

Union Corners 2012

Presented by Union Corners neighborhood ad hoc committee participants

Radiance: *The radiance of deep history both emanates from a place and draws us to that place. That history is held in the minds of the people who live there. The significance of that history is made evident by the edifice those people erect in that place and in the evidence of collective caring for that place.*

Introduction: This proposal is submitted in response to the Union Corners RFP. It is the culmination and distillation of ideas generated over multiple years by hundreds of residents of the neighborhoods adjacent to Union Corners. This proposal was not prepared by professional planners or developers and it should not be judged as such. Rather, the ad-hoc neighborhood committee who prepared this proposal did so with the intention of assuring that the values of the residents are represented amongst the spectrum of proposals that will be considered by the committee and that those values will inform the evaluation process. In preparing this proposal we fulfilled each requirement of the RFP to the best of our ability with the collective expertise of various members of the community.

Finance model: This proposal includes a City Community Land Trust Partnership for a national model for “Green Co-Housing” on one component of the site. The majority of the site will be financed through a combination of conventional development models and public/private partnerships. Co-housing has been a priority of local residents. The type of “green” Co-Housing proposed here will provide a mix of safe, healthy, energy efficient (i.e. “green”) housing, including senior, assisted living, subsidized, and market rate housing options. Residents with significant equity in their homes may take on a reverse mortgage to buy into the new community housing space. The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy “Community Land Trust Partnership” (CLTP) document includes several successful case studies of the CLTP financing model (www.lincolninst.edu).

Expertise: The community membership includes individuals and families from a diverse range of professional and working class backgrounds. The membership includes artists, soil scientists, urban planners, acutely aware and involved citizenry, solar design companies, many live/ work gallery arrangements, and transportation planning advocates. Members have been working on plans for this site for over eight years. As this project moves forward the diverse expertise of the community will be a valuable asset.

Building Massing and Openspace: This proposal recognizes the advantage of phasing when developing a site of this size and significance. Construction will be phased in such that new jobs will support new housing and new retail. When built out, the building masses form their own topography, with setbacks and roofscapes that create a variety of open spaces, capture prevailing winds for summer cooling, and maximize solar gain in the winter.

History/French Battery Building: This proposal includes the reconstruction of the architecturally significant French Battery Building that used to occupy the site. The reconstruction will include as many of the original bricks that were saved during the deconstruction of that building. Significant moments in the history of the site and the relevance of its location (e.g. union soldiers camp, gateway location) will be commemorated in large-scale art installations and in a variety of artful elements and materials in the common spaces and courtyards.

MAJOR COMPONENTS

1. Parking: 950 units. The cores of the buildings contain parking structures. These structures will receive some natural light via skylights and sun tunnels. The primary parking levels will be on level with the retail commercial spaces. The exterior of each parking structure will include delivery access to adjacent businesses. Parking under a portion of plinth of the French Battery Building will be open on three sides and used as safe streets activity space during low occupancy.

2. Commercial space (120,000 square feet of commercial space at street level): The exterior of the structures at ground level is dedicated primarily to commercial space, with some live work/space on the Southern side of the site, adjacent to the residential areas. Commercial space could have two fronts – one exterior to streetscape and one interior to parking/interior complex (e.g., light manufacturing and assembly, housing).

3. Office & light manufacturing/assembly (79,000 square feet): Portions of the upper levels are dedicated to small business and light manufacturing. This space would be internal to building mass with exposure directly to parking structures. Light shafts and ventilation chimneys provide ventilation and lighting.

4. Residential (444 units): A variety of housing types is distributed throughout the site, including a relatively high percentage of affordable units: a) Above the commercial space in live/work and low-rise buildings; b) Stepped up around the South facing facades; and c) Above and wrapping around some parking structures. Units vary from hostel rooms and room and board arrangements to family unit and penthouse configurations (800 square foot average per unit). Many will have view of Capitol building and winter solar exposure. The residential areas include semi-private courtyard access in one or more directions, depending on location. A national model of “Green Co-Housing” with common rooms is located in triangle south of Winnebago. This section of the site includes a vertical farming greenhouse with fish farming. There is one parking space per unit.

5. Landscape: Landscape is integral to the healthy functioning of community space. The heart of block 2504 is a greenspace. This greenspace is transected longitudinally to simulate a natural drainage meander. This meandering element functions both as an esthetic element and as an ephemeral stream. A tree canopy will be contiguous across the site, including small green space corners, with an adopt-a-tree program plan. The Southern edge the Green Co-Housing site (2507 Winnebago) is green space with a light/commuter rail station (approx 50 ft x 300 ft). Rainwater will collect in raingardens, cisterns, and retention pools. An alternative stormwater management system will infiltrate and/or recycle stormwater from structures and hard surfaces for recycling in a central water feature. This water is used for watering of edible vegetation where it remains separate from ground water, and roadway surface run off is used for non-edible landscape including shrubs and trees. All edible vegetation must be cultivated in above ground containers due to potential risk of rare metals in residual battery waste in soils. Large tree species will be established in “structural soils” method at grade. Some trees will be established in trenches on roofs using a similar method to assure longevity. Shrub species will provide wildlife food and habitat, fragrance, and fall color. All plantings will include a variety of native species from an appropriate range of hardiness zones to increase the potential for adaptation in a climate change scenario. A water feature providing low level background sound near the East Washington frontage will help to mitigate traffic sound in the green corridor at the heart of the main block (2504 Winnebago).

6. Additional concept issues - Wellness: Stairways in all building are treated as primary travel routes and not hidden away or considered as only emergency exit routes. An exterior walkway will rise

and fall across the constructed landscape through the use of a few strategically placed exterior stairways to provide roof and courtyard access to residents and visitors. A decorative arched footbridge will connect major building components across the central green space. Private space will be adequately delineated and fenced as needed. Rooftops with housing components are intended to function as a secondary level of pedestrian streetscape and function as exercise route. Additional wellness focus throughout to be delineated.

Rationale for Design Concept:

A) Compatibility with surrounding blocks: The step-back from surrounding 1.5-2.5 story residential areas respects height issues; B) Step up of housing toward northeast on top of parking core creates artificial landscape and barrier element to traffic noise of East Washington Avenue. Care is taken to assure that noise reflection to neighborhoods across the street is minimized, with the use of slanted front to traffic; C) The site is a gateway to the downtown and a destination site, so commercial interests include local farmers market space, a small grocery outlet, basic goods and services, and art related sites (e.g. live-work galleries). The site is inherently a transitional zone from high to low density as one moves away from main traffic arteries. The core of the development is bike and pedestrian friendly, with bicycles sharing limited roadway with heavy pedestrian use. Primarily pedestrian zones receive significant pedestrian scale detail to delineate them as safe streets. The roadways and parking are designed such that motor vehicles can easily avoid the safe streets. Community car parking and bike racks are distributed across the site.

Unique design features: Parking core, microclimates with canyons and kettle/drumlin modeling. Art sculpture built into structural design (skyscape) as integral component of building matrix, not only used as site addition.

Financing: Community investment plan for local residents who wish to advantage equity in property to facilitate purchase. A combination of public/private partnerships and venture capital investment.

Marketing Plan: Market to small business interests and start-ups. Include business incubator support faculties. Health care facilities and high tech firms are desirable. Reach out regionally to internationally.

Timetable for each major phase: Development and review time for each major component is estimated to be 1.5-2 years. Groundbreaking on stage one would be 2014.

Overall economic impact (tax base generation, construction jobs, permanent jobs): average of 400 construction jobs of mixed-use green jobs per stage (five stages total and stage sizes vary). 500 jobs once built in mixed use retail, non-retail commercial, assembly/light manufacturing positions. 4-600 residents on site and immediate neighborhood support of 6-10,000 households.

Purchase price and approach to securing ownership: \$4 million. We wish to partner with major interests on purchase since the community ability to front the money is limited. Some community members do have equity in property that they will want to use for buy-in to residential or live workspace. The community wishes to facilitate cooperation and speed implementation toward useful space that reflects local values.

Union Corners ad hoc committee participants includes: Mary Anglim, Margaret Bergamini, Joe Bonardi, Betty Chewing, Fareed Guyot, Gary Karch, Tony Keshena, Larry Lundy, Gretta Wing Miller, Matthew Miller, Joe Mingle, James Montgomery, John Steines, Larry Stephens, Sue Thering, Anne Walker, Caroline Werner

Due North across entire Union Corners site
Radiance, 2012



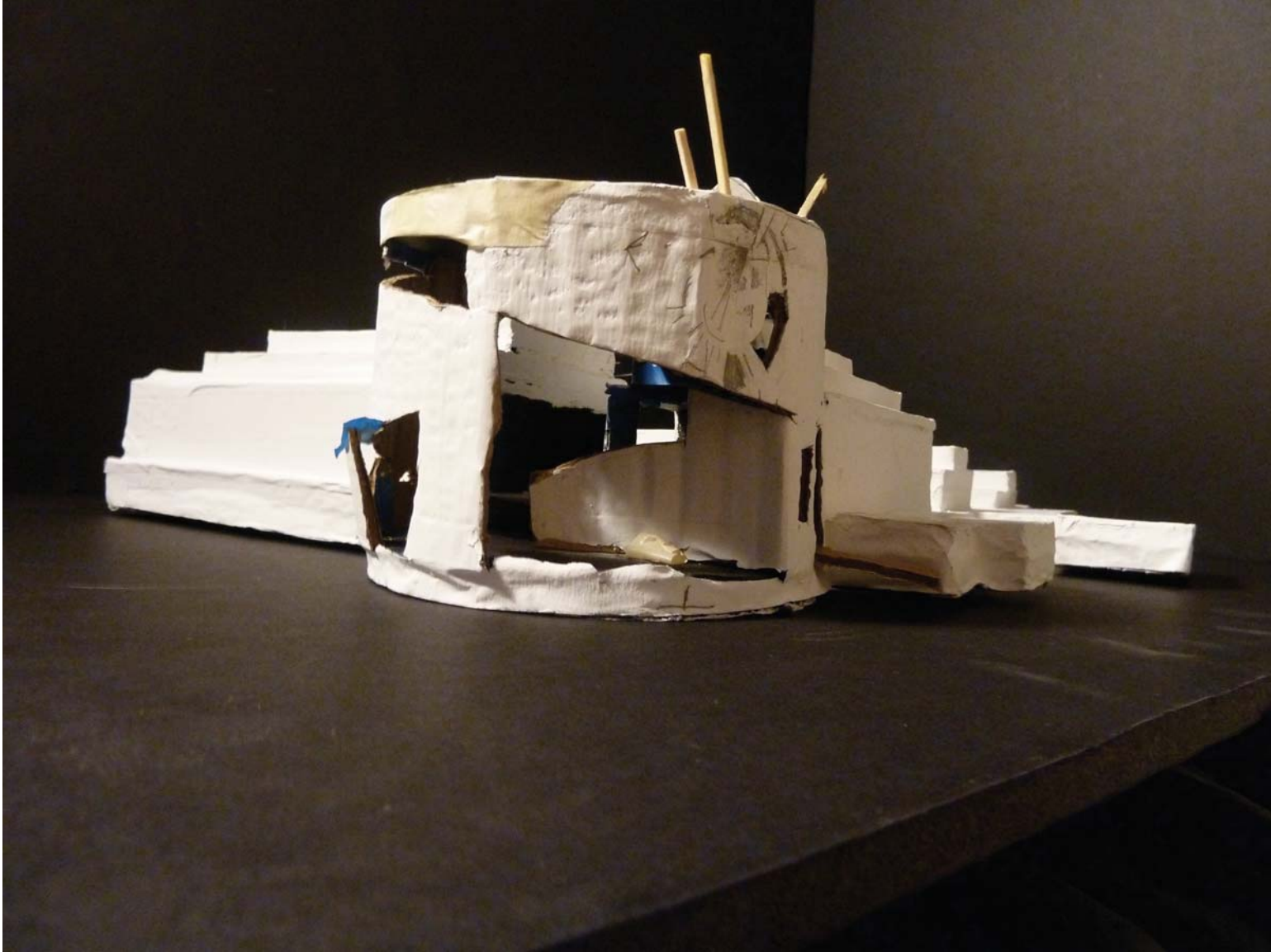


Facing Northeast across entire Union Corners site
Radiance, 2012



Central greenspace wedge between building masses with dry waterway leading toward restored French Battery Building raised on plinth
Facing southeast across property, East Washington at bottom of photo, afternoon light. Radiance, 2012





South view across 2504 Winnebago Ave from about 6th St

Radiance, 2012



Site plan Union Corners,
Union Corners 2012
Presented by Union Corners neighborhood ad hoc committee participants
26 July, 2012

John Steines
3327 Chicago Avenue, Madison WI., 53714
jsteines@gmail.com
608-251-1893



Scale supplied with model @ 1 inch = 20 feet
Photograph of model displayed

West view across 2504 Winnebago, Radiance 2012



Due North across entire Union Corners site
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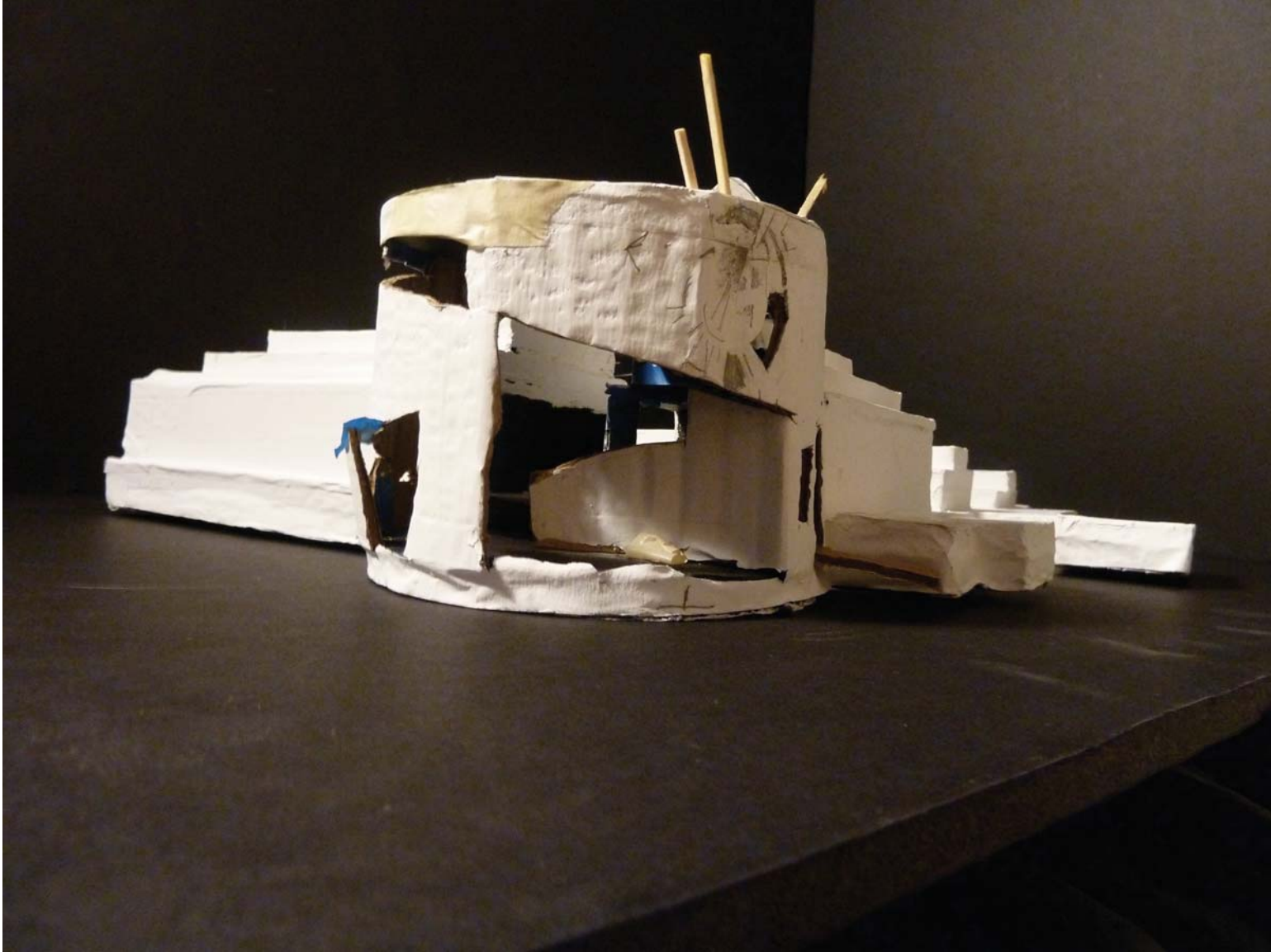


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