

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** January 29, 2020

TITLE: 701 Gardener Road – Madison Yards  
Block 2 in UDD No. 6. 11<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist.  
(58985)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: January 29, 2020

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Jessica Klehr, Craig Weisensel, Rafeeq Asad, Shane Bernau and Christian Harper.

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of January 29, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for Madison Yards Block 62 located at 701 Gardener Road in UDD No. 6. Registered and speaking in support were Sean Roberts, Aaron Ebent and Ethan Skeels, all representing Summit Smith Development; Kevin Yeska, representing JSD Professional Services; and Shawn Zimny, representing Gilbane Development Co..

Roberts presented the surrounding context from the recorded GDP documentation, as well as some drone footage. The three blocks that are part of the initial phase are Block 2, Block 3 and Block 6. Yeska presented Block 6. The center of the project is a large underground detention basin, all the stormwater on the site will be private. The street section views will be consistent with the GDP and they will be adding street trees along University Avenue and Segoe Road. The central greenspace will be loaded up with plantings with potential street market on weekends and will be bordered on one side by a restaurant. This is seen as the gathering space for residents and employees. Some type of monument feature (raised seat wall) will be placed on the corner with passive seating on the northwest corner. The northeast corner will be framed by a stage for smaller events and concerts with a bit more hardscape element on the south end. The material palette will be modern industrial for an urban clean look while pulling in natural stone seen throughout Madison and native plantings. A one-story 5,500 square foot “white box” is shown with the intention of getting the form approved before working to find a tenant and finalizing details. They will provide architectural details on all four sides of the building and orient it towards the plaza. The landscape plan does not include some of the more commonly used species around Madison and concentrates more on prairie like plantings.

Block two will contain a 50,000 square foot Whole Foods grocery store and a hotel. Ebent of Kahler Slater presented the site plan with the grocery store on the left, central parking and a hotel to the east facing Madison Yards Way. The site does have a tremendous amount of slope with the grocery store being two-stories built into the hill. The hotel has an exposed lower level and has some presence on University Avenue, with the corner activated by a pool and fitness room. The primary access will be off of Segoe Road for the grocery store with

the back-of-house elements facing University Avenue. He reviewed of floor plans and site access circulation. They are maximizing the amount of glass used to visualize activity. Building materials include cast stone or masonry base with wood-look siding and white metal panel for Whole Foods. Sunscreens will be introduced on the south facing glass.

Block three will contain primarily residential and retail. KTG Architects presented the same challenges with grade change and elevations. The retail will face Madison Yards Way and the central green with the residential atop the podium. Located at the lower level of University and Gardener is the lobby for residential and provides a nice activation of this corner. Two levels of parking will serve residential and retail for the building with grade allowing entrance to each level. The retail area is approximately 10,000 square feet and fronts Madison Yards Way while activating the central green. There are five levels of residential, an interior courtyard with amenities and an exterior terrace on the north side of the building. Building materials will include fiber cement panel, metal panel and brick veneer base.

Alder Martin, District 10 expressed support for the project; they are holding a neighborhood meeting tomorrow.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Could you go back to the loading area for Whole Foods.
  - It's a one-way eastbound from University Avenue so they'll come from the west, pull in straight ahead, back up to load and exit.
- Are these full sized semis?
  - Yes.
- I find that slightly worrisome. Something about that stretch of University coming east, they just accelerate over that bridge at Blackhawk. I guess it's the best solution for what you're doing but I'm trying to picture semis pulling in and out at that space.
- Has there been conversation with Traffic?
  - Yes absolutely and University Avenue is designated a truck route. From a Traffic perspective they've asked us to keep it out of the neighborhood.
- So they're doing the maneuvering inside the property?
  - Yes.
  - There's a signalized light intersection there also.
- Do you have a tenant for the hotel?
  - We are not hotel experts so that will be a condo unit. We're working with a group out of Milwaukee and a group out of North Carolina. The design is based on their projected brands. They're looking at extended stay so the footprint of the rooms is larger than typical.
- I like this, I've liked it from the beginning. My only concern is the white masses of the apartments, they seem heavy and need attention.
  - The concept is trying to undulate or make movements on the outside of the building. We've been responding to cost increases and everything else. We originally looked at inset balconies but wanted to capture as much rentable space as possible and make the nicest living units we could. This is a wood frame building so an exterior balcony is supported by a post element or you hang it off the building and we didn't want to go the traditional hung balcony with a metal band. We felt it fit the architecture a little better.
- I'm curious about what is happening in the courtyard above the parking. Is it landscaped?
  - Yes it's landscaping, there isn't a pool in the program. It'll be a landscaped interior court that's programmed with grill space, patios, etc. There will be an activated patio and seating.
- There was a tree on the roof on the last rendering.

- We have a small terrace on the north side to take advantage of the view to the north. The landscaping up there would be potted.
- (Firchow) Two points we wanted to touch on are the relationship to University Avenue, and one of the “asks” that would be different in the Zoning from a Zoning standpoint is the one-story element, where the Zoning interpretation was a 2-story element all the way around the block (Block 2).
- It expresses itself one-story on one side, are you suggesting two-stories along University Avenue?
  - On University it is two-stories. Our understanding from Matt Tucker was we would need to run a concurrent amendment with the SIP submittal.
- For us, is the effective height of this building sufficient to give that edge of two-story feel?
- The entry to Whole Foods, the Madison Yards/Gardener Way corner where you showed a pretty big sign. In talking about signage I want to make sure you’re comfortable with that architecture if that Whole Foods sign does not take up that whole side. That’s a pretty big sign given the size of the street.
  - We’re beginning the sign discussions in earnest tomorrow. We kept this design general. Whole Foods has asked us to work on getting this requested sign but we know we have to comply with the Zoning Code. We’ll have to coordinate with Whole Foods once we find out what’s allowed.
  - Our understanding is that signage is based on a series of factors, how big that wall is that it’s sitting on, how big it can stretch to. That has a little bit of a give and take to it.
- The west elevation of the apartments...why? Regardless of what’s happening on the interior of the building the exterior should speak to itself. It’s really stark compared to the other elevations.
  - It is, we have no activation by units. We’re straddling the line of being a good neighbor while addressing the State Office building.
- Forget they’re there, just talk about the architecture.
  - The architecture here has a great deal to do with the large building next to us. We’re not capturing this elevation except for the people leaving the State Office building. When you’re looking at this coming down University its back in the canyon between the 10-story office building and out building. We’re right on the property line. We cannot have many openings by code.
- When you come back show how that building looks in place because we don’t get that perspective.
  - If there was a park facing to the west we would turn the units that way.
  - We purposely turned the units in because the view out was not great.
- The State didn’t do us any favors when the sited that building.
- Perhaps there could be more design to it. Right now it’s just gray, you have a lot of white panels, maybe it’s all white. A little reflectivity and brightness. This kind of looks like a highway sound wall. There’s still conveyance between those buildings.
- There’s a plaza facing half of that building, some gesture of at least wrapping it around instead of cutting it off at the corner.
- The hotel looking down at the roof of Whole Foods, is there any talk of a green roof?
  - There is not because Whole Foods has 40 skylights for natural daylighting.
  - And mechanicals and elevator overrun.
- There’s a lot of things I like, in particular the west face of Whole Foods where the architecture materials fold out into planters, it’s a nice transition. It’s hard to foundation landscape around large buildings like this. I think you could study where those fall against the brick and materials against the building. On the University side it’s such a large façade with fast traffic speeds, what you’re showing for plant materials is good. I would advise refraining from gumdrop shrub plantings, keep it massed and substantial to break down the height you have. Good start.
- Very good baseline what you have here.
  - To give you a schedule idea we do have an executed lease with Whole Foods, that requires us to have the residential and streets done at the same time, so we are actively working on our land use

applications for all three blocks. We would start to do earth work concurrently with the September time frame.

- The more consistent you are with your original plan I think the easier it will go. Thank you very much, nice project.

**ACTION:**

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