

AGENDA # 9

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: September 16, 2015

TITLE: 3520 & 3546 East Washington Avenue –
New Auto Service Station with Detached
Car Wash and Convenience Store for
“PDQ” in UDD No. 5. 15th Ald. Dist.
(38452)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: September 16, 2015

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Dawn O’Kroley, Michael Rosenblum, Richard Slayton and Sheri Carter.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of September 16, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a new auto service station with detached car wash and convenience store in UDD No. 5 located at 3520 & 3546 East Washington Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Tate Walker, representing OPN Architects; Dan Bertler, representing PDQ; and Alder David Ahrens, District 15. Registered and speaking in opposition were Diane Calhoun and Michael Shivers. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was Nancy Troxel-Hoehn.

Walker discussed the revised plans after discussions with Planning staff and the neighborhood. East Washington Avenue is proposed to be going underneath Stoughton Road in the future, which will affect the access to certain businesses in the area. The development has shrunk considerably to allow for stormwater control and to create a buffer between the future store and the existing residential neighborhood. Working with Traffic Engineering has decreased the curb cut substantially on Schmedeman and allows for entry on East Washington Avenue, which will facilitate delivery of food and gasoline. The building is relatively the same size and moved to the northeastern corner, holding the corner with a 10-foot setback. The pump canopy is rotated and the pump count has been reduced by two.

Alder Ahrens spoke to the PDQ store located near Madison College that will likely be closing in the next couple of years. PDQ serves as a food store for many people who do not have private transportation (600 families living in Truax housing). In terms of the process, this has really shrunk a lot as the overall site has shrunk, and the driveway is moved down the street, serving the immediate neighborhood and the clientele better. Secondly, this will be the first commercial store when people come off the highway. PDQ provides employment for people locally, it pays above average convenience store wages and also provides health insurance. It’s an improvement for the community, which now has at this site a defunct restaurant that’s empty and not going to re-open. Because of the scarcity of parking in this revised site, “Visions” will have difficulty parking. He stated that he heard from many people in the neighborhood that they are looking forward to this store opening.

Diane Calhoun spoke in opposition. The neighborhood was not aware of the revised plans until last week. Because this is a small neighborhood, she feels that their input has been disregarded out of hand, and the powers that be felt that this project should be ramrodded through with their objections. Where some larger neighborhood associations are consulted, they were never given the consideration of offering constructive input into the type of development that they felt would be best suited to and have the least impact on those directly impacted. Suggestions such as accommodation of low traffic business on a first floor level that would close no later than 10:00 p.m., with residential on the second level have been disregarded. The desire was for small, independent businesses and cafes that serve the neighborhood more geared toward community, not City-wide or chain. This proposal exacerbates traffic, and opening a drive on Schmedeman will dramatically increase traffic on Ridgeway Avenue, especially commercial and fuel deliveries. The neighborhood plan calls for increasing pedestrian safety and reduce traffic volumes and speeding on residential streets. This proposal raises serious safety concerns for pedestrians using the Mobil quick mart just across the street. Considering the current objections of the immediate neighbors facing the site, who in the future will not want to live directly abutting a 24-hour gas station and car wash. The Hawthorne Neighborhood has not been given serious consideration throughout this entire process.

Michael Shivers spoke in opposition. Having lived in this neighborhood for over 30 years he can confidently say that this is going to cause major traffic problems. What has developed in their neighborhood after years of collaborative efforts will be destroyed by this PDQ development. The neighborhood cannot handle the increase in traffic. There is great concern for the children in the neighborhood and their safety.

Nancy Troxel-Hoehn spoke in opposition. She stated that Alder Ahrens is incorrect in stating that the neighborhood is looking forward to this. She has not encountered anybody that is in favor of this development. The only people that will benefit from this is PDQ.

Heather Stouder addressed design issues relative to the Planning staff report. There is now a much more efficient use of the site with the residential swath of land on the north side and the improved orientation of the convenience store building itself on the corner. Small details needing the input from the Urban Design Commission include the adequacy of the bioretention area in the northeast part of the site, and the stone mulch still being shown on the landscape plan.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- It was referred to as a 24-hour operation.
 - That is the intent. The proposed hours of operation are in the letter of intent.
- It appears the circulation could be a one-way pattern.
 - It's a two-way pattern.
- I see that this door here looks like where deliveries might be coming in. That's shown as glass right now, are you going to allow customers to go in that way?
 - Yes, the plans are included in the packet. It's not our primary entrance. My request would be to put a side light in that door to get a little bit more visibility.
- Can you explain what this element is here?
 - It's a niche. Most convenience stores have a lot of items for sale out in the open on their site, and that's against City ordinances, so we wanted to provide a somewhat closed option to selling things like propane, firewood, etc. So that will be screened.
- Do you know why on the site plan, now that there's no development there why the City wants to remove the trees?
 - I think they're diseased. They're marked for removal.
- Before the site is improved are you going to sod or seed that site?

- Almost 1/3 of this is a CSM for residential, we would seed all that and maintain it. Our intent is to find a developer that wants to develop single-family homes and turn that over to them. But until it happens we'll still be the owner and maintain that, keep it up to standards.
- Could you address the staff concerns about the stormwater management?
 - If we move forward on this project tonight we'll have many more details on stormwater management and landscaping details. Right now we have dedicated stormwater management in this area, and we're sizing it for the proposed residential. There are some unanswered questions as to the stormwater counts, but we know we have enough room.
- Are you going to extend the fence?
 - We're open to whatever works best for the City.
 - We hear many things from the City, as well as the Police Department, they don't like fences, the neighborhood preferred a fence.

Extend the fence to Schmedeman Avenue.

- Consider a one-way entry off of Schmedeman Avenue with angling the stalls to discourage exiting out onto Schmedeman Avenue, along with knuckling down of the drive aisle with landscape end island.
- Incorporate the bioinfiltration into the site better as a natural park, using grasses and plants that would work here. Take a more natural approach rather than a decorative one. Major and minor trees should be added.
- Need plantings along East Washington Avenue. Eliminate Spirea along with incorporating a more "naturalistic" approach to the landscape plan.
- Eliminate Arborvitae at the street; incorporate major/minor trees.
- No signage or LED lighting should be facing Ridgeway Avenue, face East Washington Avenue only.
- Provide more landscaping to the north to screen the lighting.
- You have signage facing Ridgeway. You should have no signage facing Ridgeway and no LED lighting on the canopy facing Ridgeway. I'm tempting to even say omit the LED lighting on Schmedeman. Only signage, only LED lighting facing East Washington Avenue. Study your fascia detail of your canopy, because if your lighting projects at all below the canopy...everything is recessed? I would look at more landscaping to the north, even if the direct source isn't visible from the neighboring residential streets or that open area, there will be a constant lighting level coming off of that property.
- Look at the possibility of multi-family development on the lands to be rezoned, which might provide more of a barrier to the neighborhood.

ACTION:

On a motion by Goodhart, seconded by Braun-Oddo, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (7-0). The motion provided for address of the comments about landscaping, signage and lighting, details on the landscape plan, bioretention area and fencing, requirements for setbacks on residential lots, and the suggestion to look at one-way angled parking.