

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: August 14, 2019

TITLE: 9510 Watts Road and 604 Feather Sound Drive – Residential Building Complex Consisting of One 4-Story and Two 3-Story Multi-Family Apartment Buildings, Including Underground Parking and 4,000 Square Feet of Flex Space. 9th Ald. Dist. (55804)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: August 14, 2019

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Christian Harper, Rafeeq Asad, Lois Braun-Oddo, Jessica Klehr, Shane Bernau and Craig Weisensel.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of August 14, 2019, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Residential Building Complex located at 9510 Watts Road and 604 Feather Sound Drive. Registered in support of the project were Brian Munson, representing Forward Management; Ald. Paul Skidmore, representing the 9th District; Rick Schwarze, Matt Saltzberry, representing Forward Management; Brian Boelter, Austin Krueger, representing the Cardinal Glenn Neighborhood; and Ulian Kissiov, representing Forward Management.

The core of the composition is to create a green courtyard uninterrupted by traffic, pushing the traffic away. The architecture uses as much glass as possible. The landscape plan emphasizes the greenspace and includes a pool area and dog park, outdoor kitchen with pergola, directly connected to the community room and common areas. Building heights vary and are asymmetrical. Kissiov shared 3D views from the street and sidewalk. The roof remains pitched with a modern treatment and steps back about 6-feet from the overhang and allows for roof drainage without downspouts. He shared a video showing how the building is perceived from the farthest sidewalk on Watts Road and South Point Road. In address of the Commission’s previous comment to study adding canopies, historically the canopy doesn’t exist, but that doesn’t preclude making an interesting entry without a canopy. He shared images of other buildings that have interesting covered entries without using what may be considered a typical canopy (Madison Municipal Building, the Red Gym, historic buildings on Library Mall and the Union). The underside of the balconies will be dark and shadowed and you really won’t see them from the street. The landscape architect did provide more separation from the neighborhood on the northwest corner. In address of Planning staff’s comments, he showed that they are trying to point to the great quality of the composition and the undisturbed greenspace for outdoor living. The plan emphasizes humans; the Planning suggestion focuses on vehicles, making the traffic comments superficial; Traffic Engineering is fine with their concept. The building is five to eight-feet above the site wall because the lot slopes in that direction. The L-shape is determined by the farthest end where they start at grade, keeping a 25-foot setback distance to line up with the neighboring lot.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Since you angled the building the canopy seems unnecessary. The exposed balcony is not going to work.
- Everything you did is responsive and nicely thought out, the roofline and overhangs. The only thing I don't buy is the underside of the balconies. You will see that treated wood. Paint it dark or stain it.
- (Firchow) The underlying zoning and adopted plan recommendations for this site intended for the corner to be commercial. Many of the recommendations were helping to set the table to make this future conversion possible, recognizing that this site was intended, planned and zoned for future commercial conversion. We do have confirmation from Traffic Engineering that the western side of the site is right-in, right-out. Planning commented on the L-shape to respond better to the single-family homes on that side.
 - I requested a left turn on South Point Road from Traffic Engineering, which will be granted. All the drawings were developed based on that promise. A couple weeks ago Traffic Engineering came with a comment that they do not object to the left turn from South Point but there are issues with the right-of-way because the neighboring lot doesn't align but extends into the right-of-way.
- Overall the landscape plan is nicely done and better than what we often see. On the north side where the driveway comes in from the east, is there any screening along that north road?
 - That is an alley for the single-family to the north. This parcel was modified to transition from this parcel to the north by inserting alley-access single-family and share that driveway between the garages to the north and the apartments to the south. Effectively north of that drive aisle will be alley access.
- The concept to uphold the L-shaped people space is a strong one. There are panels of seed mixes between some of the entry stoops on the south and north façades, which is a little non-traditional, I'm not sure how that's going to work out. Your foundation plantings are going to take some establishment time and maintenance, and I'm concerned that it won't succeed.
 - Something more of a plant mix than a seed mix?
- It could be the same species in the mix but something more substantial.
- There are low meadows but they take some effort to establish.
- I'm still confused by the southwest corner. That will become commercial?
 - It's zoned CC-T so we deal with the approval is the building is today. It's designed to transition into commercial. The first submittal showed how that could happen. To do that we would have to come back through the City process showing how the interior floor plans would change, and landscaping to address outdoor eating areas, etc.
- Where would public parking be? It seems like a difficult corner to convert and raises a lot of questions about accessibility, delivery and parking.
 - There are solutions. There is 25-feet from the sidewalk on one side and 40-feet on the other, we can put the entry low with higher ceilings. The sloping terrain offers more opportunities for cascading terraces or plazas. I can easily add one level.
- I have a problem approving something we don't see. This is eventually going to have another element smacked in the corner that can kill the building. We are approving 100% residential and you're telling us it may change.
 - If it does change to commercial it will end up back here as part of the zoning request to make those changes.
- How are you planning for that parking now in case it does change?
 - In the future 700 square feet of commercial space would need 13 parking spaces. We have over 40 parking stalls on the street as designed now. The commercial component would be very small.

- You did a good job of making it very modern, but my concern is the amount of balconies. It could be the rendering with shadows. The type of railing you've used can either kill that concept or enhance it, and I'm not sure that what you have is enhancing it with the amount of metal.
 - These are rental properties and the owner doesn't want liability of the weather effect. There are decorative options but I think this is the simplest because it complements the finished materials.

ACTION:

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Bernau, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (8-0). The motion provided for the following:

- The wood undersides of the balconies shall be painted or stained to match the surrounding building.
- The landscaping plan shall be revised to provide more substantial seed mixes between entry stoops on the south and north façades.