



May 29, 2019

Heather Stouder
City of Madison
Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development
115 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Suite LL 100, Madison Municipal Building
Madison, WI 53703

**RE: LETTER OF INTENT - EAST END APARTMENTS
NEW MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
MADISON, WI 53703**

Dear Ms. Stouder,

The following is submitted together with the subdivision application, associated plans and documents for review by City Staff, the Landmarks Commission, the Urban Design Commission, the Plan Commission and the City Council for consideration of approval.

PROJECT TEAM:

Developer: McGrath Property Group, 730 Williamson St. Suite 150, Madison, WI 53703
Architect: CaS4 Architecture, 4414 Regent Street, Suite 102, Madison, WI 53705
Landscape Arch/Civil Engineer: Vierbicher, 999 Fourier Dr. Suite 201, Madison, WI 53717
Surveyor: Isthmus Surveying, 450 N. Baldwin St Madison, WI 53703

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

The Developer is under contract to purchase an assembly of properties from the current land owner. The proposed project will sit on a portion of that assembly, including 510-518 E. Wilson Street, a portion of 506 E. Wilson (extending out to S Franklin St), a portion of 148 S. Blair and 134-140 S. Blair Street. The footprint for the project is currently predominantly surface parking (see Exhibit A for Legal Description of the Site).

Also included in the purchase but excluded from this development proposal are the four homes located at 110 - 120 S. Blair and the building located at 506-508 E. Wilson (commonly known as the Come Back In). The Developer intends to restore the 506-508 building on a separate track and currently has no plans for the 4 homes on S. Blair St.

The site is 60,655 SF in area (1.39 Acres) and sits in two different Historic districts. The properties fronting E. Wilson Street are in a National Historic District and all of the parcels to the north of them are in the Local First Settlement Historic District. The project site will be part of a new CSM to consolidate the lots that it sits on. The project is located in the 6th Aldermanic District, First Settlement Neighborhood. It is currently zoned Planned Development (PD), WP-17 with the parking lot area having the additional designation of HIS-FS.

Demolition of 510 thru 518 E. Wilson will be necessary to complete the project. 518 E. Wilson is listed as a "Contributing" building to the National Historic district but it is the opinion of the Developer that this building is beyond the point of feasibly being able to restore. Areas of the existing structure are pulling apart from each other along the exterior walls, portions of the foundation are collapsing in on themselves and have led to areas of floor framing falling in within the current structure. Additionally, removal of this building helps to honor and improve the character and viability of the adjacent Hotel Ruby Marie property at 524 E. Wilson St - which is also listed as "Contributing" to the National Historic District.

Following demolition and excavation of the site, new construction consisting of a 5-story, mixed-use rental building containing: 153 residential units, 11,000 SF of commercial space and 220 parking stalls. The proposed building has frontages on E. Wilson and S. Blair Streets.

All parking serving the property is accessed from S. Blair St. where there is a separate entrance for ingress and egress into the parking. There is also a 2-lane turn-around area in between the ingress/egress for postal/Fed-Ex/Ups deliveries, and taxi/Uber pick ups and drop offs. Additionally there is a separate loading zone accessed off of S. Franklin St to serve the building and for tenant move-ins/move-outs that utilize a larger moving truck. Refuse/Recycling collection will occur at this same location.

The Developer is also required to provide up to 30 parking stalls in the project for users of the Hotel Ruby Marie. To facilitate their access to the parking, a small parking garage entry has been added which will allow them to drop off luggage behind the hotel and then enter the garage without going back onto S. Blair St.

A consultant has been retained to prepare a Traffic Study for the project. This report will be submitted at a later date.

Specific building areas and other pertinent information is provided on the attached plans. No public subsidy is being requested for this project.

NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT:

The project is located in the First Settlement Neighborhood (FS). City Staff, the Alder and FS leaders were notified in writing of this project on February 25, 2019. A public notice neighborhood meeting was held on April 25, 2019 and a second public notice meeting was held on May 16, 2019. The developer has also met several times with City Staff and the neighborhood "Steering Committee" that was formed for the project. The development team has shared information with this committee and will continue to meet on an as-needed basis as the final details of the project are worked thru.

ZONING:

The proposed site is currently zoned Planned Development (PD) - but it is the Developer's understanding that this zoning has expired. The proposed project is predominantly, if not entirely, consistent with Downtown Core (DC) zoning. At the recommendation of City Staff we are requesting that the site be rezoned as PD using the Urban Mixed-Use zoning category as its basis.

The proposed project is generally consistent with the First Settlement neighborhood plan and other city plans. The site is specifically called out as an under-utilized site and is recommended for predominately residential mixed use redevelopment. The City of Madison Zoning Code allows for buildings up to 6 stories tall on the site and we are staying 1-level below that maximum.

ARCHITECTURAL/LANDMARKS DIALOG:

The current zoning and downtown height map, along with recommendations in the Downtown Plan, the updated Comprehensive Plan, and the First Settlement Neighborhood Plan (1995) all point to this particular site as being underutilized and a prime candidate for a more intensive development. The Downtown Plan points to this block (Block 115) as underutilized and a focus for more intensive redevelopment. The Comprehensive Plan defines these sites as ones for generally larger multifamily buildings or multifamily complexes. Within the First Settlement Neighborhood Plan it calls for higher density residential developments on arterial streets, institutional edges, and Lake Monona frontage. This site is identified as R7 within the neighborhood plan and again calls for higher density and higher rise development due to its location along major transportation corridors and/or valuable lakefront sites such as the E. Wilson Street frontage.

The proposed development is comprised of 153 residential units, 11,000 sf of new commercial space along South Blair Street and E. Wilson Street, and 220 internal structured parking stalls. The building's grade level commercial space and residential lobby along both E. Wilson Street and South Blair Street are a taller single story to allow for better commercial spaces that will also shield the internal structured parking located at the center of the site. Above the grade level along E. Wilson Street and South Blair Street are four levels of residential housing. The building scale and its location fit within the boundaries of the downtown height map and keep the taller mass of the development along the edges of the First Settlement Neighborhood and in relation with the taller neighboring structures of the Cardinal Hotel, South Franklin Street Condominiums, MG&E buildings, Settlement Place, The Ruby Marie Hotel, and 320 E. Wilson Street apartments. This is a key component to both the Downtown Plan and First Settlement Neighborhood Plan recommendations for potential development of this site. Within the depth of the site a two level portion of residential apartments steps down to the scale of the Germania condominiums; refer to attached sections within the submittal that describe this situation further. Along E. Wilson Street the Come Back In remains as an independent structure within the development and will be renovated on a separate track of approval and permitting.

The focus of this project has been developing an architectural language that looks to the existing buildings within the neighborhood and surrounding buildings within a 200 foot radius of the perimeter of the site and taking cues from those structures to create a development that relates to the neighboring structures without mimicking them. The following portion of the design narrative looks to address the City of Madison historic preservation standards for the First Settlement Historic District. These standards along with a design concept that looks to relate to existing context through scale, proportion, and rhythm is the driving force of the overall design of the project.

The height of the proposed building is equal to or less than the height of buildings within a 200 foot radius of the site; those buildings include the Cardinal Hotel and MG&E buildings. The corner elements located on 115 South Franklin Condominiums are approximately equal to the roof elevation of the proposed building; some are a few feet taller and some are a few feet shorter. The overall mass of the building is broken down along both East Wilson Street and South Blair to relate the buildings horizontal scale at the street edge to that found within 200 feet of the site. Along South Blair Street the façade is broken down into two main “buildings” that relate in length to the street scale of Settlement Place and the MG&E buildings across South Blair Street. The vertical scale looks to relate to the datum set by Settlement Place and Hotel Ruby Marie. At the datum the masonry plans terminate to reveal a rhythm of 4” exposure cement board lap sided bays to create a simple rhythm along the South Blair Street elevation that translates down through the inset balcony conditions. As you walk along the building the columns of the covered main entry and parking access component is within 18” of the sidewalk; the building then steps back 10’-6” to the portion of the building that is rendered as the “break” between the two main “buildings” before stepping back out with the commercial storefront that is held back 4’-6” from the back of the sidewalk. The introduction of canopies to provide shelter at the storefronts also creates another texture and rhythm that is in line with the scale of other storefronts found at the Hotel Ruby Marie. The storefront within the masonry openings at grade level is setback 16-24” to provide a sense of a thick masonry wall. This articulation within the façade helps to provide variety and scale along the building face that is similar to the buildings located along both sides of South Blair Street and East Wilson Street. The commercial storefronts along both East Wilson and South Blair are of a scale similar to that found on the Hotel Ruby Marie as well as the Cardinal Hotel and other storefronts of buildings of that period. The pedestrian experience along East Wilson Street is one that looks to maintain the street level experience that is created by both the Ruby Marie Hotel, the Come Back In, and the Cardinal Hotel where the scale and rhythm of the storefront is maintained on the building to complement that which is in place on both adjacent existing structures. The articulation and detailing of the masonry along East Wilson Street is done in a fashion that subtly relates to that which is found on both the Come Back In and the Hotel Ruby Marie. Soldier course headers and header course jamb details that are found on both of these structures provide details at the openings along East Wilson Street. This detailing combined with the proportion and rhythm of the openings is consistent with the two adjacent pre-1930 buildings and also those found on the Cardinal Hotel and the early MG&E buildings on South Blair Street. The beauty of the existing buildings adjacent to the proposed building on East Wilson Street is that they are detailed and arranged to create a subtle rhythm within the elevation. The elevation of the new structure along East Wilson Street uses a similar concept of subtle cues within the overall masonry elevation to breakdown the façade both vertically and horizontally. The horizontal layout of the elevation provides subtle changes in the layout of the openings at grade to define commercial storefronts from residential building entry with the incorporation of a soft

arched entry in combination with stepping out the face of the wall 4". The vertical proportion and scale is broken down with a cast stone course that runs at the elevation of the Come Back In while the continuous punched windows of the first two floors above the commercial space are to relate back to the scale and proportion of the Ruby Marie Hotel. As the building moves above the fourth floor the masonry finishes with a (3) soldier course and cast stone cap. The residential units step back 9 feet from the masonry face to allow the upper level to be rendered with a flat seam metal panel in a scale of 14"x38" horizontally. This metal panel installation is used within the portion of the building along East Wilson and a few highlights within the elevation along South Blair Street. This color of metal is found on the MG&E buildings within 200 feet of the site.

As we move around the building and begin to engage the residential component of the neighborhood the building steps down to two levels of housing immediately adjacent to the residential neighborhood fronting on South Franklin Street. With the transition into the residential neighborhood the material palette becomes that which is similar to a majority of the homes and townhouse condominiums that front South Franklin Street. The proposed material composition at these elevations is a combination of modular masonry units in a running bond coursing along with two colors of smooth faced 4" cement board lap siding (grey and darker brown); these materials are components suggested within the City of Madison historic preservation standards for the First Settlement Historic District. Again the proportion and scale of the window openings is that which is found within most of the neighboring residential community. A series of double hung window conditions mixed in with larger "Chicago Style" windows comprised of a double hung window on each side of a fixed pane window create a distinction between living spaces and bedrooms. The elevation of the building that runs parallel to the Germania Condominiums is set up to provide (8) townhouse type units within the new building. This relationship and scale of a two story unit works directly with the scale and rhythm of the existing town house typology of the Germania Condominiums. Special attention has been put into the landscaping and setbacks of the units from the face of the building to provide a sense of privacy for all residence within both buildings; refer to the section within the packet of information for further graphic information.

Through the use of similar materials, proportion, and rhythm this project takes the cues and qualities of the buildings found within 200 feet of the site as its design direction to articulate an appropriately scaled design of its time, and for its context and location within the City of Madison, that is sympathetic to its context without mimicking it.

REFUSE & RECYCLING:

Garbage and recycling from the property will be collected by a private service. Roll-out containers serving the residential and commercial spaces will be located in an enclosed room on the grade level portion of the parking structure. Access to the collection room is from S. Franklin St. Collection vehicles will pull into the driveway and temporarily park while the roll out containers are loaded for collection.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

We are working with WHEDA to finance the project. If successful we will be renting 20% of the units to Tenant's who do not earn more than 80% of Dane County Medium Income.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS:

The construction of the project will have a positive impact on trade labor as it will utilize approximately 150-200 craftsmen from several local and regional businesses over an 18 month period. Additionally, businesses involved with manufacturing materials incorporated into the project will see an ancillary benefit from the development as well.

The current assessed value of the properties that the project sits on is \$1,992,400 - we expect the new project to generate an property tax increment of nearly **20X** once complete.

GREEN FEATURES:

We will be working with Focus on Energy to incorporate as many energy efficient features as possible. We anticipate using energy efficient light fixtures, energy star appliances, high efficiency forced air furnaces and air conditioners, low flow plumbing fixtures, and Low-E glass on the windows. Common mechanicals will also be high efficiency.

We will also explore photovoltaic solar panels on the roof - and hopefully will be able to install them if we can receive subsidies to help off set the significant initial cost of the solar installation.

We will install a minimum of two electric car charging stations in the parking level and will have the ability to add more in the future as needed.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

5/6/19:	Landmarks - Informational Meeting
5/8/19:	UDC - Informational Meeting
5/29/19:	Formal Application
6/24/19:	Landmarks Commission Meeting
7/17/19:	UDC Initial/Final Approval Meeting
7/29/19:	Plan Commission Meeting
8/6/19:	City Council Meeting
10/1/19:	Start Construction
4/1/21:	Occupancy

Please feel free to contact me if additional information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lance T. McGrath". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Lance T. McGrath
Owner - McGrath Property Group, LLC

Attachments:

- Exhibit A: Legal Description
- Exhibit B: Zoning Text
- Exhibit C: Photographs of Buildings to be Demolished
- Exhibit D: Management Plan
- Exhibit E: Tandem Parking Plan