

## Here's your chance to weigh in on microhousing design, Swedish m

Posted on [Wednesday, June 11, 2014 - 5:58 am](#) by [jseattle](#)

This week, look south for important meetings that will shape the physical space around us. **Mad Flats**, an E Madison microhousing project, is ready for its final step in design review and the community process to shape the "Major Institution Master Plan" for **Swedish Cherry Hill** begins. Details below.

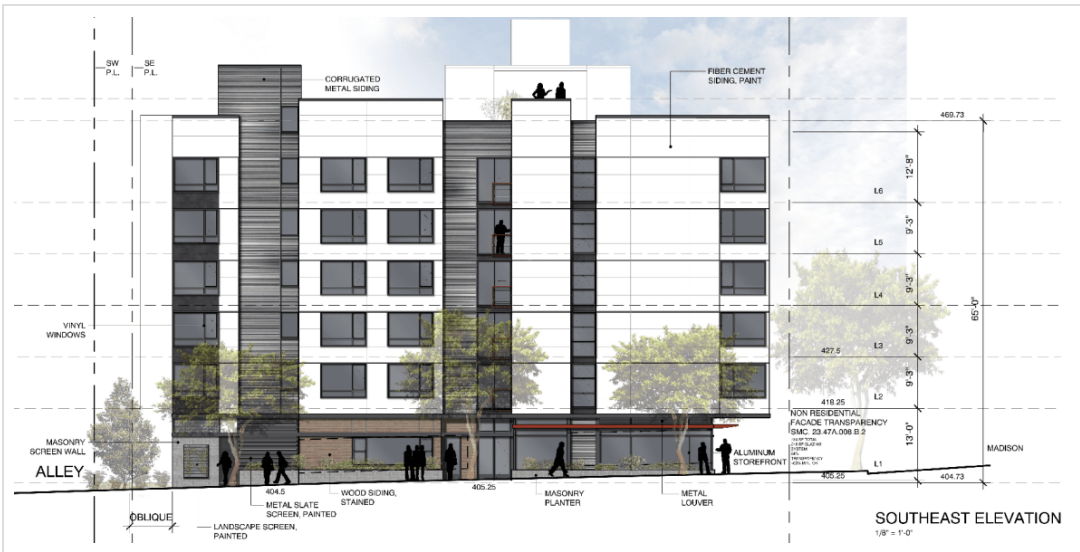
### Mad Flats

Replacing an old E Madison Victorian with a planned 55 "efficiency dwelling units," the Mad Flats project at 1523 E Madison sailed through [its early design guidance review session last summer](#) without a single public comment.

The project from developer **Johnson Carr** and architects **Janette** also went unimpeded by the [Landmarks Preservation Board](#) as the body could find [no good reason to protect](#) the more than 100-year-old E Madison Victorian built by **Capt. William Renton** that will be demolished to make way for the development.



— A rendering of the future Mad Flats near 16th and Madison



Wednesday, the **East Design Review Board** will take what will likely be its final spin through the project's plans for the five-story building with 55 apartments, two live-work units... and no parking. It will, however, have a tidy little 800 square feet of retail:

*The urban junction of Madison and 16th is anchored by commercial space. The corner of the building is pulled back at the pedestrian level to allow for additional sidewalk space that is sheltered by the structure above. Operable glazing in the commercial space allow activities to spill out onto the corner.*

### **1523 E. Madison St / Design Proposal**

Review Meeting:	June 11, 6:30 pm
	Seattle University
	<a href="#">824 12th Ave</a>
	Admissions & Alumni Building
Review Phase:	Recommendation <a href="#">past reviews</a>
Project Number:	3014989 <a href="#">permit status</a>   <a href="#">notice</a>
Planner:	Shelley Bolser

Last summer, the developers described their mission around creating “workforce” housing. “This proposal is addressing a need for affordable housing within the city’s urban neighborhoods,” they wrote. “Labeled ‘workforce housing’ by many, the objective is to provide an opportunity for those with limited income or with needs for a safe, simple, efficient living environment, to find residence within our urban centers.” That’s well and good. But it’s a little disingenuous. In a project like **12th Ave Arts**, affordable apartments are [available only to tenants earning 60% of the area median income](#). Affordability at Mad Flats seems likely to be based on the size of its small, “efficient” units. The review board won’t be able to say much about that — but it will be able to rule on whether the design fits together and fits the corner at 16th and Madison.

### **Swedish Master Plan**

Major Institution Master Plans are an irony of urban planning. The process sets the direction and guidelines for huge chunks of city land, far into the future. But the planning process plays out long before most people can grasp that they might want to give a damn.