

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: July 15, 2013

TITLE: 210 South Brooks Street – designated
Landmark – Alteration to Longfellow
School for adaptive reuse and
construction of a new apartment
building. 13th Ald. District. Contact:
Randy Alexander, The Alexander
Company (28679)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: July 15, 2013

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Jason Fowler, Christina Slattery, Marsha Rummel, and David McLean. Gehrig and Rosenblum were excused.

SUMMARY:

John Seamon, representing The Alexander Company, registering in support and wishing to speak. Mr. Seamon explained that the project team is not looking for an action from the Landmarks Commission, but is interested in getting feedback from the Commission.

Mr. Seamon explained that the foundation or base of the building will be covered with ivy and that the color palette is warm gray EIFS, white brick, concrete block and terra cotta metal panel.

Staff explained the concerns addressed in the staff report.

Mr. Seamon explained that the ivy is one method to break up the building foundation and that the location of doors and windows and colonnade elements also help to articulate the base.

Mr. Seamon explained that he is concerned that using materials on the new building that are similar to the materials on the landmark building will lessen the visual importance of the landmark.

Staff explained that simply changing the color of the materials might be the most effective method to comply with the ordinance.

Rummel explained that she needs more information about the treatment of the windows for the new building.

Mr. Seamon explained the changes to the site plan in the new submission. He explained that the courtyard space is much larger because the physical link between the two building and the tall wall of the parking deck have been removed.

Slattery explained that there are many positive attributes about the current design including the reduction of height and the loss of physical attachment.

Mr. Seamon explained that the project team is working with the State Historic Preservation Office for tax credits.

There were numerous comments about material treatments and color changes.

Jeremy Frommelt, representing The Alexander Company, registering in support.

Jeff Ripp, registering in neither support nor opposition and wishing to speak. Mr. Ripp suggested that the project team meet with the neighborhood to discuss the materials and color and overall design.

Levitan suggested that the Landmarks Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the landmark.

Staff explained that using the previous submission information, the Certificate of Appropriateness can be granted.

ACTION:

A motion was made by McLean, seconded by Slattery, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior restoration of Longfellow School. The motion passed by voice vote/other. Levitan non-voting.

A motion was made by Fowler, seconded by McLean, to refer the discussion of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new building on the landmark site adjacent to Longfellow School. The motion passed by voice vote/other. Levitan non-voting.

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: July 29, 2013

TITLE: 210 South Brooks Street – Designated Landmark – Alteration to Longfellow School for adaptive reuse and construction of a new apartment building. 13th Ald District. Contact: Randy Alexander, The Alexander Company (29679)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: July 29, 2013

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Jason Fowler, Christina Slattery, David McLean and Michael Rosenblum. Rummel and Gehrig excused.

SUMMARY:

John Seamon, representing the Alexander Company, registering in support and wishing to speak. Mr. Seamon briefly presented the changes to color palette and materials that have been made since the last meeting. Seamon explained that the EIFS has been removed and replaced with brick. Seamon explained that the elevations were also changed to bring in design elements that would allow for color and material changes. Seamon provided material and color samples for Commission review.

Levitan explained that the Commission appreciates that the materials have changed to brick and that the project team has continued to have a dialogue with the Commission.

Staff explained that the staff recommendation requests more color changes. The recommendation suggests that the body of the new building be changed to brick that matches the brick of the landmark building.

Seamon explained that the design intent has always been to allow the landmark to stand as the focal point and the materials for the new construction were chosen so that the power and importance of the landmark would not be diluted.

Randy Alexander registering in support, wishing to speak, and available to answer questions. Mr. Alexander further explained some design considerations including the articulation of the building and the reasoning behind the material and color changes. Alexander explained that the review of the treatment of the new building is subjective and that the National Park Service may not approve a brick that has the same appearance on the brick as the landmark.

Alexander explained that he prefers to keep a bold color for the metal panel and to have the fascia and soffit in the same material.

Jeremy Frommelt, representing the Alexander Company, registering in support and available to answer questions.

Slattery explained that the current brick color ("Dark Brown") is not warm enough.

Rosenblum agreed with Slattery and explained that the staff elevations show a more appropriate brick color.

McLean also agreed with the need for a warmer palette that is more similar to the brick of the landmark.

Fowler agreed that a warmer color palette would help, but he also expressed concern about the possibility that a close match to the landmark brick might not be close enough.

Slattery explained that the actual brick selection should determine the metal panel color.

Alexander explained that the doors on the landmark may be painted a different color and should not be used for determining colors on the new construction.

Seamon explained that he is concerned that there is a risk in trying to match the brick.

Levitan explained that the architectural differences allow each building to be distinct even if the materials are the same. Slattery explained that out of respect for the Urban Design Commission, the Landmarks Commission should allow for a middle ground in the particulars of the metal panel color.

McLean explained that he appreciates the flexibility of the project team related to this conversation.

The Landmarks Commission discussed and found agreement that the metal panel color should be complementary to the landmark and may be neutral or an interesting pop of color.

Cheryl Elkinton, representing Vegan Haven Central Inc., registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Ms. Elkinton requested that the City review development plans with an understanding of our city's economic and ecological crisis. She expressed concern that by allowing Longfellow to become residential units, it cannot be used as a school.

The Landmarks Commission discussed the color for the masonry block and requested that the project team make changes to the color and/or treatment of the block. There was discussion that the block could be a color that is already in the elevation instead of introducing another color as currently submitted.

The Landmarks Commission discussed that the architecture has previously been reviewed and that there are no further Landmarks Commission comments related to architecture.

Staff will provide a summary of the Landmarks Commission requirements to share with Urban Design Commission for their review of the project.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Slattery, seconded by Rosenblum, to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the following conditions:

1. Change the brick depicted as "F-Dark Brown" in the submitted drawings to a brick that is similar in color to the main brick of the landmark building. The "C-Ultra Brown" brick color shall remain as submitted.
2. Consider colors for the horizontal architectural metal panel that allow for options that are complementary to the warm color palette.
3. Consider options to integrate the upper wall elements into the base by changing the color of the proposed block and/or by changing the placement and quantity of the block.
4. The project team shall review the materials, final colors, and revised architectural details with staff for staff approval on behalf of the Landmarks Commission before a Certificate of Appropriateness may be granted.

The motion passed by voice vote/other.

1153 Emerald St.

Madison, WI 53715

August 20, 2013

Dear City of Madison Plan Commission Members:

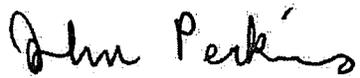
I am writing on behalf of the Greenbush Neighborhood Association (GNA) Neighborhood Council regarding The Longfellow apartment proposal from Alexander Co. for the old Longfellow School and a proposed new building behind the school.

The GNA Neighborhood Council has the following concerns regarding the proposal as it stands today:

1. We feel the neighborhood would be best served by limiting the number of occupants per unit in the proposed complex to no more than 2 unrelated adults. This project was presented to the neighborhood as a "workforce housing" development offering "market rate" apartments; we feel this is a reasonable demographic to market to and do not feel the 2 unrelated adults limitation will hamper the developer's business plan by preventing them to rent to their target market. The developer has also indicated at neighborhood meetings this will not adversely affect his business plan for the property.
2. The current parking ratio currently stands at 1.25 spaces/dwelling unit, higher than the 1.0 spaces/dwelling unit at which City Planning typically implements limits on Residential Parking Permit Program (RP3) permits available to a development's residents. However, fifty of those spaces are to be used by Meriter Hospital during peak hospital hours, which reduces the parking ratio to 0.78 spaces/dwelling unit--below the City Planning threshold. We request there be no RP3 permits offered to residents of this building. We have been told in neighborhood meetings with the developer that he does not intend to request RP3 permits to be available to residents of this project, so we expect this will not adversely affect his business plan for the property.
3. We are concerned about the number and locations of bicycle and moped parking facilities for residents of this development. Plans we have seen so far call for 16 visitor bicycle parking spaces split between the north and south sides of the building, but exact numbers of wall-mounted or floor mounted bicycle racks in the parking garage are not denoted in the floor plans we have seen so far. Also, no moped parking is shown in the floor plans, although the developer has indicated he will not tolerate moped parking on the sidewalks or terrace areas around the building. We ask Planning staff to review this detail and make recommendations to the developer regarding appropriate locations and quantity of adequate moped and bicycle parking facilities. We request all moped and bicycle parking storage areas ensure egress of this traffic to the street without interfering with pedestrian movements on sidewalks as well as be out of view or screened from public sidewalk areas.

The Greenbush Neighborhood Council feels that addressing these concerns will make this development a more vibrant contribution to the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Perkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

John Perkins, GNA president

Zaccai Lewis

Cynthia Koschman

Duane Steinhauer

Cynthia Williams

Peter Williams

Nate Warnke

Karen Carlson

Andrea Levy

8/20/13

Dear Plan Commission Members and City Staff,

I am writing you to relay my substantial concern regarding the proposed developments at 210 south Brooks St at the Longfellow School location that are on the agenda for August 26th.

As a homeowner at 1023 Chandler Street, I obviously will be directly affected by any proposed development across the street. My family and I have owned and occupied this residence for over a decade. While I am fully onboard for the remodel of the Longfellow school, I have detailed my concerns and potential areas of improvement related to the proposed addition to the West of Longfellow school:

Fit for Neighborhood:

1. The Greenbush neighborhood plan (11/9/2010) in its executive summary focuses on the increase of owner occupied homes, and development of a family friendly neighborhood ("Encouraging the improvement of housing stock and expanding homeownership in the neighborhood"). Such developments as that proposed by Alexander are in direct contrast to the many encouraging things I have seen happening in our neighborhood. The proposal by Alexander and company is for 1-2 bedroom apartments which will not foster a family friendly or owner occupied neighborhood, and will further the rental and short term occupant nature of the neighborhood.

2. The original 2009 GDP called for an additional Meriter Office Building at this location. The neighborhood was a willing partner in the GDP process as Meriter was recognized as an important regional asset. However the change from low density residential zoning to business zoning in the 2009 GDP has now been requested to change to high density residential by the Alexander SIP. This change is substantial in my opinion and also for many other neighborhood residents. It has been mentioned many times by the Developer, Meriter, and city staff that the "density" of the proposed 104 unit apartment building would have less/equal impact than the office building previously approved in the GDP. I do not agree with this assessment as the density that I (and the neighborhood) am worried about is density that is present during the time of day we are present-mornings, evenings and weekends. An office building would be empty during those times, and we already live by Meriter and thus are well acquainted with their workflow patterns. Adding 150 or so new residents in a single neighboring block should be considered density that is much different in its impact than an office building, as originally proposed in the GDP.

3. With 74 more units planned in the Gallinas project on South Mills, the interior neighborhood is going to be adding 178 units in 1-2 years time to an area that has been sparsely populated. If one adds in the Lane's and Ideal projects on the Park street corridor, 275 units will be added within a quarter mile. Given there are roughly 1200 total units (according to 2010 GDP) in the whole of Greenbush neighborhood, these projects combined will result in a roughly 25% increase in neighborhood units in about 1-2 years time. The local area near Meriter and Park Street will be converted from largely a house-based dynamic, with owner occupancy and renters, to a very high density apartment complex dynamic. Issues of noise, traffic, parking, moving day(s) clutter, and stresses to city services will likely follow.

Traffic, Parking and Safety Issues as Related to Current Design:

In general, the south end of the proposed structure on Chandler Street represents a 10 foot high concrete block barrier, dual garage doors as a parking entrance and loading pad accompanied by a 5 story stairwell. This big box design does not at all attempt to merge into the neighborhood. Other members of the neighborhood have likened it to the alley entrance for a downtown apartment complex. Living directly across the street, I certainly agree. Below I parcel out some of the more specific concerns and potential solutions.

1. Chandler St is parked full at nearly all times, and is often used as a conduit for cars moving from Park street through the Greenbush neighborhood, making the street difficult to navigate. Our vehicles have been hit no fewer than 6 times in the past 10 years when parked directly in front of our house on Chandler street. The parking entry to the proposed Longfellow addition apartment complex on Chandler street will exacerbate this problem with cars entering and exiting a driveway that does not currently exist.

2. In addition, the proposed loading pad east of the two garage doors on Chandler street will be used to park moving trucks after which residents will wheel their items down the sidewalk into the garage doors. Given that the developers have been pushing their plan to have leases that commence throughout the year for 104 units, there will be a constant, weekly flow of moving trucks and materials. Not only is a parked-full Chandler narrow in the summer months, in winter, Chandler becomes essentially one-way due to snow narrowing the street. How are moving trucks going to safely access the loading pad? I can oftentimes barely get a pickup truck in and out of my driveway. Moreover, any moving truck of larger size will extend over the pad onto the sidewalk.

3. In addition, my understanding from the developers is that multiple times each week, the large garbage dumpsters will be pushed out of the garage doors onto the Chandler street apron/street so the contract refuse collector can access them. Large dumpsters and garbage trucks on or near the sidewalk would be an additional eyesore and hassle.

4. The intersection at Brooks and Chandler is one that has many “near misses” as hospital traffic moving on Brooks street often fails to stop or executes rolling stops. Added traffic and moving trucks associated with the Longfellow addition could likely make this issue even more problematic.

Combining issues 1-4, it would be advantageous to neighborhood residents for the design to instead include a second Mound street entrance at grade (between new building and Longfellow school, where a driveway entrance to the surface parking West of Longfellow school currently exists) to access the recently added courtyard surface parking lot and subsequently access the second level of the parking ramp (i.e. have the courtyard as the point of entry to the second level parking tray). Moreover, Mound street dead-ends at Meriter so hospital valet and apartment owners would be the major players in that traffic pattern. In fact, a few weeks back at the Gallinas presentation for the other planned complex on South Mills, they are proposing to do exactly what I describe via a Mound street entrance. This would eliminate the two garage door entrance and moving pad on Chandler, additionally allowing the moving process to be contained within the complex and afford refuse collectors access to the complex. **It would also prevent Chandler street from becoming the “Alley” for a very large, 104 unit apartment complex. As a homeowner directly affected by this construction, this is a major concern and I feel that it should be incumbent upon the developer to provide for the basic needs of the complex without pushing this burden onto area property owners.**

Design Aesthetics:

1. The masonry block above ground parking level will be an eyesore. One wonders why the parking level cannot be faced with materials that match the actual living structure. A brief tour of the new apartment complexes in the downtown Madison area indicated that nearly all of them had parking levels faced similar to the apartment complex itself.

I thank you for considering my comments and potential ideas for improvement as you deliberate over this proposal for Longfellow School redevelopment. I feel that neighborhood development should be implemented to improve the neighborhood, and I personally feel that the location, overall density and design all fail to do so. There are so many other ways this coveted parcel could be redeveloped in better concert with neighborhood and city goals.

Sincerely,
Eric Shusta
Homeowner, 1023 Chandler St.

Parks, Timothy

From: Barbara MacCrimmon [bardonmacc@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2013 5:16 PM
To: Ellingson, Susan; Parks, Timothy; Martin, Al; Scanlon, Amy; Cliff Goodhart; Dawn C. O'Kroley; Ken Opin; King, Steve; Resnick, Scott; Michael Heifetz
Subject: new Greenbush apartments

Hi – This memo is written by myself, a resident of the Village Cohousing Community (VCC), an intentional community on the northwest corner of Mills and Mound Streets. It is my response to recent events in my neighborhood; please read it. Yours truly, Don MacCrimmon :

6 August 2013

to : members of the Village Cohousing Community and to the City of Madison's Urban Design Commission, Plan Commission and Common Council

from : Don MacCrimmon, 1110 Mound Street, a resident of the Greenbush Neighborhood

This memo describes an unprecedented expansion of apartment projects in Madison's Greenbush neighborhood : projects which comprise 233 or 273 new apartments on Madison's near-West side, in the area bounded by Emerald, Milton, Brooks and Mills Streets.

One of the four is the Gallina Company's proposed Vicinato Apartments (72 apartments, planned for the east side of the 100 block of South Mills Street, proposed for completion in May, 2014. The others are :

Ideal Apartments (Gallina Company) : 57 apartments, on the western side of Park Street, at 502 South Park Street, now under construction with completion planned in the Fall of 2013;

Lane's Apartments (proposed by Joe McCormick) : planned as a five-story, 40-unit building on the western side of Park Street, across Drake Street from the new Ideal Apartments;

Longfellow Apartments (Alexander Company) : either 64 or 104 apartments, at 210 South Brooks Street. (If the Longfellow School were to be modified into apartments, there would be about 94 apartments in the Longfellow development – if not, 64.)

– a total of 233 or 263 new apartments –

1. According to the proposals of the three developers, their four apartment proposals would have about 74 two-bedroom units, 149 single-bedroom units and 9 studio-size units. (If Longfellow School itself were to be converted into 30 apartments, then there might be 263 apartments : 85 two bedroom, 170 single bedroom, 10 studio) There would be no family-size rental apartments; this, despite the urging of neighbors advocating that more families move into Greenbush. (When thinking about young families, please remember they most often need three bedrooms.)

2. None of these properties ought be permitted without provision for adequate parking. If it's true a recent parking ordinance mandates no more than one parking space for each apartment, there ought, nevertheless, be more parking provided by the developers.

Perhaps as many as 233 parking stalls are shown in their plans, but if these plans go forward, the neighborhood will be beset with too many vehicles on the scout looking for a place to park on the street. The City ought mandate adequate parking and require that developers provide it.

(Assuming a population of about 470 apartment residents, if two-thirds of the residents were to possess their own automobiles (that is, about 320 automobiles), then about 87 renters would need to find street parking [320 auto owners minus 233 parking stalls; $320 - 233 = 87$]. During the UW's academic sessions street parking is already scant and during football games, it is available only for several hours at a cost of \$15 or more. Consider, please, that Randall Stadium lies within walking distance across Regent Street.)

3. The proposed Lane's Apartments and the Ideal Apartments might offer a few retail spaces on Park Street, but the proposed developments at Longfellow and Vicinato do not. The four projects offer no spaces for public libraries, nor study rooms, nor laundry-rooms, nor secure wi-fi, nor spaces for security personnel – nor for something like Lane's Bakery.

A description of the proposed Vicinato Apartment :

The following description derives from notes taken during meetings on March 12, March 19, July 9, and July 29, 2013. Inaccuracies within it are the fault of the notetaker, myself.

The Vicinato Apartments are a Planned Development (PD) which affects the Greenbush neighborhood on Madison's near west side. Meriter Hospital recently sold two real estate parcels, both of which abut, or are across the street from, existing hospital buildings, to two separate developers. It appears Meriter no longer has ownership interest in the following : 1) the west half of the block bounded by Milton/Brooks/Mound/Mills streets, and 2) the east half of the block bounded by Brooks/Chandler/Mills/Mound Streets (that is, Longfellow School and its parking lot). This, despite Meriter's intention, as expressed in an earlier GDP (General Development Plan), to devote the two parcels to 'employment' or 'medical' purposes. According to our alderperson, there is no underlying zoning code which regulates Planned Developments; rather, citizens must resort to whatever ordinances and statutes might have bearing on specific, actual circumstances.

The two successor owners now propose separately to convert the two parcels into 'residential' use. That is, two new owners : the Alexander Company and the Gallina Company, plan to use the two parcels for apartment buildings. Of especial interest to members of Village Cohousing Community is Gallina's proposal for the development on the east side of South Mills Street between Milton and Mound Streets.

In Wisconsin since 1980, the Gallina firms have designed, built and operated apartment complexes, single-family subdivisions and office/retail centers. They now manage over 3,000 apartment units in Madison, Milwaukee, Green Bay, northern Illinois and central Florida, they own and manage single-family subdivisions in Mt. Horeb and Sun Prairie; their retail and commercial properties are located in Madison, Mt. Horeb, and Middleton. (These details are from Gallina's website, gallinacompanies.com/)

Their local properties (in addition to four apartment properties in Middleton) are :

2202 Luann Place Apartments, a little west of Fish Hatchery Road and immediately south of the Beltline,

Cedar Glen Apartments in Cross Plains,

Fuller's Woods Apartments on Sherman Avenue near Maple Bluff,

Lake Pointe Apartments near Cherokee Marsh in northeast Madison,

Schroeder Square near Whitney Way and the Beltline in southwest Madison,

Ideal Apartments at 502 South Park Street (now under construction), and

Vicinato Apartments proposed near Meriter Hospital.

The Ideal project is now partially built; it is on the southwest corner of Drake and Park Streets on the site of the former Ideal Body Shop. If you look at the Ideal Apartments structure soon, before it is closed-in, you will see a sturdy ground-floor parking garage with superstructure of four or fewer floors of wood stud walls, wood joists, wood flooring and wood sheathing. The walls and ceilings of the parking structure are made of cast-concrete and are nearly fireproof. But the apartments atop the parking structure are framed with dimensioned lumber (2"x 6", 2"x 4", trussed wooden joists, wooden underlayments, etc.) nailed together using the 'platform'-type structure now found in most frame homes – much less fire resistant.

The Gallina management proposes a second, similar apartment structure for the east side of Mills Street between Mound and Milton Streets. They have named it Vicinato Apartments. Some of Greenbush's residents, including myself, were in the audience in Neighborhood House yesterday evening; we looked at the drawings of the proposed development and listened to the descriptions by a Gallina officer, Craig _____, and Gallina's architect, Steve _____, of Plunkett Raysich Architects (PRA). In general their descriptions recapitulate drawings and descriptions given earlier, on March 12, 2013, in the Bolz Auditorium in Meriter's McConnell Hall – also four or five years further back, in the description of a proposed general development plan (GDP) offered by Meriter Hospital and termed the 'Greenbush-Vilas Renovation Project'.

Gallina's proposal is framed as a Specific Implementation Plan (SIP) which they intend to soon submit to Madison's municipal commissions and Common Council :

Urban Design Commission (UDC) on September 11, 2013; and the
Urban Planning Commission (UPC) on September 30, 2013; and to the
Common Council on October 15, 2013.

Before and between these dates various municipal departments : Traffic, Water, Sewer, Engineering, etc., will review Gallina's Vicinato SIP and, perhaps, might require changes. If our Common Council approves Gallina's Mill Street existing proposal on the 15th of October, 2013, Gallina intends immediately to begin construction, planning for completion of the Vicinato structure in eight months, about mid-May, 2014.

Gallina's representative told us that downtown occupancy rates in Madison usually exceed 96 percent. He asserted the Gallina Company intends to be a owner/manager for the long-term, and said his firm would hire one live-in manager to help manage the Vicinato apartment.

Further, he told us tenants would be pre-screened and that his firm expected to rent to 'workforce professionals', although some UW graduate students might qualify. He said prospective tenants must :

have income at of at least two-and-one-half times greater than cost of rent,

have no record of prior offenses, such as felonies, and perhaps including

some misdemeanors,

provide references extending at least one year into the past,

have adequate financial scores.

Some details about the proposed Vicinato structure :

It would run along Mills Street about 255 feet and along Mound Street about 85 feet. At grade level it would be set-back ten feet from the inner edges of the sidewalks along Mills and Mound. But its eaves, balconies and window bays would overhang the ten-foot set-back.

It would be a four-storied building about 42 feet tall, It would have the shape, in plan, of the capital letter 'L', the vertical stem of the 'L' parallel to Mills Street.

The proposed Vicinato structure, if built, would be as tall as the existing McConnell Hall, which is about 42 feet tall. Gallina's representative told us the buildings of Meriter Hospital are restricted to a height of 164 feet; he added that Meriter intends to replace the College Station Apartments and McConnell Hall – sometime – with garages, laboratories and office structures and that such yet-to-be-built Meriter buildings might be as tall as 164 feet. He justified the 42-foot height of the proposed Vicinato structure, saying its height would make a reasonable transition between existing neighborhood houses to the west, and the height of Meriter's future structures to the east.

Seventy-two or seventy-four apartments are proposed with other interior spaces. Monthly rentals are planned to range from \$800 to \$1,125.00 for those more desirable :

- a) 47 one-bedroom apartments,
- b) 24 two-bedroom apartments,
- c) 3 studio apartments,
- d) a ground floor entrance foyer, etc.

Existing houses at 105 and 107 South Mills Street, and at 1018 and 1022 Mound Street would be demolished.

The Vicinato would offer no spaces for public libraries, nor study rooms, nor laundry-rooms, nor secure wi-fi, nor spaces for security personnel – nor for something like Lane's Bakery.

Parking would be provided :

- a) 51 stalls in 'underground', or sub-grade level, located under the proposed ground floor apartments,
- b) 20 outdoor stalls behind the proposed structure,
- c) as many as 45 spaces which might need to be found on nearby streets,
- d) there would be adequate stanchions and small spaces for mopeds and bikes,
- e) entrance and egress for motor vehicles would be on Mound Street, about 90 feet east of Mills Street.

Ground floor apartments along Mills and Mound would be fronted with patios. Apartments on the second, third and fourth floors would have projecting balconies. All apartments would be equipped with ducted through-the-wall forced-air devices for heating and cooling.

There would be one elevator in one elevator shaft in a central location – large enough to accommodate a hospital gurney. There would be three stairwells : one at each end and one in the center.

There would be one hallway on each floor, running the length of the building, and providing access to apartments lying on either side. Hallways parallel to Mills Street would be about 230 feet long and would communicate directly to hallways parallel to Mound Street, which would be about 55 feet long. The connected hallways, when seen in plan-view drawings, have the shape of the capital letter 'L'; and reflect the overall plan shape of the entire structure – also shaped like a capital 'L'.

A pedestrian entrance would divide the Mills Street façade into roughly equal halves, making the structure seem as if the proposed structure were two separate, side-by-side buildings. The pedestrian entrance would be placed in a broad recessed niche perhaps as deep as eight feet, perhaps as wide as twelve feet, extending upward through all four floors. The feeling of separate buildings along Mills Street would be enhanced by a slightly reduced height along the northern part of the structure.

Façades on all sides would be capped by 'Mansard Roof' eaves which would project about three feet outward and be supported by knee braces at intervals of about 30 feet.

A fascia layer of red face brick would cover all four sides of the proposed structure. Windows would look like domestic double-hung windows. Some windows would be accentuated on the upper three floors by their placement within projecting vertical window bays, each bay about 30 feet tall and about 12 feet wide. These bays would have a whitish color and would be sided with cementitious clapboards. There would be six vertical window bays on the Mills Street side – and two or three along the Mound Street side – placed at regular intervals and corresponding to the placement of bedroom windows.

A criticism of the proposed Vicinato Apartments :

1. The proposed Vicinato needs to look more like the smaller structures found across Mills and Mound Streets. It needs set-backs instead of sheer, abrupt façades, such as those planned along Milton, Mills and Mound Streets. Its proposed style resembles that of Meriter Hospital. If it were to look less like Meriter Hospital and more like nearby neighborhood buildings, it might become a more pleasant transition from a high-density apartment precinct to a single-family neighborhood.

My experience is that, depending on the season, our transient student residents are : boisterous, tipsy, sometimes thoughtless, sometimes loud, sometimes shooting off fireworks – and sometimes late into the night.

(But the Gallina firm has no experience in student housing. Gallina's representatives asserted their intention to rent to 'young professionals' – perhaps admitting a few graduate students. Yet the neighborhood of 100 South Mills is a part of an intense bailiwick of undergraduate housing. On St. James, Milton, and Bowen Streets, and between Mills and Randall Streets, there are only a few houses that are not occupied by young student renters, while further east along Milton Street, between Mills and Brooks Streets, and also at the corner of Park and Regent Streets, there must be about 150 student-occupied apartments – the College Station Apartments and Park Regent Apartments.)

(In the more southerly reaches of the Greenbush neighborhood, bounded by Mills, Mound, Lake Wingra and Randall Streets, there are many single family homes whose resident families favor the settlement of their neighborhood by more families. Indeed, they want their neighborhood to change : from the dinged-up houses now occupied by students – to a place for families with children – families in family homes. They would not favor the barracks-like apartment residence which the proposed Vicinato Apartments seems destined to become : a large-scale abode of – boisterous, tipsy, sometimes thoughtless, sometimes loud, sometimes shooting-off-fireworks – undergraduate students.)

3. Most undergraduate residence halls employ Resident Assistants (RAs) – one RA being allocated to 20 or 40 students. In their Vicinato proposal Gallina would provide for only one resident manager – merely one (1) for perhaps as many as 120 people – in a building whose wooden walls and floors would readily transmit noise.

4. Since undergraduate residence halls nearer the UW campus are made with floors of post-stressed concrete planks laid on ferro-concrete beams and supported by ferro-concrete posts, why not reconfigure the Vicinato proposal as a ferro-concrete structure? Vicinato would be safer and quieter if it were to be constructed of ferro-concrete members.

5. Also, for purposes of management and safety, why not insert two substantial masonry partitions projecting from the basement up through the roof? Fire safety is a serious issue with wooden structures. The existing Vicinato proposal shows four long floors of wooden construction – each floor having a horizontal corridor longer than 200 feet : and each of which, absent vertical fire-resistant partitions for localizing a serious blaze, might allow a fire to travel quickly from one end to the other. Masonry partitions would promote the safety of residents.

The following news article advocates for more families in Greenbush; from :
Wisconsin State Journal, 5 August 2013 :

... Ald. Sue Ellingson, 13th District, is equally excited about the prospects for the Park/Drake TIF district.

The TIF money would be used to help rehab homes in the area that originally were occupied by families but have since been turned into student housing.

The city will use money generated by the construction of several multifamily developments to fund the purchase and renovation of student rental housing to convert back to single-family homes.

Under the program, the city would provide 20 to 30 forgivable TIF loans ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000 at 0 percent interest. The loans would include language requiring the home to be owner-occupied for at least 10 years.

“It has the goal of trying to renovate what are basically pretty modest houses in Greenbush that have gotten pretty run down with being rented out for many years,” Ellingson said. “Landlords don’t seem to care about keeping them up, and the tenants, mostly students, don’t either.”

“So they get to the point where they’re really in bad shape, which is not good for the neighborhood or the city. So we’re trying to bring them back.”

While the details are still in the works, Ellingson said a key to the plan is to make it more practical for people she calls “urban homesteaders.”

“These TIF programs are usually designed for big developments and have a number of requirements that are hard for a homeowner to handle,” she said.

In addition to the small cap TIF program, the city also will be able to acquire property and contract with a developer to fix it up.

“These properties are often worth more as student rentals,” Ellingson said.

“You’ve got five students living there, they pay more than a family can pay. So the landlords don’t have an incentive to turn it back to single family. They’re just willing to let it get ruined to the point where it doesn’t stand up anymore.”

DATE: August 8, 2013

TO: City of Madison Plan Commission

FROM: James Matson, Greenbush Neighborhood Resident (1022 Vilas Ave.),
Small Business Co-Owner ("Chiripa," 636 S. Park St.)

**SUBJECT: "Longfellow School" High-Density Rental Housing Development;
August 26 Plan Commission Meeting**

I am writing to express my concerns related to the Meriter Hospital-Alexander Company proposal to convert nearly an entire block of the Meriter Hospital campus to high-density rental housing. The Meriter-Alexander proposal would convert the existing Longfellow School building, a designated historic landmark, into rental housing (41 rental units). Of greater concern, the proposal would also create a new "big box" rental housing complex immediately adjacent to the current Longfellow building (64 rental units).

If this project is added to other projects currently proposed or approved for construction, there will be a total of 273 new high-density rental units added to the Greenbush neighborhood in *this year alone*. The current pace of high-density rental development threatens to undermine the Greenbush neighborhood plan, which emphasizes the importance of owner-occupancy for the stability and vibrancy of this unique and historic neighborhood.

The Greenbush Neighborhood Association has gone on record in opposition to the proposed development (see July 1 letter attached). Neighbors are especially concerned about the size and density of this development, which goes well beyond what might be considered a moderate-density "transition" development on the fringe of the Meriter campus.

Neighbors wonder how nearly an entire block of land could be suddenly rezoned for high-density rental housing development without any prior planning basis or documentation, contrary to both the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan (which designates the entire Meriter campus as an "employment area") and the city's Meriter Hospital General Development Plan (GDP) adopted only 4 years ago in 2009. The Meriter GDP designates the Longfellow block for hospital development (which was the whole purpose for the GDP). As of this date, the city record does not appear to contain any updated planning documentation from Meriter to support the dramatic change from hospital development to high-density rental housing development.

The 2009 Meriter GDP rezoned the Longfellow block out of *low-density* residential use, ostensibly because Meriter needed the block for hospital development. If that rationale no longer exists, the block should arguably be returned to more moderate-density, owner-occupied residential use consistent with the Greenbush neighborhood plan. Meriter and the developer stand to reap a substantial windfall if the city now approves the block for *high-density rental housing* development unrelated to hospital needs.

Aside from the basic zoning issue, there are also more specific issues related to the size and density of the proposed new building in relation to its site. The Meriter-Alexander proposal attempts to cram as many rental units as possible into a constrained space, with unfortunate consequences for the neighbors, the historic landmark, and the workability and attractiveness of the new building itself.

For example, the proposed new building presents a decidedly "unfriendly" face to the Greenbush neighborhood, and particularly to Chandler Street, as detailed in the attached letter from Chandler Street resident Eric Shusta. Chandler Street residents will see a monolithic foundation wall and stairwell façade, a problematic loading and waste disposal area, an unsightly pair of garage doors, and a hazardous parking lot exit onto a narrow (and already difficult) street that is currently parked on both sides. The proposal will, in effect, turn Chandler Street into a "back alley" for the "big box" residential development. It will aggravate existing traffic and pedestrian hazards cited in the 2009 Meriter GDP. These problems could be ameliorated, to some degree, if the building were somewhat smaller.

The density of the development has also forced the developer to use the interior "courtyard" between the new building and the historic landmark as a surface parking lot rather than an attractive green space that might enhance the landmark. Among other things, this will create vehicle-pedestrian conflicts as pedestrians seek to access the main entrance to the building via the "courtyard." This unfortunate use of the "courtyard" is a direct result of the fact that the proposed new building is still too big for its site, and still has too many rental units that must be served with parking. The developer now says that he may also need street parking permits (in an already "overparked" neighborhood) to serve the too-densely-packed development.

If the proposed new building had a somewhat more modest scale and footprint, and fewer rental units, these and other problems would be more manageable. Instead of a "big box" shoe-horned into a problematic space, one could imagine a truly graceful building that would do justice to its neighbors and to its landmark companion building.

A scale reduction would of course create some opportunity cost for the developer. But that cost is one that the developer should reasonably be asked to bear, with help from Meriter, given the unprecedented zoning change that those parties are seeking from the city – a zoning change that (if approved) will give Meriter and the developer a substantial financial windfall. As it is, all the costs are being imposed on the neighborhood.

The city is not obligated to approve this development. This is not merely a step in the implementation of the existing Meriter Hospital GDP, but rather a fundamental change in that GDP. The developers are not just asking for a minor zoning variance or adjustment. The development can only proceed if the city makes substantial changes to the existing Meriter Hospital GDP, and possibly to the city's Comprehensive Plan (zoning must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, which at this point designates the Meriter campus as an employment area rather than a residential area).

The Greenbush Neighborhood Association has gone on record in opposition to this development. If the city chooses to rezone this block and approve this development over strong neighborhood objections, it should do so only on the basis of an adequate planning record that includes thorough documentation from Meriter related to the future needs of the Meriter campus. It should also insist upon reasonable scale reductions and design changes needed to provide a better fit with the neighborhood and with the Longfellow historic landmark.

Although I am writing on my own behalf, I am confident that many neighbors share my concerns.

Attachments

Cc: Al Martin, Urban Design Commission Staff
Amy Scanlon, Landmarks Commission Staff
Alder Sue Ellingson

August 22, 2013

To: Plan Commission Members and Staff

From: Karen and Rodney Stevenson, 1030 Vilas Ave

Re: Proposed Longfellow development density and parking concerns.

We are concerned about the proposed development of the Longfellow property into a 105-unit rental complex. We are especially concerned with the density and the parking impacts.

Density:

The proposed dwelling unit density of the Longfellow rental project is 61 rental units per acre (105 units/1.7 acres) - more than 4 times the Greenbush neighborhood plan goal of 15 housing units per acre.¹ The Longfellow rental project will re-enforce perceptions of the neighborhood as a rental enclave with its attendant congestion on evenings and weekends and will discourage interest in conversion of surrounding properties into owner occupied houses.

Parking:

The Longfellow rental project will aggravate parking problems that currently exist. Increased congestion, parking inconvenience, and parking pressure will be detrimental for current neighborhood residents and families considering moving into the area.

The proposed design puts the rear of the building on the 1000 block of Chandler Street, and incorporates a parking entrance and loading dock. Currently, parking on Chandler does not realistically allow for two-way traffic flow on the street even in the summer; with snow it becomes impossible. The Longfellow loading dock will add to the congestion. Delivery trucks, garbage trucks and moving vans will need frequent access to the area but will have inadequate space to maneuver. As the pictures on the next page confirm, Chandler is heavily parked on both sides of the street during the daytime making two-way driving virtually impossible. Parking is still very dense at night.

The new building's parking entrance and loading dock will reduce the number of parking spaces on the north side of Chandler Street and will increase parking pressure on neighboring streets. Longfellow project residents and visitors will vie for parking spaces with those who currently live in the neighborhood, regardless of whether Longfellow project residents are allowed street parking permits. Meriter employees seeking parking will simply spill further out into the neighborhood. Meriter has no current plans to address these parking problems.

Some of the adverse effects on Chandler Street could be alleviated if the loading dock was moved north to the Mound Street side. Moving or adding an additional residential parking exit to Mound Street would help as well. Such changes would create the possibility that the Chandler Street side could serve as frontage to the neighborhood rather than simply being the back-end alley of an isolated complex.

¹ Greenbush Neighborhood Plan. Adopted by the City of Madison July 1, 2008, Amended November 9, 2010.
www.cityofmadison.com/planning/ndp/documents/GreenbushFinalPlan121610.pdf, p.38

PARKING PICTURES

CHANDLER STREET 1000 BLOCK



ADJACENT STREETS

Parking is already congested in the adjacent streets. These photos were taken at a variety of times to demonstrate the problem is not limited to daytime business hours.

