

**PLANNING DIVISION REPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
Of October 10, 2007**

**RE: I.D. # 07470: Zoning Map Amendment I.D. 3297 & 3298, Rezoning 611 Langdon Street from R6 (General Residence District) to PUD-GDP-SIP**

1. Requested Actions: Approval of a request to rezone 611 Langdon Street from R6 (General Residence District) to Planned Unit Development, General Development Plan/ Specific Implementation Plan (PUD-GDP-SIP) to allow demolition of the University of Wisconsin Hillel Foundation building and construction of a new Hillel facility (“The Barbara Hochberg Center for Jewish Student Life”).
2. Applicable Regulations: Section 28.07 (6) of the Zoning Ordinance provides the requirements and framework for Planned Unit Developments; Section 28.12 (9) provides the process for zoning map amendments; Section 28.04 (22) provides the guidelines and regulations for the approval of demolition permits.
3. Report Prepared By: Timothy M. Parks, Planner.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Applicant & Property owner: Hillel Foundation, University of Wisconsin; 611 Langdon Street; Madison; Greg Steinberger, representative.  
  
Agent: Erik Jansson, Engberg Anderson Design Partnership; 1 N. Pinckney Street; Madison.
2. Development Schedule: The applicants wish to commence the development as soon as all regulatory approvals have been granted, with completion anticipated in January 2009.
3. Location: Approximately 0.33 acres located at 611 Langdon Street, approximately 150 west of N. Frances Street, Aldermanic District 8; Madison Metropolitan School District.
4. Existing Conditions: The existing Hillel Foundation building is a two-story structure with 12,100 square feet of floor area.
5. Proposed Land Use: A new four-story, 40,000 square-foot facility for Hillel Foundation activities.
6. Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:  
North: Roundhouse Apartments, University of Wisconsin Extension Lowell Center, zoned R6 (General Residence District); a six-story apartment building, zoned PUD-SIP;

South: Mixed retail and residential buildings located in the 600-block of State Street, including the University House Towers, zoned C4 (Central Commercial District);

East: Campus Inn, zoned PUD-SIP;

West: Six- and eight-story apartment buildings, zoned PUD-SIP.

7. Adopted Land Use Plan: The Comprehensive Plan identifies the subject site and other properties along Langdon Street in the “Langdon Residential sub-district,” which encourages mixed-use buildings containing a mix of office, service, dining, entertainment, etc. uses on the first floor and residential uses on upper floors.
8. Environmental Corridor Status: The property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor.
9. Public Utilities & Services: The property is served by a full range of urban services.

### **STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

This application is subject to the demolition standards of Section 28.04(22) and the Planned Unit Development District standards.

### **PLAN REVIEW**

The applicants are requesting approval of planned unit development zoning to allow construction of a new four-story facility for the Hillel Foundation at the University of Wisconsin to replace the Jewish student organization’s existing two-story, 12,100 square-foot facility, which was constructed in 1956. The site is a 0.33-acre parcel located at 611 Langdon Street, approximately 150 west of N. Frances Street, and is currently zoned R6 (General Residence District).

The existing structure is a low-slung two-story building with a brick and stone façade and aluminum-framed windows. The architecture of the building is largely indicative of many other post-World War II commercial buildings and features a modern, angular design. The nearest portion of the building sits approximately 24 feet from the Langdon Street sidewalk behind a mostly grass front yard, which is partially terraced in the center. The remainder of the front wall of the L-shaped building is set back 50 feet from Langdon Street. A concrete terrace extends along a portion of the front wall between the two front entrances to the facility, while a canopy extends over a portion of the walkway connecting the main entrance of the building to the street. A 12-foot wide shared driveway straddles the western property line of the site and is shared with the adjacent six-story apartment building to the west (619 Langdon Street) and some of the

commercial properties located to the south of the site along the north side of State Street. The driveway is governed by an existing joint driveway easement that extends the length of the common property line shared with the adjacent apartments. Parking for approximately three cars is provided in diagonal parking spaces located on the Hillel side of the shared driveway. The rear yard of the existing facility includes an asphalt and gravel parking area that is shared with the businesses in the three-story commercial-residential building located at 638 State Street.

In addition to the apartments at 619 Langdon Street to the west, the Hillel property is bordered on the east by the seven-story Campus Inn hotel, which occupies the corner of Langdon and N. Frances streets and whose underground parking garage forms most of the eastern property line of the Hillel site. The subject site is located across Langdon Street from a six-story, 30-unit apartment building at 614 Langdon Street, a fraternity house and the University of Wisconsin-Extension Lowell Inn and Conference Center. The southeastern corner of the property adjoins the University House residential towers, which occupy the northwest corner of State and N. Frances streets and includes a tall brick wall that separates the subject site from a service court serving the University House development. The site and surrounding area are characterized by a modest slope south and west from the corner of Langdon and N. Frances streets, which results in about four feet of grade change from the northeastern corner of the site to the northwestern corner.

The new Hillel facility will be a four-story, 40,000 square-foot building, which, in combination with a raised concrete terrace that will extend along most of the front wall of the proposed building, will occupy most of the subject site. The new building will include parking for ten vehicles in a basement garage accessed from the shared driveway by a one-way ramp entering at the southwest corner of the building. The basement level will also house mechanical rooms and storage for the facility. The program for the rest of the new facility includes a first floor café, various lounge and office spaces, a library, a 162-person dining room and kitchen facility, a 240-seat auditorium, and fourth floor fitness facility and rooftop recreation court. Sliding glass doors are proposed to open onto the raised terrace from the first floor café and student lounge to provide outdoor seating for those spaces. In the rear of the building, a two-foot tall brick wall will be extended from the western edge of the wall that currently separates the Hillel property from the University House service court to channel traffic into the rear of the State Street properties accessed by the existing joint driveway in a more organized fashion than currently exists. The letter of intent indicates that the raised terrace along the front wall and the fourth floor recreation court will be used on occasion for religious worship services. The first floor café is characterized in the letter of intent as “religious based food service,” which the zoning text states may be operated by Hillel or an outside vendor.

The proposed four-story building will largely stand 60 feet in height above grade as a result of 13 to 17-foot floor to floor heights, with a total height of 66 feet to the highest parts of the

building. The building architecture will be distinctly modern in character and will feature a combination of metal panels, glass block, Jerusalem stone and cement board paneling on the exterior, with a substantial curtain wall extending through the center of the first through third floors on the Langdon Street facade. The proposed building and raised terrace will extend the length of the eastern property line, with a setback of approximately a foot proposed. The building will also be situated along a portion of the southern property line. The western wall of the building has been set back to accommodate moped parking between the wall and the shared driveway, with a loading and service area for the proposed building in the southwestern corner of the first floor. The applicants hope to achieve LEED Silver Certification for the new building.

The applicants propose a granite block and stamped concrete area between the raised terrace and Langdon Street sidewalk and a new stamped concrete terrace and three maple trees between the sidewalk and curb in the Langdon Street right of way. The terrace improvements will require approval of a Privilege in Streets agreement prior to recording of the specific implementation plan for the project, with the consultation of the City Forester on the trees to be installed. Landscaping for the new facility is otherwise limited to planters located near the front entrance and the installation of three hornbeam trees in the paved area between the raised terrace and sidewalk on private property.

### **ANALYSIS & CONCLUSION**

The applicants are proposing demolition of the existing two-story, 12,100 square-foot Hillel Foundation at the University of Wisconsin facility located at 611 Langdon Street to facilitate construction of a new four-story, 40,000 square-foot facility. The project requires PUD zoning as a result of the proposed structure not providing the front, side and rear yards required in the R6 residential zone, which also has a maximum floor area ratio of 2.0, which the proposed building will exceed (a FAR of 2.83 is proposed).

A casual observation of the existing building by staff found the 1956 structure to be in average to above average condition, and no information has been presented with the application that would suggest that the building is not structurally sound or capable of being rehabilitated or repaired. However, the scope of programming for the 40,000 square-foot building proposed suggests that it may not be economically feasible for the applicants to modernize the existing facility and expand it to suit their future needs. Given the relationship between the Hillel organization and the University of Wisconsin campus, it appears unlikely to the Planning Division that Hillel could expand their presence in this area of the City without demolition of an existing structure factoring into the discussion. The existing Hillel building is generally unremarkable, and the site represents the most logical location for the applicants to expand their campus/ downtown presence.

The Planning Division feels that the new building is well designed and fits well within the existing urban context and building rhythm present at the western end of Langdon Street, which features a variety of buildings that occupy most or all of their sites with dense, mid- and high-rise, residential structures representing a variety of architectural styles. Staff feels that the new Hillel facility will relate well to the sidewalk, and should further enhance the already high amount of activity already present in the 600-block of Langdon Street. While the proposed building will be constructed to abut the eastern property line adjacent to the Campus Inn, staff feels that the project has been designed to have a minimal impact on the adjacent hotel, whose underground parking and upper parking level occupy the common property line shared with the Hillel site. The main hotel tower itself will be located approximately 17 feet from the proposed Hillel building, which staff feels will result in a sufficient light shaft between Hillel and the hotel given the downtown setting.

There are presently no specific, detailed neighborhood-level plans in effect for this area of the City. The Comprehensive Plan identifies the subject site and other properties in the Langdon Street corridor as part of the “Langdon Residential sub-district,” which generally encourages mixed-use buildings containing a mix of office, service, dining, entertainment, etc. uses on the first floor and residential uses on upper floors. Buildings in the Langdon Street sub-district are recommended to stand between two and eight stories in height. In general, staff feels that Hillel and other campus-related uses like the nearby French House at 633 N. Frances Street are an appropriate element in this area of downtown.

The subject site is located in Downtown Design Zone 3. However, because the project does not contain any residential units, it is not subject to the design requirements for that zone, which limit the height of buildings in this zone to eight stories and a FAR of 5.0 and include specific yard requirements.

The Urban Design Commission recommended final approval of the project on September 5, 2007 (see attached report).

In closing, the Planning Division believes that the redevelopment of the Hillel Foundation facility at 611 Langdon Street meet the standards for demolitions and planned unit developments.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission forward Zoning Map Amendment 3297 & 3298, rezoning 611 Langdon Street from R6 (General Residence District) to Planned Unit Development, General Development Plan/ Specific Implementation Plan (PUD-GDP-SIP),

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to the Common Council with a recommendation of **approval**, subject to input at the public hearing and the following conditions:

1. Comments from reviewing agencies.
2. That the zoning text be revised per Planning Division approval as follows:
  - a.) that the floor area ratio be noted “As shown on the approved plans;”
  - b.) that the family definition be removed as the project does not propose any residential units;
  - c.) signage shall be limited to the maximum permitted in the R6 zoning district, as approved by the Urban Design Commission and Zoning Administrator.
3. That the applicant receive approval of a Privilege in Streets agreement for the proposed Langdon Street terrace improvements prior to recording of the specific implementation plan. The City Forester shall be consulted of the on the trees to be installed in the terrace.