

PLANNING UNIT REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
March 29, 2006

**CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION:**

1. Requested Action: Approval of a dormitory building and expanded parking lot located at 1014 Edgewood Avenue/855 Woodrow Street for Edgewood College.
2. Applicable Regulations: Section 28.08(2) classifies college and universities as a conditional use in the R1 Single-Family Residence District, which carries to the R2 Single-Family Residence District. New buildings or substantial additions to existing buildings trigger the conditional use review as major alterations to an approved conditional use.
3. Report Drafted By: Bill Roberts, Planner IV.

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Applicant: Edgewood College, 1000 Edgewood College Drive, Madison, WI 53711; Potter Lawson, Inc., 15 Ellis Potter Court, Madison, WI 53711 (architect).
2. Status of Applicants: Owner and architect.
3. Development Schedule: The applicant wishes to commence construction as soon as all necessary land use approvals have been obtained.
4. Parcel Location: Southwest side of Edgewood Avenue, south side of Monroe Street within the Edgewood Campus, Madison Metropolitan School District, 10<sup>th</sup> Aldermanic District.
5. Existing Zoning: R2 Single-Family Residence District.
6. Existing Land Use: Edgewood College, High School and Grade School Campus.
7. Proposed Use: College dormitory and expand an existing parking lot.
8. Surrounding Land Use and Zoning: This site is surrounded by a predominantly single-family neighborhood that surrounds the campus.
9. Adopted Land Use Plan: SI Special Institutional District/Special District-Campus in the adopted Comprehensive Development Plan.
10. Environmental Corridor Status: This property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor. The campus is on the north shore of Lake Wingra.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICES:**

This site is served with the full range of urban services.

## **STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:**

This application is subject to the conditional use standards.

## **ANALYSIS, EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION:**

### **Development Proposal**

Edgewood College is requesting approval of a major alteration to an approved conditional use to construct a new three-four story, 198-bed dormitory and expand an existing parking lot within their existing campus located along Monroe Street between Edgewood Avenue and Woodrow Street. The proposed 58-suite, 198-bed residence hall will be located on the easterly side of the campus off of Edgewood Avenue and Edgewood Drive. The proposed new dorm will be built on a hillside resulting in the dorm being four stories in height on the southerly side and three stories high on the northerly side (see attached drawings). The building exterior will be a mix of brick veneer and fiber cement board siding. The applicant voluntarily went to the Urban Design Commission for their input. The Urban Design Commission's report is attached.

This application also includes a proposal to expand an existing 54-stall parking lot to 107-stalls that will be used by Edgewood High School faculty and residents of the new dormitory. Access to this expanded parking lot will continue to be from Edgewood Avenue. This lot is proposed to have access control to prevent student commuters from using the parking lot.

As part of this proposal, the applicant has submitted a traffic impact analysis for City staff review. The current proposal also provides for a fire lane at the request of the City of Madison Fire Department that will connect the existing Marshall Hall parking lot to the central campus drive. This lane is shown on the attached site plan will be designated as a pedestrian pathway only. The lane will have controlled access and be used for emergency vehicles, trash pick-up and student move-in/move-out days only. The applicant has been working with City Traffic Engineering staff regarding potential changes to Edgewood Avenue.

A very good landscape plan was included with the application that provides ample new plantings in and around the proposed new building and expanded parking lot and along Edgewood Avenue. A detailed lighting plan is included with the plans that shall comply with the City Lighting Ordinance.

### **Existing Master Plan**

There is a master plan for the Edgewood Campus that was approved by the City Plan Commission in 1996. This plan shows two smaller dorm sites just east of Marshall Hall and one larger dorm site. A copy of the Master Plan is attached for Plan Commission information. The applicant's letter of intent indicates that in the summer of 2000, a number of large trees were removed as a result of storm damage. The letter of intent states that this created enough space to build this residence hall north of the existing Siena Hall. The applicant indicates that through on-

going discussions within the Dudgeon-Monroe and Vilas Neighborhood Liaison Committee, it was agreed that the two smaller dorms as shown on the 1996 Master Plan would not be built. The application indicates that the Neighborhood Liaison Committee wanted the dorms moved further towards the center of campus. The Master Plan indicated that “The City’s R2 zoning requires a 30-foot wide front yard for buildings up to 35-feet in height. An additional one-foot of setback is required for each foot of building height in excess of 35-feet. This setback to height relationship should be observed along Edgewood Avenue.” The current proposal for the new dorm shows the building located 297-feet southwest of Edgewood Avenue and 305-feet northwest of the Edgewood drive along Lake Wingra. The proposed new dorm is about 120 feet west of the single-family lot located at 1110 Edgewood Avenue. This is the only single-family house along the southwest side of the street. A copy of the 1996 approved Master Plan with the portions relative to the parking lot and dorms highlighted is attached.

### **Standards for Review**

All conditional use applications, including major alterations to existing conditional uses, need to comply with the standards contained in the Zoning ordinance. The Zoning Code states that no application for conditional use shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless such commission shall find that all of the following conditions are present:

1. *That the establishment, maintenance or operation of this conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger the public health, safety or general welfare.*

The comments from the reviewing City departments, in addition to any information provided by residents or the neighborhood at the Plan Commission public hearing usually provides the basis for the Plan Commission to use to determine whether this standard has been met or not. There is significant concern being voiced by residents of the adjacent neighborhood regarding traffic and parking issues that may result in the establishment of this new dormitory and expanded parking lot at this location. The neighborhood is worried that the dorm building at this location will result in noise impacts on the nearby neighborhood (see attached memorandum from the Vilas Neighborhood Association).

Based solely upon the attached comments received from the reviewing departments, there is nothing to indicate that this use would endanger the public health, safety or general welfare. Many in the nearby neighborhood feel otherwise for reasons stated in the attached emails and memo from the Vilas Neighborhood Association.

2. *That the City be able to provide municipal services to the property where the conditional use is proposed given due consideration of the cost of providing such services.*

The attached comments received from the reviewing departments, including the City Engineer, Traffic Engineer, Water Utility, Fire Department indicates nothing out of the ordinary in providing municipal services to this property as a result of the changes proposed. Both the City Engineer and Traffic Engineer are recommending improvements to Edgewood Avenue.

3. *That the uses, values and enjoyment of other property in the neighborhood for purposes already established shall be in no foreseeable manner substantially impaired or diminished by the establishment, maintenance or operation of the conditional use.*

This standard is often the most difficult standard for the Plan Commission to address in the process of reviewing conditional use applications. Information provided by residents or property owners in the neighborhood at the Plan Commission hearing usually provides additional information for the Plan Commission to use to determine whether this standard has been met or not. As noted above, there has been concern expressed by the adjacent neighborhood that this new dormitory and expanded parking lot will have a negative effect on other property in the neighborhood. The Plan Commission will need to weigh the application materials, the reviewing department's staff reports and input from the neighborhood, as well as the applicant's presentation at the Plan Commission to determine whether this standard has been adequately addressed. Both the applicant and the neighborhood have provided specific comments on how this proposal will or will not address this standard (see attached).

4. *That the establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.*

All of the property around this campus has been fully developed since the 1930s. Staff feels that this application will not impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding properties in this long-established near west side neighborhood.

5. *That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, parking supply, internal circulation improvements, including but not limited to, vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, public transit and other necessary site improvements have been or are being provided.*

The City Traffic Engineer and City Engineer, as well as the other reviewing departments have reviewed this proposal and have not identified any potential problems regarding utility availability, drainage, etc. However, the City Engineer and Traffic Engineer are recommending improvements to Edgewood Avenue at Jefferson Street (see attached reports). The applicant has submitted a detailed traffic impact analysis for City Traffic Engineering staff review, and a stormwater analysis summary for review by the City Engineer. The City Zoning administrator has reviewed the parking lot proposal and their comment is attached. The Commission will give special attention to the comments of the Traffic Engineer regarding access, parking, and circulation.

6. *That measures which may include transportation demand management (TDM) and participation in a transportation management association have been or will be taken to provide adequate ingress and egress, including all off-site improvements, so designed as to minimize traffic congestion and to ensure public safety and adequate traffic flow, both on-site and on the public streets.*

As noted above, the City Traffic Engineer has reviewed this proposal and their findings/staff report recommending specific improvements are provided to the applicant and the Plan Commission.

7. *That the conditional use shall conform to all applicable regulations of the district in which it is located.*

The City Zoning Administrator has examined this application and has determined that this standard has been met. The Zoning Administrator has reviewed the parking information and has made a determination that the overall parking provided is sufficient to accommodate the proposed new dorm.

8. *(Standard Number "8" specifically relates to a community living arrangement conditional use, which is not applicable to this conditional use application.)*
9. *That when applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an alteration to an existing building, the Plan Commission;*
  - a. *Shall bear in mind the statement of purpose for the zoning district, such that the proposed building or addition at its location does not defeat the purposes and objectives of the zoning district; and*
  - b. *May require the applicant to submit plans to the Urban Design Commission for comments and recommendations; and*
  - c. *May consider the use of the proposed building as it relates to the City's Land Use Plan.*

This site is located in the R2 Residence zoning district. A copy of the R2 statement of purpose is attached. The Zoning Code requires colleges and universities to be processed as a conditional use in the R1 Single-Family Residence District, which carries up to the R2 Single-Family Residence District. The Zoning Administrator has determined that a student dormitory is accessory to a college or university and is permitted within the broad definition of a college or university. Major additions or changes to an existing conditional use require Plan Commission review and approval. As noted earlier, the applicant voluntarily submitted the plans to the Urban Design Commission for their comments and recommendations. The Urban Design Commission was supportive of this proposal and their comments are attached for Plan Commission consideration.

The recently adopted Comprehensive Development Plan for the City of Madison shows the Edgewood Campus site as a Special District-Campus. Among the land use goals, objectives, policies and implementation recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan, the campus designation "is applied only to the campuses of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Edgewood College and the Madison Area Technical College. These are defined areas that comprise more than a single urban block and represent specialized sub-areas within the community which may include a wide diversity of uses associated with the primary education mission." The plan goes on to state that "campus master plans should include the proposed location and mix of land uses, recommended development density and intensity, and building size, height and design parameters. The campus plan should identify locations for future info opportunities and address recommended land uses in transitional areas at the edge of the campus area, both within and outside the defined campus." The City will continue to work with the

University and colleges as these educational facilities develop and implement their campus master plans, with a particular goal of creating attractive and engaging interfaces between the campus and adjacent land uses. Among the recommended land uses in these campus designated areas are:

- Educational facilities,
- Research and employment centers,
- Cultural and performance facilities,
- Student, faculty and employee housing,
- Student-oriented retail service, dining and entertainment, and
- Other institutional uses.

The Comprehensive Plan notes that universities and colleges are significant traffic generators. Vehicular access and the location and amount of parking should be designed to minimize congestion and potential negative impacts, both within the campus and in the surrounding neighborhoods. Frequent transit service to and within the campus should be provided. Streets, walkways and multi-use paths and trails should provide strong pedestrian/bicycle linkages through the campus areas and be interconnected with similar facilities beyond the campus. The plan also provides that campus development should be compatible with surrounding uses and their design characteristics, and mitigate potential negative impacts on adjacent areas. Campus areas should not be expanded into adjacent neighborhoods unless such expansions are also consistent with a City-adopted neighborhood or special area plan. Both the City and campus plans should specifically address the goal of creating a productive and engaging relationship between university and college related activities and other compatible activities within the campus transition area.

10. *Standard Number "10" relates to a specific application for a reduction in off-street parking requirements and is not relevant to this application.*
11. *Standard Number "11" is relative specifically to telecommunication facilities which is not relative to this application.*

The application also provides an update to the Campus Master Plan. A copy of the Master Plan update is included in the Plan Commission materials.

City Landmarks Commission staff have reviewed this proposal and it appears that the Native American Mounds on the campus will not be affected. Landmarks Commission staff and the applicant have been in contact to confirm that the current proposal (as well as potential further development on the campus) will not encroach on the mounds.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Thirteen years ago, when Planning Unit staff recommended that Edgewood consider preparing a Master Plan which would guide future campus development and construction activities, staff hoped that the preparation of the plan would provide a process which would allow all interested citizens the ability to comment on the proposal and participate in the development of the plan. It

was also Planning staff's thought that once the Master Plan was prepared and, if adopted by the Plan Commission, it would serve as a guide to Edgewood when developing future conditional use applications and establish for neighborhood residents and the City of Madison additional predictability of possible campus development. The Master Plan has achieved this goal.

In 1996, the Plan Commission approved an overall Edgewood Campus Master Plan that would serve as a guide for future campus development and construction activities. The plan showed dormitories generally on this side of the campus. The application before the Plan Commission at this time for a new dormitory does not specifically match the locations of proposed dormitories as shown on the approved 1996 plan. However, it places the dormitory in the general area closer to the campus center and further removed from the adjacent residential neighborhood. The approved master plan also provided for the possible expansion of this parking lot and preserving the Edgewood Avenue access point. There are significant, valid concerns from the residents of the adjacent residential neighborhood regarding the impact that this proposal may have on their neighborhood. As noted above, input provided by residents of the neighborhood at the Plan Commission public hearing usually provides additional information for the Plan Commission to use as a basis to determine whether all the conditional use standards have been satisfactorily addressed.

Edgewood College and the nearby neighborhoods have utilized a long-standing neighborhood liaison committee to keep the lines of communication open between Edgewood and the neighborhood as planning for the campus has moved forward. Up to this point, this committee has done an excellent job in resolving issues related to the ongoing expansion of the campus. As part of the application packet, Edgewood has provided information indicating how the College believes that the application meets the conditional use standards. The neighborhood has provided information supporting their contention that the standards have not been met.

Unless additional compelling information is presented to the Plan Commission that demonstrates that the ordinance standards cannot be addressed, staff would conclude that most of the conditional use standards for approval of the dormitory have been addressed. Standard No. 3 is often difficult to completely address to all parties satisfaction. Depending on one's point of view, this project will have significant or minimal impact on the nearby residential neighborhood. The area of greatest concern with the proposal seems to be related to traffic and parking management. This is the case with many larger institutional uses that are expanding throughout the City, including the University of Wisconsin, St. Mary's Hospital, Meriter Hospital, larger churches, etc. Based upon the information provided by the City Traffic Engineer, Madison Metro Transit and the City Engineer, the Commission will need to make the determination as to whether the standard dealing with access roads, pedestrian/bicycle, parking and circulation improvements has been satisfactorily addressed.

All agree that Edgewood Campus is a longstanding important community asset. It is important that the campus continue to be successful without overly burdening the surrounding neighborhoods.

Staff suggests that Edgewood consider a comprehensive update to their 1996 Master Plan sometime in the next 4 to 8 years to help plan for future changes on the campus over the coming decades.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Planning Unit believes feel this proposal is generally compatible with the Master Plan. The Planning Unit recommends that the Plan Commission review the plans and consider this application along with the applicant's presentation at the Plan Commission, the comments from the reviewing departments, the comments from the Urban Design Commission and the input from the neighborhood at the public hearing to determine whether all the ordinance standards have been satisfied, or if additional conditions will be necessary to address remaining concerns with the project.