



November 19, 2013

Matt Tucker  
Zoning Administrator  
City of Madison Zoning  
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53709

Re: 627 N. Lake St.  
Conditional Use Application for vertical expansion of the existing structure

Dear Mr. Tucker:

Our application is enclosed for Conditional Use Application for vertical expansion of the existing structure for the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house redevelopment.

- We are requesting conditional use for
  - 1. A six (6) story completed structure (1 above the allowed 5 stories),;
  - 2. Continued use a fraternity house – residential use in the DR2 district; and
  - 3. Lakefront Development.Please note the site has been in use as Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity prior to 1924 when the current house was constructed after demolition of the house that stood on the site.
- This is a project that is about preservation of the Greek community in Madison. The SAE house is one of many fraternities and sororities in our community that face the state law mandate of fire sprinklering installation prior to January 1 2014. A few of these organizations have been able to raise funds to either upgrade their houses or replace them. Most do not have the finances to permit them to accomplish the law and are faced with a dilemma. Many, according to the management company of SAE, BMOOC, Inc. of Madison, are not allowing their members to live in the houses but rent the rooms out to outsiders. The rooms have no cooking facilities so renters must depend on university meal plans or eating out. This ultimately means the Langdon area will become a series of third tier rooming house rentals managed by third party management or area landlords.
- We believe the Greek system is worth a position in the community for two reasons. First is the fact that there is university oversight of the activities that take place in the houses. We all know that un-adult behavior is common among these groups, but when real harm or damage is done, the university steps in and takes action. There is more control with the Greek system in Langdon than there would be without. Secondly, the Greek system alumni are some of the major contributors to the UW system. Promoting the continuance of the Greeks means supporting the university in Madison which is so vital to the entire community in Dane county.

**Project Team:**

Tri-North is the design-builder and team leader.  
Architect: Engberg Anderson Architects  
Civil Engineer: Quam Engineering  
Landscape Architect: Paul Skidmore



**Existing Building:**

The current structure was built in 1924 and added onto at the north and east in 1926 which is its current configuration. The building is structurally sound but is in need of numerous maintenance & repair tasks and upgrades both interior and exterior. The structure is masonry bearing walls, steel channel joists and concrete. The roof is wood frame including wood ceiling joists.

The basement and first floor are common gathering and dining functions. The upper 2 floors are bedrooms with one common bathroom facility for each floor. There are stairs at each end of the building that are functional but do not meet current exit stair code run and rise dimensions.

The original “sleeping porch” on the east side was enclosed as part of the 1926 addition and now houses a laundry room, storage (lowest level) and a manager’s apartment.

**Schedule:**

City approval process and final design now through January of 2014

Construction: February 2014 to August 20, 2014

**Proposed Building Concept:**

The house will remain an SAE fraternity house owned by the SAE Housing Corporation, as it has for the last 100 years plus. The current membership exceeds 100 men and continues to grow. There is a need to retain upper classmen in the house for mentoring, recruitment, and overall camaraderie. The current rooming house style is not attractive to upperclassmen that move to apartments after sophomore year.

The addition will gut the existing upper 2 floors allowing all five residential floors to be configured into suites with single bed rooms in 2 – 4 room “suite” sharing a full bathroom. Refrigerators, microwaves and cabinets will be furnished in each room for individual’s use. A common kitchen will be reconstructed on the first floor in an area formerly used as a servery (the kitchen was in the basement and connected to the servery by 2 dumbwaiters). Dining will continue on the first floor along with the living room and study space. The Basement will house mechanical equipment, indoor bicycle storage, and rentable personal storage.

The east portion (original sleeping porch) enclosed in 1926 will be utilized to house the elevator for handicap access. The manager’s apartment will be reconfigured with a vertical addition of one floor. A full-time on-site manager will be utilized in the new operation.

The existing footprint on the site is 3,013 GSF.

The basement and first two floors will have the same footprint of 3,013 GSF

The upper floors will have approximately 2,733 GSF

The total SF of the project will be approximately 19,971 GSF

Residential units occupy 14,477 SF

Kitchen and Dining occupy 792 SF

Common area on the first floor occupies 1,443 SF

Current zoning: DR2

Allowed development height: 5 stories. Plus up to 2 story bonus

627 N. Lake St.

Madison, WI

Zoning Analysis

**Zoning:**

Zoning district DR-2



**BUILD SMART.**

Current Height – 3 stories + basement  
New Proposed Height – 6 stories + basement  
Front Yard – Mendota Ct. -10' required; Existing is 9'6" to 9'7"  
Side Yards – 5' required, east is approx. 6'10"; west is approx.. 6'3"  
Lakefront Zoning Setback = 75' The existing building falls within current setback. The original porch roof extends approx.. 7'6" into the setback.  
No car parking is required  
Bicycle parking = 1/BR =46 + (4/BR guest) = 12 TOTAL Bicycle Parking = 58

**Lakefront Development (28.138)**

The proposed vertical addition has no impact on the shoreline vegetation. There are no shrubs trees and the like currently on the shoreline (no cutting or trimming).Other than repair of an existing landscape retaining wall approximately 2' high that is beyond the 35' line from shore, there is no construction, grading etc. on the site. Lawn and landscape repair/replacement will be done after construction is completed.

**Residential Point Calculation: (28.079 (3))**

(1) 1 BR =1.0 x1 =01  
(30) 2BR =2.0 x30=60  
(15) 3BR =3.0 x15=45  
Total Points =106  
Total Units = 46; Avg points = 2.3 > 1.25  
Max. 46 persons

**Useable Open Space Required = 20SF per bedroom x 46 =920 SF**

Lot area = 12,167.36 SF  
Building =3,013 SF  
Porch and sidewalk = 560 SF  
**Open Space = 8,594.36 SF**

*When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed by Section 28.071(2)(a) Downtown Height Map for a development located within the Additional Height Areas identified in Section 28.071(2)(b), the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans, and no application for excess height shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:*

*a. The excess height is compatible with the existing or planned (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) character of the surrounding area, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.*

**The planned expansion to 6 stories is in a neighborhood that has 3 to 14 story buildings within 1 block of the site. See attached diagrams. The NW side of Mendota court from Lake to Frances St. has been zoned in the DR2 district for 5 floors with a bonus for 2 additional floors per the conditional use ordinance provisions. (the south side of the street is not zoned for 2 bonus floors) Planning staff added the bonus stories in this area compared to the remainder of DR2.**

*b. The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.*

**This height allows a proportion of typical multi-story colonial revival style that is greater than 2 stories to be more "correct" than a 4 or 5 story version. The architects we have discussed the project with have all said this building looks like it was "cut-off short". The use of similar brick and stone that matches the existing will greatly enhance the appearance and fit within**



**BUILD SMART.**

the neighborhood, blending in with the adjacent brick and stone structures (some are new, some are more than 60 years old. The owners reviewed options for both 7 stories and a 5 story addition. The 7 story version was out of scale for the area and for the existing building. The 5 story version does not meet the needs of the fraternity and does work financially.

*c. The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the projects and create a pleasing visual relationship with them. Sec. 28.183(6)(a)14.d. ZONING CODE Rev. 12/15/12 28 – 238*

**This area has numerous buildings that are 7 to 14 stories. The attached diagram illustrates the density of those properties.**

*d. For projects proposed in priority viewsheds and other views and vistas identified on the Views and Vistas Map in the City of Madison Downtown Plan, there are no negative impacts on the viewshed as demonstrated by viewshed studies prepared by the applicant. NA*

**Land Value:** assessed land value is \$605,000

**Estimated Project Cost** is \$3.3M

**Construction Jobs:** We estimate 37 jobs will be created during the project's construction and 2.25 full time equivalent jobs permanently.

There is **no public subsidy** requested.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Harms'.

Steve Harms, AIA, LEED BD+C  
Tri-North Builders, Agent for SAE Housing Corp.