

From: Dawn O'Kroley [mailto:dokroley@dorschnerassociates.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 10:51 AM
To: Martin, Al; Fruhling, William; Murphy, Brad
Cc: 'Richard Wagner'
Subject: Downtown Plan

Hi all, I will apologize in advanced as these comments will be a bit more contemplative and free form. Thank you for your efforts articulating a collaborative vision.

Key goal 1, well put, Celebrate the Lakes. I support the bike path connection on Mendota.

p. 14 Would it be possible to add text encouraging the ability of the land bridge from Wilson to be integrated with structures constructed on the lake (or for that matter, on Wilson) to provide a direct connection for pedestrians to the lake (whether in terms of view or physical connection) as well as the potential to cover John Nolan traffic and underground parking (consideration as another site if Block 88/105 cannot support the demand at this time?). Design studies for the boat house of a modern interpretation influenced by the history of Frank Lloyd Wright's original concept is encouraged. A competition would be interesting.

P27 Rec 20 seems to echo the motion made last week to allow increased height, whatever the development approval mechanism.

P 27 Rec 21.. yes, please target, although some 60's redevelopments aren't even zero lot line, but are equally bad)... I understand the trade off being encouraged to allow the density to go vertical, but could text be included that increase in height in comparison to the immediate context is due to the urban improvement by providing a setback more appropriate in scale and material. Could it be noted that an increased density is encouraged from the original parcel density and an increased height in relation to the immediate context, even if within the purview of Landmarks. Again, understand the trade off for these sites as reduced density would not likely be redeveloped.

P 36. Priority viewshed in combination with the dialog of heights is a very strong concept.

Also on height, again the motion at the last meeting provides some flexibility in height to avoid the 'topping off' effect where all structures abruptly stop at the Capitol View Preservation Height.

P 43 streetscape design... I continue to encourage the City to study the primary cross streets crossing E Washington to be developed in a differing character with substantial street trees, and any overhead utilities relocated underground, consideration for differing street lighting, articulation of crosswalks... Current developments (E Wash and Central Park) seem to lend the best focus to Livingston and Brearly with adjacent City owned property on those streets to create a linear connection across E Wash. This also strengthens the concept of connectivity of the Urban Forest on p 45. This same dialog is important and reflected on P 94 to strengthen the identity of historic districts.

P 59 Bill, I would be happy to work with you on public education of the benefits of Historic Districts as a mechanism to provide resources and assets to owners (Fourth Lake Ridge pilot project?). The Cultural Plan also well describes the greater value of our historic structures.

P 91 Glad you address demolition by neglect, I assume this isn't the venue to define "inspecting more often", but it is definitely needed.

West wash... because there is a fabric that exists, while needing care, my instinct is to hold the scale/massing of new development to one that is comfortable with the existing fabric and require any development to hold the primary building face and balcony setback (articulated best in Richard Wagner's comments) consistent with existing conditions and require any development that would occupy more than one of the historic parcel in width to have substantial articulation and additional setbacks (including changes in height per parcel) to architecturally retain the scale of the existing fabric. As development will occur over time, parcel by parcel, I fear a development at this location that does not visually support the existing cohesive existing fabric, would not strengthen the historic context that could remain, but would encourage other large scale development and the loss of character of these few blocks.

To touch on a couple points in the cultural plan that strengthen the downtown plan, again not sure if this is the venue.

P 15 strengthen policy and practice around creative sector facilities utilization and development and P 51 discusses optimizing the use of parks and streets for fairs...

P77 goal 26, requiring projects to integrate art, streetscape, landscape, stormwater management with architecture and culture early in the design process would lessen the burden placed on UDC to incorporate these features later in the project.

One last note:

Could the City create a city wide inventory of existing utilitarian spaces for feasibility of use in for public works (or other) projects in lieu of developing greenfields on the periphery of the City. From the CNU Canons of Sustainable Architecture and Urbanism: 'Wherever possible, new development shall be sited on underutilized, poorly designed or already developed land. Sites shall either be urban infill or urban-adjacent unless the building is rural in its program, size, scale and character.' I also understand the general location of some of these buildings relates to emergency response time.

And on that note, the goals set that we should strive to achieve downtown will have a much greater impact on the City than just the boundaries of this plan.

Last subject, could we receive an update on the Development Review Process. Could the City organize one venue in which all development related committees and departments meet, so that our various charges and efforts are described in how they collectively support of this vision of our City? Educating ourselves on the role of others and bringing clarity to process quasi-internally, may strengthen the perception of process and what must be our broader focus to support the collective Key Goals of our City. Thanks, Dawn

Dawn O'Kroley
Principal
Dorschner|Associates, Inc.
849 East Washington Avenue, Suite 112

Madison, Wisconsin 53703
v: 608.204.0777 f: 608.204.0778