



Agenda Item #:	5
Project Title:	115 W. Doty Street - Public Building, Amendment to Planned Development (PD) for Dane County Jail Consolidation, South Tower Addition and Public Safety Building Renovation. 4th Ald. Dist.
Legistar File ID #:	73953
Members Present:	Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Shane Bernau, Jessica Klehr, Christian Harper, Rafeeq Asad and Amanda Arnold
Prepared By:	Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of October 12, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for the renovation of the Dane County Jail building located at 115 W. Doty Street. Registered and speaking in support was Jan Horsfall, representing Potter Lawson, Inc. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Jeff Heil. Registered neither in support nor opposition was Todd Draper, representing Dane County Public Works. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak was Dan Fitch.

This proposal was before the Urban Design Commission for an Informational Presentations in 2019. The building itself is being located in a surface parking lot adjacent to the Public Safety Building, with the Wilson Street face becoming more the front of the building and the area for trash and recycle collection. The massing of the building and exterior design have remained fairly similar, but two floors have been removed for a smaller building that now sits below the courthouse building, with no portion protruding into the Capitol View Preservation Height Limit. Previous gray bands that were metal are now terra cotta, with frosted glass throughout the upper portions of the building. The basic composition shows the random vertical openings and a gradation from the corners to the center, where it is more open, in an attempt to get as much light as possible into the interior spaces. The main entry is on Doty Street with a service entry on Wilson Street to provide all the services for City-County Building, Public Safety Building and the courthouse. They are exploring a mural along the Wilson Street entry wall. The columns are poured in place concrete that will be polished to look more finished and lit at night, and texture on the opposite sidewalk will delineate the pedestrian path and City right-of-way. Small scale louvers are integrated into the openings.

Dan Fitch commented that the County has not funded this addition and has no plan to move this project forward with nothing in the executive budget for funding. Mr. Fitch noted that it is weird that this is going through UDC. He finds it odd that this project is moving through City processes when its financing is up in the air. He also mentioned being curious about the mural, and if it will commemorate that this is building a monument to the racial bias of our justice system.

The Commission discussed the following:

- The terra cotta is supposed to match the existing Public Safety Building, that's fine, but it doesn't have to. The detailing of this is enough to make it stand on its own and not match anything around it. It is successful showing how you can see this building from various vantage points. It's a simple project, but simple is not a bad thing if it's done right, this is a very good project. Program use and activism aside, I do agree with some of those issues, but the design of the building is great.
- The materials and detailing are nice. The pedestrian experience is entirely relying on that mural to provide any sort of pedestrian activation. What's above is cool but I can't get over this hulking mass with concrete columns holding up the mass, and two wide garage doors along the streetscape; it has to be a lot better. I would echo the

community comment from the neighborhood that functionally, the trash pick-up needs to be more thoughtful, but the Wilson Street façade has to enhance the street level experience for pedestrians, it still feels very lacking.

- The main building is entirely successful, I like the randomness of the window openings and simple use of materials, it's quite striking, but that lower level leaves a lot to be desired. A really big mural certainly helps, particularly if it's illuminated at night, but it almost accents how bad the rest of it is. Much of what we're seeing there is driven by what's happening behind those doors, but there could be a better treatment. If those are in essence big industrial overhead garage doors, do they have to be just big expanses of gray, can there be some coloration or gradation of colors, anything on those rather than what we're looking at? They're so foreboding.
- I give the developers credit for trying to do something with those columns with polishing and lighting, but that seems like the bare minimum, something else could be done that would allow them to serve their functional purpose yet be more attractive; dyeing the concrete, applying surface imprinting, something more dynamic with the lights.
- I sympathize with the citizen comments, the design aesthetics of a building that's meant to incarcerate people. I would advance the view that even buildings that serve a darker side of our society should still be decent architecture.
- I don't mind the columns, but is there a way to not have the garage doors be as industrial? Have you looked at wrapping that art around for color? I understand regulations with municipal buildings, is there any way to enhance those so they're not a gray expanses?
 - It's something we can take a look at. We can take that back to the County and see if there are options to make that a better pedestrian experience.
- The one door looked like it might be fifty-feet wide.
 - They are wide, it's a tight site and needs a big loading area.
- That's your big canvas, that's your street facing façade. Are they solid or fabric type doors?
 - They are the rubber type door. The east door is thirty-feet and the west door is about forty-feet. The material is used because were trying to max out the opening, the exiting overhead doors cause difficulty backing in where they've hit the building numerous times.
- So similar to the back of Overture. You'll see if there is a way to apply color or expression.
- The architectural design is really successful and interesting. Every building downtown has a utility entry to them, it's hard to locate anywhere downtown that won't engage pedestrians, but I do think there is sometimes a benefit to not draw attention to these utility areas. The concrete columns are a nice attempt to try to refine the utilitarian side of the building. Having these dark doors recede, your eye is not drawn to it. The pedestrian experience is subjective and fleeting, maybe there is a way to add more landscaping. The easement side is the City's purview but turf or additional raised beds could augment the pedestrian experience more through landscaping.
- Maybe if there's any kind of vision window could they be staggered or something done to them for movement and visual interest. Make the storefront pop toward the street for interest and texture along the sidewalk.

Action

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.