

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** April 14, 2021

TITLE: 1901 Aberg Avenue - Planned
Development (GDP-SIP), Occupy
Madison, Inc. Tiny House Village 2. 12th
Ald. Dist. (64300) **REFERRED:**
REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: April 14, 2021 **ID NUMBER:**

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of April 14, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Planned Development located at 1901 Aberg Avenue for Occupy Madison, Inc.'s Tiny House Village 2. Registered and speaking in support were Brenda Konkel, representing Occupy Madison, Inc.; Edward Kuharski, and Travis Graham.

The existing village is a gated compound with a 6-foot privacy fence around it. The former bar was renovated as a community space for the village, including kitchen facilities, laundry, common areas and showers. The site is comprised of single-story structures, with 22 residents regaining housing, health, community and a positive future; everyone who lives here was formerly homeless. The renewal of the site and building is in a key location for development of the neighborhood. This is somewhat of an isolated area with two new projects across the street, next to a storage area and the North Transfer Point. A coffee cart will provide income for the village and foster community engagement in the form of a tiny house; this will continue to sustain the village to pay electric and other on-going operating expenses and will be located behind the 25-foot vision triangle. Timber arbor frames the entrance and helps tie the two villages together. Gardening and edible landscaping will be incorporated as much possible for the residents. Raised garden beds will help infiltrate stormwater before it reaches the sewer system. One of the two existing curb cuts will be closed. Four resident parking spaces are provided, along with three visitor spaces. Trees will be added within the compound; both the east and west boundaries of the site have mature deciduous and evergreen tree species that provide a nice buffer, backed up with the fence.

Travis Graham spoke in support as a resident. This place may have saved his life, not just because of the shelter and heat, but the community and the site itself.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Thank you to the resident for calling in and sharing that with us. I'm a fan of the Johnson Street location. What is the intent of the fence, in particular why a solid picket fence?
 - One because the residents appreciate their privacy, and each of our houses plug their electric into that which runs along the fence line. That way we don't have to bury the power lines.
- You have a person gate by the transfer point; on the other end do you have to go through those big vehicular gates?
 - No, we added a controlled front entrance for the public in that vestibule that bumps out. We also provide a person gate near the pair of vehicle gates.
- It's refreshing to see a project that talks about housing in a different way than we typically see. Who builds these?
 - We ended up building a number themselves in a workshop they rented. Then two east side high schools put us out of the house building business for several years. We may be talking to them again, we haven't exactly worked that out. We try to keep it as simple and low tech as possible to keep the cost down.
- Is the coffee hut technically a food cart vs. a building?
 - Yes, we're using one of the houses because we have that design but the inside will be done differently. We thought it would be good to have it look like the rest of the village, and we'll have to apply for the permits.
- Bike parking – most of the residents have bikes. I'm surprised there isn't more of an intentional bike rack on the houses. How do you manage the orderly and secure storage of bicycles?
 - Security of the fenced compound, it's managed by the residents. Eyes and ears are what matters most. Typically residents prefer to keep their transportation close at hand, that's why the strong preference and practice is people securing them at their home.
- What do they secure it to if it's not built-in?
 - We haven't added that feature yet but I expect we will provide a docking feature on the north side of each of these houses.

ACTION:

On a motion by Asad, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).

Limitations are same the City in general faces. Regulatory framework for how we can require development initiatives of any kind; Zoning authority and other ordinances i.e. UDC), State Building Code, State Energy Code. Remove obstacles, educate, incentivize. Pre-emption issues. What is a construction standard? There is not a clear answer in the law. Similar issues with regard to State Energy Conservation Code; still subject to a preemption analysis. Practically the UDC isn't the body to enforce this, would be Zoning Code or stand-alone ordinance. Purpose and intent has not changed since 1972. Focus is on design, created by the Plan Commission to help design aesthetics. This language and the purpose of design (ensure high quality, promote high quality) can change over time. In 2021 high quality design doesn't necessarily mean it's good looking, it's built in a way that's sustainable.

Comprehensive plan for this, ordinance change. Developers, Alders, Commission members can be aware going into a project. Incentives, assistance. Energy benchmarking. Grappled with trees, bonus stories, LEED certification that doesn't occur until post-development (enforcement).

BBM:

222-232 E Olin Avenue: current zoning,