

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: November 18, 2015
TITLE: 6001 Gemini Drive – PD(GDP) for “Grandview Commons Town Center.” 3 rd Ald. Dist. (39063)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Jay Wendt, Acting Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: November 18, 2015	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Sheri Carter, Lois Braun-Oddo and Michael Rosenblum.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of November 18, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a PD(GDP) located at 6001 Gemini Drive. Appearing on behalf of the project were Joseph Lee, representing DSI Real Estate; Brian Munson, Roger Guest and Robert McCaigue, representing Veridian Homes.

This is the last block within the town center to fulfill the goal of having integrated walkable uses within the neighborhood. The site is limited with bedrock that ranges from 3-10-feet across the site, eliminating the possibility of underground parking. The proposal is a minor alteration to the zoning to deliver the retail component. They want to reinforce the street edge with a format that is one-story for 2 buildings, 1-½ stories (two story volume) on 2 buildings along North Star and a 2-story building in the northeast corner, for a total of 32,000-36,000 square feet of retail space, which is what was approved for this site. All of the buildings have a primary entrance on the public street with some secondary entries on the parking lot side. On the Sharpsburg side of the building it appears as a 1—story building, whereas on the parking lot side it appears as 2-stories. Plans call for four-sided architecture to also address the parking lot side of the buildings. The architecture is warehouse style with brick, 3 different masonry accent colors and fiber cement siding/panels.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I have questions about the approach and the traffic flow. Is it really important to have this direct?
 - Traffic Engineering had a strong preference for aligning these driveways across. The cross-over point becomes the fire route. We’re hoping to not have all the turn movements be fire truck movements. We don’t see a need for people to drive across, but they were concerned it was going to complicate the turn movement and the distance from the street, as well as stacking concerns.
- Do you have an ADA ramp on the side with the stairs?

- We have made sure that this whole route becomes accessible all the way through the site. We're trying to see about getting rid of some of the stairs, but we have grade changes to deal with. All the buildings will be accessible.
- The placement of this building, not to mention this amount of parking and two driveway access points, completely compromises Gemini Drive and the ability to make this a commercial, walkable street. Rather than a building plunked into a surface parking lot. This orientation creating a street edge on Cottage Grove Road is compromising creating a street edge on Gemini, and the 2nd vehicular access point is compromising the ability for this building to create a street edge on Gemini.
 - I don't disagree. We're replicating some of the landscaping elements to bring the scale down. We did have some conversations about how to squeeze the buildings to elongate as much as we can. Our other challenge is we can't have direct access out to Cottage Grove Road. This configuration allowed the balance of keeping the core parking intact and circulation components so people have access to all the buildings. Traffic Engineering is only allowing parking on the east side of Gemini Drive.
- I won't support it. It compromises Gemini, and if it's Traffic Engineering that is forcing all of these compromises...
- It's giving us a suburban shopping area in what is supposed to be new urbanism development. I mourn the loss of that open space, but I understand that Sharpsburg has become your open space with the farmer's market. All this asphalt and circulation just for traffic purposes, it might as well be Hilldale or any other place.
- One access point on Gemini could help address some of these concerns.
- This is not an inviting place. This is a place you're going to run in and run out and drive away, it's not a place you're going to hang out. You could reduce your square footage and then reduce the parking.
- The designs of the buildings are fine.

ACTION:

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