

AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** August 17, 2011

TITLE: 201 West Mifflin Street – Public **REFERRED:**
 Building, Madison Public Library. 4th **REREFERRED:**
 Ald. Dist. Comprehensive Design
 Review of Signage for the Renovated
 Madison Public Library (20291) **REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: August 17, 2011 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Henry Lufler, Todd Barnett, Marsha Rummel, Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins and John Harrington.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of August 17, 2011, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Comprehensive Design Review sign package for the Madison Public Library located at 201 West Mifflin Street. Appearing on behalf of the project was Gene Post, representing the City of Madison Public Library. Appearing in support and available to answer questions were Brian Reed and Bryan Cooper, representing the Madison Public Library. The primary subject of the Comprehensive Design Review is wall signage on the sides of a vertical support for a canopy that is an extension of the building. Post provided a detailed reviewed of the signage elements requiring Comprehensive Design Review and their locations that consist of two oversized wall signs at Fairchild and Mifflin Streets. They are proposing to add promotional banners. The sign lettering will be zinc to match the building materials. Cooper discussed an encroachment agreement they are entering into with the City, which has been drafted and approved. The Secretary stated there is no allowance for the use of the right-of-way for signage purposes outside of public safety or temporary events. The Sign TAST Team is currently in the process of working out the language or amendments to this ordinance. Because this property is in the C4 District it is still required to be shown at this time for context purposes. The banners cannot be approved until the charter ordinance is completed.

Rummel inquired about the sign facing the wrong way on a one-way street. Barnett agreed and also wondered about marking the building for pedestrians and people coming from State Street; is there another way to handle the banner and flip the library sign to the other side? Smith found the signage an integral part of the architecture and found the banners “tacked on,” temporary and borderline silly. He sees the signs as having lasting impact and could be on a color wheel that could change over time. Slayton liked the sign and asked about the Overture and the potential for blocking views with this sign. Cooper responded there has been no comment. Harrington liked the sign package and suggested the banners be larger and more dynamic. Huggins agreed and encouraged them to think along the lines of Metropolitan Museum to make them more exciting. She inquired about people sitting or climbing on the monument signs and would they be able to withstand that. Post replied that they are very heavy duty with steel cores. Huggins asked about the ratios of the signs and how they arrived at these sizes. He further responded that they reacted to the nice plaza at the one corner in relation to the building and the needs of wayfinding. The letters on the wall will stick out roughly one-foot in order to discourage people

from sitting on the wall or placing bags in front of the signage. O’Kroley commented that the banners should be larger. She also noted that because the sign is illuminated on both sides that it comfortably sits within the curtain wall perimeter. Rummel asked if the signage will include naming for example “Schwab” as other libraries are named. Cooper stated the library is trying to rebrand themselves as the Madison Public Library. Smith thought the gasket was a mistake in terms of adding another material.

ACTION:

On a motion by O’Kroley, seconded by Barnett, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of the Comprehensive Design Review of signage with a finding that the standards were met. The motion was passed on a vote of (8-0). The motion provided for the move or change of material of the base on both sides of the drop-off box.

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, 7, 7 and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 201 West Mifflin Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	7	-	8	7
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	6.5	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	7	-	7	7
	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	7

General Comments:

- “Library” sign good, the banner needs refinement.
- Charter Ordinance for sign in right-of-way seems questionable – library in this location for 50 years – do we really need large wayfinding sign for pedestrians coming from West Washington Avenue? Banners can be larger and more dynamic. Monument/ground sign underwhelming. Effort to rebrand library signage through system welcome but perhaps too unassuming (boring). Concern that people will sit on low wall with signage.
- Option to vinyl letters?
- Interesting sign package, but needs a dynamic – hopefully the banners will do that.
- Ground sign is the weak place.