

## AGENDA # 9

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** November 28, 2012

TITLE: 210 Langdon Street – PUD-GDP-SIP for the Deconstruction and Construction of a New Fraternity House. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (28428)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: November 28, 2012

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Marsha Rummel, John Harrington, Melissa Huggins, Richard Slayton, Cliff Goodhart and Tom DeChant.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of November 28, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a PUD-GDP-SIP located at 210 Langdon Street. Appearing on behalf of the project was J. Randy Bruce, representing Rattle Building Corporation and Theta Chi Fraternity. There is an addition on the front of a historic building behind the subject property that was originally the parsonage for the church next door. Currently this is a fraternity in very bad disrepair. They are suggesting demolition of this structure and construction of a new more modern fraternity. The plans try to maintain the existing yard setback. Planning staff will be suggesting a front yard setback overlay of 20-feet. There are 5-foot setbacks on the side yard lot lines with a pedestrian access point from Langdon Street down to the lake. The floor plan for the project shows an entry vestibule with a main living room and stairs to the upper level bedrooms with shared bathrooms. A side deck is included, as well as a deck over the front entrance. Small kitchenettes are included on the upper floors. A dozen cars, 8 moped stalls and 8 bicycle stalls are being accommodated. Architecturally they are looking at a strong academic motif with a stone base with simulated stucco on the upper levels, including some heavy timber details on the windows. The Secretary distributed and discussed the Landmarks Commission's recommendations for this project, which include preservation of the rear portion of the building designed and altered by Frank Riley, architect in 1926.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Need to provide more context on adjacent existing development; especially along Lakelawn.
- Need to adjust parking at Lakelawn to provide greenspace at street, including eliminating two stalls to have more landscaping.
- Can you clarify what was remodeled by Frank Riley?
  - Just the rear portion. The interior has been significantly altered. Amy Scanlon has since been in the building and has a better appreciation for what the structure is. It is a structure that's truly beyond its years. It's a timber frame building.
- Ald. Maniaci noted this is a "one for one" in terms of building mass and capacity.

- We don't have the context of what is happening on Lakelawn.
- What are the conditions of the trees in back?
  - There are some trees along the property line that are invasive. I had an arborist take a look at the Oaks; one has a 50% cavity at the base so the owner's are going to take that down now. The other will probably not survive more construction; it's already had its root die back from the 60s construction.
- The academic architecture is certainly fine. I like the use of the study areas with the decks with the caveat that there is no beer bottle chucking from there.
- I think it's going in the right direction. I really appreciated the rendering because it really showed the neighboring building very realistically. I would encourage a little bit more restraint on the design of the southeast corner, with the fireplace and the trellis, compared to the strong gable next door. A little bit more pure form. It's got a quiet presence but a strong geometric form.
  - I question the context because it's the TKE House next door. How can we make, through their design, the TKE House look better?

I don't want to prescribe exactly what you should do.

Bruce remarked that Amy Scanlon has a little bit of hesitation of us using stone next to the stone building next door. We initially just liked the stone and weren't thinking so much about the competition of the building next door. She is suggesting brick.

You can't mix brick and keep the stone.

There are other buildings along the street that are brick.

There's probably stone next to stone too.

I don't have any objection to stone or brick.

- I'll read Dawn's comment: Her recollection of the property to the northeast shown in the background on the rendering is a gable end that feels pretty substantial as a pedestrian. That neighboring gable is dwarfed by the proposed gable roof form. Please show the adjacent flat roof structure to the west to understand the relationship to both neighbors, understanding they differ substantially. I question the appropriateness of emulating a historic style with less detail and articulation and question the durability of EIFS sills.
  - The whole exterior skin is one system so this is EIFS, the light piece is EIFS and the sill piece is EIFS as well.
- Maybe she's suggesting some masonry sills, eyebrows and headers. With EIFS you don't get that same attention to detail.
- Clearly whatever you can do to maximize the durability of the building would be well received.
  - Next time we could come with a streetscape elevation.
- Some other sense of how the rest of the street rhythms work. It's a larger building than most.
  - It's a little deeper than the existing building but not a heck of a lot.
- Help educate us and the public in terms of how scale works in this neighborhood.
- It looks like miniature chimneys, maybe it's just this perspective. This looks like it's just not of this house. Otherwise I think the rest of it works really well.
- A permanent grill might be a better option than allowing them to move one around. (Maniaci)
- That projecting entryway seems to really compete with the building next door to it. Look at shifting it to the corner so you wouldn't have that competition. The other thing is that in this traditional academic architecture that sort of chimney doesn't seem to work.
- I want to see more of what the back of the lot looks like; need rear façade treatment related to Lakelawn.
  - From a neighborhood perspective I have gotten comments that incorporating parking is probably a good thing for the neighborhood.

Surface lots are not though.

Any and all parking is a welcome thing to the residents of this neighborhood whether it's surface or not.  
(Maniaci)

- Provide a consistent line around building architecturally.

**ACTION:**

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

After the Commission acts on an application, individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10, including any changes required by the Commission. The ratings are for information only. They are not used to decide whether the project should be approved. The scale is 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding. The overall ratings for this project are 5, 5 and 8.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 210 Langdon Street**

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	6	5	-	-	-	6	7	5
	-	8	-	-	-	-	9	8
	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	5

General Comments:

- Too much going on at southeast corner. More design restraint, please.
- Too much detail – overdone. Overpowers frat to east, which is landmark. Tone it down.