

## AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** July 28, 2021

TITLE: 12 N. Few Street - Addition and New Construction for 8 Commercial Spaces and 8 Residential Units Located in UDD No. 8. 2nd Ald. Dist. (64038)      **REFERRED:**  
**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Kevin Firchow, Acting Secretary      **ADOPTED:**      **POF:**

DATED: July 28, 2021      **ID NUMBER:**

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

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of July 28, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of addition and new construction located at 12 N. Few Street. Registered and speaking in support was John Seamon. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Kevin Yeska, representing JSD Professional Services, Inc. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak were John Belknap, Karen Banaszak and Jeff Reinke. Seamon reviewed updates to the project, noting that they removed the off-street parking for clarity relative to the commercial entries, and added transom windows and canopies above the commercial doors for a more intuitive path. He reviewed the entry sequence and travel distance to the walk-up residential entries, security provisions (10 surveillance cameras and monitoring, blind spot security mirror in the corner and lighting at the doors and pathways). They will include “residents only no trespassing” signs.

John Belknap spoke regarding about setbacks and missing mechanicals on the plans, with nothing on the roof or in the apartments to indicate heating or air conditioning. This block is one of the most dynamic in Madison. WYSO is planning to buy the Avenue and associated parking lots; there is no parking at all. Eliminate Unit F on the corner. The setback is a required minimum 15-feet; UDC may allow greater setbacks, not diminish them. The setback revision is totally unacceptable.

Karen Banaszak spoke regarding setbacks, run-off, solar panels, mechanicals, lighting at night, construction staging, results of soil testing and dust being sent up into the air.

Firchow noted that the setback was changed as a text amendment to UDD No. 8, which revised the setback and created Block 5c with a different setback range approved by Common Council in June 1, 2021.

Seamon responded that the HVAC louvers on the second story windows are integrated in the fenestration, the thru-wall units (P-taks) are all electric heating and cooling for the second floor units. The first floor will be heated with ceiling hung modine units and cooling the spaces with ceiling fans. Given the lower level location and the orientation of the building this will be an energy efficient approach. The permeable pavers are called out

on the landscape plan and the site plan. They exist primarily along Curtis Court. Lighting is indicated as well, with wall sconces at every door and intermittent wall sconces along the pathways of the building.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Our current lighting ordinance does not allow any light spill into the neighbors' yards.
- I love the aesthetics of this building, I'm hung up on how it feels super crowded. There are two curb cuts on Few Street but no place to go with a car. I don't know if there's any clarity if these would have cars in them. I don't know where mailboxes would go. The dumpster location has enough for 8, but Madison has the refuse and recycling so that would double what they have shown here. I see some real functional limitations with the size of the site and the practicalities of occupying it. The lower level modine units, is there circulated air or any fresh air potential, and there's no restrooms on those first floors.
  - This is not live-work, it is a mixed-use building. By keeping those curb cuts open we have the future potential of a drive condition into the first floor. That's the goal. We're trying to have them not seen as parking stalls, we're happy to put signs there accordingly and have considered bollards. We're looking for the future flexibility to have that live-work. The trash and recycle is planned four for trash and four for recycle and we were told that is sufficient. We're seeing mail slots in each of the entries. We will have to have restrooms, we're seeing that as the next phase of the project, single accommodation restrooms in each of those units. Exactly where they locate we see as the next phase.
- Is there a barrier if somebody did get the entire Unit A first and second floor, can they put a car there by code?
  - We'd have to have fire separation and would have to go through a conditional use. That would be a change we'd have to get approved through Plan Commission at the very least.
- Are the addresses all on Curtis Court and Few Street? I don't think the postal service will walk around the building looking for slots.
  - We have not gone down that path yet.
- The final plans would need to show toilet rooms there. How can we sit here and listen to you say there won't be any cars parked at these units? Either we're a little naïve or there's something that we're not grasping.
  - We have not shown the building-out of commercial spaces in there primarily because we haven't seen the need to do it yet. If that's something you need to see in terms of primary functional program pieces for commercial space for approval, that's something we can do.
- To me it looks and smells like a residential garage. It just looks and feels like it's going to be an apartment above with a garage underneath and that's a problem as it would require a conditional use that you're not applying for. It's going to be difficult to have any kind of commercial space in there with a modine unit and a ceiling fan.
- Where would any other units even go? I'm not sure we see enough detail to comment on the full building not knowing what other penetrations there might be.
- I wouldn't mind if it was a garage unit under the apartment but it seems like you're insisting that won't happen; it's set up for the perfect opportunity for it to happen.
- Is it truly the intent to have that mirror finish on the glass of the garage doors?
  - No.
- My understanding is the intent of the garage doors is a loading function.
  - It could be used for that, we see them as operable storefronts in so many ways. Flexibility with large openings, the retail presence it can bring, that's what we like about it. The visual tie to the context.

- Is there an operable window solution here in lieu of a garage door to help us consider to get around this concern?
  - It could be all fixed storefront or partially fixed with an operable component. We were liking that this did all of those things I mentioned earlier in one assembly. Future flexibility to have them become more live-work down the road.
- I do appreciate the simplicity of the lower unit, creating an opportunity for a use that perhaps doesn't need typical amount of air conditioning, I do see benefits.
  - We feel like the elevations all show the locations of all the thru-wall units.
- My concern about the penetrations was for future first floor. I see the ones on the second.
- I would want to see how this is feasible to make this an occupiable space. Showing how the mechanicals would work, not just 'this is how I think we'll do it'. If you're proposing mixed-use with nothing on the inside, is mini storage the only thing that could be used? You can't put automobiles in there, what actually would be the use as currently proposed?
  - We think there's a number of small businesses that could go in there.
- Where are you going to put the bathroom exhaust vents? Mail slots? On a street facing façade?
- I could see a scenario where the elevations and plans could be amended to reserve locations for intake and exhaust louvers for mechanical ventilation and toilet room exhausts. So we know those things are feasible.
- Curious about the brick wall that runs along the lower unit alleyway, it looks like it partially supports the upper unit balconies but only extends for the back half of that. Is it a load bearing aspect of those balconies?
  - That south wall is the existing wall of the building, we're trying not to demolish the whole building. Keeping that and having it be a support for those balconies is exactly what we're trying to accomplish.
- The planters on the top, you indicated quite a few of those planters along there. Your choice is a pretty tough ivy (Virginia Creeper) and super aggressive. As tough as it is trying to keep any plant in a small container alive through the winter, it can freeze and rip apart the roots. Twenty-one of that plant along that stretch, yikes. Five would give you the desired effect.
- In a different setting, or if the car rental lot was part of this, I can't get past the fact that we have 8 residences and 8 businesses with no parking. I very much admire your aspirational view of getting to a place where there's room for buildings and businesses that don't need cars, I just don't think that's realistic. This is going to bring vehicles along with it; street parking is just not always there.

### **ACTION:**

On a motion by Knudson, seconded by Bernau, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (8-0). The motion provided for the following:

That the applicant returns back to staff with drawings indicating future louver openings necessary for commercial occupancy as well as future restroom exhaust, and a notion of how postal mail will be delivered to the site and centralized.