

Project History

Grandview Commons

Grandview Commons, designed in 1998-1999 and adopted in 2002, is the first fully developed new traditional neighborhood in the City of Madison. Developed and implemented as a mixed-use walkable neighborhood, this project has been a proving ground for how to design, refine, and implement new urbanist principals in an economically and socially viable way. Through the course of implementation the developer and design team (the same group throughout) have made numerous modifications and undertaken significant efforts to deliver a vibrant and unique neighborhood that features a wide variety of housing options, integrated parks & open spaces, and a walkable town center. The development of the town center has proven to be the most difficult step in completing the vision of the neighborhood.



Grandview Town Center

Conceived as a center for neighborhood activities, community identity, and neighborhood retail, the town center was designed to be a walkable mixed-use district accessible to both the neighborhood and surrounding region. Implementing the Town Center for Grandview Commons has been a complex process that has adapted and expanded over the course of the neighborhood build-out. The Grocery Store proposal highlights the on-going evolution of the commercial uses and is one of several programmatic changes that have shaped the path of implementation.



Original General Development Plan: December 17, 2001

The original town center concept envisioned a small scale retail component focused on delivering a mix of commercial and office uses clustered around the first block of North Star Drive with 50,000 square feet of commercial and 20,000 square feet of office. While the location echoed the Sprecher Neighborhood Plan, the overall acreage and commercial distribution was significantly less. This reduction in scale reflected the design teams' concerns over the viability of creating an un-anchored commercial node in a largely residential area of the City along with the desire to preserve the unique setting that became the Village Green.



Recorded General Development Plan: August 9, 2002

The recorded General Development Plan reflects planning staffs' comments requesting that the town center be enlarged, per the February 25, 2002 Letter of Approval:

- #74. Revised the General Development Plan to increase the size of the Neighborhood Center Mixed Use district by extending it north along B Street (North Star) to encompass one additional lot (Lot P-19 in the preliminary plat) in order to provide additional retail development potential.

Note: This condition has been further modified by the Plan Commission requiring final staff approval of the following modification to this condition of approval as suggested by the developer:

Given the neighborhood services focus for the Village Green area, the need to capture both local and regional commercial markets dictates that the near-term commercial focus is placed along the Cottage Grove Road frontage. Accommodating commercial growth within the neighborhood center required careful attention to character, building massing and most importantly, parking loading. The growth potential of commercial uses as the development and region matures may allow for the spread of commercial uses along the Sharpsburg Drive and Street "B" (North Star) frontages; however, the design team recommends that the growth could be accommodated through the east-west expansion of the mixed-use areas, without the creation of parking conflicts with the higher density residential areas to the north.

The Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use district will not be expanded to include lot P-19; however, larger commercial square footages in this area will be accommodated through east-west expansion of the mixed-use districts in the areas between Sharpsburg Drive and Cottage Grove Road.

- #75. Revise the first floor General Development Plan and Zoning Text to increase the maximum total amount



of first floor retail or office use allowed within the Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use district to 100,000 square feet.

#76. Revise the General Development Plan and Zoning Text to require that buildings within the Neighborhood Center Mixed-Use district with frontage on B Street (North Star) or Sharpsburg Drive opposite the Village Green be at least two stories in height, that the ground floor uses along these block faces be non-residential (except for building entryways), and that at least 50 percent of the frontage be devoted to retail sale and service uses. (This would include restaurants, personal services, and similar businesses providing goods and services directly to neighborhood customers).



#77. Revise the General Development Plan and Zoning Text to require that the street frontages of the ground floors of building within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use district that are not initially used for retail or office activities be designed as “flex space” that could be reasonably converted to alternative retail uses at some time in the future.



Note: Relevant to Planning Conditions No. 76 and 77; these conditions have been further modified by the Plan Commission requiring final staff approval of the following modification to this condition of approval as suggested by the developer:



Comments four (76) and five (77) address the similar topics of accommodating commercial growth, and creating an urban pedestrian-focused enclosure along the Village Green area. These issues will strongly impact the development of the desired activity and vitality in the commercial district will be influenced by the timing and installation of the buildings.



The pedestrian enclosure within the Village Green area will be accommodated through the preservation of the mature trees within the Village Green, and the construction of buildings at appropriate scales. The design team agrees that the heights of the buildings will clearly define the area, and forward the idea that any building facing onto the Village Green must be a minimum of two stories or 24 feet in height.

Grandview Commons
Town Center Amendment Request

The utilization of flex space will accommodate both the goal of creating a unique urban surrounding in the near-term, through early construction of adjoining buildings, while allowing for the maturation of the commercial market. The following maps designate “primary commercial zoned” and “Flex space zones” that address the balance of the near-term commercial spaces and future growth areas, as opposed to the restriction of 50% non-residential frontages. (This map identified the first block of North Star and the NW corner of the Sharpsburg/North Star intersection as primary commercial zones, with the balance of the West frontage of the Village Green and the entire South frontage of the Village Green as Flex space zones).



These conditions of approval combined with the staff report’s call for the Town Center to be enlarged to “attract customers from beyond the neighborhood if the Center is to become established as a vibrant community focal point and provide neighborhood residents with an opportunity to satisfy a meaningful portion of their convenience shopping needs in close proximity to where they live (Planning Unit Report, January 24, 2002)” resulted in the modification of the General Development Plan enlarging the placement of the town center and the allowance for retail/office to 100,000 square feet.



Library Amendment: May 9, 2007

The General Development Plan was further expanded to combine the Mixed-Use district and Residential district between North Star Drive and the Doric Lodge site into one Mixed-Use district. This amendment created the lot for the Library and increased the non-residential square footage to accommodate the expanded community use and enhanced acreage, resulting in an increase of the overall commercial square footage within the Town Center to 150,000 square feet. This major amendment was adopted on July 17, 2007.



Doric Lodge Demolition Conditional Use: October 8, 2007

The existing structures on the Doric Lodge were approved for demolition and will be removed as part of the construction on the site.



Proposed Amendment

Amended PUD:GDP/R2T

Twelve years of marketing and design efforts have proven that the town center idea cannot be implemented without the incorporation of an anchor use. Veridian has aggressively pursued every possible lead and contacted more than 130 operators for uses that would fit the existing zoning and planning. This effort, coupled with consultation with national retail and town center experts, has identified that the existing planning framework does not accommodate a financially viable anchor use needed to create the synergy to facilitate retail activity. Absent an anchor the town center will not become a reality. Amending the General Development Plan, the first step of the two step re-zoning process, will allow the incorporation of the crucial anchor use as part of the consideration of the overall town center plan assuring that the anchor facilitates the desired mixed-use components, reinforces the walkable nature of the town center, and balances the traffic, aesthetic, and use goals for the greater neighborhood.

Request:

Amend the zoning to re-allocate the commercial and residential uses within the town center, incorporate the Doric Lodge site into the town center, facilitate an anchor grocery store use, and maintain the vision of an economically viable, walkable, mixed-use town center.

Amended Sprecher Neighborhood

Modifying the Sprecher Neighborhood, in concert with the General Development Plan, will allow the placement of the anchor use within the town center and will remove the economic roadblock towards implementing the town center.

Request

Amend the site designation to allow mixed-use commercial/residential uses on the majority of the town center/Doric lodge site. Re-configure the institutional uses to reflect the placement of the City of Madison Library site. Amend the plan text to reflect existing site conditions and accommodation of an anchor grocery store use greater than 25,000 square feet.

Amended Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2006 prior to the modification of the State's Consistency Law, anticipated the town center placement but does not reflect the current adopted town center or the changing needs of the town center. Amending the map designations will allow the placement of the grocery store, while preserving the emphasis on a mixed use walkable environment.

Request

Amend the comprehensive plan mapping to reflect the inclusion of the Doric Lodge parcel as part of the Town Center, re-designate the C Block area of the town center as Community Mixed-Use, maintain the B Block area as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, and redistribute the single family residential district.

PUD Approval Criteria

The proposed amendments to the existing Planned Unit Development are consistent with the adopted goals of creating the town center as an integral component of the overall Grandview Commons Neighborhood. This amendment also offers the City and Neighborhood a significant long-term community benefit by moving a vacant parcel towards creation of the neighborhood serving mixed-use commercial district, facilitation of public gathering spaces and destinations, incorporation of new open space, and increasing access to groceries within a large underserved area.

Character and Intensity of Land Use

The proposed configuration creates the long sought after walkable town center along Sharpsburg and North Star, reflecting the adopted goals of creation of a unique mixed-use center serving the surrounding community with neighborhood commercial, public facilities, and a vibrant urban fabric. The resulting configuration creates a district that fits within the functional and aesthetic character of the emerging town center area while supporting and transitioning to the surrounding neighborhood. The revised town center matches in intensity the existing approved Grandview Commons General Development Plan and does not increase the overall commercial/retail square footage while maintaining a mixture of residential, commercial, institutional, and office uses.

Revisions to the concept plan, based upon feedback from the neighborhood and City Staff, have resulted in a stronger relationship between the grocery store and plaza area. These revisions include reducing the overall parking count to match the parking needed prior to the incorporation of the grocery store, expanding the use of shared parking and transportation demand management strategies, strengthening vehicular connections with Cottage Grove Road, enhancing bicycle & pedestrian connections to the neighborhood, and creating landscape buffering/transitions throughout the site. The resulting configuration remains within the previously approved total square footage of commercial use for the unique and vibrant mixed use district while offering an economically feasible anchor to spur the development of the full town center.



The site has long been planned for mixed-use and residential uses with appropriately scaled public infrastructure installed or planned to serve the site and will the proposed amendment is consistent with these goals and will not adversely impact school or municipal services.



The street infrastructure surrounding the site has been designed in anticipation of the town center containing 150,000 square feet of commercial uses and has been sized to meet the traffic loading of the revised proposal as it will remain within this threshold. Transportation demand management approaches will be required of the town center as part of an effort to reduce single occupancy trips, reduce overall parking demands, and encourage a pedestrian focused environment.



Economic Impact

This proposal will create the economic engine to move the currently vacant town center into implementation, facilitating a significant new investment in jobs and tax base for the City, and supporting the goals for a vibrant walkable district in keeping with the vision for creating a diverse mixed-use neighborhood featuring a blend of commercial and residential uses. The higher long-term valuation of a mixed-use center will enhance the economic prosperity of the City and surrounding area and will not negatively impact the provision of municipal services.



Preservation and Maintenance of Open Space

The proposed concept creates the walkable active street along the existing Village Green and facilitates the creation of a new urban plaza space for outdoor dining and gatherings. The resulting unique open spaces offer residents of the neighborhood two distinct and vibrant open space facilities with complementary program spaces for gatherings, farmer's market expansion, and other neighborhood focused activities.



Implementation Schedule

The proposed project will be built in phases with the grocery store implementation followed by the Library Site (currently budgeted for 2014). The remaining parcels will be built based upon market demand and will fit into the overall infrastructure.