

## AGENDA # 9

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** May 6, 2015

TITLE:      710 East Mifflin Street and 124 North  
Livingston Street – Review of  
Landscaping and Architectural Details,  
as requested by Plan Commission –  
Four story multi-family residential  
development containing 189 dwelling  
units. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (36904)

**REFERRED:**  
**REREFERRED:**  
**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary      **ADOPTED:**      **POF:**

DATED: May 6, 2015      **ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Richard Slayton and Sheri Carter.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of May 6, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a four-story multi-family residential development containing 189 dwelling units located at 710 East Mifflin Street and 124 North Livingston Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Joseph Lee, Rich Strohmenger and T. Wall, representing Veritas Village, LLC.

Lee discussed that there were errors on the last printed elevational drawings and that the materials listed had been in error. One color of brick will be used. Planning staff still has concerns with the landscape plan in terms of the pedestrian friendliness of Mifflin/Dayton Streets, the detailing of the center courtyard, and the detail in the other entry courtyards. The Mifflin/Dayton Street façades have become more lush and broken up with different species, and plantings to cover as much of the plinth as possible and soften everything. The plantings along Livingston Street against the building have been reduced and replaced with more sod to give more open space. From a landscape perspective, Planning staff still has concern with address of the 5-foot plinth, which the Plan Commission was also concerned; whether they successfully created a transition from sidewalk to the building. The ground plane treatment in the courtyards is also of concern, with the only landscape feature being potted plants; it’s a lot of flat work concrete. Some other sort of treatment on the ground plane would help to soften that, as it is the primary open space for this residential community.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Planters can actually tighten the sidewalk. Something to soften the area along the wall might work better.
- Regarding the interior courtyard, you did have Evergreens in pots. Are those brought inside in the winter, or just replaced?

- The pots themselves would have annual flowers.  
But you do mention Arborvitae, and with the roots above ground it's not going to survive.
- You've got 5 ornamental trees in 72 feet wide of concrete, those are stationary in the interior courtyard space. That starts to give you the framework for how this works with permanent plantings. It might be a better way to go with a few Evergreens in there rather than in pots where they won't survive. For the enjoyment of the tenants they need to have some green area, even if it's a hardscape area, but we need to be more realistic about what's going to live in there. Maybe look at shade tolerant grasses or perennials to give it more green.
- In raised plaza areas, what if the trees opened up, and where the bikes are now became a place where people could actually be and the bikes go somewhere else. Then you've created this zone for people to congregate and this is a space you can actually be in. Look at that in making this more of a place where you might hang out with some friends for awhile with more usable space in entry areas.
- The details of the landscaping plan should return to staff.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Slayton, seconded by Goodhart, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-0-1) with Huggins recused. The motion provided for the landscape plan details to return to staff, Slayton and Harrington, and shall include details and blow-ups that deal with more effective landscaping and openings within the raised plinth area that effectively details both streetscape plantings and furnishings. This motion does not approve signage.

No rankings were provided for this project.