

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 11, 2011

TITLE: 1907-1911 Monroe Street – PUD(GDP-SIP) for a 4-Story Commercial/Residential Apartment Building. 13th Ald. Dist. (21200)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 11, 2011

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Marsha Rummel, Mark Smith, Dawn O’Kroley, Todd Barnett, Richard Slayton, R. Richard Wagner and Henry Lufler, Jr.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 11, 2011, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a PUD(GDP-SIP), Option Number 1 located at 1907-1911 Monroe Street. Appearing on behalf of the project was J. Randy Bruce, representing Mark and Maggie Smith. Appearing in opposition to the project and wishing to speak were Tom Turnquist and Chris Thomas. Appearing in opposition and not wishing to speak was Tara Montemaya. Appearing neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak were Matt Schultz and Jon Standridge, representing the Vilas Neighborhood Association. In addressing the Commission’s previous comments, Bruce presented details for a stamped concrete walk which will withstand constant use and make for easier maintenance. In terms of elevations, features of the architecture on the front of the building have been carried over to the sides and back; they looked at different options and felt it was most successful to take the same window pattern and take that to the back of the building as well with hardiboard siding. Building materials were presented, with champagne colored brick, a storefront color and railing color in dark bronze, corrugated metal for the upper level of the building and in an accent, with simulated prairie stone along the base.

Tom Turnquist spoke as a neighbor, stating they like the older version better because it is more in keeping with the historic elements of the neighborhood. He quoted some of the provisions of the Monroe Street Commercial District Plan, that lean toward preserving the historic qualities of the neighborhood. He noted this design is something more modern than is appropriate for the neighborhood and wants that project to be able to work in harmony with the existing architecture of this historic neighborhood.

Matt Schultz spoke as a neighborhood resident, stating they were not aware of the other design that was made available to the Commission members at previous meetings. He appreciates the historic design of the neighborhood.

Chris Thomas prefers this style over the others and feels it’s much more appropriate for the neighborhood (traditional option). The concerns of the neighborhood are not wanting to see an urban Euro-style architecture on Monroe Street. They aren’t against change, but there is a stark difference for the neighborhood residents. He feels that since the building owner, Mark Smith, could go either way with the design, that is an important

comment for the Commission to consider. They had a neighborhood meeting on May 9 with no one approving this new design.

Tara Montemaya, whose house faces the alley where residents will be entering and exiting the underground parking, spoke of her concerns with headlights, noise, traffic, and children playing. She would like to see smaller density, shorter height and fewer residents. The increased traffic in the neighborhood is already a safety issue and this project will add to that.

John Standridge spoke as the president of the Vilas Neighborhood Association. They have had a lot of chances to look at the proposals; of the 18 people in attendance, 15 voted for Option 1 (traditional), none voted for Option 2 (contemporary).

Note: The display boards before the Commission featured the contemporary modern version as Option #1 that had received initial approval previously by the Urban Design Commission with Option #2 as the traditional version favored by many area residents in attendance.

Bruce pointed out that behind the alley are a block of garages, which will help to block headlights. Barnett feels the proportions are done well, and the architecture of the neighborhood is one of variety. O'Kroley appreciated the neighborhood's concerns and their interest in what happens with their surroundings. She pointed out that at the time these older buildings were built, they were built for the architecture and needs of the time. As time evolves, we still have to be respectful of those buildings, but in terms of scale, material and compatibility we need to build truthfully to the materials we have today, and have a dialog with those historic buildings without emulating them. Rummel sees this modern option as one where it potentially is not inviting to a retail component. She sees the difference between the two options as how the first floor is going to be used. Barnett agreed; he is bothered by the large columns from the Trader Joe's building and sees this project as much more transparent and appropriate for the space (Option #1). Smith pointed out that Monroe Street does not have one type of architecture, it's a mélange. Slayton said the Commission appreciates the reiterations the plans have gone through to try to accommodate the architecture of the neighborhood; he also pointed out the need to listen to the neighbors and respect their input, and understand that the Commission encourages the use of the contemporary pieces but when you have such a clear voice from the neighborhood you need to listen.

ACTION:

On a motion by O'Kroley, seconded by Barnett, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of Option No. 1 with the larger first floor openings, detailing more appropriate to modern construction, with the form, composition and mass as appropriate to the historic neighborhood. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-2) with Lufler and Rummel voting no.

Barnett mentioned that the Commission greatly appreciates the neighborhood's input, that the neighborhood is a collection of many types of different architecture and part of the richness of the neighborhood is from the variety of styles and materials. The proposed version is based on something well-executed and addresses the neighborhood and urban street in an appropriate manner. Rummel felt conflicted and asked for a gesture that the project doesn't have to be exactly as presented. Bruce suggested moving forward with language suggesting that the original version is acceptable. Staff noted the Urban Design Commission is a recommending body to both the Plan Commission and Common Council on the PUD rezoning; where both bodies can evaluate both options based on input at the future hearings. Bruce when questioned by staff noted that the current version of the "traditional" option had been modified to address the Urban Design Commission's previous comments of March 2, 2011; therefore, staff felt if that version were approved by the Plan Commission and Common Council it would reflect the Commission's input and comments.

A previous motion by Slayton, seconded by Lufler to recommend approval of Option #2 which reflected more traditional architecture failed on a vote of (3-4) with Rummel, Lufler and Slayton voting in favor; and Barnett, Smith and O'Kroley voting no, with Wagner breaking the tie vote. During further discussions, Smith asked the Commission to think back on how many times the Commission may have dictated to an applicant or owner what style their building is going to be. Barnett replied that the Midvale Commons project was the one time the Commission asked them to look at the context of their project. Rummel would like the Commission to consider what has been brought to this point and support moving forward while incorporating the needs of the neighborhood.

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 6, 7, 7.5, 8 and 8.

DRAFT

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 1907-1911 Monroe Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	8	8	8	7	-	8	8	7.5
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	6	8	6	-	-	6	8	8
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
	5	7	-	-	-	-	7	7

General Comments:

- Contemporary version is much better.
- Prefer original option. Architectural designs are both just “skin,” but neighbors didn’t have a change to collaborate in the design process.
- Keep it modern – look ahead! Not backward.

Stouder, Heather

From: Ellingson, Susan
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2011 10:07 AM
To: King, Steve; Rummel, Marsha; Schmidt, Chris; 'erics@cows.org';
'jolson@operataionfreshstart.org'; 'michael.heiftez@deancare.com';
'timothy_gruber@yahoo.com'; 'mabasford@charter.net'; 'avandrzejews@wisc.edu'
Cc: Stouder, Heather; Murphy, Brad
Subject: Please support the Empire Photo proposal

To the Plan Commission--

I support the proposed building for Empire Photo on Monroe St; I hope you will, too. It would be a good improvement and help keep this little commercial corridor vibrant.

Julia Kerr, the previous alder in District 13, held a neighborhood meeting on Feb 16. At that time, the neighbors agreed that it was a good proposal. Conditions such as runoff, parking, and traffic were discussed, and the project was modified to address them.

I held a neighborhood meeting on May 9 to get feedback on two proposed façades. 18 neighbors attended the meeting; two contacted me by email. Of those, almost all preferred the more historic-looking façade. As a result of the May 9 neighborhood meeting, the Vilas Neighborhood Assn took a vote supporting the historic-looking façade.

My own opinion is that, given the wide variety of architectural styles along Monroe St, either façade would fit. I lived in suburban Chicago for a very short time, where all the houses were the same style. The lack of variety was deadening. I think that great weight should be given to the wishes of Mark and Maggie Smith, who will own and live in this building. I don't know which style they prefer.

Unfortunately, I'm unable to attend the Plan Commission meeting.

Regardless of the style, I hope this project will go forward. It would be a welcome addition to Monroe St.

Thanks.

Sue

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Sue Ellingson, Alder
City of Madison, District 13
district13@cityofmadison.com
259-1824

Stouder, Heather

From: Ellingson, Susan
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2011 12:21 PM
To: Stouder, Heather
Subject: FW: Empire Project on Monroe

From: Shawn Schey [<mailto:shawnschey@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2011 11:04 AM
To: Ellingson, Susan
Subject: Empire Project on Monroe

Hello, Sue -

Tonight is the monthly Edgewood-Neighborhood Liaison Committee meeting of which I am a member, so I will not be able to attend the Plan Commission hearing.

I'm one of the citizens at the library last week who favored the "traditional" facade over the more modern rendition. Although Monroe Street is a mixture of styles, immediately west and adjacent to this planned project are brick and Tudor-style buildings of a more traditional nature. I strongly urge the Plan Commission to approve Randy Bruce's more traditional design.

Thank you, Sue.

Shawn Schey

Stouder, Heather

From: Ellingson, Susan
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2011 3:54 PM
To: Stouder, Heather
Subject: FW: empire photography project

-----Original Message-----

From: atwallja@aol.com [<mailto:atwallja@aol.com>]
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2011 3:50 PM
To: erics@cow.s.org; Rummel, Marsha; King, Steve; Schmidt, Chris
Cc: Ellingson, Susan
Subject: empire photography project

Hello, Eric, Steve, Tim, and Marsha,

I am a Vilas neighborhood resident and I am writing about the Empire Photography project to be discussed at tonight's Plan Commission meeting. I have written to our alder, Sue Ellingson, and if she is present at the meeting, I expect she will report on her communications with the area residents, but in any case, neighbors in the area have some concerns that were raised at the Urban Design Commission meeting last week. Mine are set out below (excerpted and slightly edited from my recent email to Sue):

(a) the effect on local traffic and parking with a building of the size proposed. The alley behind the building will have many more cars per day coming and going. The proposed units have only one parking stall each, and while we have been told that the tenants will be unable to get resident parking permits for street parking, there is no guarantee as to how long that restriction will last, and our overburdened side streets will likely be even more crowded. (can the owners perhaps support the retail space with fewer residential units, like 12 rather than 18?)

(b) the loss of all of the greenspace on the two lots; could some trees or other greenery be included in the proposal?

and most importantly, at this point:

(c) the appearance of the new building. Even if Monroe Street itself has undergone some dilution of its historic flavor, the neighborhoods surrounding Monroe Street are historic. The neighbors have an interest in encouraging new construction that blends with the historic look of the neighborhoods and that incorporates architectural features consistent with the era in which most of the buildings were first erected. With a total redesign unlikely at this point, I favor the first proposed design, which at least uses two kinds of brick on the facade, and looks like multiple buildings rather than a modern-looking behemoth of a building.

With respect to the building design, I believe at a recent meeting the Vilas Neighborhood Association Council voted to approve the first, more traditional design, based on feedback from neighbors who attended that special meeting, but I'm sure you will hear about those development from Sue.

Thank you very much and thank you for your service on the Plan Commission.

Annie Walljasper