

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: March 19, 2014

TITLE: 17, 19 & 25 North Webster Street and 201 East Mifflin Street - Deconstruction of Four Homes and the Construction of a New 6-Story, 49-Unit Apartment Building, New Construction in the Proposed UMX District. 2nd Ald. Dist. (31341)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: March 19, 2014

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Cliff Goodhart and John Harrington.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 19, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED RE-INITIAL APPROVAL** of the deconstruction of four homes and the construction of a new 6-story, 49-unit apartment building in the UMX District. Appearing on behalf of the project was J. Randy Bruce, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC. Bruce presented changes to the plans and addressed the Commission’s comments from their previous review of the project, which includes more landscaping and less paving. On the Webster Street frontage, metal siding at the top of the building will be incorporated at the stairwell also to help accent the entry feature and help with the rhythm of the building in relation to the streetscape. A couple of bay elements are incorporated into the balconies to create a feeling of a more vertical element and to highlight the living room windows. On the Mifflin Street frontage, the entry, looking at the back the small recess is now brick rather than metal panel for a more cohesive look. A lighter colored metal is being used at the 6th stepback level in a corrugated fashion. They purposely want that to recede and look more like a penthouse. There were questions about what the space was in between the two buildings; a section elevation shows the connector piece; looking at the Webster Street side they show windows along those spaces, particularly out towards the edges with the ability to get a kitchen window in, and the entries into the building itself. In addressing staff comments, Bruce stated that the applicant will be preparing a shoring plan to submit to City Engineering. For additional context he showed a view with the Lamp House visible and showing window patterning. The building has been unified and simplified, perhaps maybe not as simplified as staff would prefer, but they wanted to reinforce the scale they have. The masonry all the way to the upper levels on all façades; they felt strongly that having masonry at that scale and level, then breaking at the top for metal, really reinforces the residential scale. The extended drive area will be used for some staging of tours, bicycle parking, with part of the level raised to create a small landscaped area and break up the space. The Webster Street entrance has been strengthened. The amount of glass has been expanded and the spandrel piece minimized. The modified Webster Street elevation provides a more pedestrian-friendly entrance. In considering an entrance at the basement level, they wanted some grade separation from the surrounding sidewalks and having that entry 4-feet off the sidewalk felt much more

comfortable, particularly near the entrance to the garage. Windows have been added to the Webster Street garage elevation and the composite panels between windows have been eliminated. No walpaks will be used. The building material palette was displayed: red brick masonry with some texture, the base of the building is smooth face prairie cast stone with a rough course, the metal panel is pewter colored at the upper level.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- It feels like rather than the buildings climbing down the hillside, it feels like you set your parking deck level and pushed your grade up. Can you drop your parking level enough so it's a true at-grade entry, and essentially increase your first floor height?
 - I'm matching the first floor in two places. But there is so much fall across here that we need to have some sort of ramp access back there. We can drop this portion some, but I still have to get up to that entry door.

It feels like your "right" building wants to drop.

- What's the elevation here relative to the entrance?
 - We're at grade at first floor elevation there. So if I drop any further I'm going to be below grade.
- The building on the right side, is there something you can do, kind of cleave to the back so it doesn't feel more condensed that it already is? It feels like its accentuating it to me.
- The base and across the main cornice line, both of those how they hit it feels like they're not quite off enough to realize it was intentional. What's your cornice line back to metal, what's that depth?
 - It's a foot separation. It's flush on the right.
- The lighter color seemed to make it stand out more. Now looking at the actual samples I think they're not as different.
- Straight on the elevation it looks like there are very strong corners but I see actually they are open corners. So the brick is one-dimensional on one side of the corner and a thinner dimension on the other. Have you considered making those square piers on the corner?
 - It's a relatively tight site so right now our balconies are at a 5-foot dimension; I want to keep that as open on one side as I can.

My biggest concern is how the material turns the corner and turns into brick.

- I almost kind of like the original, in terms of now I get a mass of two buildings, before you could have had two separate buildings. I like some of the articulation you've done but I still like that feeling of going to separate buildings.
 - My sense is it really is one building, two colors of brick is a cheap trick.
 - There's differences in the ways the lines are coming out.
 - We made a change from the two building format to more of one building.
- I just think from a pedestrian point of view it works better.
- The building on the right where the brick is above the cornice, maybe the cornice continues through and doesn't have that substantial change.
 - We could look at eliminating this running course and see. We had played with that, again that was just another way to try to get a little bit of scale to the building.
 - The different rhythms you've created now, I personally like that more. As an individual living there you'd have more identity with the place.
 - I'd like this to be in the style of what Frank Lloyd Wright might have done (landscaping). Be sensitive to what might have happened. Take it to Taliesin I you want. Look at going with something of a smaller nature like a Dogwood, an understory tree, and having more variations so that relative to the Lamp House it's not a line of green but undulating. Plantings should relate more to the proximity of the Lamp House.
 - I would add stormwater management to your approach to that, and how it relates to the Lamp House.

- I will vote yes but I will not vote yes if the buildings come back and there isn't some distinction between the two.

ACTION:

On a motion by Slayton, seconded by Goodhart, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED RE-INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-0). The motion provided for address of the comments above and the following:

- Provide detailed information on stormwater management.
- Provide a more distinguished appearance of the façade between both buildings.
- Provide options for landscaping in a "Wright" style and relate to the Lamp House.
- Look at eliminating the horizontal cornice treatment above fourth story on the building's right facing Webster Street.

After the Commission acts on an application, individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10, including any changes required by the Commission. The ratings are for information only. They are not used to decide whether the project should be approved. The scale is 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding. The overall ratings for this project are 6 and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 17, 19 & 25 North Webster Street and 201 East Mifflin Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
	-	6	5	-	-	-	6	6

General Comments:

- Planting at rear of site must relate better to Lamp House.