

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: February 20, 2013
TITLE: 304 West Washington Avenue – Demolition and New Construction in the UMX District for an Addition to an Existing Office Building. 4 th Ald. Dist. (28617)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: February 20, 2013	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Cliff Goodhart, Henry Lufner, Tom DeChant, John Harrington, Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins and Marsha Rummel.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of February 20, 2013, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for demolition and new construction in the UMX District located at 304 West Washington Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Dan Barker, Annie Laurie Gaylor and Bill Montelbano. The Secretary noted that this project is in a zoning district requiring specific building materials of which these elevations do not represent as provided in the packet on this item; it is expected that the elevations and building materials will be changed to meet the zoning requirements prior to the project’s return to the Commission for initial and final approval. Montelbano noted that there are three different types of architecture going on at this site because of the additions over the years; the Commission had previously recommended that they simplify and go with the 1940s prairie architecture. They have taken some of the stucco off and it seems realistic they could expose the old stone.

Annie Laurie Gaylor spoke to their desire to preserve as much of the history of the building as possible, while updating and expanding the structure.

Dan Barker stated that the original Italianate building had a cupola up top and that space would give them the room they need for the library.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- The proportion of glass strongly needs to be reversed against the portion of solid (Italianate component).
- The roofline of the Italianate still exists. I would strongly encourage you to look at the form allowing to remain and stepping back your addition. When you’re on the corner of West Washington you would see that Italianate; let the brackets do their job.
- Instead of cutting off the roof planes and putting on an addition, add a cupola to the top.

- Instead of trying to add on top of the Italianate, I would do it in a dialogue much more modern and make it a much larger cupola. In essence your entire floor is a cupola, rather than doing a “false” fourth floor with the cupola. The brackets that you’re saving are what disturbs me the most.
- It seems like trying to combine the Italianate and the prairie isn’t quite working.
- Everything new that you’re putting on here is one expression and it could be a really modern expression of an addition on top. Not a hat on top of another hat on top of another hat (Italianate component).
- Two halves superimposed on something is not really Italianate.
- Staff noted that the design of the addition is what’s at issue, not necessarily the cupola. The library could still be placed where you want it but the addition form on top should be different. They want a different, more contemporary design.
- The building’s three components don’t hold together, third story addition doesn’t work.
- The historic elements that are important here are not being picked up on the outside. It is extremely important that these three buildings make a statement and hang together well, which they do not do currently. They can work together and be very powerful together. I would strongly suggest you take a good hard look at this site and think about what is best for this site from an urban context. There may be other ways to get your programming in there.
- Some of your selected plantings will take too long to reach their desired size. Lilly turf needs edging to control. Provide vines beneath the Maples; English Ivy or Winter creeper.
- Keep one Maple with other tree to be a bit larger, mid-level; e.g. Yellow Wood but OK as is, slow grower.
- Better images would really understand the design a lot better than elevations, need color, three dimensional images when project comes back.
- Maximize windows at 10’ setback along lot line.

ACTION:

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

After the Commission acts on an application, individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10, including any changes required by the Commission. The ratings are for information only. They are not used to decide whether the project should be approved. The scale is 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding. The overall ratings for this project are 5, 6, 6 and 6.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 304 West Washington Avenue

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	6	5	7	-	-	-	7	6
	7	6	6	-	-	-	8	6
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	6	6	6	-	-	-	6	6

General Comments:

- Request cohesive expression of new elements/additions instead of copying 1850’s style. Very nice solution. Please work to simplify Johnson St. elevation – west corner is successful.
- Enhance the prairie. Simplify.