

February 18, 2009

Mr. Brad Murphy
Director of Planning
Department of Planning & Development
City of Madison
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
PO Box 2985
Madison, Wisconsin 53701

Re: Letter of Intent
PUD-GDP-SIP
604-630 E. Johnson St.
309-323 N. Blair St.
609-625 E. Gorham St.
Madison, WI

Dear Mr. Murphy:

The following is submitted together with the plans, application and zoning text for staff, Plan Commission and Common Council consideration of approval.

Organizational structure:

Owner: Stone House Development
321 East Main Street
Madison, WI 53703
608-251-6000
608-251-6077 fax
Contact: Rich Arnesen

Renaissance Property Group
One Sherman Terrace
Suite 102
Madison, WI 53704-4403
Contact: Michael Matty

Engineer: Calkins Engineering
5010 Voges Road
Madison, WI 53718
(608) 838-0444
(608) 838-0445 fax
Contact: Dave Glusick

Architect: Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC
7601 University Avenue, Ste 201
Middleton, WI 53562
608-836-3690
608-836-6934 fax
Contact: Randy Bruce
rbruce@knothebruce.com

Landscape Design: Ken Saiki Design
303 S. Paterson St.
Suite 1
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 251-3600
Contact: Ken Saiki

7601 University Ave, Ste 201
Middleton, Wisconsin 53562
p (608) 836-3690
f (608) 836-6934
www.knothebruce.com

Introduction:

The proposed site is located on the west end of the 600 block of East Johnson/Gorham Streets at the North Blair Street intersection. The site is approximately two acres in size and contains a total of 19 structures plus a garage building. It was formerly under the control of a single developer and the deferred maintenance of the structures is extensive. This project proposes the renovation of the historic homes and yards on the north side of the site while redeveloping the south side of the property for a 85-unit townhome and apartment development.

Two developers will be working to implement this proposal based on their respective specialties. The Renaissance Property Group will be responsible for the renovation portions while Stone House Development will be responsible for providing the newly constructed townhomes and apartments. Renaissance has already started work on the structures with their successful renovation at 609 East Gorham. The intent of RPG is to provide high-end urban housing that will meet the current demand for rental housing while allowing for owner occupancy at a later date.

Stone House will be requesting Federal Housing Tax-Credits from WHEDA to provide new high quality workforce housing opportunities for the neighborhood. The range of housing types and tenant incomes will create a rich and diverse community within the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood.

Although the proposed development exceeds the density recommendations of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan it does achieve many of that plan's goals. The developers have been working with the alderperson and the neighborhood group to realize the suggestions in these plan documents and to create a redevelopment with an active residential streetscape that respects the neighborhood context.

Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan:

The site is on the west boundary of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan. The land-use recommendation for the site is Medium Density Residential with densities of 16 – 25 units/acre. Although this proposed redevelopment will exceed those density recommendations, we believe that the proposal merits an exception to this recommendation. Many of the TLNP goals are met with this unique proposal including:

- Removing backyard parking and encouraging shared parking.
- Decrease the number of properties with absentee landlords and short term rentals.
- Strengthen the East Johnson Street neighborhood business district.
- Maintain large back yards.
- Reduce the arterial use of East Johnson and Gorham Streets by promoting pedestrian, bicycle and mass transit use
- Restore the residential character of the neighborhood.
- Ensure that affordable quality housing opportunities continue throughout the neighborhood.
- Reinvest and maintain older housing stock.

Several meetings with neighborhood representatives, the alderperson and the neighborhood as a whole have been held. Additional neighborhood meetings will be held in the near future to provide additional exchange with neighbors.

Deconstruction:

This proposed development envisions the deconstruction of eleven apartment structures and one garage building that currently exist on the site. These buildings are as follows: 309 and 311 East Blair Street, 604 -630 East Johnson Street and a garage building at the back of 615 East Gorham Street. Photographs are attached to this letter of intent.

Inspections of these properties have been made by the development team, representatives of the neighborhood and Kitty Rankin. The development team has concluded that the structures are beyond the capacity of any reasonable rehabilitation. Additional reports on the structures existing condition will be prepared for distribution to the staff and plan commission. There are individual components of the structures that have value and are of particular value to Renaissance Property Group. The developer will contract with the Madison Environmental Group to prepare a recycling and re-use plan for the buildings and the components and materials will appropriately handled.

Although the zoning code clearly encourages the preservation of existing structures, the zoning codes purpose also includes promoting the general welfare of the city, encouraging the most appropriate land uses and conserving and enhancing the taxable value of lands and buildings. We believe that the plan commission can determine that the demolition standards are met.

Project Description:

The site plan was designed to enhance the existing streetscapes and create an urban, pedestrian-oriented environment. The existing driveways and backyard parking is removed from the Gorham Street properties returning the yards to an early 20th century condition. Landscaped front yards, porches and pedestrian paths will take precedence along Gorham Street. The existing backyard parking will be placed below the newly constructed buildings in a shared parking garage to restore the Gorham Street backyards to landscaped open space.

The three newly constructed buildings in the development form an articulated street edge and rear courtyard spaces. Individual townhome entries with generous porches are emphasized on the street façades with a series of two and three-bedroom townhomes forming much of the first two floors of the structures. The central building houses the community areas of the development with a commons room that opens onto the courtyard. The courtyards are hardscaped for intensive use but are open and connected to the landscaped green space that provides recreation, plantings and storm water management. Terraced gardens at the center of the site will provide for both management-maintained and tenant maintained garden plots.

The buildings are designed and articulated to maintain a residential scale and rhythm that is consistent within the neighborhood. The high quality exterior materials are durable with masonry in combination with fiber-cement siding cladding the buildings. The siding will have varied colors to enhance the townhome scale and the masonry detailing will add to the substantial appearance. The new construction will be environmentally conscious and meet the standards of Wisconsin Green Built Homes.

Vehicular access to the underground parking garage is accommodated off Johnson Street at the east end of the site. Visitor parking will be accommodated on-street. Since multiple driveway openings will be eliminated on the surrounding streets on-street parking opportunities for the neighborhood are increased. Convenient bicycle parking is provided in the courtyard areas and basement parking.

Site Development Data:

Dwelling Unit Mix:

New Construction:	
Studios	7
Studio Loft	6
One-Bedroom	29
One-Bedroom + Den	1
One-Bedroom + Loft	6
Two-Bedroom	16
Two-Bedroom Loft	7
Two Bedroom Townhomes	4
Three-Bedroom Townhomes	<u>9</u>
Total New dwelling Units	85
Existing Dwelling Units	29
Total Dwelling Units	114

Densities:

Lot Area	87,251 or 2.0 Acres
Lot Area / D.U.	765.3 SF/unit
Density	57 units/acre

Building Height: 38'

Parking:

Automobile parking (underground)	116 stalls	or 1.02 stalls/unit
Bicycle parking (underground)	25 stalls	or .22 stalls/unit
Bicycle parking (surface)	44 stalls	or .39 stalls/unit

Project Schedule:

It is anticipated that construction of the SIP phase will start in the summer of 2009 and be completed in summer of 2010. The renovation of the homes along Gorham Street will follow and are expected to be completed by 2015.

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Social & Economic Impacts:

This development will have a positive social and economic impact. The development will substantially increase the city tax base on an infill site with minimal, if any, increased costs to the City. The redevelopment will enhance the historic district on Gorham Street and provide new workforce housing in the central city while promoting pedestrian, bicycle and mass-transit circulation.

Thank you for your time in reviewing our proposal.

Very Truly Yours,



J. Randy Bruce, AIA
Managing Member