

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** March 25, 2015

TITLE: 5422 Portage Road – Multi-Family
 Apartment Development Including Three
 Multi-Family Apartment Buildings and
 One Tenant Use Pool/Clubhouse Building.
 17th Ald. Dist. (37462)

REFERRED:
REREFERRED:
REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Jay Wendt, Acting Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: March 25, 2015 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Lauren Cnare, Tom DeChant, Cliff Goodhart, Melissa Huggins and Richard Slayton.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 25, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a multi-family apartment development including three multi-family apartment buildings and one tenant use pool/clubhouse building located at 5422 Portage Road. Appearing on behalf of the project was Joseph Lee, representing 5422 Portage Road, LLC. When they began this project they were asked to look at how their development could be integrated with the lands to the north; they came up with a concept plan that includes their property (which includes wetlands and a stream making much of their parcel undevelopable) worked into the fabric of the lands to the north and the existing neighborhood. The site plan shows a public street as an extension of Diloreto Avenue, 3 multi-story, multi-family buildings, two L-shaped buildings along the central greenspace, and another four-story building adjacent to Portage Road. A clubhouse is proposed for a future phase of development. The fourth-story will be stepped back to add a bit of architectural variety, and the ends are proposed to be bumped up massing for the same effect. Two of the buildings will have rooftop decks to add more articulation and create views. A contemporary aesthetic is proposed with flat roofs, to keep the scale down and provide more variety. The material palette is primarily masonry and fiber cement siding with large windows and overhangs to accentuate certain areas of the building. The mechanical systems for the units are going to be typical magicpak systems that are incorporated into the design of the building with the vents in the balconies to minimize the visual impacts.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Is parking planned on that public street?
 - Not in the first phase.
 - (Staff) Working that out with Engineering, if you see where it connects to the existing Diloreto there’s a little bit of an offset there, they’ll be building ½ of this road and then when the site to the north develops, the second portion of the street will be filled in. I think you’re starting out with 26-foot pavement width and eventually when the road fills in it would go to that full width

that would allow on-street parking at that time, and that's per Engineering's request. The applicant only has to pay for his side of the roadway.

- It struck me that putting your landscaping dollars into little foundation plantings, rectangular around buildings, didn't do much for the site, and if you had more shade trees that were near your parking that could help shade the parking and help make connections between your residential units and the greenspace, which appears relatively wooded. Rather than have those grass spaces between the creek area it might draw and link that greenspace into your project more.
- I think that your architecture is of a style that the intimacy of the plantings at the foundation almost becomes too decorative for this, as if you're building in a more natural area, so that you have places that relate more to the area to the south and that trees come in somewhat random, but still relating to what you're trying to do. I'd get away from the more residential look, it's kind of a blanket statement that the foundation plantings are a belt around the building right now. What's the reason for that, other than it's somewhat a decorative, very intimate look. It should be more substantial and that would fit better with the architecture. Substantial meaning masses of shrubs, not just lines of things.
- I know John would be concerned about the heat island effect of the parking. If some of them are more shade trees near the parking they would reduce that rather than taking away the parking spaces with more trees.
- I really like the red and the use of the fiber cement I think is really interest. I'm struggling because sometimes the rhythm, we're so prescriptive now sometimes I see you guys come forward with designs and I think "haven't we seen this before?" And then I have to look carefully to figure out how this is different. I would like to see you jazz this up, be more bold with the red and actually be non-rhythmical somehow. We just approved something in District 3 that is not something we're used to seeing in Madison, and it was really fun. You're kind of getting at that with the red but you're being a typically restrained Midwesterner.
 - I'm all for pushing the limits.
- I would like to see the fun, and not necessarily the red, but if this could become a little less restrained. Make it stand out on its own, particularly since it's across from American Family, it's in a very prominent location. Your setting the tone for this new neighborhood.
- Based on that concept that you're going to have long views of this full site, you should look at the full composition so when you approach from the north it doesn't look like three of the same got approved.
- It seems counterintuitive not to park on the street until smaller scale development is built to the north. I don't see why they would have any demand for parking on the street. When you show all these walk-outs and very pedestrian, approachable, not a soul will be on that street.
- (Staff) I think it's important to note that when they originally came in to talk to us they actually had on-street parking and things like that, but because of the Engineering logistics, those kind of design aspects got lost unfortunately. They really worked with what they were given.
- Maybe there's consideration that somehow if the roadway is expanded to include some parking then we can eliminate some surface parking near that greenspace. I don't think the street will achieve its function even if it has the aesthetic of the walk-ups that the City probably encouraged, without allowing on-street parking, at least on one side.
- You could almost do curvilinear paths. With parking it won't be long before people would cut across there instead of using the walkway.

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 ratings for this project are 5 and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 5422 Portage Road

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	6	7	5.5	-	-	-	-	-
	6	6	5	-	-	5	5	5
	7	7	5	7	-	6	7	7

General Comments:

- Street parking would enhance street activity and potentially reduce demand for other surface parking.
- Landscape approach should be more “plant community” based vs. decorative...relate to architectural style.
- Work to bring organic natural features into landscape plan. More shade trees, less foundation plantings.