

Parks, Timothy

To: Murphy, Brad
Subject: RE: Edgewater Hotel project

From: dory christensen [mailto:lacumbiambera@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 9:58 AM
To: Schumacher, Michael; Kerr, Julia; erics@cow.s.org; jolson@operationfreshstart.org; jboll@mge.com; jabowser@facstaff.wisc.edu; mabasford@charter.net; michael.heifetz@deancare.com; timothy_gruber@yahoo.com; dpearson@madison.k12.wisc.us
Cc: Murphy, Brad; ALL ALDERS
Subject: Edgewater Hotel project

As a concerned citizen and downtown neighbor, I am hoping that you will do the right thing and not approve the plan for the Edgewater Hotel redevelopment as is now planned. Many of us are concerned about the precedent that would be established if the developer is granted many leniencies which will deteriorate the foundation of how projects are studied and approved or disapproved in Madison. Honestly, having that huge tower sticking out in such a prime location would be totally at odds with the historical neighborhood that so many of us are so proud of.

I also strongly disagree with the city having to use \$16 million in tiff money for this project. We will need those funds for more important projects that will truly restore blighted areas downtown. All you have to do is take a short walking tour through the W. Dayton-W. Mifflin student housing neighborhood to realize how much better these monies would be used.

Thank you for your consideration.

--

Dory Christensen
360 W. Washington Ave.
Madison, WI 53703
ph: 204-0681

Murphy, Brad

From: Rummel, Marsha
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 3:36 PM
To: Murphy, Brad
Cc: Martin, Al
Subject: Edgewater PUD standards

Dear Plan Commission members-

I will miss the middle part of your meeting because of a work commitment from 7-9p. I hope to make it back in time to participate in the discussion about the Edgewater.

The unusual 5-4-1 vote last week was the first tie vote since I was appointed to UDC in April 2007. In my experience UDC commissioners generally agree about most projects after working with the applicant over the course of several meetings so initial approval usually means there is agreement on the mass, scale, height, site plan and landscaping for the project and context. This project has been an exception because many of the concerns UDC has noted and requested to be addressed have not been done in a timely way.

Overall the Commission agreed that there were many positive features of the Edgewater proposal such as restoring the 1940s Art Moderne building, enhancing public access to the lake, removing the top of the 1970s building to construct the public plaza and restore the public views of the lake as promised in 1965 ordinance but we were divided over whether the mass and height were appropriate for the site and while we narrowly vote for initial approval, the majority of members thought the building was too big. When we asked Hammes to respond to requests to reduce the height, they repeatedly said removing floors and "program" would make the project financially infeasible. It is not UDC's charge to review this but I would urge Plan Commission to follow up and make a determination.

In late January, I requested that the developer work with NGL to move the building 30' to the east in the hopes that it would address the mass and volume and conform better to the setbacks along the majority of Wisconsin Ave and to relocate the parking garage entry off of the city portion of the ROW. The March 17 submittal shows they did both things, not completely, but the result is a positive change, and I voted for initial since I felt I was instrumental in pushing for these changes. But I still have many concerns about the height and mass of this building.

At the March 17 UDC meeting, I asked the developer to present the new proposal to the Landmarks Commission. I would like Landmarks to review the changes to the architecture of the new tower, the relation of the plaza to the historic hotel, tower step backs from the right of way, and street setbacks and apply for a new Certificate of Appropriateness. This is an FYI and I understand it is not in Plan's charge to make this recommendation.

UDC is somewhat at a disadvantage because we are the front end of the application process and don't have the thorough staff report that addresses standards to help inform our decisionmaking like Plan Commission does. So the next step is in your hands.

The Mansion Hill historic district plan and Comp Plan both address the unique character of this district and area. Consistently I have seen residents from several neighborhood associations, not just Mansion Hill, raise concerns about the economic stability of the historic district and integrity of standards for approval for new development if the Edgewater Hotel is permitted to intensify it's mass and uses so dramatically. This consideration weighs heavily on many of us and I hope that Plan Commissioners will take these concerns seriously since you have a broader array of standards to apply including economic impact and compatibility.

Aside from a reference to the TIF application process, in reviewing the standards for economic impact, staff did not discuss the addition of a luxury hotel to the market- both as it impacts existing establishments and potentially derails/delays a convention center hotel that would benefit Monona Terrace as recommended by the first Hunden report. Based on the initial Hunden study I think a case could be made that the economic prosperity of some hotel owners in the downtown may be adversely affected. Another subject that has had very little discussion in the staff report is the request to allow residential condos as part of this project. Additional elevators and other features to accommodate residential users add to the cost of the project. Some argue that the income from condo sales offsets the construction costs and so why not reduce the height by two stories? As you are probably aware, one of the discussions swirling in the community is the impact of extending the life of this TID and borrowing for the Edgewater will have our schools. This will be taken up by the Board of Estimates and the Council. But the economic impacts of this proposal are far-reaching and extend beyond the addition to the tax base, the provision of temporary construction jobs or mostly service industry jobs at the hotel.

Plan Commission will need to determine if the increased setback from the right of way is sufficient enough to offset the scale and mass of the new tower, or if an additional setback is necessary or the height of the building should be lowered. The latest plans add a penthouse lobby that "causes the tower to exceed the uppermost limit recommended in the Comprehensive Plan for the Langdon sub-district". I don't think we should exceed the uppermost limit of the Comp Plan. I urge you to determine if there is a way to reduce the mass of the building.

I also urge you to refer the PUD until you see the final configuration of the public lakefront easement access along the entire lakeshore of the development to accommodate a pedestrian/ bicycle path and ADA access; the use, maintenance and delineation of the public versus semi-public versus private spaces, and; the execution of the maintenance agreement between the developer and the City. These are the public community benefits the city will be receiving with TIF subsidy if this proposal is approved. I want Plan Commissioners to see and discuss the details considering the plaza management, outdoor cafe and use of alcohol and address it at the front end of the approval process. You requested it at your last meeting and I think you should have it before you approve the PUD.

Thank you for your service-

Marsha Rummel

Murphy, Brad

From: Rummel, Marsha
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 3:37 PM
To: Murphy, Brad
Subject: FW: Edgewater Tonight

Scott gave me permission to share his comments with Plan Commissioners.

Marsha

From: Scott Thornton [sbthornton@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 10:50 AM
To: Rummel, Marsha
Subject: Edgewater Tonight

Hi Marsha -

I'm still out of town so will not be at the Plan Commission tonight. I'm not sure if you will be there, but am sending this in case you are.

This is not about reconsidering the UDC decision. That's not something I necessarily agreed with, but understand why the vote was close. Tonight's Plan Commission meeting is a bigger deal and I hope that you have some input there.

While I appreciate the changes that Hammes has made to the project, but I do not think that they go far enough to make it compatible with the Mansion Hill neighborhood. The tower is still too massive and too close to Wisconsin Avenue. These concerns are also raised in the staff report.

Passing the project as is sets a very bad precedent for the Mansion Hill district and other historic districts in the city. It has been stated often that approving this building would not set that precedence, but every time NGL is mentioned and shown in a perspective drawing, you know that is not true.

Imagine if this building were proposed for the site of the Elks Club. Would promises of public access to lake Monona and jobs make it compatible with our own historic district? I don't think so.

Please urge caution and careful consideration of all issues that this project would bring to our city now and in the future.

Thanks,

Scott

Scott B. Thornton
1104 Jenifer Street

Parks, Timothy

From: Judy Bowser [jabowser@wisc.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 9:19 AM
To: Murphy, Brad; Parks, Timothy
Subject: Fwd: Edgewater plan-lets get it started!!!!

Hi Brad and Tim,

I received this email from a former neighbor and friend of my daughters. Since these topic-related communications are typically shared with all commissioners, I'd like to request that you pass this along to the other commissioners.

Thanks,
Judy

Begin forwarded message:

From: "ttgoll tds.net" <ttgoll@tds.net>
Date: March 19, 2010 6:14:46 PM CDT
To: jabowser@facstaff.wisc.edu
Subject: Edgewater plan-lets get it started!!!!

Well hello Mrs. Bowser- Even in my adulthood I cannot call you Judy!! I would be in trouble with Joe still! The reason for my email is that I know you are on the plan commission for the redevelopment of the Edgewater Monday night and I just to express my excitement about it! I do not know if you remember my dear friend Sarah Dunn Carpenter- I have gone to school with her since kindergarten and she spent many days at our home on Camelot Dr and had "played" with Debbie and Kim too. She is sister to Bob Dunn, President of the Hammes Company and mastermind of the redevelopment. Sarah is the Director of Community Relations at the Hammes Company and she has worked endless hours informing the public about the redevelopment plans. This project not only comes from the brilliant minds of my dear friends-it is something that our whole family has prayed for years would get a extreme makeover! With Joe and Kay living on the Lake we spend our summers on Lake Mendota and there is not a good place to eat or that is easy to access by boat! I can honestly say I have had some of the best times of my life there-endless family meals on the dock, Christmas brunches, college dances and dinners, HS dinner before a big dance, wedding parties, baby showers, and many birthday parties. I have been lucky to see all the plans and have heard the details again and again- I am beyond excited for this project to get started so we can start to build more memories there as a family!

I remember as a kid helping in your election- it was so fun! I thought this would be an excellent opportunity for me to tell you how excited we all are and I hope you can use your pull to get it started!!!

Take care-Say Hi to Mr. Bowser-

Traci Tisserand Goll

Parks, Timothy

Subject: RE: Edgewater Development

From: JOHN SHEEAN [mailto:johnsheean@hotmail.com]

Sent: Monday, March 22, 2010 1:56 PM

To: Schumacher, Michael; Kerr, Julia; erics@cows.org; jolson@operationfreshstart.org; jboll@mge.com; jabowser@facstaff.wisc.edu; mabasford@charter.net; michael.heifetz@deancare.com; timothy_gruber@yahoo.com

Cc: Murphy, Brad; dpearson@madison.k12.wisc.us; ALL ALDERS

Subject: Edgewater Development

My name is John Sheean, I live at 25 Langdon Street, across from the proposed Edgewater Development. I wish to emphasize to the commission the simple/basic fact that the proposed development is inconsistent in mass, volume, and height with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Move the huge/towering structure back, add more parking underneath it, get rid of the plaza turn around in front of it and it remains a poor, inappropriate, and uninspired building for the site in regards to it's imposing size. It has no respect for existing zoning laws and ordinance standards that exist regarding one of Madison's most treasured National Historic Neighborhoods, yet the developers and city hall claim foul on the opponents of the development for wanting the laws and standards in place abided by. How does one commit a foul when playing within the rules? Why is the executive branch of city government not upholding our laws of our city elected to do, instead of manipulating them for the economic benefit of private interests?

The Edgewater Hotel is not in a commercial neighborhood. It is not surrounded by shops, restaurants, museums, theatres, etc., it is surrounded by homes, apartments, and owner occupied condominiums such as mine. There is a sleight of hand being used by the proponents of this development by labeling/using downtown and commercial synonymously, as if downtown means commercial. The residential Mansion Hill Historic Neighborhood is, yes, downtown, but it is a vital part of the non-commercial district of downtown. A thriving residential neighborhood which stimulates the activity of the commercial, financial, entertainment, and public and private service agencies that make downtown Madison so vibrant and exciting.

The Hammes Corporation has spent over \$208,000 in lobbyist expenses over the past 18 months according to a recent Isthmus article. If this is such a great development for the citizens of Madison why do they need lobbyists to convince everyone of this fact? If this is going to be such an economical success for it's investors why do they need public monies for their financing? Why not 16 millions dollars for our schools, or are our children too speculative of an investment for city hall? Is it better to invest in a firm with a track record of building football stadiums and basketball arenas, not hotels, for a guarantee on your investment? Recognizing the current state of our social/economic society and culture, maybe city hall should be thanked for knowing where we should invest in our future: in an upscale, exclusive, behemoth hotel; not on the speculative venture of educations for the children of our working/middle class families dependent on the successful financing of our public schools.

Thank you,

John Sheean
25 Langdon Street

Hotmail: Trusted email with Microsoft's powerful SPAM protection. [Sign up now.](#)

Hotmail: Trusted email with Microsoft's powerful SPAM protection. [Sign up now.](#)

Ledell Zellers
510 N. Carroll St.
Madison, WI 53703

March 22, 2010

Dear Plan Commission members,

There are reasons this project has dragged on for so long and been so onerous. It is the wrong project for this site. It is too big and too tall. It is too close to the lake. It violates too many of our laws. It has terrible consequences. It is wrong.

No matter how many hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars are spent for lobbying, no matter how many people are manipulated by pretty pictures, no matter how many votes are reluctantly cast for a little bit of movement here or there, no matter whether dollars toward fixing up the historic district are promised or even delivered, it is still the wrong project. There are not anywhere near 1000 construction jobs...unless you can call 200 that last for a year and a half close. This project will take money away from school districts. This project will seriously injure if not destroy the Mansion Hill historic district. It is too tall, too close to the lake, too massive. It is wrong. We should not compromise our lake fronts. We should not go back on promises made when the street end was given to the Edgewater and NGL. We should not make a mockery out of the Comprehensive Plan.

We should follow the provisions of our ordinances and conditional use provisions. We should have some courage...and simply say NO. This is not the right project for this special place. And while at one point I thought this developer might be able to design the right project, I have reluctantly concluded either that he cannot or simply that he chooses not to. His preferred route seems to be to blow up all the rules and then use massive PR and lobbying to convince people that that approach is ok. Send the message it is NOT ok. If you don't, this developer's approach will be the "new normal" and Madison will be much the poorer for it.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,



Ledell Zellers

Massing issues as referenced in Planning Department Report to the Plan Commission,
March 22, 2010

(bolded emphasis added by compiler, John Martens)

- 28.07 (6)(f)1. "In a planned unit development district the uses and their intensity, appearance and arrangement shall be of a visual and operational character which:
- a. Are **compatible with the physical nature of the site or area.**
 - b. Would produce an attractive environment of sustained aesthetic desirability, economic stability and functional practicality **compatible with the general development plan.**"

"Conformance with the Planned Unit Development Standards:"

- "...staff acknowledges that the new tower **is of a considerably greater scale** than most of the other buildings in this corridor except for the NGL Building, which is setback approximately 70 feet from the Wisconsin Avenue right of way." (page 16)
- "However, despite the significant revisions that have been made to the development since February 8, the Plan Commission will still need to give **serious consideration to the physical compatibility of the new hotel tower** and the physical nature of the site and area in order to find that this standard of approval is met." (page 17)

"Conclusion"

- "The Comprehensive Plan also recommends that new development be complementary to and compatible with the existing and planned characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood, and the recommendation that infill development be designed to be compatible with the architectural character and scale of existing development. **This point is most germane in the consideration of the scale and character of the new tower on the eastern portion of the site, which will be considerably greater in scale to most other buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.**" (page 25)
- "However, the Plan Commission will need to determine if the increased setback from the right of way is sufficient enough to offset the scale and mass of the new tower, or if an additional setback is necessary or **the height of the building should be lowered.**" (page 26)

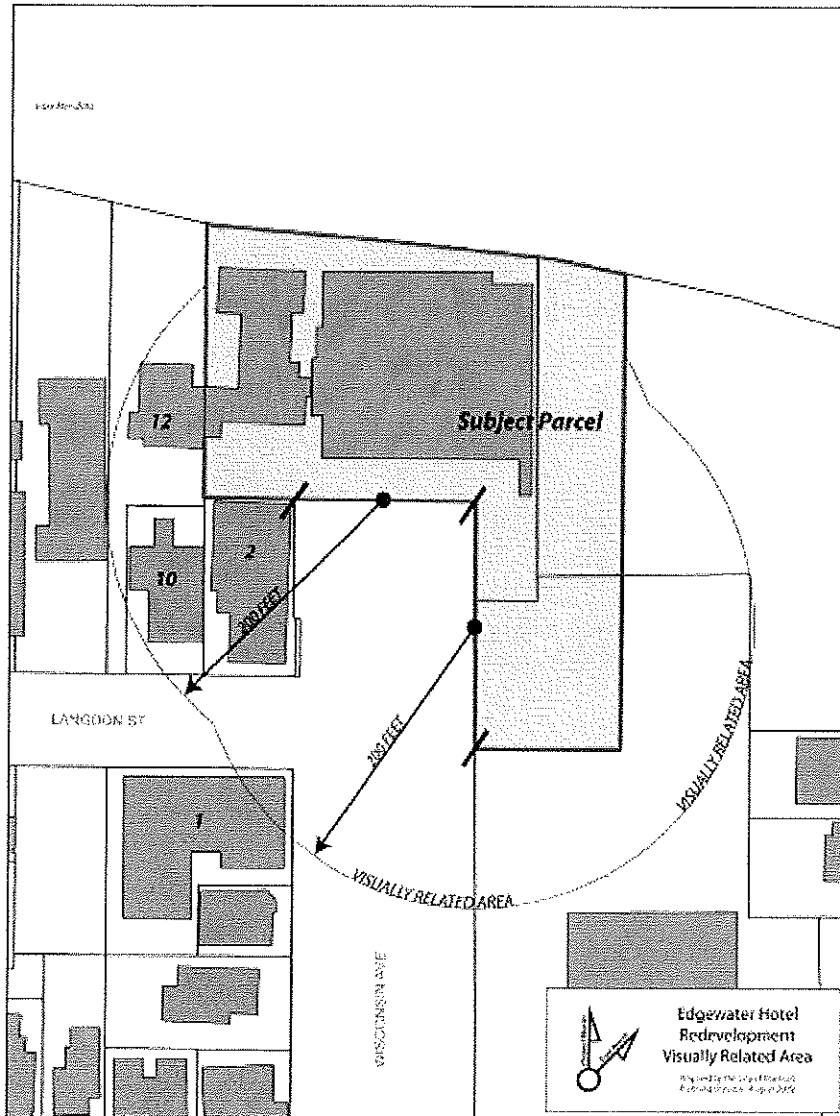
"**Recommendation by the Urban Design Commission on the PUD**"

- "...other members noted that they **believed it was incompatible** and did not meet the approval criteria."

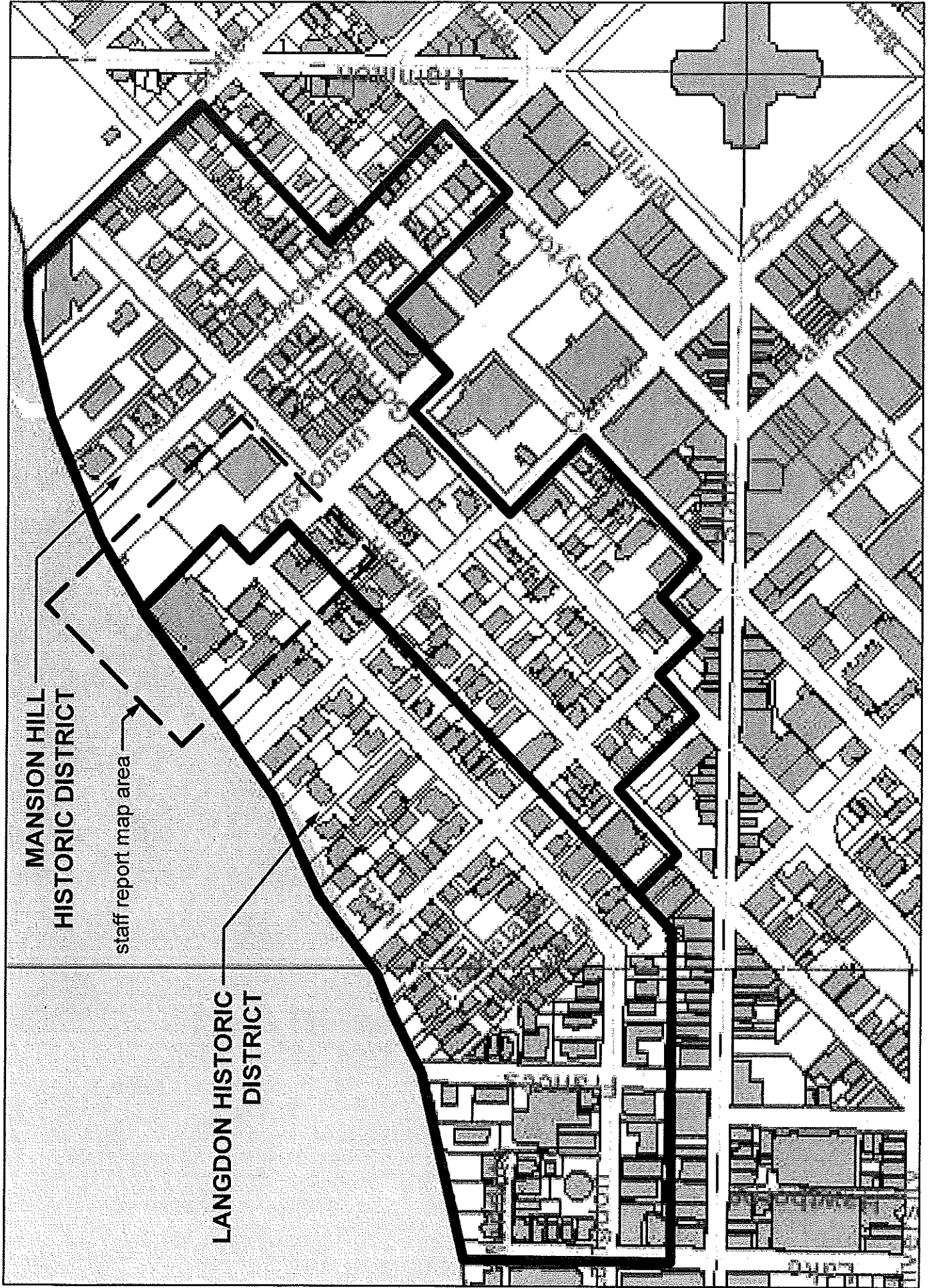
From Staff Report for Landmarks Commission, November 30, 2009

“...staff would find it very difficult to conclude that the proposal can meet criterion 1 for new construction...”

1. “The gross volume of any new structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment with which it is visually related (visually related area).”



	Estimated Gross Floor Area	Estimated Gross Volume	Estimated Floor Area Ratio
1 Langdon St.	53,600 sq. ft.	589,800 cu. ft.	3.8
2 Langdon St.	19,600 sq. ft.	215,000 cu. ft.	2.3
10 Langdon St.	9,700 sq. ft.	107,100 cu. ft.	1.45
12 Langdon St.	14,500 sq. ft.	159,600 cu. ft.	0.93
Edgewater New Tower (including the podium portion)	164,100 sq. ft.	1,692,200 cu. ft.	3.44 (not including the right- of-way)



MANSION HILL
HISTORIC DISTRICT

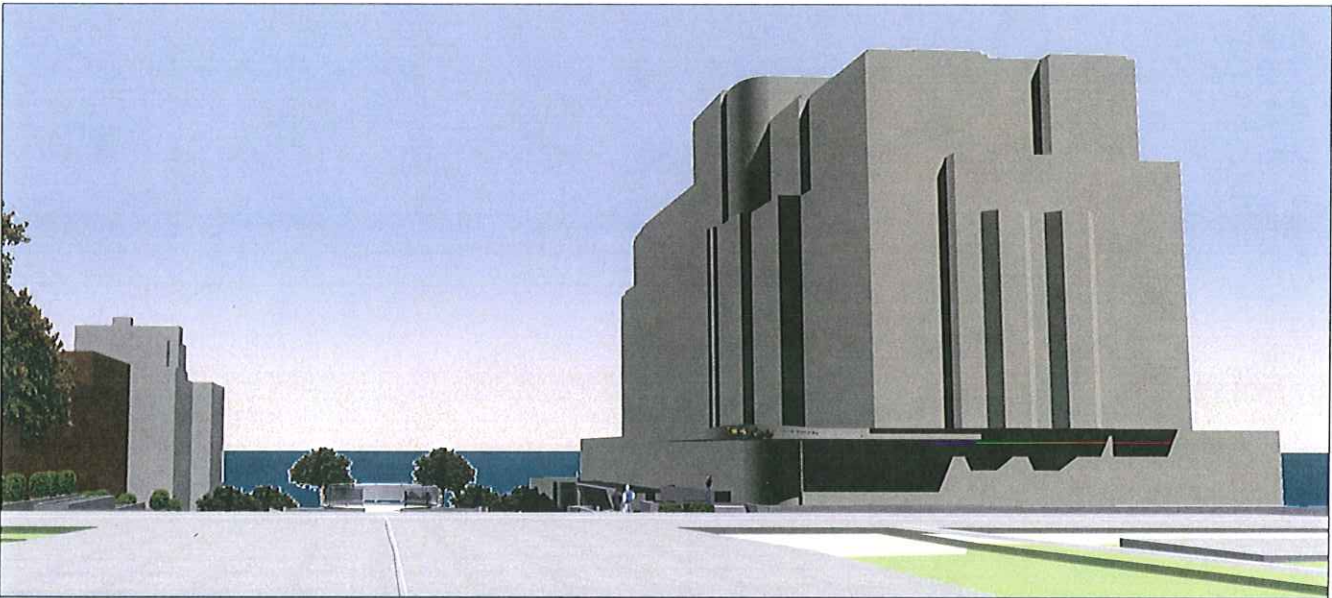
staff report map area

LANGDON HISTORIC
DISTRICT

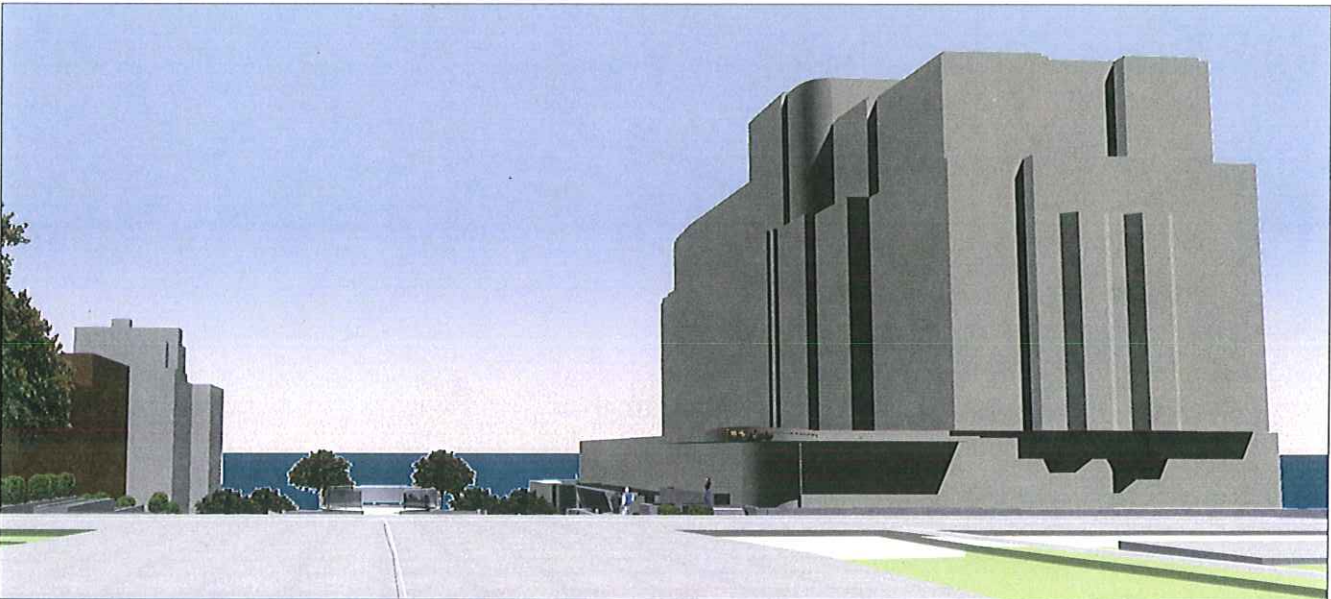
BUILDING FOOTPRINTS IN REFERENCED HISTORICAL DISTRICTS



Tower at Lot Line, w/Landscape, No Vehicles or Parking Structure



Tower 11' from Lot Line (as proposed), w/Landscape, No Vehicles or Parking Structure



Tower 26' from Lot Line, w/Landscape, No Vehicles or Parking Structure



Rendering from Hammes Plan Commission submission 03/10/10 - no landscaping, building cropped



Rendering same as above, except with landscaping and view of full building height and width



Rendering as above, except shown with reduced height mirroring heights of nearby buildings per recommendation of Planning Dept. staff (see page 16 of March 22, 2010 staff report)