

# AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** February 25, 2015

**TITLE:** 510 University Avenue - New 12+ Story Mixed-Use Project, "The Hub at Madison II" with 295 Apartment Units and Approximately 9,230 Square Feet of Retail. 4<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (36901)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

**AUTHOR:** Alan J. Martin, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** February 25, 2015

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Richard Slayton, Cliff Goodhart, Lauren Cnare, John Harrington, Melissa Huggins and Tom DeChant.

## **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of February 25, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** on a new 12+ story mixed-use project located at 510 University Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Jeff Zelisko, Brian Munson and Brad Mullins, representing Core Campus, LLC. The site is bounded by a through-lot that goes from the bend on Gorham Street and University Avenue through to Gilman Street. Munson introduced plans for a building that speaks to this unusual site, with Zelisko discussing the project in more detail. The project will meet the Downtown Height Standards, the setback requirements, the criteria of the Downtown Design District for zoning and urban design. Retail is proposed along University and Gorham, at 9,000 square feet which is about 1/3 the retail of “Hub 1,” with some “flex” space that could also be retail. They have 160 potential parking spaces for underground parking but they are unsure if they will need that many, depending on the mix of tenants. Two lobby locations are proposed for different types of housing, some of which may include townhomes. Market rate units may have larger living rooms, larger bedrooms, fewer number of bedrooms, different configurations and may also be unfurnished; whereas the student units would come furnished, may have different configurations of bedrooms, and may have some double occupancy units. After the second floor all the floor plates are the same going up to the 12<sup>th</sup> floor, with the second floor having amenities in a more compact manner than the “Hub 1.” This level would also have terraces for individual units that would not be public spaces. Terraces will be surrounded by planters, shrubs and ornamental trees, with green roof amenities beyond that such as sedum trays. The unit mix would include everything from micro-lofts all the way up to 5-bedrooms. The floor to ceiling ratios are shorter than the “Hub 1,” which gives this project a smaller building envelope even though they have reached the 12-story limit. Shadow studies were shown; because of the orientation the building will have less of an impact on surrounding structures. Masonry details will be stylized and used in a very modern way, contrasting with metal panels and steel headers. Roughly 15% of the units will have balconies. Window headers would be steel lintels to contrast the brick elements. An architectural louver will run the length of the retail at grade, with signage to be used to differentiate the retail fronts.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- You seem to be relatively successful on the University corridor side, because you have a sense of the urban loft that you've created successfully on University Avenue, but there I don't really get a sense of that at all.
- This brick return looks like it is in the same plane, like it's sitting on the lower level. I'm not certain where that dialogue comes into play. The all glass prow and then this kind of warehouse dialogue clips into it, looking at your massing and final resolution that piece doesn't feel resolved (p. 38, faced at point of bend on University Avenue).
  - We are at the property line on a couple of the side edges, so there are limitations where we're at the edge, but we'll definitely look at those as to how they get put together in terms of the windows turning the color.

How this sits on other elements. If this base is going to read as an element, how does that and why does that narrow piece of masonry sit on that?

- You've chosen this traditional load-bearing dialogue. It's very awkward to see that dialogue stop at this cantilever. You should think about that and move away that rigid, columnar system when you have some of these different areas (p. 31).
- In terms of your overall composition, the historic structure will read very much as its own. I'm trying to understand the resolution of this bay that is now meeting the ground, as opposed to sitting behind its neighboring structure (p. 37, Gilman façade).
  - We'll tie those elements together. The dark brick might be the right approach for the feel of the street.

That reads so differently, each of these infills might want to be its own dialogue and really just treat that as its own piece. If you can avoid these areas where the new construction is now abutting that in the same plane. Keep studying how they all meet. Provide something that explains that plane variation better than what we're seeing here. It might be more successful keeping it recessed.

- The main building is so warm, and then you come down to the retail and it's very cold. I understand the setback and glass but there were a couple of images that looked like somebody temporarily blocking construction. I don't know how you can get some of that, but the gray feels really cold as compared to what's going on above. The pedestrian is barely going to experience what's up there or have the benefit of the view, so it would be really nice to think about something like New York, where you take a traditional loft and what happens to the street level, instead of using this modern interpretation that you have at the top, but you haven't taken it down to the street.
  - We've just been looking at that expression in the last couple of days, and after seeing this I think this may be a great opportunity to bring this brick down.

Right now it feels like two separate buildings.

- The entrances to the residential areas need to be firmly distinguished from the retail. The sense of arrival at your home is really important and we should have a sense of divisions between residences and commercial and it should be strong.
- I think that this is a real, super conservative approach and I don't understand this overgrown loft aesthetic when you've got such really cool ideas at the bottom. I agree about distinguishing the lobby entrances to the building, but this is a curve, it's dynamic and it's moving, but we're getting another red brick, real conservative, play-it-safe building at a really prominent location. I would encourage you to do something really spectacular and go away from this load bearing warehouse aesthetic that I think is irrelevant.
- There does seem to be a great homage paid to the building across the street, with the mansard roof. My concerns are more pedestrian in nature. This drive aisle (access on the property next door at the back of the adjoining buildings), you're coming out at an angle, so the cars want to come out here pretty far. There's student and cars coming out at this curve. This reminds me of an exit road at the Metcalf's

Hilldale, where they've angled it so you miss the electric boxes onto University Avenue. I worry about a stream of cars coming in here, the blind spot and the students here. I'd hate to lose this dramatic thing but look at how you could possibly square it off just a little so you get a better view.

- The parking areas look like they're going to be in a lot of shade, and I don't know that you need plantings to soften this façade. I might like to see an alternate approach where you provide a parking deck at the trees. It's a little unorthodox because it's an urban setting, but think about making a wide planting area that benefits the tree roots.
  - One thing of note, the Gilman Street streetscape was rebuilt and is part of the State Street jurisdiction in terms of design and modifications, so we're somewhat limited but we can talk to them about that.

Do you have to have gates?

- We don't, we were thinking that there is a lack of safety with the entry right at the street.
- I wonder if it was one-way the other direction what cues you would take from this corner. I think this is appropriate to the curve, but think about walking on Bassett, that you might do something differently. It becomes somewhat of a terminus.
- You've got a 15-foot setback on the sidewalk. I really appreciate that, it's really important to get that sense of place. I'd take advantage, at least your retail space should take advantage of that.
- I think the trees on Gilman are needed. I agree that the plantings shown really don't do a lot. I encourage you to look at some type of structural soil. You need to get some trees that are in scale with it.
  - There's a Metro station right here, there's a potential BRT station right in front of the lobby, as well as a B-Cycle station that'll be coming, so we're in discussions with Traffic Engineering and City Engineering about how do we fit all of this together and still have room for street trees and crosswalks, all the things that have to happen here.
- One thing I'd like to see is a perspective going down Gilman that shows both sides of the street. Also it would be useful to look a bit more at how that curve works on University, maybe put some cars in that image. How it's going to feel with cars coming into that. I think it's important to look at how they're going to move through that space.
- I'm struggling with this one because it is trying to do two different things: there is a historical reference here and very contemporary elements. It's the piece in between. I have real trouble with the hung balconies, they look like fire escapes. I'm wondering if the horizontal elements could be worked into more depth and have those become the balconies rather than hung balconies. And I struggle with the arches, I know exactly why they're there, but the building reads as mostly very contemporary.
  - The Zoning Code requires a stepback of 15-feet to the primary façade so that's driving some of the massing you see on University Avenue.
- We recently saw a building that had a similarly curved façade. Did you look at something that would be more square, a less striking corner for that?
  - We've looked at a lot of different approaches on this, a very horizontal approach, interlocking shapes, ultra modern, it just doesn't come together.
- Some of the comments are bigger than just looking at elements. It's the composition. We would expect to see bigger revisions than just modifying elements.
- The notion of that façade on the Gilman Street side, have you spoken to anybody about the preservation of that piece?
  - We're anticipating some dialogue about that. They did not have any of the information about the preservation of the façade, so we're anticipating coming back and describing what's being proposed.
- They've never seen any of this?

- (Staff) No, what it is is the fact that all demolitions by zoning ordinance basically have to be reviewed once they're posted. It's not an application, it's a review of the potential demolition of the building. They react to it being posted.
- It really isn't a building that had a function projected 100 years later. We think the façade is something we'll be incorporating, it keeps the character of the street, but inside the building there really never was anything beyond the garage.

**ACTION:**

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

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 rating for this project is 5.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 510 University Avenue**

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	6	4	-	-	-	7	8	5

General Comments:

- Too conservative. Doesn't distinguish itself or take advantage of curved form.