

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** July 12, 2017

TITLE: 722 East Main Street – Madison Gas & Electric Substation Enclosure. 6th Ald. Dist. (47904) **REFERRED:**

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Chris Wells, Acting Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: July 12, 2017 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Rafeeq Asad, Amanda Hall, Cliff Goodhart, John Harrington, Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant and Michael Rosenblum.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of July 12, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a Madison Gas & Electric substation enclosure located at 722 East Main Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Dean Proctor and Tim Bliefernicht, representing MG&E.

The team submitted for the northern lot today and will submit plans for the wall across the street (for the substation). The west end will be landscaped and they will work with the City on the trees. What is currently parking will be returned to lawn with added trees. The west end will be the drive aisle; a new access drive will be added to the southern corner. They have a very narrow area in which to add the wall. They will be 9-foot precast panels with brick face, with banding brick and the upper brick to match the historic building. They are looking at perforated metal panels with 30-40% openings, with perforated copper panels to add an artistic touch. Horizontal pattern become necessary due to the issue of the foundation. They will have something sculptural/interpretive to help provide interest at Main and South Livingston Streets. They are looking to switch to a precast wall behind the gas station. The applicant has met with DAT and will work with Traffic Engineering.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Is there any plan for lighting?
 - The lighting proposed at this point is decorative.
 - The site is well lit at the corners (Blount Street) but not in between (Main Street).
- You mentioned the way you framed this towards safety. Tell me about your industry and how much of a thread teenagers or pranks are to these facilities.
 - There has been a death in the City of a student who was inebriated. The real driver is what happened to our collector system. There’s guidance from the federal government to utilities to

look at our bulk electric assets. This ties to that, but it's multi-pronged; to further protect what we have but also to enhance and dovetail what's been done from a development standpoint. There is a push in the utility industry to better protect those assets. MG&E doesn't have what FIRQ classifies as "critical assets." Our substations are diversified and small enough that if something were to happen it wouldn't take out the entire city. These requirements are increasing every year.

- Are there any grants that go with this?
 - There are requirements and then there are guidelines. This is not a requirement, this is an enhancement. We can't move the substation but we want to be a good partner to what's happening around us.
- How do you think this design (rust color) fits into the local design context?
 - The metal is for the industrial buildings in the area, and the brick is for the brick buildings in close proximity to us.
- The new cooling tower has Corten steel.
 - The issues of staining of the wall and sidewalks below it were considerations, and graffiti. We're looking at Kynar or anodized (better coated) steel.
- I like the design; it's absolutely an improvement. For the space across from what will be the music venue, tagging is such a concern; maybe throw out a spot for people to spray paint.
- I like what you're doing here too.
- You've got this long stretch of wall. Any thought to creating gaps so you can see what's going on inside there? Without compromising security.
 - Anything open at ground level would be susceptible to a firearm. If there's any way of putting a gun into a hole, we're trying to prevent that sort of thing.
- Maybe there's a chance for landscaping or something so it's not absolutely straight. Or where it touches the control building, could that change at all? If the new access point jogged back a little bit.
- You mentioned there's sections of wall in how they're constructed. Where they come together, if there was a gap and maybe it was a thin piece of plate steel going all the way up, that leaves you a foot to grow a vine to have some green. Not everywhere but some pieces of green. A little bit more variety here and there if you have the opportunity.
- At the Goodman Center they took these long pieces of PVC pipe, cut them open and put plants in them. There's an opportunity for that, or bat houses along here.
 - We're hoping that this line of trees will help with shading.

ACTION:

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