



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 7-9 W. Main Street
Application Type: Alteration to a an existing development in a DC District –Final Approval Requested
Legistar File ID # [56318](#)
Prepared By: Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Matthew Aro, Aro Eberle Architects, Madison, WI 53703

Project Description: The applicant is requesting final approval for façade modifications; this is a follow up to a previously requested alteration to an existing building in a Downtown Core (DC) district.

Project History/Schedule:

The Urban Design Commission referred this project at the June 26, 2019 meeting and then heard an informational presentation of an updated design on October 2, 2019.

Approval Standards: In the Downtown Commercial (DC) Zoning District, Design Review is required for new construction, additions, or exterior changes. While minor alterations may be approved by the Director of Planning, Community, and Economic Development, MGO Sect 28.074(4) states that alterations not approved as a minor alteration “shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the design standards in [Sec.28.071\(3\)](#) MGO and the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#).”

This proposal was not approved as a staff-level alteration as such, the UDC is an approving body on this request. This project is located in Downtown Core (DC) District and is not a recorded landmark or national register property.

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

The proposed modifications were not approved as a minor alteration due to staff concerns regarding the alteration's inconsistencies with the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. As noted within the previous request, staff does not believe that the proposed designs are consistent with the applicable design guidelines. More specifically, staff has concerns that this proposal reduces the ground level windows and covers over existing character defining details with a composite panel that is not consistent with the following guidelines.

Downtown Urban Design Guidelines: Architecture

2) Building Components: P. 12

- a. *The lower levels of street facing facades should generally incorporate a higher level of visual interest and richer architectural detailing.*

4) Door and Window Openings: p.14

- a. *The size and rhythm of windows and doors in a building should respect those established by existing buildings in the area where a clear pattern exists, and the residential and/or mixed-use nature of the building. (Figure 10)*
- b. *Existing traditional buildings should not have window openings with different sash configurations, smaller windows, or materials inappropriate to the original design.*

5) Building Materials: p.15

- a. *A variety of complementary exterior building materials may be incorporated to provide visual interest to the building. The palette of material should not be overly complex.*
- b. *All sides of a structure should exhibit design continuity and be finished with high quality materials. Materials should be those typically found in urban settings.*

cont. p.2

The approval standards further state that the development also be reviewed against the zoning codes standards of MGO 28.071(3). Staff notes these standards only apply to additions or new construction, not façade alterations such as this. Staff notes that the use of wood/composite panels is not allowed in the ground story.

Chapter 28.073(3)(f) – General Provisions for Downtown and Urban Districts - Building Materials -

B. Wood and fiber cement panels shall not be used on the ground story except between the sidewalk and the bottom of storefront windows or as an accent material.

Staff further questions whether the required storefront window area would meet the requirement for ground story doors and windows comprise of a minimum of 50% of the first floor area.

Please review the June 26, 2019 referral report and the October 2, 2019 Informational Presentation report and reference the above standards when providing a recommendation. (attached).