

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** July 1, 2020

TITLE: 2021 Wheeler Road – Residential Building Complex. (60923) **REFERRED:**

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: July 1, 2020

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Tom DeChant, Lois Braun-Oddo, Christian Harper, Craig Weisensel, Rafeeq Asad, Syed Abbas and Shane Bernau.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of July 1, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new Residential Building Complex located at 2021 Wheeler Road. Registered and speaking in support were Ray White and Melissa Huggins, both representing The Annex Group. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Kraig Gallagher and Joy Skidmore. Registered in support but not wishing to speak was Dale Erlandson. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was J. Keith.

White introduced the master plan development that is in early stages and will be annexed into the City south of Wheeler Road and Packers Avenue. The proposal includes approximately 315 residential units. He shared a site survey which shows a 70-foot drop from the high point on the west down into the southeast portion near Packers Avenue. A portion of the site will become an addition to White Tail Ridge Park. The round element is a water tank and single-family home residential lots to the south. New public streets and a looping road will be constructed on the south along with another connection to Wheeler Road. Context images were shown. The south end of property would be 6 single-family lots transitioning into two-story townhomes, with the north housing 16-unit buildings and two 3-story buildings with basement parking, three 6-plex buildings and a series of 16-unit buildings. A series of stormwater ponds are shown going down the hill with the desire to handle it all on-site. The backup plan would be tying into stormwater across County land that ends in a wetland. This development would be a range of 1-4 bedroom apartments, affordable and workforce housing.

The Commission discussed the following:

- To what level are you planning for stormwater retention, 100 year flood?
 - We are planning to meet the new Madison ordinances, our civil engineer is not here. They are basins that would infiltrate.
 - At the very least the stormwater management will improve the current existing condition in terms of how it's running off the farmland. We're hopeful we'll retain all of the water on-site and if not, we are working with Dane County Airport to see if we can tap into one of their easements

that will take the water across Packers Avenue and the airport property, jumping over the Yahara and dumping into an existing wetland on the other side.

- Appreciate how the plan works with the topography. Still in the works with looking at how to incorporate parking into the buildings or slightly larger buildings to reduce on-site parking, particularly the east edge, northeast units. There is some 90 degree parking that seems maybe excessive but overall I like the plan. I think I would look at how to soften the edges of the stormwater devices to make them more organic or a landscape feature amenity and less an engineering device.
- Are there inconsistencies between the older plan and this, given the trade off with underground parking or is this a real concern?
- (Tim Parks) I would say the density in the building forms are a concern, it is understandable the desire to put some of the parking within the structures. Basically there's a potential fundamental disagreement between elements of this plan and the Cherokee Special Area Plan. In our estimation a finer grained development pattern than parts of what we're seeing here. Elements of the proposal are consistent with the special area plan recommendations: the townhouses on that southern tier east of the closest portion of the park addition and the single-family lots backing up to White Tail Ridge, but the 16 and 60-unit buildings are the primary question mark that we need to explore further with the applicant. This is the most evolved we've seen the development in our conversations so far. But there are questions about whether this was the nature of development anticipated for this site how it was laid out with the special area plan 13 years ago.
- To what degree does the new stormwater ordinance constrain the site?
 - Were still digging into the details of that, still have to do soil boring tests. Ultimately our goal is to meet the requirements and the choice to include 16 units and 60 units was directly in response to the Alder's concern about the greenspace and stormwater. This is a 13 year old plan and this is different.
- This project is next to Ald. Kemble's district. Residents do have some concerns. I'll echo what Shane said – almost close to 80,000 square feet of stormwater. It's interesting to us as a Commission how we want to see those designed. Especially with affordable housing. What safety features will be used with that amount of water? If the water stays there we should look into your stormwater design.
- Wheeler Road really is not supposed to be the connector and to make additional cut through streets where you'd have increased traffic near a large park, you'll need to calm the traffic down and decrease the amount of cut throughs, make it more accessible for bikes and pedestrians to get to the park.
- My only concern about that is it seems like Packers takes a pretty fast turn right at that intersection. Wondering about your suggestion that becomes the primary entrance to the development?
- It's 45 mph and will have to slow down but instead of multiple pathways, maybe it's a roundabout. Trying to get cars to stay on these feeder road and not making so many pathways in that you get additional traffic through single-family neighborhoods.
- (Parks) We are encouraging of that connection being made but there's a home sitting right there. Ultimately we won't have traffic from this site having to go out to Packers through White Tail Ridge. In terms of directing traffic up to Wheeler it can probably handle more but it's the primary means of entry into Cherokee from Packers. That intersection is adequate now but we wouldn't want to overload it. There might be additional development at Wheeler and Packers itself, we wouldn't want to force all the traffic from this development there.
- We've discussed the discrepancies in the 2007 plan and the developer's rationale for the development. Doesn't sound like there's a lot of opposition to a larger development than what the plan calls for.
- This is affordable housing. Having it so far at the end of the City, public transportation is a concern. How will they connect? Preferably this type of affordable housing should have amenities and be close to public transportation access.

- Should all affordable housing be high density? Maybe there are options that are for people with a car. It is quite a departure from the plan. Any strong objection to that, it would be fair for us to articulate that now.

ACTION:

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