

**PLANNING DIVISION REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
of November 19, 2007**

RE: I.D. #08143, Conditional Use Application – 233 Langdon Street

1. Requested Action: Approval of a conditional use to convert a former fraternity house/single-room occupancy building into a 20-unit apartment building.
2. Applicable Regulations: Section 28.12 (11) provides the guidelines and regulations for the approval of conditional uses.
3. Report Drafted By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Planner

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Applicant and Property Owner: 233 Langdon Street Group, LLC, c/o Harold Langhammer; 233 Langdon Street; Madison, WI 53703

Contact: David Ferch, Architect, 2704 Gregory Street; Madison, WI 53711
2. Development Schedule: The applicant wishes to begin January 1, 2008 with completion anticipated on May 15, 2008.
3. Location: An approximately 8,712 square foot parcel located at 233 Langdon Street near its intersection with Howard Place. Aldermanic District 8; Madison Metropolitan School District.
4. Existing Conditions: The subject building is a vacant 25-unit rooming house, most recently occupied as a fraternity house. The property is zoned R6 (General Residence District) and DDZ4 (Downtown Design District 4). The property is within the Langdon Street National Register Historic District.
5. Surrounding Land Use and Zoning: The subject property is located among several multi-story apartment buildings and fraternity/sorority houses. The building to the east is a three-story, 14-unit apartment zoned R6-DDZ4. The building adjacent to the west is a three-story sorority house, also zoned R6-DDZ4.
6. Adopted Land Use Plan: The City of Madison Comprehensive Plan identifies this area as part of the “Langdon” Downtown Sub Area. Recommended uses include multi-unit residential development. A general density range of 16 to 60+ dwelling units per net acre is recommended with detailed recommendations to be found in City-adopted detailed neighborhood or special area plans.

7. Environmental Corridor Status: The property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor.
8. Public Utilities & Services: The property is served by a full range of urban services.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

This application is subject to the conditional use standards of Section 28.12 (11).

ANALYSIS, EVALUATION, AND CONCLUSION

The applicant requests conditional use approval to convert a former fraternity/rooming house into a 20-unit apartment building. The physical alternations proposed to complete the conversion consist primarily of interior remodeling, however, a few exterior changes are noted in the submitted plan set. As a proposed multi-unit apartment building in R6 zoning, this request is subject to the conditional use review and the standards of Section 28.12(11).

The subject building is a three-story, 13,520 square foot structure. The building is currently vacant and was most recently used as a 25-bedroom fraternity house that operated as a conditional use. The property is located among a line of rooming house, fraternity/sorority house, and apartment buildings located in close proximity to the University of Wisconsin campus. A three-story, 14-unit apartment house is located immediately to the east of the subject property. A three-story sorority house is located immediately to the west. Similar uses are found opposite the structure on Langdon Street. The property is within the Langdon Street National Historic District.

The applicant proposes to convert the building into a 20-unit apartment building. Based on the parcel size, 20 units would be consistent with density requirements for R6 zoning. The building would include seven (7) efficiency units, eight (8) one-bedroom units, and five (5) two-bedroom units. Units would be accessed through internal hallways and would not have separate outdoor entrances. Amenities in the individual units include in-unit washers, dryers, and dishwashers.

Several physical alterations to the building are proposed, however these are primarily changes to interior walls to convert the existing bedrooms into apartment units. Exterior changes include the construction of a new concrete sidewalk and driveway along the western side of the building, addition of a new accessible ramp, new landscaping, and the addition of a screened trash enclosure. New lower level windows will be added to serve the basement, per the attached plans. Finally, new synthetic stucco will be placed over the existing plaster on the rear elevation. The City Preservation Planner had no objections to the proposed alterations.

The Planning Division believes that the project is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. That Plan recommends multi-family development as an allowable use in the Downtown-Langdon Street Sub Area. Additionally, the Plan recommends densities should generally be between 16 and 60+ units per acre with specific densities to be included in detailed neighborhood or special area plans. The City has not adopted any detailed plans providing a specific density recommendation for this area. The proposed 20-unit project would have a calculated density of 100 units per acre. While this density could be interpreted as being in excess of 60+ units per acre, staff note that this proposal will decrease the site's number of dwelling/rooming units and maintain the current number of bedrooms.

In the absence of a specific neighborhood plan recommendation on density, staff have considered applicable zoning standards and surrounding neighborhood context to evaluate the proposal. The proposal conforms to the site's R6 zoning density standards and staff believe the proposal is consistent with the Plan's adopted policies for residential development in the Downtown and Campus area. Further, staff believe that the proposed alteration would have no negative impact on surrounding property and that the proposed 20-unit apartment building fits within the neighborhood context.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the conditional use standards are met and **approve** the conversion of a former fraternity house/single-room occupancy building to a 20-unit apartment building, subject to input at the public hearing and comments from reviewing agencies.