



**Agenda Item #:** 2

**Project Title:** 115 W Doty Street/118 W Wilson Street - Public Building, Amendment to Planned Development (PD) for Dane County Jail Consolidation, South Tower Addition and Public Safety Building Renovation. 4th Ald. Dist.

**Legistar File ID #:** 73953

**Members Present:** Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Shane Bernau, Russell Knudson\*, Jessica Klehr, Christian Harper and Amanda Arnold

**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

\*Knudson recused himself on this item.

## Summary

At its meeting of December 14, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of the public building portion and made an **ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION to the Plan Commission to approve** the amendment to the Planned Development (PD) for the Dane County Jail consolidation, south tower addition and Public Safety Building renovation. Registered and speaking in support were Doug Hursh, Jan Horsfall, Chris Sina and Jared Vincent. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Todd Draper, representing Dane County Public Works; Steve Richards, Christopher Harp and Jeff Heil. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak was Jonathan Cooper, representing the Bassett District of Capitol Neighborhoods. Registered and speaking in opposition were Ally Bates, Erika Bach and Dan Fitch. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak were Philip Gasper, Hilary Hunt, Tessa Echeverria and Harry Richardson.

The proposal maintains the same design with brushed and smooth terra cotta panels and terra cotta black bands for a long-lasting quality façade. Changes to the ground floor include turning of the pedestrian entrances to be behind planters, extension of the planters and an increase in the amount of plantings along the sidewalk, the addition of glass between the two center columns in front of the loading area. The concrete past the sidewalk will be designed for definition of where the sidewalk continues, and murals will be located on the walls entering the ramp, to be lit at night. The team will continue to look at moving the glass in the garage doors; they will end up being square elements with a bit of a random pattern in the panels. The glass is all frosted to create a glow on the upper floors. The County has a master gardener that may add more plantings.

Jonathan Cooper of the Bassett District of Capitol Neighborhoods spoke neither in support nor opposition. The initial neighborhood reaction was that the W Wilson Street façade really needed more activation. Over the last three years as the project has evolved, the façade has not developed to the degree it should. The addition of planters is appreciated, and the street tree is shown on the renderings, although not the landscape plan. But the façade is primarily garage doors. The trash door is approximately 25-27 feet wide, the loading dock door is about 35 feet wide; with the addition of the ramp, almost 75% of the facade is dedicated to vehicular traffic. The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines note that buildings should be designed so loading doors and dumpsters are not part of the street façade; they could have incorporated some of the innovation done at the Memorial Union. The Commission has asked that buildings be of more exceptional design; this building is on the north side of the street without lake views, but is a prominent downtown location and deserves exemplary design.

Ally Bates spoke in opposition. Jails do not make us safe and do not make the community healthy, and are directly counter to the stated zoning purpose to this area. The County has not approved a final plan or full funding. It is

disappointing how this Commission reacted to concerns about the jail. Design is political, municipal architecture is propaganda. This design conveys something very specific to people inside and outside. It normalizes the prison industrial concept in our community, and yet this committee is very concerned about the pedestrian experience walking past. There are not enough trees, planter boxes and murals to forget what happens inside this building.

Dan Fitch spoke in opposition, noting that the County hasn't approved these plans nor do they have full funding. This is not a necessary evil, that's propaganda. There is no good evidence that more police or jails reduce crime.

Erika Bach spoke in opposition, noting that the public has questions about this City and County wide effort. The renderings are beautiful, but we're not talking about urban design elements serving the people of Madison. The question to ask is in what way are we contributing to the violation of human rights? She encourages all to continue asking these questions, and ask why we are making a jail look so pretty.

The Commission discussed the following:

- We are advisory to the existing PD that is being altered. Look at the standards that would support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, the economic health of the City, traffic and coordination of architecture and building forms.
- The pedestrian entry doors are now capped with planters, glad to see pedestrian scale amenities introduced into that first floor. Combined with the lighting and murals it does get us better than where we started. It's still not great. Do the planters require the pedestrian to walk in the driveway to get to the door?
  - There is a sidewalk between where the door is and where the loading docks are located. It should be noted that these doors are not the main entrance to the facility, they are more exit and service doors.
- As a public building we are also an approving body, any motion would have to be framed accordingly. We don't approve the landscape plan for public buildings but as advisory would make recommendations on the design to the Plan Commission.
- I recall the main issue on the lower street level was largely a lack of landscaping, which has been addressed. The nature of the columns, they have a burnished look with downlighting. We had a lot of concerns about the color and nature of the doors.
  - The lighting on the columns is an accent feature and serves to highlight the landscaping. The columns are still poured in place concrete that will be polished. The garage door window pattern is still waiting on feedback from the manufacturer. This is the only service area on the block and is utilized for multiple entities, necessitating the large garage doors. Because of the size and materials, murals are not a good idea which is why we have the random window patterning.
- I can appreciate the structural challenges of trying to guild the lily here. I commend you for the landscape additions.
- This building has been before us a number of times, is this the first time they are seeking an approval?
- That's correct, yes.
- Each time it has improved. Social concerns and issues aside, we are looking at the design as it fits into the context.
- (Secretary) To clarify the motion, it should be two parts: first for the public building approval, second as recommendation to the Plan Commission on the proposed building, landscaping, lighting, and any comments you would like to see addressed.
- We try to design buildings that don't have a back door, but at some point those have to be accommodated. They've done a sufficient job of making it as pedestrian friendly as they can. For the pedestrian experience to go down for a couple of feet along a decent block is okay.
- Before we vote, can the applicant explain again the use of each of those garage doors? Roughly 75% of that façade is vehicular driveways; they're doing a pretty decent job with what they have but it is so much driveway.
  - The ramp is to the parking both for the PSB and the courthouse. Right now there are two ramps, we've actually combined both of those ramps. The receiving area as shown is for receiving of product used by

the jail, the receiving location for the courthouse, the food service delivery dock, the trash and recycling loading dock is for the compactor for both the City-County Building, the PSB jail and the courthouse. The recycling also has a compactor, and some other containers within this space for miscellaneous recycling.

- Why can't it be internally connected to the receiving rather than having its own door?
  - Because the trash compactors are permanent and would have to be picked up; they can't be put inside the building and still be accessible. There are four lanes to provide for the compactors and receiving. You can't make that maneuver inside to get to the compactors.

## Action

On a motion by Asad, seconded by Harper, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of the public building, and made an **ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION to the Plan Commission to approve** the proposed building and landscape plan, finding that the Planned Development (PD) standards are met.

The motion was passed on a vote of (5-2-1) with Goodhart\*, Asad, Harper, Braun-Oddo and Arnold voting yes; Klehr and Bernau voting no; and Knudson recused.

\*Generally under Roberts Rules the Chair does not participate in debate or vote unless the Chair's vote effects the outcome of the motion. In this case without the Chair's vote the motion would have failed with a 4-2-1 vote where 5 yes were needed to pass.