



Agenda Item #: 12

Project Title: 304-318 N Broom St/408-430 W Johnson St/407 & 431 W Gorham St - New Student Housing Building in UMX Zoning. 4th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 76205

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Wendy Von Below, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Jessica Klehr, Russell Knudson, and Marsha Rummel

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of August 16, 2023, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED A SECOND INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new student housing building located at 304-318 N Broom Street/408-430 W Johnson Street/407 & 431 W Gorham Street. Registered and speaking in support were Brian Munson, and Jeff Zelisko. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Doug Tichenor, and Justin Otanicar.

This area is identified for 12 and 6 stories, they are pursuing affordable units for additional stories. The entire building is set below the Capital View Height Preservation Limit. They are looking at an Oliv-style model for a fourteen-story student focused project with some mixed use along Gorham Street. They have been working to break down the four different masses, which is evidenced in the design of each building. There are now two entry points along Johnson, one on Broom and one on Gorham. There is also a lobby entry point within the vehicular court, as well as parking. The lobby leasing area has displaced the previously proposed townhome-style units along Johnson. Based on feedback, a more vibrant color palette has been incorporated, with much brighter colors, and the depth of some of the projections, particularly Buildings 1 and 2, have incorporated more subtle setbacks. Looking from Gorham, they have integrated more balconies throughout the buildings. The area next to the windows is still being studied, perhaps that will change to metal panel, but it is shown as brick here, with colors ranging from tans, reds, versus grayish colors. The whitish areas in the renderings are points of public art opportunities along Johnson. You are seeing more balconies on Building 4 as well. On Gorham Street, Building 4 has a strong base element with darker material at the base, at the top is a change in materials and a setback where they really tried to create a base, middle, and a top. The cornice element maintains the datum with the Equinox building. There is 40 feet between Building 4 and the Equinox. In the rendering looking towards Johnson, you will see a collection of building, while defining each building within the collection. They included before and after renderings to really reinforce the changes. The plaza space has been better defined with a border.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- The large percentage of materials on these building, are you using brick or metal panel?
 - A combination, Building 1 is primarily brick. We are looking at these elements as metal panel, but we are just looking at that. Mostly brick with metal panels and masonry base. It's a combination of the materials.
- It's an improvement but I wouldn't call it vibrant. I would like to see more color, Madison is the red brick, gray, that's the skyline of Madison. For some reason people don't want to add color. The composition works, it's very busy, I like it and it's much better than before, I just get tired of seeing the brick buildings that continue the same color palette throughout the city. I know it's different but we still clad it in all the same color materials. I don't know if there's opportunity to get real vibrancy there. I love the plaza, it's really modern and interesting

from the plan. You have this white cupped articulation on that, you have these notes of interest that could be celebrated in a different way, it's just so safe with brick and gray. But it looks much better, I like the entries, and things you started to enhance the project.

- I hope you might consider using lighter colors on the street level. The bases work well as a plinth for what's above it, but walking past dark colors as a pedestrian with dark colors at the street, the sun and light are sucked out of the street. Slide #29, the windows changed quite a bit. Are those windows with a panel below them when the windows do not go all the way down to the floor? What is happening below the window frame – is that a recessed metal panel?
 - That window goes floor to ceiling, you see the operable window above.
- I was hoping that would be the answer. If it was a panel, it would have lost some of its interest. There was something about the one on the left that had really nice proportions, maybe it might be better for putting furniture if it's not floor to ceiling. But that one on the lower left was really handsome (Building 4 along Johnson).
 - When we do our next UDC presentation – there will be renderings where the glass will be expressed. I am excited to share that with you. It will be expressed in how it will read on the street.
- The corners went from being solid to being open, there was a lot of change in there and that is something for us to notice - you have a lot of changes in there. Just thinking about consistency in the whole thing. I highly encourage considering not using dark colors along the street level.
- The bridge could use some design, it looks super functional as a walkway with glass on either side. Think of that as an opportunity. I quite like Building 2, its slim and elegant, it's just so simple that when you place the other buildings next to it, the other buildings start to look a little...there's not much life to them. They become very repetitive, there's no whimsy. Building 2, in and of its mass is so slender and someone mentioned cupping, which adds interest; the others just need more articulation or color or whimsy, or something. This rendering view is terrifying because I feel like the buildings are so close to each other that it looks like you are looking right into others' kitchens or something.
 - They are further away in actuality, like 25-30 feet.
- Maybe more articulation is needed.
- This is a perfect picture, what is going on with the punched window opening patterns, they all look different. Is there supposed to be some type of randomness to them? It seems like there is a lot of undulation.
 - There is articulation that does step within the building. The rhythm of the windows is proposed to vary.
- Maybe a standard floor plate?
 - The floor plates and windows are the same, there is just a variation and rhythm on it based on the way the materials are used.
- Look at the seventh floor, inside corner. That is odd.
 - Those are showing across the courtyard.
- The windows don't align, it's drastic.
 - Yes, there is a little variation and rhythm. Something that we will look at. There is a little bit of a rhythm to it, it's not like it's on every floor.
- On the first floor, is that commercial – what is that supposed to be (along Johnson to Broom)?
 - That is some amenity space and the white space is a public art opportunity. That is where you are seeing a pretty big change in the elevation.
- So am I seeing units?
 - This portion is two units where originally there were townhouse units, which do not have entries on the street. Currently you enter from within the building. Because of the grade change we replaced it with active uses and panel areas that we are planning for public art opportunities – even if we opened it up it would expose the parking garage.
 - Where the units are located at the corner, it is a remnant of how the building functions internally. It kind of has to be residential.
 - We are also looking for some window walls that open for indoor/outdoor space – potentially along the plaza space or Broom Street frontage. Our biggest challenge is making the bridge to where we have a

half floor along the sidewalk and once we got down to a full floor area return it back to an active use and that is the residential piece along the left.

- I do appreciate the before and after, it is dramatic and very interesting – thank you.
- I see an opportunity here for some landscaping because it looks like you are right on the sidewalk, you are really not on the sidewalk, right?
 - Correct, we are not. We're at the stage where the landscape plan has not quite gotten integrated. There is landscape along that stretch and widening of the sidewalk. It is not right on the sidewalk as far as the building placement, and there is an opportunity there for some landscaping softening along that entire edge...inaudible audio.
- That will really help a lot rather than just having that right on the sidewalk.
- I struggle with the heaviness of the grid, especially on the smaller shorter building, it's probably heavier than the structure is. It just looks so compressed, whereas this building (2 and 4) have an opportunity because they're more vertical. This one is pancaked because of the heavy expression of horizontals. Look at the building diagonal to this where it had grids as a bold statement, metal panels and big funky grids. This harkens back more to some of cast in place concrete buildings you see around town that were built in the 70s with low floor-to-floor ceiling heights and they took that concrete structure and expressed in on the outside with brick infills. It sound like that is what I am hearing from the rest of the Commission, Building 2 is tall and elegant, Building 3 is light due to its color and height, and Building 1 is oatmealy and compressed. The ground floor is really dark, it's just a matter of the fenestration and the color and the material keeps going.
- This zig zagging here, is not random, but it's not straight. If you go kind of random and really articulate it at that, it almost looks slightly crooked like you're not really sure...if you are going to do it, do it.
 - We will look at this some more. There is some similar comments that we received on May 10.
- This is a veneer, so you could just do a simpler more taught, brick veneer.
 - Yeah that's true.
- One of the things we talked about before, was suggesting taking this mass back and giving this plaza a little bit more relief from the tall vertical structure right on the quarter pie. You decided that wasn't worth bringing this mass back and kind of closing this off like you did around the corner with Building 3?
 - We looked at that, we felt like we wanted a hard corner that. There is a lot of relief already as we wrap around the block. We felt this was the right approach. It was an important expression especially as it is the entry. If we it dropped down it would disappear, and it's probably the most important entry point to the building. We wanted to have that be a strong element and strong statement.
- Especially 2 and 4 could stand alone as their own building, Building 1 needs some work. Looks like a cohesive building in and of itself. You see this gap in the middle with the balconies and just sort of not consistent with everything else going on beside it. I'm glad you came here informationally because that is what we are trying to do, give some feedback.
- You could do a simpler more taught brick veneer on that (Building 1).
- Taking this mass back could give relief and more room for the plaza.
 - We wanted to have more mass at the corner, it's a stronger element at the corner and an important entry point. We wanted it to make a statement.
- Buildings 2 and 4 can stand alone as its own building, but Building 1 needs some work so it looks like a cohesive building itself.
- The roof of Building 1 seems like a great green roof opportunity to soften the experience of folks living in Building 2 looking down on it.
 - We don't have them in the renderings at this time. We are looking at an entire green roof on Building 1 having a green roof for stormwater management. Then a very detailed combination of active spaces on the roofs of Buildings 2 and 3 along with additional green roof components. We are looking at ways to activate those. Building 1 will be proposed for green roof, not an accessed green roof, but as part of our stormwater management.
- It's a great improvement, the massing of Building 1 could be simplified while still maintaining the unit count. Does it need to be an "E"; it could be a "U" or pulled back. I agree with the comments with how the entry should

show. It's fussy for no reason, you could change the massing and still maintain the number of units and density to where it is simpler. I agree that that piece in the middle doesn't help anything; it's in and out for no reason.

- These buildings are based on the planning of the units from the inside out – it doesn't mean that it has to be this, but the shape was designed to create units that made sense from the way that they laid out based on the mix. We have heard some really good feedback on Building 1 that will continue to look at.
- The one furthest by itself that has the bridge that works independently (Building 4) is fine. The one in the middle is what it is, but then Building 1 is so, just looking at where your corridors are and how your units come off of them, it's just fussy for now reason. If you simplify it, it could be stronger a composition.
 - It deserves a lot of focus and attention given its location.
- As you know the more you go in and out, it adds cost.
- This project has a lot going on the windows with the size of those windows I don't know that they needs to be the drunken installation. There is a strategy with aligning them. There is articulation with the metal panels and the horizontals and other things that you don't need this hour glass pattern of windows that look like a mistake.
- Is there an opportunity to open up Building 3 with balconies like Building 4? It really helps lighten up the building.
 - Let us look at the way those are planned internally. We will study that and see what we can do with that. These are metal panels and masonry at the base, they are to compatible metal panels and brick combination.

Action

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.