

AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 20, 2015

TITLE: 1004 & 1032 South Park Street – Amended PD(GDP-SIP), Four Connected Mixed-Use Buildings in UDD No. 7. 13th Ald. Dist. (36572)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 20, 2015

ID NUMBER:

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 20, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of an Amended PD(GDP-SIP) located at 1004 & 1032 South Park Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Randy Bruce, representing Terrence Wall; David H. Vogel, Ald. Sara Eskrich, District 13; Jeff Porter, Steve Short, representing The Bruce Company; and Rich Strohmenger. Registered and speaking in opposition were Daniel Thurs, Steve Vanko, Ron Shutvet, Carrie Rothburd and Robert W. Lockhart. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was Jane Elmer.

Bruce discussed changes and refinements made to the project. The site plan remains the same. Where commercial frontages exist along Park Street and the corner of Fish Hatchery Road they suggest improvement of the street terrace areas to include hardscaping and additional infiltration areas treated with more natural grasses and flowering plants. Planters will help create a sense of place and create a buffer with the traffic. Parking in the basement is restricted to tenants only; Bruce noted several non-restricted guest parking spaces throughout the development. The color palette has been toned down with a champagne color carried throughout the building. The grade will still get the variation they are looking for but in a much lighter palette. A curved element has been introduced to the balconies.

Robert Lockhart spoke in opposition. He lived and worked out of his home office in this neighborhood for over 30 years designing mostly housing. He urged Bruce to continue improving the design of this development on this prime site. With time all of the challenges for the architect and developer can be solved. The treatment of the masonry and exterior design continues to bother him and is still of concern to him and his neighbors. He remains in opposition not because of the increase in density or the location of the three building masses, but because there seems to be no design use of existing building elements to achieve beauty. In his opinion there is a better design for this project.

David Vogel spoke in support of the project. This is an acceptable design, it's not great, but it will be a great addition to the neighborhood. He thinks there could be more parking.

Carrie Rothburd spoke to the design from Robert Lockhart. There was appreciation from the neighbors in its greenery and an ice cream parlor. That design sketches out another take on the iconic structure everyone wants to see at this important intersection in a way that Bruce's designs have held back. She asked that the Urban Design Commission uphold its promise to South Madison and the Bay Creek community to do better and hold out for the best design possible. The design should relate to the existing neighborhood that surrounds it, creates livable interior and exterior places, finds a way to balance all the needs of parking, traffic, livability, affordability, long-term use and enjoyment as well as market demand and return on investment. The proposed development does not yet achieve that balance and is not a good enough design for this site. Minor modifications on this are not going to be successful because it's not good yet in its current iteration.

Ron Shutvet spoke in opposition, noting that it is difficult for neighbors to keep up with the process when the designs can change from day to day. He asked that the Commission not give final approval; there could be other ideas that are better for this property. This design is the best so far, but it is still too much mass for this site. There is no placemaking here, this is a walled off community with all the doors locked. It's a reverse prison. This neighborhood is working class ever since it was created in 1905 and this is going to be a bunch of young professionals who won't fit in and be a part of the community. We want something here that's going to last, something that looks more like the Bancroft Dairy; no more of these buildings where it looks like they ran out of materials and it's all chopped up. The building is too big and not well thought out.

Jeff Porter spoke in support of the design only. The developer has listened to the neighborhood and made a lot of changes in that regard, but he doesn't feel that zoning requires enough parking to realistically accommodate this density. Madison doesn't have the mass transit required for this type of planning. They already have spill-over parking all through this neighborhood and do not need more. This project will require extensive design planning with Traffic Engineering, both on Park Street and Fish Hatchery Road. There are already numerous traffic issues in this location and it's only going to get more congested.

Steve Vanko spoke to stormwater run-off issues. This project is too big for the neighborhood and the stormwater is going to affect the immediate neighbors. There is not going to be any sight lines for emergency vehicles once this building is built.

Daniel Thurs spoke in opposition. He sees this as something designed to make money that will not contribute anything positive to the immediate neighborhood. Madison and this neighborhood deserves better.

Ald. Sara Eskrich, District 13 spoke. She echoed many of the concerns of the neighborhood around parking, traffic and overflows. The architect has been quite responsive to many of the constituencies he has been hearing from. The neighborhood has had three public meetings with the development team, they've done canvassing and one survey and are all reflected in her submitted comments. She highlighted the design concerns, which include: greenspace, there has been improvement but she defers to the Commission to be sure they are managing stormwater run-off as effectively as possible in the improved terraces; concerns with reflectivity of the material palette; the point has also been improved, particularly around the balconies, but also the curved nature is something the neighborhood really wants to see.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I have concerns about turning left to go north to the parking area.

- This island will get redesigned to allow for a left-turn lane and to allow for some queuing and stacking. The shared area will be blocked off after business hours.
- How much of the success of the businesses will be traffic coming this way, straight across? That's going to be a nightmare.
 - I don't know that that kind of discussion has been had. We don't think that will be a lot of the activity. There's been a lot of discussion about the left-turn and we've done a lot of counts that show that.
- This isn't our purview but it would be nice to eliminate turning left from Lakeside to Park Street.
- I do have concerns with what the landscape concept is. It seems like a lot of decorative landscaping and I don't know that it's contributing to a lot of infiltration. You have a lot of hard surfaces yet; I don't see any rain gardens, things like that to show the neighborhood, show the City of Madison and visitors how the 21st Century building site should be developed to be sustainable. I know you don't have a lot of room to work with, but what you do have there are things that can be found.
 - The intent for these spaces is to be stormwater areas. The plantings may not be exactly appropriate but the intent is something natural that allow for that use, the intense water absorption.
- We need to deal with stormwater and getting large trees, particularly on Park Street. The areas where you've got salt coming in are going to be problematic. Stormwater is a big factor here. You need to start looking at green roofs or backing off the street to allow for drainage. Cities are moving towards that everywhere.
 - We talked about this previously. We do have landscaping on the courtyard as well.
- That's not enough. There are other solutions too, but we need to start talking about them.
- If these really are potentially going to be commercial spaces, right now it continues to look like they are being treated like a residential space, and when I think of a live-work unit I think of something like Tamarack on East Washington Avenue. So if this really were to be a live-work unit, if the street elevation on the first floor were pushed back to give that storefront a little more space, or the personal living space a bit more breathing space, to avoid these non-accessible entrances to these public storefronts, it would give that change to flourish as a commercial space. Some subtle changes like that on the first floor would give it more placemaking and give it a better shot as a commercial space.
 - We're balancing parking. We did pull this back so we have more of a setback and we've increased the greenspace here. This slab is elevated because of the groundwater elevation, so that is dictating the basement elevations and first floor elevations. We could look at bringing the first floor back some, there's a little bit of space that might be available.
- But if it's not in combination with bringing that level down to the street plane, I don't know that doing one without the other would improve it.
- I thought this was getting much more successful at this point (Flat Iron), but when I saw this point and the spacing on the windows, for some reason my sense was it should have continued around the corner, those vertical windows would have pulled that side piece the same way the point was and made a stronger Flat Iron element. It's sort of hidden behind the balconies.
- I miss the public aspect of a balcony. It had the sense that it was a special corner and could be activated. The sketch that was provided actually had an intriguing idea that maybe it was a balcony at the top floor. It feels very taut and rigid to me, spacing or aesthetic I'm not sure but it doesn't feel as excited.
- I see a bunch of windows that are all mulled together and it's going to look more faceted than curved in reality. That's the concern I have, these are "off the shelf" units and the only reason they're narrow is so you can make the corner there. The general consensus is it's on the right trajectory but what I hear from the Commission and neighbors is that it needs a little bit more attention.
- I'm not sure now that holding on to the vestige of that overhang and that element at the top is helping out at all. Maybe just continue with whatever color that is.

- It looks tacked on. Isn't this truly what you're trying to express that façade as?
- Would porous pavement be an improvement?
- I think it would work if there were structural soils underneath. The bioswales will last longer but they are going to slowly clog up because there's just so much going on, so much debris.
- Even with the Bancroft Dairy in there, there was a fair greenspace that we lose.
- On the point, I ask that you really work on the detailing of the masonry base. I'm a little troubled by the lintel that's curved and un-supported; some way of really celebrating all the forms that come together. I see the whole rhythm and then a big old garage door here; have you thought about a rhythm of these stone piers and having two garage doors, just to break it up a bit? The detailing of that piece is super important.

ACTION:

On a motion by DeChant, seconded by Goodhart, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-2) with DeChant, Goodhart, O'Kroley and Carter voting yes; Harrington and Slayton voting no. The motion provided for finer detail on the live-work units to return to 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 5.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 1004 & 1032 South Park Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	5	5	4	-	-	-	5	5
	6	6	6	-	-	-	-	-

General Comments:

- Stormwater solution needs to be successful. Design for large canopy trees.
- Much improved design and site; could be greener in many aspects and curved corner could be even stronger if fenestration is simplified.