

The Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association supports the request for a PUD-SIP rezoning the properties at 609-625 E. Gorham Street, 604-630 E. Johnson Street and 303-323 N. Blair Street with the intention to demolish 11 houses, build 3 apartment buildings and restore 8 houses.

TLNA applauds the commitment by Renaissance Property Group to restore 8 houses in or adjacent to the 4th Lake Ridge Historic District on E. Gorham Street and supports their long range goal of returning them to owner-occupancy.

While the proposed demolition and replacement by Stone House Development is not consistent with standards adopted in our Neighborhood Plan, the TLNA considers that the proposal merits an exception for the following reasons:

- The proposal upgrades the existing housing stock with new construction that is a grade far superior to the usual construction standards for apartments, including a significant emphasis on green construction features.
- The severe deterioration of many of the properties makes it extremely unlikely that they can be rehabilitated short of this current proposal.
- Section 42 housing is not targeted to the student rental market. This project will attract Workforce renters including families that will likely increase business for the E. Johnson Street Business District and increase enrollment at Lapham Elementary School. This supports the overall goals of the neighborhood.
- Restoring 100% green space to the backyards of the historic properties that are over 80% deteriorated surface parking lots.
- Each developer has demonstrated high quality performance in their given area- RPG for restoration of existing properties and Stone House for delivering successful Section 42 developments.

The exception is granted for the aggregate of reasons mentioned above. No single reason is sufficient to earn a future exception. Nor is the exception to be considered a precedent for approval of future demolition requests for structures in the neighborhood. The assembly of these properties by a single owner predated the Neighborhood Plan by decades and was a notable exception to the neighborhood at large. TLNA does not support the assembly of properties for redevelopment.

The text of the resolution passed by the TLNA Council at our April 15, 2009 meeting follows:

“The TLNA Council determines that the redevelopment proposal by Stone House Development for part of the 600 Block of E. Johnson Street, submitted to the City on 2/19/09, and revised on 4/8/09, has sufficient merit to be granted an exception to the standards set for this block in the adopted Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Plan.”