

**Rankin, Katherine**

---

**From:** christine mlot [cmlot@nasw.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 07, 2008 10:51 AM  
**To:** Rankin, Katherine  
**Cc:** Martin, Al; Verveer, Mike; Parks, Timothy  
**Subject:** proposed development, Bassett and Wilson

To the Landmarks and Urban Design commissions:

As a resident of the Dowling Apartments, I would like to register my opposition to the proposed apartment development at Bassett and West Wilson. I will not be able to attend the meetings next week, so ask that these comments be considered part of the official minutes of the meetings instead.

I oppose the development for the following reasons:

- 1. Stormwater runoff.** Turning those lots with their lawns and large old trees into one big impervious surface will create problems. The Dowling had moisture in the basement after the deluges of last summer, and I'm concerned we'll have more serious water problems if the trees are removed (doubtful that any of the big trees with their extensive root systems would survive the digging of the underground parking). The loss of anymore green space and trees on the isthmus should be a concern for the city given the extensive flooding and lake impacts in recent years.
  - 2. Other Dowling impacts.** The historic Dowling with the large old trees framing it is currently the largest and most striking building on the block. It would be literally overshadowed by the massive proposed shoebox-like structure. Views of the landmark along Bassett would be lost, and the projecting balconies and shade would mar the look from Wilson. The loss of the two large old trees on the property line would not be trivial. They provide natural cooling to the Dowling in summer and warming in winter that will entail increased energy consumption if the trees are removed. Big old trees like those help make the downtown liveable for many, with the beauty, shade, and birds they provide.
- I'm also concerned that students will end up renting in the new building, given the projected time of year (Aug.) the developers intend to start renting, and we'll have parties on the balconies outside the Dowling windows at bartime.
- 3. Traffic.** Bassett is a narrow, dead-end street. Apart from the increased congestion on that street, cars from the 40+ units would have to turn right or left onto Wilson. The increased traffic at that dangerous curve means there would be an increase in the number of crashes there, with the likelihood that another car will get hit rather than just the trees and structures on Wilson. (There were at least three crashes in front of the Dowling last year, including a crash into a gas meter that required residents to evacuate several buildings.)
  - 4. Overbuilding in downtown Madison.** I ask that the city carefully weigh the need for such a new development. When the neighbors questioned the developers about it, we were told in effect "we know what we're doing," and that market questions shouldn't be our concern. But given the economy and the current glut of housing in downtown Madison, a market study or other current authoritative analysis is warranted. With other large apt. projects already going up nearby on the isthmus, and other new residential buildings in foreclosure or being converted to hotels, it seems the city planners should take notice, along with all the other vacancy signs downtown, and act to preserve the viability and aesthetics

of unique properties like the Dowling.

In short, the project is too big for the site and the block. It would require an inappropriate change in zoning and a higher density than the neighborhood master plan calls for. It would have negative aesthetic and environmental impacts on the historic Dowling as well as the neighborhood. I ask that the city take a hard look at the need for such a development.

Sincerely, Christine Mlot, 445 W. Wilson Street, Madison 53703

09214

Roger Hagen and Krishna Pradhan  
306 S. and 302 S. Bassett Street  
Madison, WI 53703

March 9, 2008

The Landmark Commission  
City of Madison  
Wisconsin 53701

Subject: Lake Park Apartment Homes at S.Bassett and W.Wilson

In regards to this proposed Lake Park Apartment Homes (LPAH), we have attended several neighborhood and the steering committee meetings. From the outset we voiced our concerns about its huge size. It is too long, too wide and extremely tall for the space.

The three hundred block of S. Bassett is a dead end street. It is short and very narrow with parking on both sides. There are 12 parking spaces altogether. There are only four homes including ours on the opposite side of the proposed plan. Two of the homes are somewhat historic. We are saying 'somewhat historic', because they are not in the state or national register of homes, but mentioned in the Historic Resources of Downtown Madison booklet prepared by Katherine H. Rankin and Elizabeth Miller (1998). The photograph of the homes from the booklet is attached. There are fewer than 40 people living in this block at the present time. With a 40+ apartment building, there will be at least 100 more people and 40 more cars. We can imagine what kind of impact this growth will have on the traffic flow and parking. Although there are two levels of parking in the plan, the reality is that not all the tenants will rent the parking stalls, when one can buy a city parking permit for pennies. In addition, the block opens to a park which has a dog park and basket ball and tennis courts. This city facility is enjoyed by the whole Bassett Neighborhood. The high increase in the density of both the people and the cars created by the LPAH will certainly hinder the use of the park by the neighborhood.

We have discussed these concerns in the meetings repeatedly. However, the response from Mr. Lance McGrath has been quite disappointing. Again and again, we hear from him that it is not economically worthwhile to make the LAPH any smaller. We understand it to mean 'not profitable'. We are sure that smaller apartment homes make money, may be not so fast.

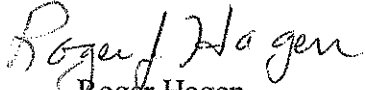
We want to make it clear that we are not against building an apartment home here. What we would like to see here is a smaller building which will cover only the space taken by the two existing apartment homes in the block. This will leave plenty of space to include a plan with the entrance and exit to the parking levels from the east side. Filling up every inch of the private land with a building and using the public land for an access to its private money making parking lot does not make any sense to us. The entrance/exit from

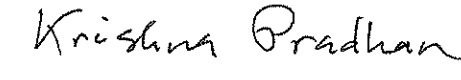
the Bassett side will exacerbate the traffic problem tremendously. Only in the last meeting, we found out that there is even a proposal for a loading zone. This will eliminate parking spaces naturally, which will create more parking problem. We would also like to see recessed balconies rather than the protruding ones. The protruding balconies are quite ugly. They also present an encroachment to the privacy of the neighborhood.

Finally, The Lake Park Apartment Homes, as it is presented now, is very self centered and will overshadow the historic Dowling Building. It will also block the lake view from our homes. A design which will fit the neighboring homes will be quite appreciated.

We would like this letter of opposition to be in file for consideration in the reviews of the LPAH proposal by the Landmark Commission and the Urban Design Commission.

Sincerely yours,

  
Roger Hagen

  
Krishna Pradhan

cc: UDC  
City of Madison

Mike Verveer

302 S. Bassett St.



This lovely Prairie style house was designed by noted local architects Claude and Starck. Built in 1906, it was constructed for Alfred and Margaret Kroncke. Mr. Kroncke was president of a large hardware company downtown.

312 - 320 S. Bassett St.



The Stacy Apartments was built in 1901 in the late Queen Anne style. George Stacy was a traveling salesman. Other early occupants included a letter carrier, a newspaper editor and an attorney. The multi-story porches facing Lake Monona make this fine house look like a resort hotel.

**Rankin, Katherine**

---

**From:** Rosemary Lee [roie37@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 09, 2008 7:04 PM  
**To:** Rankin, Katherine  
**Cc:** Jonathan D - WHS Cooper  
**Subject:** Lake Park Apartment Homes

Dear Katherine,

I may not be able to attend the March 10, 2008 Landmarks Commission meeting because of my work schedule. Would you please copy this email for each of the commissioners and make it a permanent part of the meeting minutes? The thoughts expressed here are mine - I am not writing on behalf of the steering committee.

I am on the Bassett Neighborhood steering committee for the McGrath proposal for the Lake Park Apartment Homes, 451 W. Wilson Street and 315 S. Bassett. I feel the external facade will be a great compliment to the landmarked Dowling Apartment Building at 445 W. Wilson, much more so than the two rather ugly buildings on the premises now. The set-back and width on the Wilson Street side will not overpower the Dowling. The building design does not copy the Dowling's but is an attractive compliment to it.

On East Wilson Street the beautiful 1912 historic Bellvue Apartment Homes have been sandwiched in between the 10 or 12 story State of Wisconsin Department of Administration building and the 14 story Hilton Hotel. For some reason the City process allowed these two buildings to be built and competely overshadow the wonderful Bellvue.

While I can certainly appreciate that the owner and residents of The Dowling are upset about a change that will affect them I feel that the new building will not have an adverse affect on the visual impact of the Dowling nor on the quality of life of the residents. I feel fortunate that it is the McGrath Company's project. McGraths are always very sensitive to the surrounding structures and have done an outstanding job restoring the historic Doris house adjacent to their 4th Ward Condos.

All downtown residents have to contend with new developments and it is not always easy. It is just a matter of time before this site will be developed - either by McGrath Company or another developer. We should be careful what we wish for. The McGrath Company is a developer with great intergrity. They will deliver what they promise. If we don't give our consent to this proposal it is possible that in 2 or 3 years another developer could come to the neighborhood with a much larger, not as visually attractive proposal.

I strongly urge this Commission to recommend approval of this project. The Commission has recommended approval for several projects much larger in size to adjacent landmark buildings than this one.

Thank you for "listening",  
Rosemary Lee  
111 W. Wilson Street

3/10/2008



**1000 FRIENDS  
OF WISCONSIN**

16 North Carroll Street Suite 810 Madison, WI 53703 phone: 608.259.1000 fax:  
608.259.1621  
email: friends@1kfriends.org www.1kfriends.org

09214

March 10, 2008

Mr. Brad Murphy  
Planning Director  
City of Madison  
Suite LL 100, Municipal Building  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mr. Murphy,

I would like to offer my support for the proposed Lake Park Apartments development on west Wilson and Bassett Streets. Although, we do not often involve ourselves in specific local projects, we feel this project warrants our support for several reasons:

- 1) The proposed development respects the architecture and scale of the existing neighborhood.
- 2) The proposed development will almost certainly add value to the Bassett Neighborhood.
- 3) The developer (McGrath Associates) has reached out to neighborhood residents in an exemplary manner, including developing a scale model of the project, undertaking shadow studies and meeting with neighborhoods residents repeatedly to seek their views. We feel that the outreach effort undertaken by McGrath on this project should serve as a model for other infill projects.
- 4) Moving forward with this project at this time of an economic uncertainty sends a strong signal that despite the national economic troubles, Madison remains a good place to do business.

Thank you the opportunity to offer comments about this proposed development. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Steve Hiniker  
Executive Director