

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: March 7, 2007
TITLE: 2340, 2416, 2504, 2507 Winnebago Street (Union Corners) – PUD-SIP, Five Buildings with 140 Condominium Units and 63 Rental Units and Commercial/Retail in Urban Design District No. 5. 6 th Ald. Dist. (04486)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: March 7, 2007	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Paul Wagner, Lisa Geer, Robert March, Bruce Woods, Todd Barnett, Cathleen Feland, Lou Host-Jablonski and Michael Barrett.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 7, 2007, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a PUD-SIP for five buildings with 140 condominium units and 63 rental units and commercial/retail in Urban Design District No. 5 located at 2340, 2416, 2504, 2507 Winnebago Street (Union Corners). Appearing on behalf of the project were Lance McGrath, Todd McGrath, Paul Cuta, Christopher Thiel, Marc Schellpfeffer, Colin L. Godding, Ald. Judy Olson and Att. Bill White. Plans as presented emphasized the address of comments relevant to Buildings A and C with the French Battery Building as previously proposed. It was noted that all buildings within the initial use have been registered for LEEDS certification, a commitment requested by the Commission with initial approval of the project. The water tower element has been removed and replaced with a below-grade tank to be utilized for landscaping and site irrigation. A review of modifications to Building A emphasized address of the corner issue with the provision of landscape features and potential outdoor seating area. The modifications to Building A include vertical fabric sunshades, introduction of more light along with the integration of brick with the glass wall elements of the various building elevations. Building C has been modified to provide a variation in overall height with its various components; in substitution for a previously proposed uniform building height; in combination with adjustments to parapet heights. The removal of the previously proposed saddle element at its center. Building C also features the removal of eyebrow sunshades, along with the incorporation of a pedestrian pass-thru at the center of the building. Following the presentation, the Commission noted the following:

- Appreciate the improvement to the architecture on both Buildings A and C. It was noted that the changes to the corner Building “A” had not been seen by the neighborhood according to Ald. Olson.
- Prefer Building C without the saddle roof. Still an issue with transparency of the center of the building, still big and blank as was noted with previously comments on the project. Consider pulling apart adjoining elevators and rotate 90 degrees to create a stronger visual connection between adjoining streets. The taller portions of Building C’s upper sections appear stark without detailing such as clear story windows with detailing, taller floor to ceiling heights on upper floors, at cornice detailing, etc. In

addition, not sold on curtain wall corners. It was noted by the applicant that it was their intent to return with final materials and elevation details for Building C.

- Relevant to the site and landscape plan, like overall site layout, articulation, hardscape and materials, including central mall's sense of place; problem with plant selection and design of hedges of evergreen surrounding more natural plantings. Need to determine direction so as plantings do not fight each other, e.g. tall trees with prairie plants okay initially but eventually will shade out in addition to questioning the use of borderline trees such as Hemlock and Beech in the urban setting. Plants won't survive in the long run and will require replacement.
- Building A is much improved but still not there, still a problem with the lack of scale at corner, needs layers of scale architecturally with all the undifferentiated glass not enough architecturally for urban corner in an urban neighborhood, needs a door/entry even more. Building A's relationship to the corner calls out for a grand entrance.
- Like the cut-thru connection in Building C, the south side of the entry is underdeveloped.
- Relevant to lighting, correct the discrepancy between the catalog reference showing high-pressure sodium fixtures relevant to the use of metal halide fixtures as noted within the plans.
- Building A needs a strong architectural vision not to be designed by committee. The architectural vision should be guided by a strong sense of urban design; a glassy under-detailed corner doesn't work. The lack of detailing at corner is still an issue as was previously. It is too minimal, need to carry detailing around to corner.

ACTION:

On a motion by Host-Jablonski, seconded by Woods, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (7-1) with Barnett voting no. The motion to refer cited the need to address the comments relevant to both Building A and C especially addressed of the corner with Building A as well as landscape issues. Building A needs a stronger treatment with more layers of scale that are removed from the "modernist approach"; corners and key vistas must be addressed with urban design. A whole blank corner with no reason to come there; need something to hold corner area.

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 ratings for this project are 6, 6, 6, 6.5, 7, 7, 8 and 9.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 2340, 2416, 2504, 2507 Winnebago Street (Union Corners)

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	8	6	6	7	-	7	6	6.5
	-	7	-	-	-	-	7	7
	5	A:3/C:6	7	7	-	5	5	6
	9	7	9	9	-	8	9	8
	7	5-8	5-8	-	-	6	7	7
	6	6	5	-	-	-	5	6
	9	9	7	9	-	8	10	9

General Comments:

- The corner building is still not fully cooked. This is a key gateway into the City and into this project and good urban design demands a better scaled, layered and detailed architecture.
- Some of the plants chosen for this project are marginally hardy and urban tolerant, especially in a more commercial setting, reconsider the boxwood, beech and hemlock. Need more diversity in the bioinfiltration areas, especially the herbaceous plants to ensure success. Tall prairie mix will not be maintainable under a Bosquet of trees. Still think the Milwaukee Street corner is missing its potential.
- Verify that lighting will be metal halide. The fundamental problem with building A is in the planning of the whole corner parcel, including building B.
- Kudos on: a) Green elements, especially stormwater management; b) Building C’s central passageway. Deficiencies: a) Traffic; this should be a main street experience only; the curvilinear suburban bypass is inappropriate; the width and broad turning radii promote suburban speeds, especially at the roundabout; b) Building A belongs in a suburban office park; it’s lack of a prominent active corner entry kills it as an urban building.
- C building center “pavilion” is stark – needs to be truly transparent.
- Building A is very nice except for the corner on East Washington and Milwaukee. Building C needs just a little tweaking.
- Building C needs further refinement to central atrium. Overall building design not completely resolved.
- Corner of A needs tweaking; would be better with uniform height.