

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: April 23, 2014

TITLE: 501, 509 & 517 Commerce Drive –  
Amended PD(GDP-SIP) for Sixty-Units of  
Assisted Living, Revised Plans. 9<sup>th</sup> Ald.  
Dist. (31146)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Jay Wendt, Acting Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: April 23, 2014

ID NUMBER:

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

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of April 23, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for an Amended PD(GDP-SIP) for sixty-units of assisted living, revised plans located at 501, 509 & 517 Commerce Drive. Appearing on behalf of the project was David Baum, representing Catholic Charities, All Saint’s Neighborhood. Baum presented the new plans for Phase 3 of the overall campus design for a 50- unit independent building and a 60-unit CBRF with structured parking under the entire building. In order to integrate articulation and provide activity at the street level, the lower level is uncovered and provides a retail space, giving the building a 5-story appearance. The steep gable ends have been removed and turned into a hip roof, which dramatically lowered the appearance of the building, making it more in context with the rest of the site. They have provided opportunities for street level activity, softening the street level, providing a patio on the corner, terraced planting beds concealing the structured parking level, and provide access to the two levels of parking while providing an entrance to the building on the south side. Handicapped parking has been moved from the entry circle to the side to be directly accessible to the assisted living facility, allowing for a larger landscaped area and stone walls as a gateway to the entry. A strong, defined walkway aligns the axis of their steeple with the steeple up the hill. They are providing semi-private patio with water fountain for the public to use, and two semi-private areas for activity, one outside the assisted living and one outside the independent living, provide a walkway around to connect the two of them with some contemplative gardens within the space. The shape of the courtyard has been explored to be more squared off; the plan inside the building did not work because of shifting over and maintaining site lines. On the outside they have more than they originally intended, and therefore feel they have met the objective of creating that celebratory courtyard. Their client is happy with the hip roof and the general direction the campus is going. An outdoor dining area overlooks the outdoor seating area, and an outdoor patio just north of the bridge will engage the street.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- (Chair) The Secretary has pointed out several times that there is no agreement in place for the bridge. Therefore we cannot approve that as part of the design until you get that approval. And the signage on that is not going to be approved.
- On the new tall corner, the material seems to change at the second level.
  - That is our main dining facility and we wanted to call attention to that by adding more glass. The material is the same siding between the windows.
- Thanks for the importance of that central axis. That's handled well.
- There are some areas where the foundation planting is so tight to the building but then it opens up in other areas. I really like where it opens up away from the building. That brings some interest in here. The main thing is that when plants are so tight along the building, it doesn't necessarily enhance the landscape as it does soften the building, and maybe the building doesn't necessarily need to be softened, but I think it's fine overall.
- We typically have a standard of no more than 12 stalls without an island. You'll need to work out something there.
- I think you would do yourself a favor by doubling those amounts of Juneberries. I would make this so you have a canopy right there that stands out over the sidewalk so it will give you a little more structure.
- It's definitely going in the right direction, I just encourage you to refine that corner and perhaps, if there's an opportunity for a balcony.
  - The whole thing is a dining room.

Just this corner here, to continue to bring some continuity to that corner so it doesn't feel like a 3-story wood frame apartment building sitting on this metropolis. The canopy trees along here would really help to soften that edge too.
- That corner seems like such a tall rigid face. I think the architecture needs to address it and it will be enhanced by the landscaping. But architecturally it needs to be addressed as well. To me it very much looks like the 3-story building from across the street set on a 2-story building, maybe you further that and push the upper stories back 10-feet? Really articulate it that it is two buildings and then maybe you can bring some scale to the hip roofs.
- I thought about that too but it would be disastrous to the residential plans up above.
- I'm having trouble with the corner too.
- I think it's a good evolution though. It's not a drastic redo of anything.
  - You're just looking for further integration on those areas.
- Look at directing your emergency egress stairway another way so it flows more with the landscape here, or having a landing midway between the stairs. It sticks out, you really notice it.
- There's arborvitaes through here, the narrow ones at a higher elevation, I'm concerned we're going to have a series of winters like we just had, and they're not going to be successful. Check with your landscape architect about that.
- Maybe look at that stair tying into your retail patio and then create the connection to Watts Road. It may help your lower level retail.

## **ACTION:**

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the 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 rating for this project is 6.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 501, 509 & 517 Commerce Drive**

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