

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: November 7, 2018

TITLE: 516 Cottage Grove Road – Comprehensive Design Review for Roysters Corners. 15th Ald. Dist. (53542)

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 FINAL APPROVAL** of a Comprehensive Design Review located at 516 Cottage Grove Road. Registered in support of the project were Dan Yoder, Bryan Cooper and Greg Mickells.

Yoder presented the two signs within the package that staff has issues with. The library ground sign is larger than allowed by code. He showed comparisons between what code would and would not allow. They looked at the downtown library signage and took inspiration from that to create high design. The alternative code compliant sign would be on the north elevation of the building. In terms of size and scale they feel it fits perfectly. Staff noted they felt the dense urban setting for the downtown location felt more appropriate for the larger free-standing sign. They would argue that it is appropriate as it allows the sign to be viewed from farther away. The proposed projecting sign blends well with the building architecture and uses high quality materials. The sign will not be internally illuminated, but they are looking at external linear illumination. He again showed a code compliant sign versus what they are requesting. They are willing to bring the larger sign down so as not to cross the third floor plane.

Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator spoke to a special rule in the Sign Code when you have ground signs and projecting signs that states one of those signs must not exceed 12 square feet. We don't see ground signs and projecting signs together very often and staff feels it is fine in this situation; it makes sense to grant a waiver for that. Staff had concerns about the case being made for how this sign is being viewed and the rationale for it being larger than what is permissible. Staff feels the applicant needs to make that case, which requires long views and renderings to assure the standards are being met. The library sign is for a public facility, it's a City facility; the downtown library is a very different style of architecture than the more suburban libraries. He mentioned the sign package for the Sequoia Library and the nice job the UDC did approving that. Public signs are not meant to dominate the landscape, they're meant to fit in. We're going to have more libraries in the near future and there is concern about this being a policy decision; it's up to the UDC to figure out how this relates to

the standards for this place. It is a long building but it's basically a modern suburban building, it has a greater viewshed leading to and past it, but there are still concerns about the size and scale of the proposed sign.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I'm wondering about the concept in general of having a lit sign down at ground level. Other than your inspiration of the downtown library.
 - It really boils down to the downtown library, the attractiveness of that sign and its uniqueness. This goes back to our design, this is subjective of course, but this is breaking the mold. It's not a standard sign, this is a place of learning and creativity and we think it falls in line with that.
- Given that it would be on the ground do you feel that the size becomes a certain point of no return, if it got smaller you'd just as soon have it up on the canopy?
 - Yes that's why we showed it code compliant, it just doesn't work.
- You have a niche carved into this building where this would sit, it's scaled to that inset? It works with the architectural feature. If you shrunk it there it would not align properly.
 - Yes, it's an architectural feature inset. Where we show the code compliant sign it is no longer successful.
- This isn't really a library building, it's a library in a building.
- It might be more appropriate that this calls attention to the library tenant. I like that it's right below a glass space that draws your eye into the activity.
 - Historically public buildings need to be stuffy. We think this speaks more on where we are today.
- The central library is a single purpose building. This is an apartment building and the renderings I'm seeing it looks like the library sign dominates the sign for Royster Commons. The Sequoia Library doesn't even have signage visible from Midvale Boulevard and it's probably the most used branch in the whole City. I don't see the need for this large non-compliant sign on a City owned/occupied space.
- The scale of the road it's on and the scale of the site, you've got KFC nearby, they have large signage. It doesn't bug me so much that the Madison Public Library facing that street would be that size. I also like that it hides the railing so it becomes more a part of the architecture than something tacked on top. Same thing downtown. There's something to be said that it's different and that it stands out.
- It has a high volume of customers, some of whom are coming from all over the City. The wayfinding looks kind of monumental.
- (Tucker) The ordinance allows a maximum of 40 square feet per side, combined total of 80 for all ground signs on the zoning lot. What's proposed is 115.5 square feet (smaller than downtown).

ACTION:

On a motion by Asad, seconded by Hall, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of an exception for the proposed ground sign. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-1) with Goodhart voting no. The motion further provided that the projecting sign for Royster Corners be code compliant and moved below the third floor.