



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 2202 – 2300 South Park Street
Application Type: New Construction in UDD 7 – Initial/Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID # [66040](#)
Prepared By: Kevin Firchow, Acting UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Kirk Biodrowski, JLA Architects | Dr. Ruben Anthony

Project Description: The applicant, The Urban League of Greater Madison, is seeking initial/final approval for a four-story multi-tenant office/retail building in the existing parking lot of The Villager Mall.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC received an informational presentation on June 30, 2021.
- The proposal and the proposed building has been determined to be a permitted use and will not require review by the Plan Commission.

Approval Standards:

The UDC is an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 7 (“UDD 7”), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in [MGO Section 33.24\(14\)](#).

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

Planning Division staff recommends that the UDC review the project, provide findings, and base their decision on the aforementioned standards for UDD 7.

Design Considerations

Below are a summary of design considerations related to relevant standards and guidelines of UDD 7. While there is generally some flexibility in the applying of design guidelines, standards are considered regulations that must be met. Please see the code for full standards.

- **Building Setbacks and Orientation.** UDD 7 requires that new buildings have a setback between one (1) and ten (10) feet from the front property line. The code allows UDC to approve buildings that are set back greater than ten (10) feet to allow for the development of usable public open spaces, such as pedestrian plazas.
Staff believes the development meets this standard.
- **Building Height.** With some limited exceptions, UDD 7 requires that new buildings are at least two stories in height. Guidelines recommend a maximum four (4) story height with the possibility for bonus stories. UDD 7 also includes a design guideline recommending that new buildings in excess of three (3) stories incorporate a front façade setback of at least fifteen (15) feet from the building face at the third floor.

Staff believes the development meets the height standards. As noted during the informational presentation, the development does not meet the suggested guideline regarding a stepback at the third floor. Staff notes other four-story and taller buildings in UDD 7 have not included this stepback.

- **Landscaping and Open Space.** UDD 7 includes a requirement that screen fences and/or landscaped buffers be provided at property edges. Guidelines recommend that there be “well-designed landscaped outdoor spaces for the use and enjoyment of employees and customers” and that “landscaping and fencing should be designed to complement the character of the building and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining properties and the public sidewalk.”

Staff believes the development meets the UDD 7 standards, but requests that UDC provide feedback related to the guidelines including the frontage planting in a roughly two-foot area along Park Street and the proposed use of stone mulch.

Summary of Previously Provided UDC Commissioner Comments

As a reference, staff refers the Commission to their comments from the June 30, 2021 informational review:

- Very compelling design and interesting project.
- Wow, tremendous job. I love everything about it. Looking at the programming and how you did the design, I’m amazed at how well that programming fits in. Don’t change a thing, it looks great. I want to see it come back in more detail.
- It looks really fantastic. The red on this one is so successful and I love how it highlights entries and the visual cues, very different use of that strong color than other proposals we’ve seen, especially in conjunction with the other materials. Maybe look at the drop-off space on the southwest, the proximity to Hughes Place, whether or not you need a bit more distance to create a safe pull-off condition. Maybe take the drop-off and shift it north. Love the materials, the way it holds the edge along Park Street, the indoor/outdoor relationships are all really nice.
- Very exciting design, very engaging.
- The concern has to do with the Goodman South Madison Library, and of course all the other functions in the Villager, but it will be impacted.
- The UDD No. 7 stepback above 3rd floor, how is that being handled?
- Personally it could help you out by saying there’s a partial stepback and knowing that probably the parking area between the Urban League and this building would remain open space, there is some relief in the building façade and it reads like a three-story building from the street. Do like that you have an adequate setback on Park Street.
- There’s really no backside to this building, it’s well-designed all the way around. That’s hard to do, especially on a site like this.
- I really like this project. Question about the structural elements on the outside of the glass, is it the intent that the brown structural elements are supposed to appear continuous and line-up on either side of the red canopy?
- Echo the positive comments, this is really a handsome building and I’m really encouraged that this is another addition to what I feel has been some nice additions to Park Street. The more we add these well-designed striking buildings to this street, it’s a nod to the importance of this neighborhood and this corridor, we should be putting really beautiful well-designed buildings, have this on one end and the Peloton on the other, the smaller projects in-between, it’s starting to turn into a nice stretch of well-designed attractive new architecture in Madison, glad this is part of it.