

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** September 19, 2012

**TITLE:** 125 North Bedford Street – PUD(GDP-SIP), Demolition and New Construction for a 4-Story, 8-Unit Residential Apartment Building. 4<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (27244)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

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

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** September 19, 2012

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Henry Lufler, Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Tom DeChant, John Harrington and Cliff Goodhart.

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of September 19, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a PUD(GDP-SIP) located at 125 North Bedford Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Todd Meinholz, David Ferch, the project architect; and Rick Broughman, representing Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc./Mifflin West. Staff ran through the criteria for the Downtown Design Zones pertinent to this lot. The project does not comply with the underlying existing bulk standards. The new code standards, the property would be under the DR2 Downtown Residential District. The project appears to conform to those general bulk requirements, however, to develop more than a 3-unit building the lot must be at least 40-feet wide; this lot is 33-feet wide. Concerns have been raised about the mass and articulation of the building, specially the depth. Staff is concerned with the mass and does not support the project; they also want the materials simplified. Ferch began by addressing the depth of the lot; the project meets the side and rear yard setbacks and is line with the existing houses. There is no parking included with this project. The building will contain 8-units. Colored concrete block will be used on the base, with horizontal cement siding, and projected bays on the front elevation and the south side. Additional brick has been added to the front of the building in response to Planning staff’s comments. The ceilings have been lowered to 8-feet to reduce the mass. Broughman spoke in general support of the project that was first brought to the neighborhood, not realizing the project with the lost size. The new plan has not yet been seen by all of the neighborhood stakeholders, and is not as favorable as the first version; specifically the turret is considered inappropriate. The neighborhood group would prefer the Urban Design Commission to approve the first design. Meinholz spoke to the need for new housing stock in the Mifflin neighborhood that is going to be relatively affordable. In order to pay for the brick and keep the rents affordable, the gun turrets (loft elements) were introduced. They were not well-received.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- The building has too many styles going on.
- If the turrets became another floor would that be less offensive to the neighborhood?

- This is a non-elevator building and if we add another story we'll have to put an elevator in. I can put this turret (mezzanine) on here.
- That building reminds me more of a dormitory. It fits in a different neighborhood context.
- I really like the idea of redeveloping these single-family lots. The scale of development is something the City needs; this fit is great. I'm wondering what happens when the entire block turns into this size and type development. What do we do when we've created these alleys between all of the lots?
  - It was communicated to me after submittal that Planning wants to go in the direction of bigger buildings on bigger lots. That was not communicated prior to submittal and we got that same comment from Brad Murphy: "we don't want a neighborhood full of these buildings." Having said that, this process was started before the City decided that. It sounds to me like there will not be more of these because Planning staff does not want them.
- A few of these little ones in here with some bigger buildings around them might add some interest to the area.
- I'm willing to let the Plan Commission and Common Council work out the bigger issue.
  - The fifth floor is not something I was looking for. It was in response to "we need more brick, we need more brick" and I need to pay for that somehow.
- Maybe do some mansard up there to make it look different. I think until we can see the whole thing in perspective from both sides, it's really hard to judge what the design is.
- If we were to grant an initial approval, saying the mass is appropriate, either one is appropriate (design), does it need to get to Plan Commission to get it back to us?
  - Staff responded: if we say the Plan Commission must decide on the bigger issues.
- I would like to get rid of the fifth floor. We can pass the motion like that and ask the Plan Commission to weigh in on the larger issues, rather than have us fine-tune the design.
  - So we're looking at taking off the fifth floor? The way I was able to pay for all the brick was by adding the fifth floor.

I don't think this Commission feels the need for all of that brick.

You can come back with a final design. But until we can get some of the other issues resolved, you can't be back here for final design issues. If we give initial approval we can ask the Plan Commission to weigh in on the other planning issues related to this project before we would consider the final, which would then reduce the amount of brick, etc.

## **ACTION:**

On a motion by O'Kroley, seconded by Slayton, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-1) with Harrington voting no. The motion provided for approval of the building of this mass and scale with four-stories, with materials changes and modifications to both building types provided with revised plans to be presented back to the neighborhood and that the Plan Commission decide on land use base issues that effect this project before any further consideration by the Urban Design 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 4, 4.5, 5, 5 and 6.5.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 125 North Bedford Street**

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	3	5	5	4	-	-	-	4.5
	5	6	4	-	-	-	6	5
	6	7	7	6	-	-	6	6.5
	4	4-5	5	-	-	5	6	5
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

General Comments:

- Bad site precedent for Mifflin area.
- First version with bays nice solution.
- This is a short-life building. Why do we want it?