

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: December 15, 2021

TITLE: 700-740 Regent Street - Planned Development (PD), New Residential Building Containing Approximately 363 Apartments. 8th Ald. Dist. (68730)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Kevin Firchow, Acting Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: December 15, 2021

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Tom DeChant, Lois Braun-Oddo, Craig Weisensel, Christian Harper, Rafeeq Asad, and Jessica Klehr.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of December 15, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a Planned Development (PD) located at 700-740 Regent Street. Registered and speaking in support were Linda Irving, Robert Muller, Renato Gilberti and Joseph Mayer, all representing Trinitas Ventures. Registered in support but not wishing to speak was Adam Winkler, representing The Alexander Company.

The proposed residential development would infill a section of the parking field behind two office buildings as part of an existing Planned Development. The 2012 Downtown Plan noted this as an underutilized site. They are proposing 343 residential units, and 328 parking spaces for residents and to serve as replacement for the office building parking. Architecture shows a four-sided building, with a breakdown of the massing, significant breaks in volumetric shifts, and removal of part of the top floor for an amenity deck with a line of balconies adjacent. A break and material change in the middle helps this read as two buildings. They are introducing a parklike setting and terracing adjacent to the building and adjacent to the bike path. An active façade screen at the parking levels will engage cyclists and pedestrians. The majority of residents will approach from the bike path side and campus but entrances equally address Regent Street. The building is further broken down by insets in the façades and changes in material. The entire base is activated along the Regent Street façade, which is presumed to be the ride-share arrival point. Floor plans were reviewed, noting a bike storage room with cycling related amenities. Outdoor terraces are proposed on multiple levels, as well as a sheltered interior courtyard. The top amenity level has a pool terrace and fitness room. Building materials include ribbed vertical panel with varied striation in a two color palette to create rhythm.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I like this building. I'm not a fan of the way the materials are displayed. I do like the massing, but I struggle with the randomness of the balconies, more consistency, may not belong in all the locations

shown. Once you develop your renderings the material will work itself out. That courtyard, I don't know that it will work well for you, unless I'm misunderstanding its purpose.

- It's a light well, our intention is to optimize the ability of the site to handle units. There's plenty of precedent for a light well of that size, we'd introduce potentially a mural, create an active space at the base of it, something bright or white. The angle is southeast to southwest, for a good deal of the day there will be direct sunlight hitting the top to bounce off the walls and bring light further down.
- The original intent of the balconies was to keep them contained within those frames. As we refine the design we are finding additional locations for balconies. The Ceraclad is limited to certain locations; the gray bands are where they would be a vertical pattern.
- We're currently doing a rendering with the actual materials to study how they work together.
- Your plan says courtyard, which is a very different definition to me than light well.
- The jog along the tracks where you're breaking up the building is really successful, it looks dynamic, breaks up the façade as you go higher over the entrance, which is subtle and a point of interest.
- I have concerns about feeling safe at night along that dark bike path and having your entry there, this is a backside walk. During the day it is fine, but at night it helps if you can see your entrance. I would suggest a bump out or something like that and I would question people wanting to walk back there at night.
 - I absolutely hear you. It would be our priority that we incorporate the right pedestrian lighting along the bike path, but also low level lighting at the base of the building. We have cameras at all of our entry points. The illumination level at the leasing lobby off the carport and pathway will be quite evident.
- I like the building, the textural effect of the cladding, long linear buildings need something like that. I don't mind the perceived randomness of the slots and set-ins, I would like to see more balconies. Would like to see a rendering of the experience of that light well, maybe a daylight or shadow study of that area. The entrance, right now it's going to need some kind of light element, not only to address the comment about safety, but it doesn't have an overhang or any other queue that it is the main entrance, it could use something.
- Look at this a bit more fundamentally as a piece of urban design, and remember our response to the hotel just up the bike path. Similarly, they turned their back on the bike path, this building is not on a street so the path becomes the defacto street. The applicant even indicated people would be coming in via the bike path. I'd like to challenge them to take that lobby and run it east-west. I know it effects parking but from an urban design standpoint that's what we should be looking at as a Commission.
- Not only how people are going to come and go but embracing and activating that north side. Design wise and form you've hit it, but the amenity space should be the outdoor space. Consider this to be the street. I would even challenge the roof, greenspace can be used all throughout the year. What is the actual usability of that swimming pool?
- Activating the bike path side, at least extending the lobby into the parking area, flipping it is an excellent idea. Taking the bicycle entrance and making a bike center like the one downtown, making a retail space with a storefront presence. I have a real concern about the amount of inactive space along the bike path. To the balconies, I actually love the randomness of them, it's part of the interest.
- They have to make sense, there's a little bit too much randomness that starts to detract.
 - The challenge of the narrowness of the site where we are replacing existing parking has bounds to the north and south. To make parking work we don't have the ability to pick up the leasing lobby and turning it on the bike path.

ACTION:

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.