

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** September 19, 2012

TITLE: 309 West Johnson Street – PUD(GDP-SIP), Mixed-Use Building, Housing/Retail/Commercial/Fire Department Spaces. 4<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (26346)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: September 19, 2012

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Henry Lufler, Melissa Huggins, Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroy, Tom DeChant, John Harrington and Cliff Goodhart\*.

\*This is an abbreviated report due to technical issues with the recording.\*  
\*Goodhart recused himself on this item.

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of September 19, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a PUD(GDP-SIP) located at 309 West Johnson Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Victor Villacrez, Steve Holzauer, Chris Gallagher and Nathan Walltier, all representing Hovde Properties; and Susanne Pange, representing Ken Saiki Design. Staff noted the Planning Division comments regarding this project, including concerns with the material palette needing further examination such as:

- The need for the Commission to make a finding on that portion of the site located in Downtown Design Zone 1 (off of the corner of North Henry Street and West Gorham Street) which is proposed to be six stories in height is consistent with the “Criteria for Approval” for the Planned Unit Development District (PUD) in Downtown Design Zones without a thirty-foot stepback at the fourth-story consistent with a recent amendment to the Zoning Code provisions.
- Uncomfortable with overall material palette including colors chosen. Overall staff feels that in certain circumstances, the use of color is a distraction for the building’s architecture in its extent and locations/ beyond use as an accent. Color may date the project.
- Concern with six-story portion of west elevation, appears solid; need more articulation and fenestration of the façade.

Villacrez presented their vision for the 300 Block of West Johnson Street for 250 units consisting of studios, 1-bedrooms and 2-bedrooms, retail space, office space and 30,000 square feet of condominium space for the administrative offices of the Fire Department. They have met with neighborhood groups including the West Mifflin Neighborhood and different business groups in the downtown area. Gallagher continued the presentation for the T-shaped building facing Dayton Street with a 6-story face along Johnson Street, adjacent to Station No. 1 along Dayton Street. Images showed the bulk and massing of the building as the same with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> floors stepping back further. A community space has been added to the roof deck, affording all the

residents views of the Capitol and the City. The dark brown façade has been changed to a zinc-like material and introduced wood composite in the transition zone between the retail and office, which is being brought down into some of the entry features and on the Dayton Street façade. The intent is to keep the building simple with clean lines and recessed balconies; the balconies are also alternated along Johnson Street. They are exploring the opportunity for outdoor eating along Johnson Street. A roof garden is being proposed for residents, as well as an outdoor room amenities space. The lighting is meant to be reminiscent of the lighting along State Street. The Fire Administration needs its own identity but at the same time they are accommodating the entrance to the apartment building without competing with each other, thus the varying colors and materials. They have included more of a seeding zone as an “outdoor waiting room” as part of the landscape plan. Planters and benches are incorporated into the entries. The stepback issue in the Downtown Design Zone was discussed; the solution is a break with a step. The one parcel (305 West Johnson Street) is the only part of the parcel within the design zone. The geometry of State Street being at a different angle than Johnson Street puts an angle to the site with that corner of the building being affected. The stepback requirement can be waived if all the other criteria is met. A temporary construction fence is being proposed along Johnson Street which will also contain advertising for renting the units, as well as project graphics as contained within the packet of which they are requesting approval.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Unsure about the 6-inch raised curb at the entry in a busy pedestrian area; it limits pedestrian movement around planting beds.
  - We’re trying to bring something more interesting to that entry.
- I don’t think it’s appropriate for us to tell you which colors to use. I think it’s the design professional’s recommendation. I don’t feel it’s the purview of this body to do so.
- Dating not an issue, although not excited about the colors.
- The articulation of the lower buildings is nice. The “T” almost feels like two buildings to me, but they don’t have the same variation.
  - The idea was that by making it glass, it separates the bar from the tower and then you get into the rhythm of the recessed part of the building.
- Consider dimmer colors.
- On green roofs, look at plantings that mitigate heat. Sedum doesn’t and transpires at night; need to mitigate heat island effect, look at alternatives.
- Relative to the use of graphics on a fence, limit repetitive graphics with final details back to staff and Zoning.
- Eliminated curbing around trees, need barrier free design.
- Differentiate lower Johnson Street façade treatment from other to tie into planter location.
- Color bothersome; dimmer tones, profoundly bright.
- OK to chance that the project won’t change character of State Street, design tries to accommodate impacts.

### **ACTION:**

On a motion by O’Kroley, seconded by Lufler, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-0-2) with Huggins and Goodhart recusing themselves.

The motion found that the massing is appropriate to the adjacent context. The motion provided for initial/final approval of the project with a finding that the building’s mass was appropriate to the adjacent context with the provisions for Downtown Design Zones addressed, with a waiver of the stepback as it applies to this project.

The motion required resolution of the ground plane issue on the lower Johnson Street façade with plantings, as well as address of landscape comments relating to the storefront bays on the building, green roofs along with approval of the temporary construction signage package to be finalized with staff approvals.

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 5, 6, 8 and 8.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 309 West Johnson Street**

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	7	8	8	-	-	-	9	8
	5	5	5	-	-	5	6	5
	5	6	6	-	-	-	6	6
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8

General Comments:

- Fantastic new addition to Madison downtown. But use of “Florida” colors in Madison is questionable.
- Street planting does not have quality of building architecture.