

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 8, 2013

TITLE: 441 North Frances Street – Mixed-Use PD with 25,000-30,000 Square Feet of Retail and 250-300 Residences in the Downtown Core (“The Hub”). 4th Ald. Dist. (30040)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 8, 2013

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Henry Lufler, Ald. Lauren Cnare, Tom DeChant and Cliff Goodhart.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 8, 2013, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a mixed-use PD located at 441 North Frances Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Brian Munson, representing Core Campus, LLC; Jeff Zelisko, Brad Mullins and Tom Harrington. Staff noted that this project will need to address the Downtown Design Guidelines. Munson presented the plans for a project in the Downtown Core that is 100% compliant with the new Zoning Code, the Downtown Plan and the Comprehensive Plan, from setbacks, height, use and relationship with the Design Guidelines. From a construction timeline they are looking to begin the project in January of 2014 with an 18-month construction period. They have held one neighborhood meeting and a meeting with the Greater State Street Business Association. Zelisko described the site bordered by State Street, Frances Street and Gilman Street. Parking for the building enters and exits off of Gilman Street. There is approximately 30,000 square feet of retail on the first floor. All of the existing trees and streetscape along State Street and Frances Street would remain unchanged, with one tree needing relocation for the loading dock on Gilman Street. 162 parking spaces are being proposed in the ramped parking area, in addition to 4,000 square feet of bicycle parking (150 bicycles and 40 mopeds). There will also be hooks for bicycles for those who don’t want to store them downstairs. The scale of the project is a total of 12-stories with between 900-1,000 beds, with a range from micro-units to 5 bedrooms. A large courtyard will be located on the third floor in addition to terrace areas. The 4th and 5th floors stepback and there are opportunities for terraces on some of the bigger upper units. The 7th-12th floors stepback further. Shadow studies show that their shadows are almost identical to the shadows of four-story buildings to the east, stepping back this building helps it not cast those shadows. The idea is to be a modern expression while at the same time feel contextual with the rest of the street, this will be accomplished with the use of brick and glass.

The Chair noted that Slayton and Harrington had discussed the proposal and their concerns are:

- Impact to State Street.
- Density feels inappropriate.
- State Street will be in shade through most of winter.

- State Street character is eroded, if not destroyed.
- Is this a precedent for future developments along State Street?

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- What is backing up against that parking lot on Gilman Street? The traffic will come out onto Gilman and go north. Where does it go then?
 - Three buildings will be demolished with the balance of the site surface parking. At this point the preferred option would be to turn and go down Broom. Because it's student-oriented housing the distribution of trips are trending very low.
- The massing of your upper floors seems heavy and maybe it's because they're not articulated differently as different buildings. In terms of fenestration the pattern you have on the upper tower facing State Street, with the quantity of verticals I'm surprised that's not on Frances where you're going to get a significant amount of sun. In terms of your solar orientation, solar heat gain you'll likely want vertical shading elements on your west façade.
 - All the units will have shades that will drop down.
- It would be your charge along the State Street face to articulate your building in the closer to 20-foot rhythms and create different spaces that occur for those retail frontages, much more in character with what is there now. And having the opportunity to have storefronts that are only 20-feet wide.
- On the node with Frances, it seems odd that you don't have more massing on State Street and less mass on your towers.
 - I've measured every building along there and there's quite a bit of that. We feel like we're mimicking what's there, keeping that context.
- I'll be curious to see when you come back how you really detail the storefronts at the sidewalk to recognize that there's snow and shoveling, do you have some kind of a masonry base, is there a transition between storefront and sidewalk? A transitional material that is more than just a durable thing but an architectural element as well.
- Have you considered any kind of canopy or retail overhang along Frances Street?
 - Yes, there's a large projection. The building is set in significantly so people don't feel pinched at that location. There's a large canopy as part of the residential element and we'll bring a canopy element around.
- The number of bedrooms is rather large. Is there a site that's comparable to this?
 - (Staff) We support a diversity of unit types but usually the most concerning are the large bedroom types.
 - The design right now is to try to minimize any shared light or interior bedrooms so everybody has exterior wall space to the bedrooms. Also not double occupancy bedrooms, which factors into the bed count.
- Provide more context on adjacent structures surrounding the building in renderings, perspectives and other presentation documents.
- Concern with the use of "red" on upper elevations of the tower element.
- When you continue to study your Gilman Street façade, look at the area of your parking entrance. It looks like you'll have roughly 65-feet of unoccupied façade. And the two 18-feet on the face.
- I'm not feeling good about the State Street resolution. Maybe part of it is the finer grain the older buildings provide. I'm having a negative reaction to the glass element.

ACTION:

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

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 rating for this project is 6.5.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 441 North Frances Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	6	-	-	-	-	8	-
	6	6	-	7	-	7	7	6.5

General Comments:

- Lots of parts and pieces – the challenge is to pull it all together in a unified way.
- Unsure about treatment on State Street. Would like to see options.