

AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** March 7, 2012

TITLE: 439 East Campus Mall & 731 State Street
– PUD(GDP-SIP), Modifications to an
Administratively Approved Sign Package
for a PUD-SIP for “Pres House Student
Housing” & “Subway Subs.” 8th Ald. Dist.
(25504) **REFERRED:**
REREFERRED:
REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: March 7, 2012 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Marsha Rummel, Dawn O’Kroley, Todd Barnett, Richard Slayton, John Harrington, R. Richard Wagner, Melissa Huggins, and Henry Lufler, Jr.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 7, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of modifications to an administratively approved sign package located at 439 East Campus Mall and 731 State Street. Appearing on behalf of the project was Steve McCombs. The Secretary stated that the R6 zoning would only allow for a 6 square foot, non-illuminated wall sign. McCombs appeared to ask for an illuminated flag style sign (projecting sign) measuring 8-foot tall by 4-foot wide, illuminated with back-lit white LEDs. On the east elevation they are asking for a sign non-illuminated sign measuring 20” x 40”. On 731 State Street they are asking to modify an existing sign that will show a sign is now split into two, they are asking to encompass the whole sign and make it into one for use by the “Subway” tenancy. They would like to reserve the right to return it back to a double sign should that space be subdivided in the future (a previously existing coffee shop has moved out). Brandon Donkersgoed, Manager for Pres House housing discussed the changes of the location since the signage was first installed. They were at a dead end but are now on an all pedestrian mall, which changes the entire scope of the area and how their building fits into it. They need to identify themselves more clearly to foot traffic coming all the way from the Kohl Center through to the Memorial Union. While they are in the R6 District, they feel the signage is relatively small in relation to the mass of the building and when you compare it to other signage along the entire East Campus Mall area, it’s appropriate for the area. Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I see this in the same vain as the fraternity we looked at in a residential neighborhood. The Subway sign, a sign that large seems out of scale for a pedestrian area.
- My concern is do we get more signage when we get another tenant?
- If the request is to change it from two smaller signs to one larger one I think it changes the nature of the area.
- While I appreciate the attempt to design the Pres House sign in a way that’s in keeping with the architecture, but I think how it’s positioned relative to window heights seems not quite there yet. I also wonder if there’s another way to do it. Does it really need it, or is there another location to place it that seems less tacked on? It’s a big building and it seems kind of visually flimsy.

- It's challenging because of all of the architectural detail on here. I think the best option for this building is a flag mounted sign.
- I think it should be moved down, and maybe if some additional photographs are taken in the sunlight so we can get some more architectural information.
- The campus has a policy itself about not having signs. And the signs really have to be in context, it destroys the character of the building so I can't accept this.
- Staff noted that there is also the issue of this being on the same site as a landmark. This may have to be run by Amy Scanlon (Preservation Planner).
 - We met with her at one point and she didn't have a problem with what we showed her.
 - There are some trees here and those trees are going to continue to grow and fill in and we didn't want to be in a situation where we put in a sign and the trees cover it up. It's more for the long view than the short view.
- Would this be eligible for a ground sign similar to St. Mary's? It would give you a sign that's at pedestrian level as you walk by, it doesn't touch the building so it doesn't look cheap, and it starts to fit in more with the character of that whole end of State Street. Is that something you looked at?
 - We wouldn't be able to do a monument sign because of where the right-of-way runs. We only have 2-feet.

ACTION:

On a motion by Barnett, seconded by Huggins, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (7-0).

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 2, 4 and 4.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 439 East Campus Mall & 731 State Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4

General Comments:

- No lit signs on mall.
- As presented, not appropriate.