime resident guest spaces. The shared ground level lot will close to the public at 8 p.m.
- Traffic congestion at the notoriously busy and hazardous intersection of South Park and Fish Hatchery/South Park and West Lakeside Street. The entrance to the shared parking is located on South Park at West Lakeside.

- Traffic risks due to the surrounding streets' absence of traffic calming features
 - Risks to pedestrians and cyclists along Fish Hatchery from South Park to West Wingra both north and south
 - Risks to pedestrians and cyclists along West Lakeside Street from cars driving too rapidly both east and west
- Traffic risks along of Fish Hatchery (north, south) and at South Park and West Lakeside (east, west) as cars speed through both intersections
- Storm water runoff polluting the bay during construction and on an ongoing basis
- Blockage of sunlight along adjacent residential side streets east and west
- Gentrification in Bay Creek and south of the neighborhood, pushing current neighbors out
- Light pollution from stairwells and ground level businesses and glare off of the building

Based upon the proposal presented (listing the elements)

As stated by Jay Wendt of the city's Plan Department at the most recent UDC meeting, prudent planning assumes and requires balancing Madison's needs for growth/South Madison's need for revitalization, the developer's programmatic needs, and the rights of nearby neighbors to the use and enjoyment of their properties in the manner they value.

Both the developer and the city's Plan Department acknowledge the concerns listed above as real issues; however the current proposal does not allow for their adequate remediation. Specifically in need of further discussion/solution are the issues of:

- 1) Adequate parking – The 174 interior parking stalls provided are likely to be inadequate given the development's 220 bedrooms and its targeted demographic (young and highly social). Surrounding streets (West Lakeside, Emerson, West Olin, Midland, South Brooks, and High) already experience parking congestion due to the parking needs of South Park business patrons, university and downtown employees, and Wingra Point I residents.
- 2) Traffic calming/remediation – With the exception of the 800 and 700 blocks of West Lakeside (immediately off of South Park), there are no traffic calming features east of the development/ West of the development along Fish Hatchery there are half-size islands with flags and painted islands.
 - a. Traffic crossing South Park going east and west to exit or enter and exit Wingra Point II's underground parking garage with entrance at West Lakeside and South Park will increase congestion and traffic risks at the intersection and exacerbate the incidence of cars speeding along West Lakeside.
 - b. The option of turning left off of South Park at West Lakeside into the underground parking structure will add to the congestion at the intersection and increase the risk of collisions.
 - c. The increased volume of traffic along Fish Hatchery will exacerbate the problem of drivers who turn left illegally going north to beat the bus.
- 2) Storm water management – Recent history of runoff into the bay during construction along South Park has demonstrated the need to plan carefully for storm water management during—and after—building. The proposal currently does not specify measures that will contribute positively to storm water management.
- 3) Passage of sunlight into nearby residential neighborhood streets – The height of the proposed building is likely to cut off late-in-the-day sunlight into the nearby streets east of South Park. The current design does not include elements such as fifth-floor setbacks.
- 4) Shedding of night lighting and daytime reflective glare into the surrounding residential streets – Several of the new buildings along South Park have significantly increased light at night and/or glare by day in the neighborhood. The current design utilizes reflective glass and some shiny metal elements.
- 5) Gentrification of South Madison – The targeted demographic for the building reflects only a portion of the existing community. Some Bay Creek neighbors have voiced the concern (echoed by neighbors to our south) that the development will have the effect of elevating rents and pushing

current residents out of the surrounding communities over time. These neighbors advocate the inclusion of a TBD number of units of affordable housing in the new development.

Recommendations (specific in nature)

It is recommended that:

- 1) Overflow parking – A true solution will include some combination of the following to minimize on-street parking:
 - a. Make the High Street alley into a real street with on-street parking.
 - b. Move commercial parking to the clinic next door (seeking City intervention to facilitate this arrangement).
 - c. Provide a parking spot in the lease of each apartment for residents. (Live/work spaces should be counted as residential leases.)
 - d. Limit on-street parking to two-hours by day on West Olin, Emerson, West Lakeside, Lake Shore, Brooks, Midland, etc. with more frequent patrolling.
 - e. Eliminate overnight street parking except for residents with no residential permits granted to residents of the buildings. More frequent patrolling to penalize violators.
 - f. Make the live/work spaces a permanent feature and allow no high-volume businesses such as restaurants or bars to reduce anticipated commercial traffic. Break the larger commercial spaces in two to make up for lost commercial space.
 - g. Form a committee including members of the BCNA development committee, the District 13 alder, and local business reps to vet and approve all commercial tenants to ensure the appropriateness of the mix to the community.
 - h. Keep all buildings to four stories or fewer.
- 2) Traffic congestion and risks
 - a. Eliminate the South Park garage entrance at intersection altogether or move it further south.
 - b. Eliminate the left turn across South Park traffic into the garage.
 - c. Create some design element that makes left turns out of the parking garage on South Park impossible.
 - d. Include permanent traffic calming features the length of West Lakeside and West Olin and along Fish Hatchery from South Park to Wingra, such as stop signs. Also include permanent built-up mid-street islands for pedestrians.
- 3) Storm water management
 - a. Include rooftop and ground-level rain gardens (open to the neighborhood) and bioswales.
 - b. Form a City and citizen committee to monitor the storm water solution during construction.
- 4-5) Shed light issues
 - a. Include a fifth-story setback.
 - b. Include black-out features in the lighted hallways.
 - c. Include restrictions on the sorts of store lighting allowed inside and out.
- 6) Avoiding gentrification of the neighborhood
 - a. Make the live/work space a permanent feature of the building to enhance affordability for small business owners.
 - b. Include some low-income units for seniors.

Priorities

I. Traffic

II. Parking

III. Density