

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: August 9, 2006
TITLE: 660 John Nolen Drive – Street Graphics Variance for the Size of a Ground Sign in Urban Design District No. 1. 13 th Ald. Dist. (04194)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: August 9, 2006	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Lou Host-Jablonski, Acting Chair; Michael Barrett, Todd Barnett, Lisa Geer, Ald. Noel Radomski and Cathleen Feland.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of August 9, 2006, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a street graphics variance for the size of a ground sign located in Urban Design District No. 1 at 660 John Nolen Drive. Appearing on behalf of the project was James Miller of Badger Display Sign, Inc.. Prior to the presentation, staff noted to the Commission that the variance request was based on inconsistencies of the size of the ground sign not as required within the Street Graphics Control Ordinance, but with the provisions of Urban Design District No. 1 as follows:

“The affected area of a ground or wall sign shall not exceed forty (40) square feet along John Nolen Drive or seventy-two (72) square feet elsewhere in the district unless a larger sign is specifically approved by the Urban Design Commission based upon the following criteria...an exception from the size limitation is necessary for a sign located on the site of an establishment to be identifiable and legible from the nearest roadway at prevailing speeds.”

Staff noted that the location of the sign, adjacent to the property’s lot line on a frontage road and set back from its John Nolen Drive frontage, including consideration for an intervening City bike path between the adjacent right-of-ways, appeared to support the requested size increase with the ground sign as proposed. The ground sign as proposed is one sided at 10’-8” by 69 ½” wide. The sign will be non-illuminated and is proposed to be the only graphic on this site, according to the building’s owner. According to Miller, its orientation parallel to the frontage road and the John Nolen Drive right-of-way would provide for its easy viewability. Following the presentation, the Commission noted that the sign’s orientation at an angle to the adjacent John Nolen Drive right-of-way, combined with the distance of the sign from it; provides that a two-sided sign perpendicular to the dual street right-of-ways would be more functional.

ACTION:

On a motion by Feland, seconded by Barrett, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0). The motion provided for the option to locate a 2-sided sign perpendicular to the John Nolen Drive right-of-way, as well as the single face option as proposed.

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 6, 6, 6.5, 7 and 8.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 660 John Nolen Drive

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	8
	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	7	-	7	7
	-	-	-	-	6.5	-	-	6.5

General Comments:

- Nice sign; seems more appropriate to set sign perpendicular to John Nolen.
- Approvable, limited variance with no negative precedent created.
- Appropriately sized sign.