

AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: February 23, 2022
TITLE: 7035 Littlemore Drive - Public Building, Door Creek Park Shelter. 16th Ald. Dist. (69488)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Jessica Vaughn, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: February 23, 2022	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, Shane Bernau, Jessica Klehr, Christian Harper, Rafeeq Asad, and Russell Knudson. Excused was Christian Albouras.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of February 23, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a public building, the Door Creek Park Shelter, located at 7035 Littlemore Drive. Registered and speaking in support were Mike Sturm, representing the City of Madison Parks Division, and Douglas Pahl, representing Aro Eberle Architects.

Sturm described the project to construct a 4,000 square-foot multi-season facility that includes a community room, restrooms, a small service kitchen, and a bay for maintenance operations. Door Creek Park is 160 acres and already has tennis courts, soccer fields, a playground, and a natural area. Parks staff worked with the district alder to organize two community meetings; input received from the public informed the final design for the shelter. Parks is working toward achieving LEED Silver with this building. Pahl discussed the design of the building, noting that utilities, stormwater, and sanitary are all available to supply the building. They noted that what is labeled as a transformer on page C200 in the plans is actually a condensing unit for the air conditioner, located next to the trash containers in the wooden enclosure. They pointed out the four pathways to access the building, which connect to the existing asphalt path. The restrooms are located in the southwest corner of the building, with a family restroom on the northeast corner near the playground. Sturm discussed the landscaping plans, noting that they worked closely with operations staff on the plant selection based on the maintenance required with the associated plantings. Pahl discussed the orientation of the building, proposed materials, and its split roof design, which the public voted for at the public input sessions.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I understand the need for low-maintenance foundation plantings. Initially looking at the list, I thought you were using a strictly native plant palette, but the forsythia stuck out because it's from Asia, while the others are native. Some spread slowly by runners, so there will be an issue with them growing into each other, but not much of a problem. It's nice there are some flowering plants, and they don't all flower at the same time. It is a pretty modest planting, but a decent selection for what they have.
- This area seems ripe for a well thought out prairie restoration.

- The cedar fence enclosure of dumpsters and condensing unit isn't fooling anyone, and we know what is behind the wooden enclosure. I don't think it's good to have that sitting out there like a wooden box. On the north side facing the parking lot and the west side, I would encourage you to plant some ornamental native grasses. Pick a cultivar of Switch Grass *Panicum*, such as North Wind, Heavy Metal, or Dallas Blues. You don't have to completely shield it, but maybe use three across the front and four down the side. It would look nicer if those were fronted with shorter Prairie Dropseed or Little Bluestem. It's not that expensive and would go a long way toward making the dumpster enclosure less obvious.
- Is the masonry modular brick or what size is it? Is there a close-up image of it? It appears to have patterning, but it's unclear where that is coming from.
 - It is three sizes, like an ashlar size combination. It is 2, 5, 8, and it patterns up nicely. There is a subtle color variation between the sizes.
- Is there bark mulch under the plants and stone mulch just at the building edge?
 - The stone mulch is on the north side under the overhang between the planting bed and building face where there is a dry shade, so establishing plant material would be challenging there. The intent was to have a narrow band between the planting bed and building face. The planting bed itself will be bark mulch. There will be edging between the proposed stone mulch and the planting bed with bark mulch.
- Have you discussed the location of the condensing unit with someone knowledgeable on mechanical systems? It would be unusual to have that type of mechanical system away from the building where you would have to bury the piping to the system under a concrete sidewalk. That system should be outside next to the building near the mechanical/janitor room. I'm not saying it can't be done, but it is unusual. I'm pointing it out so you can be intentional in how you react to any potential issues there. It's also an opportunity to think about the location of the trash and condenser enclosure in general and whether there is a better location, perhaps near the restrooms to the back of the building.
- I think the stone maintenance strip under the roof overhang and the plants in bark mulch are good details. I would consider swapping out some trees for something that evokes that sense of place like Burr Oak, something that resonates with the adjacent landscape.
 - Excellent suggestion in recognizing the expansive prairie to the south. Something long term with distinct character would be great.
- There should be a photographic sample of the masonry materials for the record.

ACTION:

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Bernau, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).

The motion for final approval provided for the following:

- Consideration should be given to providing landscape along the refuse area enclosure, including Switch Grass, Heavy Metal, or Dallas Blues.
- Consideration should be given to maintaining native tree species consistent with the natural prairie setting, including switching the *Amelanchier* species out and/or utilizing Burr Oak.