AGENDA # 7

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	**PRESENTED:** October 4, 2017
TITLE: 131 South Fair Oaks Avenue – New Development of a 5-Story Mixed-Use Building. 6th Ald. Dist. (49009) *Advisory Recommendation to Plan Commission*	**REFERRED:** **REREFERRED:** **REPORTED BACK:**
AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary	**ADOPTED:** **POF:**
DATED: October 4, 2017	**ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Richard Wagner*, Chair; Dawn O'Kroley, Cliff Goodhart, John Harrington, Rafeeq Asad and Lois Braun-Oddo.

*Chair Wagner disclosed that he is a member and Secretary of the Botanical Society at Olbrich, which has the gardens and supports them to the south of this site, but do not own any of the lands.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of October 4, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** to give an advisory opinion to the Plan Commission on the new development of a 5-story mixed-use building located at 131 South Fair Oaks Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Michael Thorson, Joseph Lee and Jeff Vercauteren and Adam Fredendall, all representing Inventure Capital Group.

Planning Division staff recommended Urban Design Commission review of the project. Staff gave highlights from the Planning staff report of September 19, 2017, and asked the applicant to speak to those points. The mixed-use development would contain 161 units from studios to 2-bedrooms, in four-stories above parking with rents coming in below the downtown area. The commercial and retail space fronts Fair Oaks Avenue and they are in discussion with a coffee shop, yoga studio, their design firm, an entrepreneurial space, a restaurant and a salon. Some of the amenities (in plans and in discussions) include a green roof, solar on the roof (200 kw goal) which affords power contracts, the nearby bike path (services, maintenance/repair, restrooms), club center, community room, fitness center, and a nice 3.5 acre site with mature trees on the south and east. A dog park could be a future possibility for the community. There are environmental issues related to the site, including dense environmental contamination, all of which would be remediated during the process. They have submitted to the DNR and are working through those plans with their environmental engineers. They held a neighborhood meeting in June, and those concerns were further reviewed by the SASY development review committee. They made changes to the building to respond to neighborhood concerns, and then met with the neighborhood a second time, and received generally positive feedback. The neighborhood expressed strong interest in a retail presence with this development. The building was moved back 35-feet from the neighbors across the railroad, reduced the size of the building by almost 13%, brought the density and the mass/unit counts down and preserved old mature trees to the south and east. The site is setback from the wetland areas by 75-feet, and outside of the railroad easement area. They have worked with grading and the site has a significant drop along the rail corridor; they have since pushed down a few feet to avoid filling over 5-feet, with the concern being

how the building presents itself on Fair Oaks Avenue. As you get to the northern side of the site it is flush, resulting in sunken patios for residential entries. Parking access is below the green roof to the north and south, with surface parking wrapping around the back. Building height measures at 57-feet from Fair Oaks Avenue, comparatively Madison Kipp is a 30-feet presence with the stacks going up about 75-feet. Aerial views were shown. They vegetated the parking wall and created openings both for daylight and surveillance purposes. There are community-oriented amenities on the roof for the residents (garden, pool, terraces, landscaped seating areas). Building materials include three materials to keep it simple: charcoal metal panel, cream cast stone masonry and brick masonry. The development is in front of the Commission for an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission, with the primary question being if this is compatible with the existing and proposed uses for the neighborhood. This is the first project going into the infill pocket on Fair Oaks Avenue.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- What is the distance between the planting wall and the planting zones?
    - The trellis is just off the wall and there's a green buffer before the drive.
- The approval of the building height, density and whether this use is compatible with the underlying zoning of TE is all something the Plan Commission is responsible for? So what are we advising, because as far as I understand the ordinance the Plan Commission asks us to make an advisory recommendation, not City staff.
- This is an unusual situation and it was placed on the agenda without actually consulting me. It's here, we can decide that we can make comments and send them on to the Plan Commission, or we cannot make comments.
    - I think it's partly because our original submission was lacking in some detail.
- Your areas of expertise are design. Although the zoning aspect of this may be met, there is still the design component that staff feels is quite significant for this project, so that's what they're looking to you for.
- But we don't have the most updated plans in our packets so it's kind of hard to comment.
- Do we have any comments on the five-stories or do we want to leave that to the Plan Commission?
- It seems substantial for what I would anticipate future development being in this area. It seems large.
- I agree with Dawn; I feel like I would almost want to see a stepback at the fourth floor. It's not necessarily the overall height but it is massive along Fair Oaks Avenue. The homes nearby are very small.
- The 300-foot long mass on Fair Oaks, sufficiently articulated?
- Yes.
- I heard that the residents like East High School and the local elementary school that are primarily brick. The metal panel, the brick, the cast stone is maybe a little bit too much. There's enough with the retail on the ground floor and the articulation of the balconies and the way the building's broken up that you don't really need three primary materials.
- I heard articulation seems OK but the material composition should be simplified. Toward masonry.
- I would agree with that.
- The appearance of the parking level and how that's going to appear from the Capital Bike Trail.
- I think the new one satisfies that 100%.
- What kind of vines are you putting on that green wall?
    - We're working with Vierbicher; it was recommended a Engleman Ivy or Bittersweet.
- Bittersweet gets big and will actually break up that trellis. Have you thought about hops?
- Along Fair Oaks, all of the balconies that are popping out, since that's a busier street on that elevation perhaps you could have recessed balconies, also so you're not seeing the bottom side of all those framed balconies.

- In terms of the landscape you might try to pull a bit more from the wetlands in the back part, kind of tie it to the wetlands.
- Consider carefully with the new entrance to the adjacent Olbrich property.

ACTION:

The Urban Design Commission took no action on this item, but did give their advisory opinion to the Plan Commission as follows:

- Consider a stepback at the fourth floor – this is a massive building and nearby homes are very small.
- Simplify the exterior building material composition.
- Carefully consider the appearance of the parking level from the Capital Bike Trail.
- Provide more information on the vines located on the green wall.
- Consider recess and underside finish of the balconies along Fair Oaks Avenue.
- Consider landscaping design to pull in more from the wetlands at the back of the park.
- Consider carefully the new entrance that is adjacent to Olbrich property.