

## AGENDA # 7

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** May 6, 2015

**TITLE:** 1200-1212 East Washington Avenue & 9-13 North Few Street – Three-Story Mixed-Use, Multi-Family Residential Development and Renovation of an Existing Building in UDD No. 8. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (36899)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

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

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** May 6, 2015

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Richard Slayton and Sheri Carter.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of May 6, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a three-story mixed-use, multi-family residential development located at 1200-1212 East Washington Avenue & 9-13 North Few Street in UDD No. 8. Appearing on behalf of the project were Joseph Lee, representing McGrath Property Group; and Jacob Blue, representing Ayres Associates. Appearing in support and available to answer questions was Lance McGrath. Registered and speaking in opposition was Adam Schesch. Appearing neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak were Jeff Reinke and Elyse Meaer. Architecturally the building is the same with the exception of the buff color veneer being brought across the entire base. Material samples were shown. Utility sized brick in a red-brown is also proposed. Modest changes to the landscape plan include preserving some existing trees; the plan meets or exceeds the points required in the Zoning Code. Some species were changed per the Commission’s recommendations. They did study the headlights coming out of the underground parking and found no casting of light above the first story of the building across the street.

Elyse Meaer spoke as a neighborhood resident, noting the headlights could impact her home. She has met with the development team and talked over different possibilities. She came to the conclusion that even if trees were planted, in the wintertime a tree would be of no use at all. Other neighbors pointed out a structure on Dayton Street where the exit shines lights into the house across the street and that the lights are driving them crazy. If the lights weren’t shining up as much it would make a huge difference.

Jeff Reinke noted that the increase in traffic will be a difficult issue with neighborhood children, schools and the bicycle boulevard on Mifflin Street. Staff noted that the driveway locations are dictated by the Urban Design District guidelines.

Adam Schesch spoke in opposition. The number one issue on their street is spill over parking on East Mifflin Street. In his 20 years of renting apartment units, he has only had one tenant who did not have a car. He disputes anybody who claims that half of the people in the new building are somehow going to be riding bicycles out to

the far reaches of the City. He would require low cost or free parking to all tenants who have cars and that it not be an option; a lot of landlords are charging \$70.00+ for a parking spot and young people are refusing to pay that and parking on an already crowded street. The City of Madison should recommend to the appropriate authorities that residents of the 1100-1200 Blocks of Mifflin Street have permit parking and that all others be banned from parking on those two blocks. Through traffic is a serious issue; four-way stop signs should be installed at the intersection of Mifflin and Few Streets to encourage more traffic onto East Washington Avenue. Speed bumps on the first and second blocks of North Few Street would also be recommended. He would like the developer to save the existing hardwood trees on the north side. Privacy is an issue and no business permits should be issued for something that would operate past 10:00 p.m. The City desperately needs more affordable housing.

An 8-foot fence is proposed to screen the project, and the existing Silver Maples, a Mulberry and a Locust will be protected.

Tim Parks of the Planning Division noted that Traffic Engineering is requesting no residential parking permits be authorized for this project, and that a 6-8-foot screening fence is a condition of approval.

Comments and questions from the Commission members were as follows:

- We have utility brick here and bigger down below. It seems to be a topic that we should be consistent on and if it's appropriate for this building we should find it so. There are places where we have it and places where we don't. I don't think there's a requirement. I would like to understand our reason behind why we make that decision. Often times that initial request comes from staff to push the developer and architect to go to regular sized brick and in this case you did not feel that was necessary? I was going to leave it to this body. I don't have as strong an opinion.
  - (Staff) It's an urban context issue. If you're downtown next to traditional buildings, and you're trying to inter-weave or relate to that fabric, the issue of brick size comes up all the time. The building of a lower scale would probably be compelled to relate more to that brick size as far as materiality and context. If there is a need to create a transition between smaller scale, finer texture buildings then that transition occurs with that material. Or if in context a building is not relative to what's around it, that conversation comes up. It's relevant to the context of the building being proposed and what is around it and whether or not it's intended to mesh and be seamless or seen as something that doesn't have to have that strong relationship to what's around it. It's a judgment call.
- I think it's a context issue rather than a one-size-fits-all.
- All the muttons on the double hung windows are harkening something historic and not a single tenant is going to have a piece of glass that appears bigger than 6 x 6. Things like that are a historic reference. If this had more modern windows like Veritas, it brings a total different rhythm to the building and you can read subtle, secondary patterns within these masonry openings. It brings more interest to the structure.
- Last time we did talk about studying that elevation of the drive and raising it so it was always at least on grade lighting, rather than lighting that was toward second stories, even in properties to the north, I think it's reasonable to ask for that adjustment.

### **ACTION:**

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-2) with Huggins, DeChant, Carter and Goodhart voting yes; O'Kroley and Slayton voting no.

No rankings were provided for this project.