

AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: November 8, 2017

TITLE: 118-122 State Street
New Development of a Hotel in the
Down Core

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: November 8, 2017

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Amanda Hall, Lois Braun-Oddo, Cliff Goodhart, Rafeeq Asad and Tom DeChant.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of November 8, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of new development of a hotel in the Downtown Core located at 118-122 State Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Eric Nordeen, representing 122 State Street Group, LLC; Jeff Vercauteren, Ken Gowland, Kraig Kalashian, Bryon Eagon, Michael Younggren and Kathy Bailey, all representing Ascendant Holdings, LLC; Kate Buska, representing Provenance Hotels; and Connie Barbian. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak was Peter Ostlind, representing Capitol Neighborhoods. Registered and speaking in opposition were Franny Ingebritson and Fred Mohs.

The development team presented updated plans showing how the design has evolved, with a strong desire to get the State Street façade correct. Proposed 3D renderings of corridor views were shared, with the new proposal including part of the existing to remain. Before and after views of Dayton and Carroll show no skywalk. They described the detail, rhythm, and scale of the proposed façade, incorporating a base, middle and top. Aerial views showed massing, existing and proposed. Night views were shown. The team discussed guiding principles, and believe they have met the PD standards and concerns expressed in the Planning staff memo. They have participated in neighborhood groups and staff meetings.

Peter Ostlind spoke on behalf of Capital Neighborhoods. They have met with the applicant multiple times; however, the neighborhood is not in uniform agreement. Some liked what the project could bring, others were concerned about the integrity of the Downtown Plan. Higher quality than what meets standards. They were under the impression the project would be 9 stories or nothing. They submitted a letter that outlines their concerns. He stressed the activities in the cul-de-sac and saving 4 trees on State Street and 1 tree on Carroll Street, as well as concerns with the 5th story walkout layout.

Fred Mohs spoke in opposition having been involved in the design of downtown. He referred to other projects exceeding the Downtown Plan, and expressed concerns regarding the State Street relationship and parking. He hopes the Commission will reject it in its current form, and keep the project at 6-stories.

Franny Ingebritson spoke in opposition, stating that the downtown height map must be maintained. This allows 6-stories, but 9-stories is unacceptable.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- How far are the glazing pockets projecting? Dayton/Carroll views have a reveal and too much shadow. Design has progressed a lot – like it.
 - The current location has a 14” projection to avoid a flat façade. We took our cue from historic buildings. The modulation can be reduced, should they all be the same? We have a flat condition on State Street. Should the upper be the same as the lower?
- Yes, keep same. Have uniformity around it. Not different on each side.
- The height is a big issue. Currently it’s 6-stories. Ian’s Pizza building is 4 stories, yours still matches that datum. The current building is the only one on State Street at 6-stories.
- Speak to State Street loading/unloading and how it affects the other businesses. Where do you plan to park occupants?
 - Various businesses currently utilize the cul-de-sac for delivery purposes and trash removal. The lion’s share of that demand is driven by the Concourse Hotel, who compared to our project is about three times the size of ours. From a use perspective and intensity of deliveries, they are higher than what we’ll have. The other existing uses of Ian’s and Michelangelo’s, the 30 West Mifflin office building, we’ve had separate meetings with these groups to figure out the good neighbor strategy and coordinate together. There are ways to stage the uses. The first impression is going to be Carroll Street. We do have a time lapse camera now in the cul-de-sac, and we’ve heard from people that there is already too much traffic and congestion there. We’ll be able to have some hard data on all of that in a few weeks. We’re being asked by Traffic Engineering to have a pretty thoughtful approach to this. We’re also proposing widening of the street, remove the perpendicular parking spaces and the bump out, which will effectively widen the street and allow for better flow of vehicles in and out. As far as the guest parking is concerned, we’ll be going a 100% valet parking, there is no self-parking option. The AC Hotel has data that we can look to. We will be contracting the lease spaces in parking decks in the vicinity of this facility, but not including the City-owned parking deck across the street.
- To clarify, you’re proposing removal of all the on-street parking that is there now?
 - We’ve had conversations with all the stakeholders on the cul-de-sac and we have unanimous support for that. At the expense of losing 8 parking spaces we gain a far better pedestrian experience. And we’re creating a use that translates into a lot of dollars for local merchants.
- I’m having a difficult time finding that the project meets PD standards 2e & 2h as it relates to the design of the building. I look at the building and I don’t see anything in its design, in its proportions, how it relates to any of its neighbors that does the same thing that some of these relevant precedents show us. I’m confused about the proportions of the building; it’s got two middles and two tops. There’s a real lack of elegance that I see in some of the precedents. That speaks to some of the things that relate to the scale, mass and rhythm of buildings and their relationships to street frontages, and how this building would do the same. And finally demonstrating how the excess heights demonstrates a higher quality building that could be achieved, I don’t see that this design is saying “this is the reason to give us 9 stories.” In my mind I can’t justify saying that it meets the approval standards.
- I like the idea of activating Carroll Street and how it changes State Street. I agree regarding height standards, this will show the next development and pretty soon it’s not just the one building that exceeds the height standards. You’ve shown a lot of pictures of the one sliver that didn’t obscure the Capital, but pretty soon if you multiply that down the road, it changes the character of an historic area. I think you could do a 6-story and have a nice building; it doesn’t have to be 9 stories.

- I'm not universally opposed to the 9-stories, however I find this architectural solution, because it veers towards "traditional," has become heavier so it imposes itself more so at 9-stories. A much more transparent, lighter weight contemporary building, at least on the upper floors, disappears much more quickly and doesn't intrude, particularly the corner of Carroll and Dayton. What I do like is the rhythm along the street, I agree with the smaller portals. I find the fenestration very busy. If there was a way to lighten that mass, it would be less oppressive.
- If you look at the Tenney buildings, you can get that street experience without making it try to appear as three different buildings.
- I really like this, I think this is an excellent use of space, a way of creating density of commercial square footage in a space where there is no space. I really appreciate the way you used all the square footage that you have. As Madison becomes the City that it is going to be in the future, while our viewscapes are important, we're going to need to adjust to some denser realities where buildings are going to get taller. I appreciate that this building is not in my opinion imposing on State Street, it does have that stepback to allow for commercial valuable space and still really does keep in the general traditions of the neighborhood quite well.
- I'm not opposed to the height; if you can do it lower I think you should. That front doesn't have to be three different schemes. The Carroll Street symmetry could be done on State Street. This fits with that area context. I don't think that every building has to look like the one next to it. I like the progression of where you are now.
- Is 6-stories out of the question?
 - It is for the proposed use; it doesn't work for our operator. We feel there are unique attributes to this site and it's deserving of something like this. There are some unique characteristics that are worth consideration.

The Chair reminded the Commission that they have to act per the PD standards. It is difficult to grant initial approval of the mass given those existing standards. Most of the conceptualization of height derived from an analysis of State Street and how we want State Street to look in terms of 4 and 6, and this particular parcel with its Carroll Street frontage, is a parcel that's both State Street and non-State Street, so you're now caught in this. But the way the City plan is, it applies to the whole parcel. It would be ill of us to say that these standards could be met the way that it is; it would take adjustment from the City Council to the Downtown Plan to recognize the uniqueness of the parcels on two frontages and to change the height limit in the plan to allow it to proceed, so as not to set precedence. But that's not before us.

The applicant asked for clarification. The 118 portion, respecting the opinions of the Commission, going back to the design at the street level, that piece is very sensitive in that no one wants to lose any bit of historic fabric. If the project is referred and we continue to work on it, we need Commissions to work with us to understand how that factors into your comments that you're making about one building, not three.

- The Carroll Street façade is the most successful elevation.
- It looks like three different buildings but it's not.

ACTION:

On a motion by Goodhart, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-0). The motion to refer provided for the following:

- The applicant shall respond to comments and come back to the Commission.
- The development should appear as one building, not three.

- Resolve of the State Street/Carroll Street loading/unloading.
- Consider consistency of elevation detail projections on façades of Dayton/Carroll Streets.
- Provide more information on how the project meets the PD design requirements, specifically 2e and 2h.
- Consider a more transparent, lighter façade for the upper stories.