

## AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** August 11, 2021

**TITLE:** 5535 University Avenue - Alteration to a Previously Approved Mixed-Use Development Located in Urban Design District (UDD) No. 6. 19th Ald. Dist. (66576)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

**AUTHOR:** Janine Glaeser, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** August 11, 2021

**ID NUMBER:**

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

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of August 11, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of an alteration to a previously approved mixed-use development located at 5535 University Avenue in UDD No. 6. Registered and speaking in support was Kevin Burow, representing Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Martin O'Connor, representing Realm Real Estate Development.

This project was previously reviewed and approved by the UDC in 2017-2018; there are now concerns with the viability of the proposed commercial space. The previously approved development contained 5,600 square feet of commercial space with open air parking underneath the building and an access drive out onto University Avenue. The new design reduces the commercial space to 2,700 square feet, which no longer requires that parking and allows for the addition of six residential units and additional greenspace, trees and landscaping. They also created an outdoor gathering space for the commercial user. The commercial space would still have front and corner exposure on University Avenue. The underground parking has also increased by five stalls to a total of 57. The overall floor plans are the same, with the building stepping back on University Avenue for community space and rooftop plaza. The units that front University have generous patio space as well. The exterior renderings are very much the same and illustrate the increased landscaping plant materials. A bus parking location is also provided directly in front of the building.

The Commission discussed the following:

- There was a lot of concern about that driveway onto University Avenue; it's a big plus that it has been eliminated. I like the increased landscaping out front, nice selection of plants. On the back property line, there is a retaining wall, is that being maintained? Will the existing arborvitae being retained?
  - The retaining wall will be maintained as best as possible, same with the landscaping plantings. It's the intent to maintain as much as possible the solid screening to the residential properties. They could be all new plantings if necessary depending on sequencing and what survives.

- If you do have to replace that and go with a solid wall of arborvitaes, a different cultivar than Techny would be better. Consider Emerald or Holmstrup if you're going for a wall of green effect along there.
- It seems like all of the changes are positive relative to the existing proposal. The 2-feet of vehicle clearance to the garage entry feels a little tight, look at creating another foot or two if possible.
- The red bike racks feel foreign to the rest of the project where you have dark railings. Consider a color that is more in tune.
  - That was a rendering issue and to help accentuate that they exist.
- I assume the City is part of moving that bus stop, but it is right at that corner. Has there been discussion or acknowledgement of that?
  - The City has dictated this new location for the bus stop. It is further from the corner to provide some relief, and the bus will be out of traffic, set back when it's parked.
- Now that the retail has gotten smaller, it could benefit from a more distinct expression for the commercial first floor. You have a little canopy there that matches the residential entrance in the middle. Maybe have a consistent signage band or a different expression of the piers to give it a more distinct expression than the residential units on the east side.
  - We could look to modify how that signage presents itself and look at the canopy. We want to make sure it stands out and is viable.
- Something that could wrap around, something a little bit different than where the people are living.
- The balcony treatment bothered me, they look more like outdoor rooms because they're framed so heavily. I understand the composition, but those balconies are a lot. It seems like a dark space with obstructed views.
  - It does create an outdoor room so to speak but it is open on both sides and clad in the same material. We're trying to balance it with the windows adjacent but we can look at that.
- Wonder how much of that is from the rendering and when you're standing inside you'll feel more sheltered from the traffic, kind of a double edged sword. I like the rhythm of those areas.

**ACTION:**

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