

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 7, 2008

TITLE: Amending Sections 31.03(2), 31.04(2)(b) and creating Section 32.04(2)(c) and (d) of the Madison General Ordinances to revise the procedure for the Urban Design Commission to conduct a Comprehensive Design Review for the approval of certain street graphics (signs) on private property, and creating a timeline and modifying the appeal process for UDC decisions under Chapter 31. (09802)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 7, 2008

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Lou Host-Jablonski, Todd Barnett, Marsha Rummel, Bruce Woods, John Harrington, Richard Wagner, Jay Ferm and Bonnie Cosgrove.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 7, 2008, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** to amend Sections 31.03(2), 31.04(2)(b) and create Section 32.04(2)(c) and (d) of the Madison General Ordinances to revise the procedure for the Urban Design Commission to conduct a Comprehensive Design Review for the approval of certain street graphics (signs) on private property, and create a timeline and modify the appeal process for UDC decisions under Chapter 31. Appearing and speaking on behalf of the ordinance amendment was Mark A. Olinger, Director, Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development, and Assistant City Attorney Lara Mainella. Olinger spoke to the need to provide for consideration of the ordinance amendment modifying the current standards for Comprehensive Design Review as a mechanism to provide for creativity not currently allowed within the existing provisions of the sign ordinance. Consideration of the revised provisions for “comprehensive design review of signage” where separated out as an element of redraft of the Street Graphics Control Ordinance (introduced in July of 2006 currently under discussion and review with the Urban Design Commission) to facilitate the allowance of other types of signage not currently allowed under the code. Attorney Mainella provided an overview of the text of the modified provisions against the current language within the ordinance. Staff provided additional details on how the ordinance amendment expands the existing ordinance provisions which allow for only consideration of signage variance requests beyond a 25% special allowance in height, area and setback only for street graphics. The ordinance amendment expands the Commission’s ability to grant special allowances beyond the previous extent; allowing consideration of any signage proposal where the Urban Design Commission “may recognize unique, exceptional and innovative effort to integrate street graphics with building architecture and materials by approving a comprehensive sign plan that includes special allowances for all street graphics within the building site or zoning lot.” Staff further noted that the ordinance amendment includes a modified “Comprehensive

Design Review Criteria,” it provides the basis for the Commission making a finding that the signage proposal is consistent with the ordinance as amended. Staff further noted that the ordinance amendment provides flexibility in considering many types of signage not envisioned within the Street Graphics Ordinance as originally drafted without and beyond the limitation to height, area and setback. It allows flexibility in looking at creative sign packages that have only been allowed when considered as an element of a Planned Unit Development zoning, an exception to normally required ordinance provisions.

ACTION:

On a motion by Cosgrove, seconded by Harrington, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED ACCEPTANCE**. The motion was passed on unanimous a vote of (8-0).

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 is 8.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 09802

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8

General Comments:

- Nice change, should provide a useful tool for considering unique, excellent signs.
- Great addition to sign ordinance.
- Positive improvement to the sign code.
- Cool signs – keep them coming!! Flexibility in sign ordinance improves visual environment.