

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** February 24, 2021

TITLE: 4800 Voges Road Building #2, New  
Construction in UDD No. 1. 16<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist.  
(64242)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: February 24, 2021

**ID NUMBER:**

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

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of February 24, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of new construction located at 4800 Voges Road in UDD No. 1. Registered and speaking in support were Dave Hull, representing Ruedebusch; and Wade Wyse, representing Wyser Engineering. The CSM was approved at the Common Council meeting of February 23, 2021 to create the two lots. Construction would start with Lot 1, after completion they would build on Lot 2. Lot 1 also has some infiltration basins to handle stormwater from the roofs. There are drive-in doors to the east of the building and a dock on the backside with a loop that goes around the whole building. The landscape plan meets the requirements of the City, screens certain elements of the building, and adds to the stormwater basins and overall design. The building design is set up to handle manufacturing, distribution and warehouse type uses. There are vertical precast panels that protrude out from the building to help break up the building as a whole. On the major street façades they used vertical precast panels to break up the massing along with the windows in various heights and locations, as well as decorative canopies with corrugated metal accents above.

The Commission discussed the following:

- The mechanical elements on the roof, how will those be organized?
  - The dock side (lower portion of the building) would have most of the rooftop equipment on the backside so you would not see them as you come down Galleon Run. They will be screened so as to not be visible from the street.
- The plan is to add the screening later as the tenant improvement work is completed?
  - Correct. We don't know the full number of mechanics we'll need until we build out the building.
- Was there any attempt to try and preserve some of the existing trees? I understand the drive goes through, and you're putting some back, but has there been study of keeping the healthy trees that are there?
  - There are wetlands on the site on the north portion where Galleon Run continues beyond our site. We have not done a tree study based on what's there. Most of those trees seem small in nature

from what I saw recently. We could look at that in the future to see if there is something we could keep based on the parking and the layout of the road.

- What is the use of the overhead door at the front of the building next to the main entrance?
  - Depending on the actual tenants we want the ability to access that front half of the building if necessary with smaller panel trucks or delivery trucks, that type of function, because of the depth of the building. We utilize glass to create more of an entrance element.
- It appears on the plan as one long shot of concrete not dividing up the pedestrian entry with the vehicular. It appears maybe it's one piece of concrete going to both the main door and the other door, I want to make sure there's some division there.
  - We can look at adding additional sidewalk or creating an element to separate the door.
- At the back of the building is there any way to minimize or get rid of some of the asphalt? The big trucks appear to go into the center part of the facility.
  - The intent is to have drive-in doors along the backside, that's why there's the hard surface along that whole area.
- But there's all that asphalt across the whole lot. How much of that is necessary for truck turning radius, maybe there's too much.
  - If a tenant would need additional loading dock area we are going to build the foundation accordingly so we could cut in an additional loading dock on the back, that's why that asphalt is there.
- We're clear cutting a pretty significant woods to make this project happen. I think that's concerning, we're ignoring what's there. This type of project is always difficult to reconcile the design and the existing conditions, but I would like to know what is in that forest, what species are we clear cutting from that corner of the site to make this happen?
- There's a pretty major investment in plantings happening to meet code. I'm not a fan of creating just a single line along the building to meet the points. I would rather see groupings of those plants in places that are more public where it matters that you see them. Where it's less public it's not as important to have a handful of shrubs tucked in there. Not necessarily spend more money or increase the amount of plants, but to actually design them and group them where they mean something and they have an impact. Stone mulch is called out in a few places, it's typically our policy to not allow that for a planting bed, it should be bark mulch. You have a dyed mulch, I'd rather see a natural shredded no-dye mulch.
- I didn't see what the plants were for the stormwater basins, it's a very rectilinear engineered device, I'd rather see that have some undulation to mimic some of the natural features that it sounds like are here. Bend at some of the corners or have an island or peninsula.
  - The two large stormwater basins are wet detention basins. There are bioretention basins planned immediately adjacent to parking to do rooftop infiltration. The main features along Galleon Run are wet detention basins. They are not fenced but are designed with safety considerations.
- My shape comment does not apply to the bioretention, it's more the wet ponds.
  - We can accommodate some of that undulation. We can provide the planting list for those as well.
- It seems this building will get the most eyeballs from the highway and the roof is a major opportunity and a giant billboard to potentially overcome some of the changes to this site. Have you considered the benefits of green roofs or that type of infrastructure? It could benefit the owners of the site as well in terms of visibility.
- I personally am not quite comfortable with the site plan because of the woods. I don't know how to reconcile that because it occupies so much of the site, saving it would probably change the site plan.
- The impact of the woods and the trees, I do share the same concerns. There is a possibility to revise the site plan and see how we can lower the impact from an ecological standpoint. I would like to see more creativity in the site plan.

- The applicant did mention that the health of the existing trees is maybe not great, there is the potential that the planned landscaping would be better overall, but preserving the existing would have benefits not easily replaced with the new. Some creativity to try to honor the existing condition would be greatly appreciated here.
- Both lots equally impeded on the wooded corner of the site.
- Has there been any comment from a neighborhood group or the Parks Division, could park impact fees save this land?
- (Secretary) We haven't received any public comment and other agency reviews will happen after UDC.
- The street reservation is already a mapped corridor approved by Council. This is recommended for industrial uses in the area plan and I don't believe there are park uses recommended here.
- I appreciate seeing this project as one, I understand we need two motions but I do wonder the practicality of approving one and not the other.
- How would we approve one and not the other? Saving the trees is a big thing but I don't think it's always possible.
- If we approve one but not two how will it impact the development?
- (Secretary) They cannot submit for site plan review or plan review until they have approval on both. It would hold up the entire project.
- (Firchow) I would note that the CSM that is creating these lots and outlots has been approved. Once those lots are created and approved, I do believe that separate site plans could be submitted. It's a policy decision for the Commission if they believe it makes more sense to handle the design issues and handle them together or separately.
- To clarify, there's a certain amount of creativity that could be integral to the plan and would help with final approval. How you embrace some of the existing natural features, if there is indeed anything of value. A small chunk or edge that could be saved, something that preserves some of the existing amenities. Why is this good urban design? Convince us next time that we should approve it.
- There could be opportunities for reducing impervious surface. There could be a way to widen a drive aisle and get rid of a dedicated truck lane, those kinds of things could really improve this.

### **ACTION:**

On a motion by Weisensel, seconded by Braun-Oddo, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-4) with Weisensel, Braun-Oddo, DeChant, Asad and Goodhart voting yes; Abbas, Harper, Bernau and Knudson voting no. The motion noted the following:

- Further detail on the existing tree species and conditions.
- Further detail on the planting plan for the stormwater ponds.
- Look at reworking the groupings of plantings around the building to be more in public areas that will have a greater impact.
- More undulation with the design of the stormwater ponds.
- Based on the approved CSM and approval of this area as industrial, consider what available options there are regarding design.