



October 12, 2016

Via Email and Hand Delivery

Plan Commission and Urban Design Commission
City of Madison
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Room LL-100
Madison, WI 53703

**Re: Letter of Intent for Proposed Development
The Spark Project – 819 East Washington Avenue**

Dear Commission Members:

American Family Insurance is pleased to present the enclosed materials as part of a Land Use and Design Review submittal to the Plan Commission and the Urban Design Commission for **The Spark**. This new project will be owned by American Family and home to the entrepreneurial hub Starting Block Madison (SBM), through a lease of approximately 50,000 square feet. In addition, several business units of American Family and potential retail/business partner(s) will be located at The Spark. These business units and business partners will contribute to the culture of innovation on site and will be announced at a later date.

The Spark is being developed in conjunction with Gebhardt Development's project The Cosmos at 801 East Washington Avenue. Land Use and Design Review applications for The Cosmos are being submitted concurrently with this submittal.

Project Summary

The highly sustainable architecture of **The Spark** is intended to communicate the innovation and energy that will occur within the building. Using an integrated design process the project team has worked closely with American Family to design a building that reduces energy load through highly efficient building systems. These strategies work to lessen the projects impact on the environment. Through creative use of form and material – the design is both forward leaning and sympathetic to the surrounding neighborhood. The two-story "Podium" level is active space for innovation and public engagement as it connects entries on both East Wash and Main Street. The office tower above the Podium creates near column free space to support the needs of today's workplace. The project is eight stories in height with rooftop amenities for tenants on both the Tower and Podium levels. Projected balconies are also provided for tenant use and will provide exceptional views of the Capitol, Lakes Mendota and Monona as well as the Madison skyline.

The Spark will be adjacent to the Cosmos to the east. The Gebhardt Development project named "Cosmos" will occupy the western side of the parcel along Livingston Street and replace a vacant site with a significant, mixed-use project featuring a music venue for Frank Productions, a potential Class A office tower and ground floor retail facilities.

333 E. Chicago St.
Milwaukee, WI 53202

414 271 5350 : main
414 271 7794 : fax

222 W. Washington Ave.
Suite 650
Madison, WI 53703

608 442 5350 : main
608 442 6680 : fax

The exterior of **The Spark** is composed of a state-of-the-art rainscreen featuring glass and stone cladding, metal panel with high performance triple glazed curtainwall. Integral sunscreens provide important shading of the exterior skin which articulates the façade and lessens the Spark's dependence on mechanical cooling.

The following information and attachments, offers additional specifics about the design of **The Spark**. The project is seeking conditional use approval for height exceeding district standards.

Existing Site Conditions

This total site currently includes 2.01 acres of vacant surface parking area bounded by East Washington Avenue, South Livingston Street and East Main Street extending 264.74 feet to the northeast. The internal site boundaries will be reorganized via a certified survey map (CSM) to divide the site into two parcels, one owned by Gebhardt Development and one owned by American Family Insurance. On the East Washington Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan the site is shown as part of Block 12, sub blocks A and B. This site is currently zoned TE Traditional Employment. This project will be seeking conditional use approval under this zoning designation and will create a project that complies with the current zoning.

Access to the site is provided by East Washington Avenue and East Main Street. The site is also served by Madison Metro routes 6, 14, 15, 25, 27, 29, 37, 56 and 57.

Project Layout

The project is located within Urban Design District No. 8 along the East Washington Capitol Gateway Corridor in Sub Blocks 12a & b. The project as currently designed meets established requirements or permissible variations for building height, façade height, minimum/maximum setback, and minimum setback.

The Spark is two stories along East Main Street (3-5 stories are required unless greater floor heights are provided) and East Washington Avenue. The proposed 17' ground floor and 14' second floor height exceed average required story heights and have an overall height meeting the three-story height requirements.

Proposed trash areas are enclosed and bike parking is shown dispersed through the site within proposed setbacks. Selections related to exterior materials, landscaping, lighting and other elements are intended to comply with design district guidelines. The project design is intended to be consistent with design district guidelines, as provided below.

Project Objectives and Benefits

The Project will benefit the City of Madison in the following ways:

- Revitalizing the western half of the 800 South Block of East Washington Avenue and providing a catalyst for further redevelopment on the south side of the street.
- The Spark and Starting Block Madison will create a center for innovation with the goal to become a benchmark for like facilities.

- Provide additional employment opportunities to the area by activating unused commercial property and adding substantial amounts of office, retail and other commercial space to the employment corridor.
- Improving pedestrian access to and circulation around the site by upgrading existing sidewalks and adding landscaping areas.
- Substantially increasing the property tax base on the block by placing currently exempt property on the tax rolls and constructing substantial improvements on the property.

Project Data

<u>Location:</u>	819 East Washington Avenue
<u>Building Sq. Ft.:</u>	158,000 gross sq. ft.
<u>Start Construction:</u>	Approximately January 2017
<u>Complete Construction:</u>	Approximately January 2018
<u>Type of Building:</u>	Commercial (office with limited retail)
<u>Land Area:</u>	0.84 acres (36,355 sq. ft.)
<u>Vehicle Parking:</u>	Approximately 375 vehicle parking spaces (2.4 spaces per 1,000 useable sq. ft.) subject to a long-term lease agreement with the parking utility
<u>Bicycle Parking:</u>	Approximately 50 exterior and 30 interior bicycle spaces
<u>Site Access:</u>	East Washington Ave., East Main St.
<u>Lot Coverage:</u>	77.5%
<u>Usable Open Space:</u>	39%
<u>Hours of Operation:</u>	Approximately 7:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. Monday through Sunday

Project Financial Information

Value of Land:	The land is currently assessed as commercial exempt property.
Number of Construction & Full-time Equivalent Jobs Created:	500 construction jobs and approximately 440 full-time equivalent (office)
Public Subsidy Requested:	None.

Urban Design District Standards

1. Building Height

- a. The proposed street level facade height of 2 stories/34 feet complies with the District height requirements along East Main Street of a minimum/maximum height of 29-63 feet. We do not meet the requirement for 3-5 stories but feel the architectural expression meets the general intent given height and proximity to the street.
- b. The proposed building height of 8 stories/134 feet complies with the maximum building height of 12 stories/147 feet along East Washington Avenue and 8 stories/115 feet along East Main Street (with the potential for 2 bonus stories for a total of 10 stories/123 feet).

2. Building Location and Orientation

- a. The Project addresses East Washington Avenue and East Main Street with commercial entrances facing these primary streets.
- b. Project entrances adequately connect to public sidewalks.
- c. The primary building entrances will be visually enhanced with features to increase pedestrian interaction with the project.

3. Setback and Stepback

- a. Proposed setbacks of 15 feet along East Washington Avenue and East Main Street are in compliance with District requirements.
- b. Proposed building setbacks on East Washington Avenue and East Main Street meet the District minimum requirement of 15 feet.

4. Parking and Service Areas; Circulation

- a. Off-street parking for the project will be provided through a lease with the Parking Utility for the new city ramp to be constructed directly across from the project on East Main Street and South Livingston Street.
- b. Service entries such as the loading dock are located at the back of the project along East Main Street and will not be visible from the primary building facade along East Washington Avenue. This loading zone does not impede pedestrian movement along East Main Street and will allow trucks to completely park on the project site and not encroach on the sidewalk or terrace.
- c. The entry drive is perpendicular to the respective connecting street.

5. Landscaping and Open Space

- a. Landscaping along East Washington Avenue and East Main Street will contain canopy trees and plantings appropriate for an urban project. Street furniture such as benches, bike racks and trash receptacles will be provided.
- b. The shared plaza with The Cosmos building will be extensively landscaped to provide a unique experience for occupants and visitors of the two projects.
- c. Rooftop features on both the Podium and Tower, will be partially landscaped to provide a comfortable and attractive rooftop setting for building occupants.

6. Site Lighting and Furnishings

- a. The Project will have adequate but not excessive pedestrian-level lighting and accent lighting where appropriate, designed to complement the character of the building. Building signage will include appropriate lighting to provide proper direction to building users.
- b. Full cut-off light fixtures will be used to illuminate the site.

7. Building Massing and Articulation

- a. The building mass respects and compliments views identified on the Views and Vista Map in the Downtown Plan.
- b. The Project will have unique, primary design elements on the first floor facing East Washington Avenue and East Main Street.
- c. The ground level of the commercial areas facing East Washington Avenue and East Main Street will have increased visual interest by way of storefront glazing, canopies, signage and landscape features.
- d. Rooftop equipment for the Tower will be either enclosed within a penthouse or screened. Rooftop equipment for the two story Podium will also be screened with architectural elements.

8. Materials and Colors

- a. High-quality, durable, low-maintenance exterior building materials will be used including high performance curtain wall systems, terra cotta and metal panel rainscreen.
- b. The Spark will contain areas of green roof at the Podium level.
- c. Colors and building textures will be consistent with surrounding properties and are typical for urban projects.

9. Windows and Entrances

- a. No clear existing window and door pattern exists around the Project. The rhythm shown in the commercial and residential uses will be typical and appropriate for an urban project.
- b. At least 40-60% of the ground floor exterior of the commercial spaces will be dedicated to windows. All windows on the ground floor of the Project will be transparent and unobstructed.
- c. The commercial entrances will be uniquely defined and clearly discernible for the public from the street.

10. Signage

Branding elements and signage will be integrated with the Project's architecture. Colors and low-level lighting will be selected to coordinate with the building façade and enhance the character of the Project.

The Spark Project Team

Developer : American Family Insurance

6000 American Pkwy.
Madison, WI 53738
Project Representative: LeeAnn Glover – Director of Real Estate
Phone: (608) 242-4100

Architect : Eppstein Uhen Architects
309 W Johnson St., Suite 202
Madison, WI 53703
The Spark Project Representative: Thomas Stacey
Phone: (414) 291-8159

Structural Engineer : Pierce Engineers
241 N. Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202
Project Representative: Randy Elliot
Phone number: (608) 239-3754

Landscape Designer : Design Studio, etc.
330 West Lakeside
Madison, WI 53715
Project Representative: Garret Perry
Phone number: (608) 358-6344



UDC Initial/Final Submittal : The Spark

819 E Washington Ave

Date: October 12, 2016

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Civil Engineer : Professional Engineering
818 N. Meadowbrook Lane
Waunakee, Wisconsin 53597
Project Representative: Roxanne Johnson
Phone number: (608) 849-9378

We look forward to presenting these materials to you in November as we seek your approval of this proposal to create a center of innovation while revitalizing this portion of the Capitol East District corridor.

Thank you and please contact me with any questions regarding this submittal for **The Spark**,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Stacey'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Thomas' and last name 'Stacey' clearly distinguishable.

Thomas Stacey, AIA
Associate : Senior Project Manager

cc: (all via email)
Marsha Rummel, District 6 Alderperson
Natalie Erdman, Director of Planning, Community and Economic Development
Heather Stouder, Planning Division Director
Tim Parks, Planning Division
Al Martin, Planning Division
Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator