

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: March 9, 2022

TITLE: 2101-2115 E Springs Drive - Residential Building Complex Consisting of Four, 4-Story Multi-Family Apartment Buildings. 17th Ald. Dist. (69543)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: March 9, 2022

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Tom DeChant, Jessica Klehr, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Lois Braun-Oddo, Russell Knudson and Christian Harper.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 9, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new Residential Building Complex located at 2101-2115 E Springs Drive. Registered and speaking in support was Ulian Kissiov, representing Signature Point Apartments, LLC.

The proposed Residential Building Complex would provide approximately 500 units on 14.5 acres in an area recently approved as part of the Greater East Towne Area Plan designated as medium residential. The project site is bounded by Starkweather Creek, the Interstate, parks and open space and Bowl-A-Vard Lanes. The development would create a coherent living environment with functional and beautiful buildings and open spaces defined by those buildings. The site layout was influenced by adjacent parks and open spaces and the wetlands that protrude into the lots. The primary courtyard with a pool acts as a focal point, is wide open and visually emerges with the parks and open space the secondary courtyard to the south forms greenspace, forcing the parking to the other side of the buildings. Alternating colors in buildings. The building office and clubhouse are located at the main approach at the northeast corner. Building materials include fiber cement and Nichiha panels with concealed joints, with the buildings alternating colors.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I understand the design intent of the yin yang, but I don't know that every face of a particular element needs to be a different color, it gets a bit chaotic. It can all be the same color and meet that design intent, but simplified.
- The solids and voids are working nicely and add interest to these pretty long façades. I do wonder about only one entry in and out. The parking around the edges is kind of brutal. The units that face the greenspace are much nicer than facing all that parking. I wonder about access for emergency vehicles.
 - We have two entries, Building A is at the other end. Traffic Engineering was at the DAT meeting, they emphasized on that approach at the top, they did not have any comments about

that. I talked with the Fire Department about any objections they would have, we reached an agreement that this can work.

- The concept used for the colors changing is a well-known pull-push approach to architecture. To explore the push-pull approach, it's like an apple that is one color on the surface, you cut through and see a different color. This is on purpose and the owner and client liked it very much.
- Look at how the buildings are placed on the site. The drive that goes all the way back to the underground parking is quite long and now you have double loaded parking spaces. I could see people whipping around that uninterrupted and it being a hazard backing out. We have a large majority of the building facing the parking and the highway, facing the Bowl-A-Vard, even East Springs is not a very pedestrian scale face of the site. Look at reorientation of buildings so the ends are at the parking rather than facing the parking, with the building layout more like fins so there's more courtyards in between and less units facing a parking lot. That would be more successful.
 - Wetlands and the future bike trail required by the City is protruding quite deeply into the lot, not giving us many options to reorient. This was optimal because the park and open space is right next door, this is a very strong design concept to merge the two. As to how much of the units are facing the parking vs. interior courtyards, you can see Buildings B and D have only ¼ of the units facing the parking lots. Building C we have less than 50 percent because the end units are not facing the parking lot. Building A didn't have much of an option, initial layout was the parking lot on the other side, however zoning issues and staff forced me to push the parking for Building A behind the building. This is the least desirable building because one side faces the street and the other faces the apartment. But complexes all have these issues, I rarely see them treat the courtyards free of cars, they are full of parking. We have a very strong feature in the courtyards I would like to preserve.
- I wonder if more of the buildings were spoked off of the parking lot with more greenspace between. I know this is an efficient layout to maximize units, I just feel like there could be a better solution to this thoroughfare coming around, you will definitely have vehicular issues. Building A is probably the least desirable.
 - If you start breaking down greenspaces they are less successful.
- I like the concept of giving the residents some respite from the Interstate in these courtyards. Confirming the elevations of the grade in those courtyards in relation to the Interstate. Is there any line of sight to the Interstate from the courtyards?
 - The entire lot is about 40-feet below the Interstate. Any berms or sound barriers are not feasible, but they are probably not needed either because we are at 320-feet at the closest. If you go to the website of the DOT you'll see any sound barriers are not effective beyond the 300-foot distance.
- I think the buildings are the berms. Can you describe the intent for the distance between Buildings B and C, and C and D? What's the purpose of that distance to separate those buildings?
 - The driveway to underground parking is located between B and C, there is no need for such between C and D, just separated a certain distance.
- I'm interested in any kind of efficiencies, it would benefit this project a lot. Exterior outboard landscaping, thinking about future mature trees could really go a long way in further protecting this site in similar ways you're trying to achieve now. Wonder if there's any efficiencies to bring those buildings in further for more real estate on the perimeter, and maybe a way to get some relief in those parking lots. I hardly second the earlier comments about navigating that drive.
- You indicated 500 units, what's the total parking count?
 - Surface is about 315 including the 70 stalls at Building A. 270 or 80 on that long parking around the rest of the buildings. Our intent is to have about 400 underground stalls, 100 of them dedicated to Building A, including the clubhouse, pretty much 100 per building. The entire length of that drive at building D to the driveway approach is 1,300 feet. We'll do some traffic studies.

- 350 surface, 400 underground, 1.5 ratio per unit. Does seem like an immense amount of surface parking.
- Does seem appropriate given the context.
- Appreciate protecting that large swath of open space in the middle, but I wonder about connecting to another road at the end of that parking lot, that dead end length seems really long. Instead of a double sided single drive lane on the Interstate site, have a double drive with parking and congregate more of that parking towards the Interstate. It would dramatically change your site plan, not sure if it's the right answer. This isthmus of greenspace through the site is really nice.
- The clubhouse entrance is pretty close to the main drive entrance to the building. Seems like there could be a lot more openings in the wall somewhere between the two apartment buildings. As I'm driving in, I'm thinking it could be more open and transparent, maybe some punched openings or some other detail to give that a bit less of an institutional feel there.
- Going back to the colors, I really perceive the push and pull on those middle bays, but I don't get the sense of the push and pull on the corners, it's almost more like a Rubik's Cube. I do really appreciate that the corners of the balconies are column-free. This does an excellent job of resolving those corners. The colors are the easy part to resolve.

ACTION:

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.