

## AGENDA # 7

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** May 6, 2015

**TITLE:** 1200-1212 East Washington Avenue & 9-13 North Few Street – Three-Story Mixed-Use, Multi-Family Residential Development and Renovation of an Existing Building in UDD No. 8. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (36899)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

**AUTHOR:** Alan J. Martin, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** May 6, 2015

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Richard Slayton and Sheri Carter.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of May 6, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a three-story mixed-use, multi-family residential development located at 1200-1212 East Washington Avenue & 9-13 North Few Street in UDD No. 8. Appearing on behalf of the project were Joseph Lee, representing McGrath Property Group; and Jacob Blue, representing Ayres Associates. Appearing in support and available to answer questions was Lance McGrath. Registered and speaking in opposition was Adam Schesch. Appearing neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak were Jeff Reinke and Elyse Meaer. Architecturally the building is the same with the exception of the buff color veneer being brought across the entire base. Material samples were shown. Utility sized brick in a red-brown is also proposed. Modest changes to the landscape plan include preserving some existing trees; the plan meets or exceeds the points required in the Zoning Code. Some species were changed per the Commission’s recommendations. They did study the headlights coming out of the underground parking and found no casting of light above the first story of the building across the street.

Elyse Meaer spoke as a neighborhood resident, noting the headlights could impact her home. She has met with the development team and talked over different possibilities. She came to the conclusion that even if trees were planted, in the wintertime a tree would be of no use at all. Other neighbors pointed out a structure on Dayton Street where the exit shines lights into the house across the street and that the lights are driving them crazy. If the lights weren’t shining up as much it would make a huge difference.

Jeff Reinke noted that the increase in traffic will be a difficult issue with neighborhood children, schools and the bicycle boulevard on Mifflin Street. Staff noted that the driveway locations are dictated by the Urban Design District guidelines.

Adam Schesch spoke in opposition. The number one issue on their street is spill over parking on East Mifflin Street. In his 20 years of renting apartment units, he has only had one tenant who did not have a car. He disputes anybody who claims that half of the people in the new building are somehow going to be riding bicycles out to

the far reaches of the City. He would require low cost or free parking to all tenants who have cars and that it not be an option; a lot of landlords are charging \$70.00+ for a parking spot and young people are refusing to pay that and parking on an already crowded street. The City of Madison should recommend to the appropriate authorities that residents of the 1100-1200 Blocks of Mifflin Street have permit parking and that all others be banned from parking on those two blocks. Through traffic is a serious issue; four-way stop signs should be installed at the intersection of Mifflin and Few Streets to encourage more traffic onto East Washington Avenue. Speed bumps on the first and second blocks of North Few Street would also be recommended. He would like the developer to save the existing hardwood trees on the north side. Privacy is an issue and no business permits should be issued for something that would operate past 10:00 p.m. The City desperately needs more affordable housing.

An 8-foot fence is proposed to screen the project, and the existing Silver Maples, a Mulberry and a Locust will be protected.

Tim Parks of the Planning Division noted that Traffic Engineering is requesting no residential parking permits be authorized for this project, and that a 6-8-foot screening fence is a condition of approval.

Comments and questions from the Commission members were as follows:

- We have utility brick here and bigger down below. It seems to be a topic that we should be consistent on and if it's appropriate for this building we should find it so. There are places where we have it and places where we don't. I don't think there's a requirement. I would like to understand our reason behind why we make that decision. Often times that initial request comes from staff to push the developer and architect to go to regular sized brick and in this case you did not feel that was necessary? I was going to leave it to this body. I don't have as strong an opinion.
  - (Staff) It's an urban context issue. If you're downtown next to traditional buildings, and you're trying to inter-weave or relate to that fabric, the issue of brick size comes up all the time. The building of a lower scale would probably be compelled to relate more to that brick size as far as materiality and context. If there is a need to create a transition between smaller scale, finer texture buildings then that transition occurs with that material. Or if in context a building is not relative to what's around it, that conversation comes up. It's relevant to the context of the building being proposed and what is around it and whether or not it's intended to mesh and be seamless or seen as something that doesn't have to have that strong relationship to what's around it. It's a judgment call.
- I think it's a context issue rather than a one-size-fits-all.
- All the muttons on the double hung windows are harkening something historic and not a single tenant is going to have a piece of glass that appears bigger than 6 x 6. Things like that are a historic reference. If this had more modern windows like Veritas, it brings a total different rhythm to the building and you can read subtle, secondary patterns within these masonry openings. It brings more interest to the structure.
- Last time we did talk about studying that elevation of the drive and raising it so it was always at least on grade lighting, rather than lighting that was toward second stories, even in properties to the north, I think it's reasonable to ask for that adjustment.

### **ACTION:**

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-2) with Huggins, DeChant, Carter and Goodhart voting yes; O'Kroley and Slayton voting no.

No rankings were provided for this project.

March 10, 2015

Re: McGrath Property Group Proposal for N. Few St. and E. Washington Ave.

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association (TLNA) Council has considered the proposal by McGrath Property Group for the corner of N. Few and E. Washington. On February 26, 2015, TLNA Council voted unanimously to support the proposal, although detailed below are several items of concern that TLNA prefers be addressed as the proposal moves forward.

Given that TLNA Council is made up of neighbors from across Tenney-Lapham, its findings represent the opinions of the entire neighborhood. In contrast, the TLNA Steering Committee, comprised mostly of neighbors living within a block of the proposed development, was much less enthusiastic.

TLNA hopes that readers will investigate and appreciate the opinions of all involved, including the Steering Committee and other neighborhood input, all available at our development website: <http://www.danenet.org/tlna/development.html>.

We appreciate the willingness of the development team to meet multiple times with the Steering Committee, with individual nearby neighbors and with TLNA Council. Their willingness to listen to and address neighborhood input was helpful. Throughout the process, they produced building renderings, shadow studies and perspectives as requested by the Steering Committee.

Following are aspects of the proposal that the TLNA Council finds favorable to the neighborhood:

- Follows city zoning and Urban Design District-8 guidelines with allowable conditional uses and generally follows the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan.
- Improves a property that all consider blighted and under-utilized.
- Elimination of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor that was proposed in an earlier project version.
- References to the streamlined architectural style of isthmus warehouses with large windows and a classic red brick façade.
- Quality exterior and interior construction with storage units on each floor that could facilitate conversion to condominiums if market conditions allow.
- Larger setback than required by zoning on the rear of the building, thereby decreasing backyard privacy concerns of residents on E. Mifflin.
- Balcony setbacks and other horizontal variations provide a needed visual break along the E. Washington façade and along all other exterior sides.
- Placement of the first floor retail/commercial space at ground level to increase its attractiveness and large windows for the commercial space.
- Recent expansion of the retail/commercial square footage and the accompanying increase in the first floor retail/commercial façade along E. Washington.
- Targeting retail/commercial tenants that appeal to nearby neighbors and whose primary customers are those who walk or bike, thereby minimizing traffic and parking impacts.
- No Magic-Paks or other HVAC grills on the building exterior.

- Placement of rooftop a/c condensers on the interior rooftop, away from the E. Mifflin neighbors.
- Internal, covered garbage corral that will minimize noise, odors and impact on backyard neighbors.
- Ample bicycle parking in the parking level and the inclusion of a bicycle maintenance room.
- 1:1 (or slightly less) parking spaces to apartments ratio, which discourages tenants from having automobiles.
- Developer has expressed a desire to include multiple electric car-charging stations and is exploring the inclusion of a car-sharing spot.
- Developer's willingness to work with the City to install and underwrite a left-turn lane on eastbound E. Washington, which would reduce traffic in the nearby established neighborhoods and the bike boulevard.
- Rooftop solar panels for the electrical needs of the building's common areas and the willingness to partner with Focus on Energy.

Following are aspects of the proposal that the TLNA Council finds are issues that the TLNA, the City and the Developer should work to further resolve:

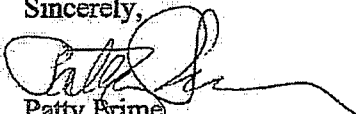
- The TLNA Council and neighborhood generally find the project's lack of an affordable housing component to be unfavorable to retaining the neighborhood's diversity and range of housing types. That said, it is recognized that housing affordability and related inequality issues are difficult to address on the project level.
- The traffic increases and changing traffic patterns expected from the new development are a large concern. It is anticipated that the majority of the proposed building's tenants will work west of N. Few St., hence returning workers will need a left turn lane off eastbound E. Washington. If this turn lane is not installed, there will be an additional unwanted traffic increase on the adjacent quiet residential streets, including Curtis Court and the 1100 and 1200 blocks of the E. Mifflin bike boulevard. The inability of exiting residents to access eastbound E. Washington is also an issue because drivers seeking nearby stoplights will use the aforementioned quiet streets. Those drivers could also potentially endanger elementary school students at Lapham School if accessing the stoplight at N. Ingersoll. Traffic calming and diversion efforts on the adjacent streets should be encouraged.
- The impingement of headlights onto 22 N. Few St. across from the parking level driveway is a large concern. The headlights from traffic exiting the parking level could negatively impact this neighbor's quality of life and property value. Ideally, the parking level exit should be located closer to E. Washington (or better yet on E. Washington) to address this problem. TLNA Council appreciates that MPG has expressed a willingness to underwrite the installation of 4-season landscaping at 22 N. Few, but additional screening options should be explored due to the small amount of land available for such plantings.
- TLNA Council is encouraged by MPG's latest proposal, which includes 34% of the units as 2- or 3-bedroom units, but would prefer as many large, family-friendly units as possible so that residents could send children to and support nearby Lapham School. Additionally, residents with children could better integrate into the existing

nearby residential neighborhood.

Should the proposal move forward, TLNA Council agrees, that in addition to the previously stated developer commitments and unresolved issues, these conditions are important to the project's ability to contribute to Tenney-Lapham:

- Adjacent neighbors on E. Mifflin should have input on landscaping and fencing plans for the sections of the site with which they share property lines.
- Existing trees and their root systems both on adjacent properties and on the sidewalk median should be protected during construction.
- Assure proper drainage away from neighboring properties.
- The exhaust fan(s) for the parking level should create minimal noise, should not negatively impact neighbors' quality of life and should not face E. Mifflin backyards or N. Few St. neighbors.
- Useable green space, including gardening areas for tenants, should be maximized on the exterior ground level, rooftop and/or in the interior courtyard.
- Additional traffic generated by the building and its construction should be discouraged from turning onto the E. Mifflin bike boulevard or onto Curtis Court.
- Street parking by apartment residents should be discouraged. Residents of the proposed apartments should not have access to residential parking permits should that program be in existence or established on nearby streets. In addition, the applicant shall inform all tenants of the facility of the restriction in their apartment leases.
- Bicycle parking for guests should be provided, as well as additional exterior spots for residents.
- If a restaurant, tavern, bar or similar establishment is included, it should close no later than 11:00pm with any outdoor spaces closing by 10:00pm.
- There should be either an onsite manager or the owner should provide a direct 24/7 phone line and email address for neighbors to use if there is a problem with tenants or the building.
- Given that the large increase in the number of apartments in Tenney-Lapham has coincided with a large increase in dog waste that is not picked up, a station for depositing dog waste bags should be provided if dogs are allowed.

Sincerely,

  
Patty Prime  
TLNA President



## Mc Guffe Property at 1200-1212 E. Washington Problems and Solutions

- ① Spillover parking on E Mifflin St:
  - \* Require low cost or free parking to all tenants with cars - (Not an option)
  - \* Madison should establish PERMIT PARKING for residents and owners of 1100 & 1200 blocks of Mifflin ONLY
- ② Through Traffic:
  - \* Create 4WAY STOP SIGNS @ Mifflin & Dayton St intersections w/ 4th St.
  - \* Put SPEED BUMPS on 1st 2 blocks of N. 4th.
- ③ Require builder to save existing HARDWOOD TREES on North side of property line WITH PLANTING
- ④ Privacy:
  - \* 8' high solid fence/wall on North side AND scattered Evergreen screening trees
- ⑤ NOISE \* No business permits to be open after 10 PM weekdays nights 11 PM weekends
  - \* Indoor garbage & recycling containers
- ⑥ Enforce an affordable family rental requirement on all future E. Wash. developments -

\* Note: I am the 20 year owner of 1205 E. Mifflin St

REGARDING THE MCGRATH PROJECT PROPOSAL 1200-1212 E.WASHINGTON  
AND THE UNIT BLOCK OF NORTH FEW STREET

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing regarding the proposed project at 1200-1212 E.Washington Avenue and the Unit block of North Few Street.

There are many aspects of the project we like. We are writing you now with some changes to the proposed project which we feel will make the project a better fit for our neighborhood. A neighborhood centered on people who have come to live and stay here.

We want Mr. McGrath to build this project and we want him to build it with the same concern for our neighborhood and its long term health and stability that we have. We do want him to succeed and we want our neighborhood to be enhanced by this project, so we submit our requests for modification of the present proposal.

We have three points to bring to your attention:

1. The proposed "Entrance -Exit" on Few Street and it's becoming "Entrance Only on Few Street" and "Exit Only on East Washington Avenue".
2. The color of the building; which is set as a "Warehouse style". Common choice in the time of development in this city. This style fits with the East Washington corridor and yet not with the surrounding family housing.
3. The accents or architectural elements of interest on the building's exterior.

Number One: Car Entrance on Few Exiting on East Washington

Elyse Meuer lives directly across from the proposed driveway. This driveway goes up to ground level coming up a four feet incline. Cars exiting into Few street will have their headlights going directly into her house. There also will be some light dispersed to right and left of the driveway.

The unit block of Few Street is the last to be plowed in the winter. The exposed incline will have issues requiring diligent plowing and salting to make the ramp up accessible in the winter for the many cars trying to access the street. It can be imagined that 70 some cars will struggle, potentially being stuck or having accidents, trying to exit on Few Street. It could be foreseeable, possible scenario.

Also, cars exiting on to Few Street and going west will either, a) go left to go to E. Washington Ave. anyway; b) go right to go down E. Mifflin Street. The 1100 block of East Mifflin is a bike boulevard, residential and with families with children. Additionally Lapham School is on the 1000 block of East Mifflin Street c) going down Curtis Ct. a narrow alley with both business and many residential driveways, with no curb and gutter and no terrace on the residential side of the street and a narrow sidewalk which is used as well as the street for pedestrian, and bikers. The residential front lawns are very small so children who live there often spill into the street. Walkers also spill into the street as they walk to the Avenue Bar and this foot traffic will only increase once this project is complete and the Avenue Bar has completed its recent proposed renovation. In winter Curtis Ct., does get plowed and the business lots are plowed and there is no place to put the snow. After winter snow falls there are rows of snow residue on both sides of the street making Curtis Ct width even narrower. Both ends of Curtis Court now are hazardous to negotiate for bikes, pedestrians and cars. The width of the alley is narrow and visibility is limited by housing that comes practically to the sidewalk. Also, now E. Mifflin has a right turn no stop onto Few St. and a left turn no stop onto Few Street as well as a right turn no stop from E. Washington onto Few Street. ( I realize that these are problems that need to be evaluated by Traffic and Engineering but all of this enters into larger safety issues of this confluence of streets and adding 76 cars to this mix is a problem.)

For these important, life preserving reasons we are asking that the cars enter on Few Street and Exit on East Washington. We understand the city has a moratorium on making NEW curb cuts onto East Washington. However where the McGrath project will be placed on East Washington Avenue there are 4 existing curb cuts 3 of which have been active for decades. (Patriot Glass has just moved out and American Auto and all their predecessors used East Washington Street as entrance and exit.)

By the project exiting on East Washington, the city will go from 3 active curb cuts to one exit.

Number Two: Color of the building.

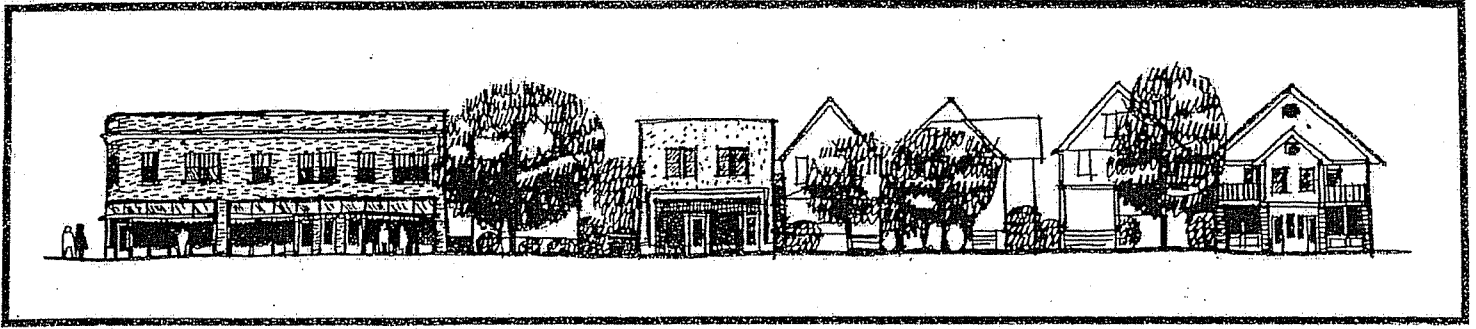
We were given "the Warehouse Architectural Style" as our one choice and we have accepted it, and we are strongly requesting that the color of the building be lighter than what has been proposed so far. The size of the building and it's foot print and Color will make this big building even more imposing, the color "red" is eye stopping and heavy, not blending with any of the surrounding housing or creating light or spaciousness quality which this style of building needs.



Number Three: We request more accents, or architectural enhancements, something that makes this building interesting and not just a big building, something that creates softness in the building, helps it fit into the neighborhood of which is surrounded on 2 sides.

Submitted sincerely the neighbors of this project:

Elyse Meuer; Jeff Reinke and Karen Banaszak



REGARDING THE MCGRATH PROJECT 1200-1212 EASTON WASHINGTON & UNIT BLOCK OF FEW

May 1<sup>st</sup> 2015

1. As the 1100 and 1200 block streets of East Mifflin are bike boulevards and are residential, with families with children, and as Lapham School is on the 1000 block of E. Mifflin St. , as Curtis Court is a narrow alley with no curb or gutter and no terrace on the residential side of the street, only narrow sidewalk with pedestrian and bike traffic used by both adult and children and as the alley has multiple driveways on both the business and the residential sides of the street, as the unit block Few St. and Curtis Ct. are among the last be plowed in the winter, which causes difficult driving The initial McGrath proposal for car traffic is 76 cars "entering and exiting" in this small space, up a four foot incline on and exposed driveway to the street level and adding a significant amount of traffic activity to a pedestrian active neighborhood that has small scale tight housing close to the streets. We therefore ask that the project "Entrance remain on Few Street" and that the "Exit be changed to East Washington Avenue". The proposed site on East Washington already has 3 curb cuts that have been active for decades. This would reduce the number of active curb cuts to one and move the traffic onto East Washington, which is plowed first and can absorb the increase in traffic.
2. We are also asking that the building keep to the 41-60 units proposed by the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan and adopted by the Madison Common Council 2008, not the number the McGrath project proposes, 76 units is too many for this site and still be able to allow for green space, safe pedestrian, bike and car traffic flow while still providing live able space for both the new tenants and the neighbors.
3. The Fire Department has reviewed the project and said that the trees as they have been placed on the terrace and on the McGrath proposal site will block access for the fire ladders. Therefore we propose that the building have a smaller foot print, to allow for an adequate number of trees and maximum amount of green space and still permit the Fire Department access for their ladders.
4. The color of the building should be lighter; the present dark red of the building is visually dominant, creating the feeling of a wall at the end of the short streets of Curtis Ct. (one block) and the unit block of Few Street (one block). Lighter colors could accents the colors of the neighborhood. We would like more accents, designs on the exterior of the building to make it more visually appealing, and fit into the surrounding family neighborhood.

Submitted Sincerely by the Signing Neighbors,