

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: November 7, 2018

TITLE: 1 Exact Lane – Comprehensive Design Review for Exact Sciences Located in UDD No. 2. 19th Ald. Dist. (53536)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: November 7, 2018

ID NUMBER:

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of November 7, 2018, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED PARTIAL FINAL APPROVAL** of a Comprehensive Design Review for Exact Sciences located at 1 Exact Lane. Registered in support of the project were Caroline Altfeather, Jody Shaw, representing Exact Sciences; and Justin Zampardi. Altfeather presented the sign visuals and summary. The Chair suggested she focus on the signs that staff has concerns with (ground sign). The campus is 49 acres with some unique situations due to the high volume of traffic, high number of employees and truck traffic. They are trying for a clean, minimalist look to go hand-in-hand with the architecture of the campus. Once into the campus there are a series of directional and small monument signs. One monument sign along the Beltline is proposed to utilize the old Rayovac base and power structure; this is the sign the staff report references. Due to the curvature of the Beltline in this location there are concern for westbound traffic, as well as the amount of wall signage they can have on the Beltline frontage, making this monument sign very important for identification. The sign is slightly shorter than what is allowable, but that is in keeping with the architecture already in use on the campus. People would most likely not be able to see any signage on the building itself; if you miss the Whitney Way exit you’re forced to go up to the Gammon Road exit. The proposed monument signs would have a minimum setback of 5-feet.

Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator: The setback requirement for ground signs also relates to vision clearance. The setbacks should be clarified in the final documents. The bigger issue is the ground sign on the Beltline. High quality signage is encouraged, signs that have a unique circumstance to their place; every one that gets approved sets a precedent. There is an existing large sign there utilizing a change of copy. The ordinance allows for a maximum of 80 square feet, or 160 for both sides on a two-lane divided highway. This is approximately 200 square feet on each side. Findings related to the CDR standards should be made clear relative to the submission application materials, letting the applicant know what other information would help make that finding. The sign could go taller to 13-feet (currently it’s at 10-feet) to take advantage of views that way and still comply with Code. The Chair inquired about the Zoning report, where it says a ground sign 50% larger than code allows might be appropriate. Is that a suggestion or a preference? Tucker responded that this part of

the Beltline feels more like 6 lanes for a greater sign allowance of 144 square feet/288 square feet combined. Look at what the ordinance allows for exceptions for what you can do and how that relates to prevailing speeds.

The applicant responded that the building is long, low and linear and that they wanted the sign to reflect that architecture. Exact Sciences wants the sign in this existing location and is happy with the sign design. The thin font doesn't read well from a distance. They don't plan on putting a sign high up on the building; architecturally a high sign with a pole base would not work. This would propose only one sign for four buildings and a parking lot.

Discussion from the Commission was as follows:

- How big was the original sign?
 - 220 square feet or so. They took the copy off and replaced it with new face.
- We have lived with something of that size previously.
- The argument was making sure people are not missing the exit. Most people are listening to their dashboard or their phone to tell them when to exit. Is this really going to help them exit and find the building or is it advertisement? Is the argument of seeing it for wayfinding less valid?
- I don't like the argument for wayfinding because that opens the door for everyone else. The fact that there's an existing sign there and you can change the copy, but not the structure, seems slightly absurd. The fact that it's existing, that's not a precedent.
- Maybe that's the reason, it's there already and we're just changing the copy of an existing sign.
- (Tucker) This is not a change of copy. Rules for nonconforming signs are to ultimately encourage signs that are non-compliant to go away. If the City believes signage should be larger along the Beltline then the City should change its code, not grant exceptions. There has to be a better way. The City has decided this, we redid the code resulting in the code as it's written today.
- I would argue it would open the door not just for this sign. Any of our non-compliant signs could use the existing base and change the copy.
- This according to code should only be 80-feet, so we're talking about more than doubling the size. I'm having trouble with the increase in size. It's partly driven by the westbound traffic, it seems like a thin excuse to accommodate people who have missed their turn off.
 - It is as much advertisement, Exact Sciences is an amazing thing that's happened in Madison. Literally 10s of thousands of people go down that Beltline that aren't turning off. By the same token Exact is proud to be here. I don't want to pin it just on this notion that if you miss it you miss your exit. If you want to go by that rule, a sign of 80 square feet, who would see it? We're 75-feet off the Beltline.
- We might consider a sign that would conform to a 6 lane road, once we saw that we might approve it (144/288).
- I would suggest showing us some comparisons when you come back.

ACTION:

On a motion by Goodhart, seconded by Braun-Oddo, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (7-0). The motion approved all the requested signage except for the large monument sign. The minimum setback of the approved signage shall be 5-feet.