



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 3554 E. Washington Avenue  
**Application Type:** Renovation of an Existing Building into a Grocery Store in Urban Design District No. 5. Initial/Final Approval is Requested  
**Legistar File ID #** [70449](#)  
**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Kirk Keller, Plunkett Raysich Architects, LLP | Jerreh Kujabi

**Project Description:** The applicant is seeking Initial/Final Approval for the renovation of an existing building into a grocery store. The scope of work includes new paint, awnings, windows, signage and plantings, in addition to bringing the mechanical, electrical and water services up to current building code standards. The design intent is to bring the building back to its original 1947 appearance.

**Approval Standards:** The UDC is an **approving body** as the site is within Urban Design District 5 (“UDD 5”), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design requirements and guidelines of [Section 33.24\(12\)](#).

**Adopted Plans:** The project site is within the Carpenter Ridgeway Hawthorne Truax Neighborhood Plan (the “Plan”) planning area. In the E Washington Avenue redevelopment goals, the Plan notes that locating neighborhood-oriented commercial businesses and services are encouraged. With regard to design, the Plan notes that an enhanced design aesthetic with an emphasis on landscaping and creative design elements (i.e. artwork) to improve the appearance of properties. The Plan identifies the project site as being within Site D1, which identifies the project site as being also suitable for infill multi-family development with 2-3 stories in height and with 15-25-foot front yard setbacks.

Please note that an update to the Plan is currently underway with an anticipated timeline for completion in early 2023.

## Summary of Design Considerations

Planning Division staff recommends that the UDC review the development proposal and make findings based on the requirements and guidelines of UDD 5, including those related to the following design consideration:

- **Building Design and Details.** The “*Building Design*” section of UDD 5 includes a general guideline stating “*all building elevations are of importance and should be carefully designed....*” As noted in the UDC Informational Presentation comments, glazing was identified as a design consideration as it related to the miscommunication between the function and appearance of the building. Considering this comment, staff requests that the UDC make findings on the proposed ground floor glazing and use of awnings relative to creating an active commercial entry related to this section of UDD 5.
- **Signage.** While signage is not before the Commission as part of this application request, the proposed modifications include potential signage locations. Section 3 of UDD 5 includes signage considerations including the requirement that “*Signs shall be integrated with the architecture of the building.*” Recognizing that signage plays a role in overall design aesthetic and given the proposed new architectural

detailing and ornamentation proposed, staff requests the Commission's feedback on the type and location of the proposed signage as noted on the building elevations.

- **Lighting.** UDD 5 includes general lighting considerations which are in addition to the more specific code requirements found elsewhere in Madison General Ordinance (MGO). As noted on the photometric plan, there are light levels in excess of what would be permitted pursuant to Section 10.085, MGO, including those at the building entryways. As a potential code compliance issue, the applicant is advised that an updated photometric plan, consistent with MGO Section 10.085, will be required to be submitted for review and approval prior to permitting.

In addition, while a photometric plan was included in the submittal materials, light fixture cutsheets were not included in the application materials.

- **Landscape.** Section 6 of UDD 5 includes the UDC's landscape considerations. While staff commends the applicant for the improvements to the site plan and streetscape, consideration should be given to the placement of landscape plantings relative to windows especially along the front of the building where awnings already infringe on natural light. Staff requests the Commission's review and findings on the proposed landscape plan as it relates to plant species selection, especially along the northeast wall of the building.

As a side note, while trees are proposed along the street, the final species determination, location and quantity will need to be coordinated with City Forestry and City Engineering.

- **Refuse and Mechanical Screening.** The Building Design section of UDD 5 includes a requirement that *"Mechanical elements mounting on the roof...shall be screened from views from adjacent properties and roadways in a manner consistent with requirements of public utilities."* Limited information was provided in the application materials as it relates to mechanical equipment and refuse storage area. Staff requests the Commission consider such considerations related to these standards in terms of maintaining consistency, compatibility, and integration with the building design and materials.

## Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

Staff refers the Commission to their comments from the March 30, 2022, Informational Presentation:

- Glad you're reusing and giving this building a nod back to its 1940s Deco aesthetic. What's going on on the second floor?
  - Those were at one time small hotel rooms that were converted to residential. There are no residents in the building now, and that is not part of the scope of this proposal. That will come as a second phase, right now we're concentrating on the exterior.
- I applaud restoration to its original style and flavor. The awnings are critical, along with the round window. I like the direction of this, very exciting.
  - We're also looking at rebuilding the canopies over the main entry to bring a dark accent back and continue the linear language of the building.
- I don't see this vision happening. I don't understand how you leave the second floor windows but replace the others. If you do the bottom you have to do the top.
- Is that spandrel glass facing the street at the deli counter?
  - That faces an alleyway, those windows will remain enclosed on the backside. It's not seen much, and our budget allows us to deal with the public sides of the building.
- Look for ways to bring in as much light as possible. You're covering windows with awnings, it's a small space and every window may be boarded or filled in.

- The glass facing E Washington Avenue is opened up with new aluminum commercial windows and a glass commercial door. The three windows facing Kwik Trip are vision glass also. The windows that are not slated to open up face a garage and house, the top ones face property closer to Stoughton Road and are rarely seen.
- I'd revisit the glazing options. Nothing says 'grocery store,' I thought this was a multi-family building.
- If there are no plans for the second floor because of code issues, why not remove that and have the light come down?
  - We will eventually restore the second floor to residential spaces as a Phase 2.
- Are the upper floor windows original?
  - Those are second generation and some are still in good condition. Some will be removed, others restored.
- Given the postcard you shared, it would be nice if you did anodized aluminum and paint in light gray or silver for continuity.
- He noted the upper level will be a second phase redevelopment process, can they do the exterior façade separately?
  - We are proposing all the exterior work at one time. We'll do the mechanical systems now so when we do restore the second floor it's essentially a tenant build-out infill project, when the budget allows for that.
- You show one entry door, how will that negotiate shopping carts? It could get really beat up.
  - The door will be ADA sized and our carts will be smaller than typical.
- Think about signage. There's a sign band on the top floor but it may be more appropriate located below the second floor.
  - We hope to end up with a small ground monument sign, and possible signage worked around the new round window.
- The parking could be reduced modestly for more planting along the E Washington edge of the property.
  - The goal is to maintain the current number of stalls.
- Good candidate for landscaping at the corner on E Washington Avenue.
- The awnings will be important. Be sure they are done well and detailed, not cheaply.
- The plantings in front are nicely thought out and go a long way to soften the base of the building.
- Given the number of parking stalls, no parking on E Washington Avenue and this future use, anything you can do to add to the front with planting is helpful.
- If that white picket fence is on your side I'd ask that it's painted the same color as the building.
- Nice project, long time coming.