

## AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

---

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	<b>PRESENTED:</b> July 23, 2008
TITLE: 822-844 John Nolen Drive - Comprehensive Design Review of Signage for a New Hotel and Restaurant in Urban Design District No. 1. 14th Ald. Dist. (11332)	<b>REFERRED:</b> <b>REREFERRED:</b> <b>REPORTED BACK:</b>
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	<b>ADOPTED:</b> <b>POF:</b>
DATED: July 23, 2008	<b>ID NUMBER:</b>

---

Members present were: Marsha Rummel, Todd Barnett, Bruce Woods, John Harrington, Bonnie Cosgrove, Richard Wagner, Jay Ferm and Lou Host-Jablonski.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of July 23, 2008, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a Comprehensive Design Review located at 822-844 John Nolen Drive. Appearing on behalf of the project were Jay Supple, Stan Ramaker, Scott Steffen, Aaron Ebent, representing Kahler Slater; and Christopher Thiel, representing SAA. Prior to the presentation staff noted to the Commission a handout contained in the packet relevant to the recently approved revised standards for "Comprehensive Design Review," which detailed the criteria for approval of the sign plan under consideration, which exceeds the normally required street graphics provisions. Thiel then presented an overall sign plan that provides for an array of variances relevant to a monument sign, building signage for both Frotello's and the Aloft Hotel requesting approval of wall signage requiring allowances in height, size and location, including consideration for multiple signable areas on individual building façades. As part of the presentation Thiel noted the directional signs as proposed were generally consistent with applicable ordinance provisions. Following the presentation the Commission noted the following:

- Issue with the "W Hotel" branding outside of the signable area for the "aloft" wall signage.
- Issue with the sign at the face of the porte cochere canopy relative to its lack of detailing, coloration and proposed lighting.
- Signage very well integrated with architecture.
- Most signs above ground level are really big in size.
- Not comfortable with approving south upper elevation sign. Can't be seen, superfluous.
- Uncomfortable with square footage of the wall signage for both the restaurant and hotel. Although integrated well but sets a benchmark and precedent much too large.
- Issue with the Frotello's above canopy sign. Sign needs to be large to be viewed based on setback of buildings; not sure it can be supported.
- Don't favor the large scale wall signage as proposed due to building siting causing issue, especially when other buildings in the area have found a way to relate to their street frontage with appropriately scaled signage; where choices made to push building back away from street frontage creates situation where signage now stands in for architecture, less urban design.

- Can't give leeway for signage request based on building orientation issues (away from streetscape, adjacent to the site's lake frontage).
- Like porte cochere sign and sign atop hotel but look at shrinking down to get closer to Urban Design District and code standards.
- Uncomfortable with precedent to award a project with three times the amount of signage beyond what code allows based on building location choices, even though scale and signage of building relate very well. Note issue relevant to the porte cochere sign.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Rummel, seconded by Ferm, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (7-1) with Cosgrove voting no. The motion to refer required address of the above stated concerns and the following:

- Support directional and monument signage. All other signage as proposed a problem; need to see what they look like if code-compliant in size, location and height.

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 4, 5, 5, 6, 7 and 7.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 822-844 John Nolen Drive**

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	7
	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	7
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	-	-	-	-	6.5	-	-	5
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-

General Comments:

- Graphically, signs are...but much too large.
- Signs well integrated, but question need for side signs on hotel.
- The signs are a little large, but are in keeping with the architecture.
- Mostly handsome and well-integrated sign package, but too big, located as it is on a badly sited building. West side “billboard” is completely unnecessary.
- Handsome package but precedent setting in size.