

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.

Stouder, Heather

From: Sullivan, William
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 1:23 PM
To: 'Tate Walker'; Stouder, Heather
Subject: RE: 3520 E Washington Ave - Conditional Use and Demolition

Hello Tate, Heather

With the revision, we intended to remove the comment regarding sprinklers keep the following comment from the original submittal:

1. Provide fire apparatus access as required by IFC 503 2012 edition, MGO 34.503, as follows:

a. The site plans shall clearly identify the location of all fire lanes.



Sorry for the confusion.

Bill

From: Tate Walker [mailto:twalker@opnarchitects.com]
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 12:16 PM
To: Stouder, Heather
Cc: Sullivan, William
Subject: FW: 3520 E Washington Ave - Conditional Use and Demolition

Hi Heather,

I wanted to follow up with you on this plan requirement. From the attached report: 39891 Staff Comments Add092115.pdf

Fire Department (Contact Bill Sullivan, 261-9658)

48. An automatic fire sprinkler system is required to protect the store and canopies, per IBC 903.2.7.

The revised report no longer requires this condition, because the connected areas have been reduced. I think that the comment copied from the prior report accidentally. (also attached: Washington Ave 3520 E REVISED PLANS Conditional Use and Demolition)

The revised plans reduced the size of the canopy and detached the carwash, bringing the connected area under the code required 12,000 square feet. Per the IBC:

903.2.7 Group M. An *automatic sprinkler system* shall be provided throughout buildings containing a Group M occupancy where one of the following conditions exists: [F]

1. A Group M *fire area* exceeds 12,000 square feet (1115 m²).
2. A Group M *fire area* is located more than three stories above *grade plane*.
3. The combined area of all Group M *fire areas* on all floors, including any mezzanines, exceeds 24,000 square feet (2230 m²).
4. A Group M occupancy is used for the display and sale of upholstered furniture.

Proposed C-Store is 6,000 square feet

Proposed Pedestrian Canopy is 1,220 square feet

Proposed Pump Canopy is 4,000 square feet

Stouder, Heather

From: Martin, Alan
Sent: Friday, September 18, 2015 1:28 PM
To: 'jackie or mike'
Cc: Stouder, Heather; Cleveland, Julie
Subject: RE: PDQ & Planning Comm meeting on Monday, 9/21

From: jackie or mike [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 18, 2015 1:26 PM
To: Martin, Alan
Subject: PDQ & Planning Comm meeting on Monday, 9/21

Hello.

If the PDQ project is approved, our neighborhood has some additions to the final draft we were shown last week by PDQ:

1. Store hours should be from 6AM to 10PM (amenable to midnight)
2. Car wash hours should be from 8AM to 8PM
3. The North line fence should be extended to Schmedeman Ave to buffer neighbors from the site.
4. The Schmedeman driveway should be enter only, with exit on E. Washington Ave.

Is it possible to add these things to your final report, or is the Planning meeting the appropriate place for us to mention them?

Are we able to see a copy of your final report?

Thanks for all your help,

Jackie & Mike Shivers

Stouder, Heather

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 4:03 PM
To: Brad Cantrell; James Polewski; Ken Opin; Zellers, Ledell; Maurice Sheppard; Melissa Berger; Michael Heifetz; Michael Rewey; Carter, Sheri; King, J Steven
Cc: Stouder, Heather; John Fish; Palm, Lawrence; Cornwell, Katherine; Crawley, Katie
Subject: FW: Urban Design Commission Agenda item #10 meeting 9-16-15: new mixed use development 2107-2249 Sherman Avenue

Dear Plan Commission Members and City Staff:

H. Stouder's midday email today, albeit last minute, includes significant design changes to the construction project referred to above. City staff state in this email that they believe all or most of the concerns about this project have been addressed. Many of these concerns were summarized in my submission to UDC last week, which is included below for ready reference.

Please consider the following: there has been no ongoing dialogue with Northside residents or the immediate neighbors.

- **the building is still too tall**
- **the building is still too long**
- **all along the developer and city staff have played hide-and-seek with the public about what exactly is on the table for this project, beginning from the first meeting about it last June, up to this last-minute submission by city staff which still leaves many questions unanswered**

If there had been dialogue, the following might have been discussed:

- **What will be the impact of blocked sunlight and views upon near neighbors or upon the health of trees and vegetation in Burrows Park?**
- **What about safety for pedestrians, bikers, and motorized traffic resulting from poor visibility around a huge building?**
- **Value in added retail? One proposed tenant is a dentist or other medical professional. Does this area need a coffee shop? Manna, one of the best coffee shops/cafes in Madison, is approximate 4 blocks north of this location, as is a project now under construction included within the Maple Bluff TID at the corner of N Sherman and Commercial Avenue.**
- **With insufficient parking and added traffic related to this project, including traffic emerging from this building's underground parking, the neighbors will have to deal with ongoing aggravations.**
- **The public still has no idea what the actual façade of this building would actually look like. Contrast with Well 7 at Schlimgen and N Sherman Avenue where the Madison Water Utility worked extensively with neighbors to develop design elements to turn a "big box" into a structure that "fits in" with the neighborhood.**

There should be dialogue with the neighbors. The public should be included in ongoing dialogue about projects which have significant impact on the public.

Thank you for your time and attention to these matters,

Dolores Kester

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 16, 2015 3:24 PM

[REDACTED]

Subject: Urban Design Commission Agenda item #10 meeting 9-16-15: new mixed use development 2107-2249 Sherman Avenue

Dear UDC members and City Staff:

I have recently had an opportunity to review the documentation for the proposed multi-use construction at the triangular-shaped land parcel located at the convergence of N Sherman Avenue/Fordem/Sherman Avenues in Madison. I have a few comments.

Neighborhood interests

This proposal was discussed at some length earlier this week at the meeting of the Sherman Neighborhood Association (SNA), which I serve as co-chair. Although SNA did not take a formal position on this proposal, it was clear from the discussion that generally speaking, the community is responding positively to this proposal. However, a number of technical elements in the design proposal now under review leave many neighbors with serious concerns which hopefully can be addressed before construction moves forward. Some of these serious concerns are listed below.

The Design Aesthetic

It appears incontrovertible that the design for this project would in theory provide a beautiful building, and there would be little or no controversy if only it were to be built in Milwaukee or in areas of Madison having much greater density than the primarily residential area surrounding this particular triangular-shaped parcel. Burrows Park is not Warner Park nor is it Lakefront Park in Milwaukee. It is not a “dense” neighborhood at this location although surrounding condos and rentals farther toward Johnson Street do include more density.

A number of design elements within this proposal are of particular concern to all of its neighbors on the Northside and particularly to those residing in the immediate area such as the southern “Great Lakes” area of the Sherman Neighborhood. Problematic design elements include but are not limited to the following:

- The color and materials used on the building’s façade are far from inconspicuous. If they remain unchanged, they would make this building “stand out” visually to neighbors and passersby—isn’t it possible to look at façade alternatives to minimize this building’s presence and make it blend in better with its neighbors?
- The absence of any setback from the sidewalk along the N Sherman Avenue side of the proposed building is uncharacteristic of other building placements in this locale and will block the view for individuals walking or riding past this

building—isn't it possible to tweak the dimensions of this project to permit adequate setbacks consistent with prevailing designs in the neighborhood, in order to facilitate safety for pedestrians, bicycles, and auto traffic (among other benefits)?

- The proposed height of this project as envisioned with lofts reaching to five stories will block views and sunlight for a number of neighbors—isn't it possible to rethink the placement of such "lofts" (assuming they are permissible at all given applicable zoning), to minimize intrusion on the neighbors' enjoyment of their properties in terms of sun access and views?
- The access and egress for the underground parking for this building are likely to complicate vehicle access to all traffic along N Sherman Avenue and this is particularly true for access to N Sherman from Northfield Place and other streets emerging from the Great Lakes neighborhood.
- Where is the parking? 60 apartments alone will need in the neighborhood of 100 parking spaces? Metro service at this location is not ideal. In addition, what will happen in the absence of adequate parking with residents or their guests attempting to use city streets for parking in surrounding neighborhoods? Maple Bluff severely limits street parking, and so does Madison along N Sherman Avenue.
- What consideration if any has been given to placement of snow in winter or accretion of ice on sidewalks next to a taller building such as this one?—more attention needs to be directed toward anticipating and solving practical problems of this nature?

Planning this proposed building to be a "good neighbor"

The public meeting held about this in June did not include details about this proposal which were created later. I submit to you that it would be very useful for the proposed developer and interested neighbors to hold another meeting for the purpose of trying to find compromises for the issues noted above and related issues. I would ask this Urban Design Commission to encourage this kind of communication with the community by the developer at this time, in the hope and expectation that this may permit more harmonious neighbor relationships in weeks, months, and years to come.

Thank you for the careful and thorough review that has been done so far for this proposal. I will be happy to assist in any way I can to help facilitate better dialogue with the community who will be living with whatever finally becomes of this project.

Sincerely,

Dolores A. Kester

[signed electronically]

Emeritus Member, State Bar of Wisconsin

Madison 53704