



Agenda Item #:	4
Project Title:	825 W Badger Road - Public Building, Madison College Child Care Facility Located in Urban Design District (UDD) 7. (District 14)
Legistar File ID #:	81514
Members Present:	Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Jessica Klehr*, Shane Bernau, Christian Harper, Wendy von Below, Marsha Rummel, Rafeeq Asad, and Russell Knudson
Prepared By:	Kevin Firchow, AICP, Acting UDC Secretary

*Klehr was recused on this item.

Summary

At its meeting of February 28, 2024, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a new daycare building for Madison College located at 825 W Badger Road. Registered and speaking in support were Fred Brechlin, and Kirk Keller. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Adam Watkins, Garret Perry, and Ken Turba. Registered in support but not wishing to speak was Valentina Ahedo.

As part of the applicant team presentation, it was noted that existing building materials match the quality already in place at the South Campus and the main Truax Campus. Fire Station #6 will be removed for this new daycare center. The floor level of the new facility will match the existing South Campus. 6,200 square feet of play space is provided for the children, with shade structures provided until tree canopies can grow and develop. The entry piece has been brought out to be 20-feet from the property line.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- I was excited to see this project come back because we gave a lot of good feedback at the Informational. I don't know that has been captured. I wish there was more design to this parking lot elevation of the building since that is where most people experience the building. You put all your details and design on the Park Street side. It's a very simple building, not every building built needs to be the next award-winning building, but this one could be a little bit better in terms of design. You took the materials from the previous projects, you need to take design from the previous projects. When I look at this, I don't know that this is a daycare. It's not playful, it doesn't have to be, but it could be. I look at this neighborhood, I know Centro Hispano, the Center for Black Excellence, Madison College, this is going to be part of the whole renaissance of the South Park Street corridor and this is not as designed as it could be. Missed opportunities. What's the reason for holding back on applying some of the comments or suggestions? Cliff had suggestions on the entry that I thought would do a lot.
 - We're dealing with budget, which doesn't mean you can't do good design on a low budget. There is not an intent to do a playful building, and not an intent to introduce a playful element that then somehow separates this for when these buildings are joined together. I ask for consideration that we responded to the Commission's comments dealing largely on not where people are entering the building, but where the public is seeing the building, which is Badger Road.
 - The comment about connecting the buildings is important, because that is our ultimate goal at that campus. It doesn't really exist as a standalone. The playground is really going to have an impact on the south part of the building because of all the structures planned.
- Every architect understands budget. I still think there's more you could do.

- Have you had input by Forestry on the street tree selection? I noticed a red oak in a fairly small terrace area and question that selection.
 - When that goes through staff review, we're getting edicts to plants, these are probably not what Forestry is going to want. When we get to staff they will show us what trees they want.
- What is the surface material in Play Area A? And is there a concept that helped drive the layout of the play area or the design of what will be some of those really cool features?
 - The College intends a full fall zone material like artificial turf. We may add additional resilient pavement for some paths. Then the mission and theme of the College is more of a risk play, imagination play, and adventure play.
- The blank wall where the buildings would connect in the future, are you connecting or adding on?
 - The answer is yes, add on to the building and to adjoin with the campus, budget being the concern, otherwise we would be doing that today. This is also an educational facility, the Goodman South Campus is starting to hit close to capacity on some things so there is intent to expand, and to add on to the daycare component here. Those windows shown would come out and the buildings would connect there. There is talk of below-grade parking in the future, but we haven't designed that.
- Kudos on the commitment to the materials. I was also inspired by some of Rafeeq's comments. The northeast rendering, I find the top sweeping roof canopy attractive on these Madison College buildings. Was there any study of how these buildings talk to each other more than just being consistent? From a budgetary standpoint did you study the potential to reduce some of that masonry and stone that I suspect has a price tag to it, in order to try to gain some other architectural or design elements?
 - Focus on Energy is now offering dollars if you up the poundage on the roof to eventually hold photovoltaics on the roof, which we are doing structurally. As far as the exterior materials, we're really controlled by Fred's department. To introduce some lighter, less expensive material is not allowed on Madison College buildings.
- It does appear that there are some existing, mature trees really close to where you are proposing new trees. What do we know about those existing trees?
 - We're trying to clear a site for construction that will include ramping, and we didn't see the ability to save those.
- The second floor mechanical room is expressed like any other occupied room, will that have vision glass or is that spandrel?
 - The venting for the mechanical will be through the roof, so there are no grills placed by the windows. The intent is that several of the windows will be vision glass, and depending on placement, maybe all of them, but we have to get farther in the engineering.
- It's purely vision, not translucent glass then?
 - Interior window coverings so that it would be the same glass used on the rest of the building.
- To give it more 3D quality, a sunshade on the windows on the south elevation that are integral and part of the storefront system can be very effective in reducing your solar gain and give the building a three dimensional quality. Given the fact you have some exceptions to that where you have your canopy and mechanical rooms might give you opportunity for more life to that façade without significantly destroying your budget.
 - If the Commission would like us to integrate that, I can envision what you are saying. We could bring that back as a staff item, a metal sunshade and not a fabric material.
- The 40% standard for windows in the staff report, can we go through that in more detail to see what you've changed.?
 - It's not a requirement, it says it "should" be 40%. What you see here is about 26-27%. Because of the functions behind there, we worked to move some of that functional space off the glass and open up, introduce the stone, but there's a need for wall space within the classrooms on the righthand side. The lefthand side, the main addition is that the entry piece is pushed out further to meet that 20-foot requirement; we could count the glass on the sides of that if we wanted to, but we wanted to be straightforward.

- I just noticed you have multiple pieces designated as “play sculpture.” I’m not entire sure what you mean by that. These are placed inside what is designated planting beds. If they’re meant to be climbed on, why are they in planting beds? I don’t think that detention area belongs there.
 - I kindly ask that as a motion those areas be removed, that is a hang on from a redesign. We are looking for a wolf to climb on, that’s the Madison College mascot. That’s a piece we’d come back for with the signage.
 - Something that evokes some fun, give a little spice to the front of the building. What those sculptures are, there’s a lot of local sculptures that have unique identifiable sculptures that evokes play and creates some depth and some uniqueness to the landscape. Not necessarily something you’d climb on. Inclusion and diversity in the landscape.
- The plant selections, the four big canopy trees are normally fine selections, but American sycamore and two honey locust trees, you might just want to peruse a list of other trees to fit in those spaces. Both those trees are notoriously messy and drop flowers, seed pods, they lose a lot of branches and are very messy trees. Neatness is not one of their attributes.

The Commission discussed the following:

- The staff report wants us to make a finding as to whether in our judgment there was enough glass vs. solid wall on the street façade, and some feedback with regard to confirmation of durable high-quality materials, and the landscape design and plant list. With regard to the street façade, when I look at the building, I don’t say this is a solid wall with tiny punched openings, it seems appropriate, and I don’t see the point of making them have larger windows for less performance on the thermal wall. I think the materials are consistent, high quality and durable. I would like to see more attention paid to the south façade, some of the things we discussed would be an improvement.
- The south side play area, there’s a couple layers of this still missing. This isn’t really going to change my overall voting or approval opinion on the project, but I think the play area could be pushed a little further. Successful play areas, often in addition to creative or natural play elements, have a unique sense of place created by topography or color or other elements of story telling in the ground plane. Integrating plants can be difficult, but there’s less risk if you’re using perennial or herbaceous material that will grow back if it’s trampled. The ground planes, the surfacing, potentially some plant material could start to create more spaces in this rectangle where kids can explore and get lost in (mentally). I would encourage you to consider exploring those ideas, simple stuff that doesn’t have to add a lot of cost. There’s a bed of penecillium which can be spotty. Because you’re massing them together it’s probably okay, maybe something to think about because you have a bed of them at the front entry. In the previous life of this site, we did spend a fair amount of time talking about the existing trees; I don’t know if it’s possible but if there is any way to save those trees, great.
- There’s future connectivity between this building and the campus, and there’s this little parking lot stuck there. Made me wonder the future of that parking lot. It’s always good to see these public bodies make it so the kids can be part of the students’ lives.
- Any introduction of below grade parking will have a lot of implications that would come back to this body.
- I wasn’t suggesting that.
- I would expect if those things occurred there would be significant reworking of the site plan, not just connecting those without any other kind of adjustment to the site plan, which is something we would weigh in on at some point.
- I think this is a great project and understand budget. Is the 40% glazing a requirement, you have to have 40% period, or how do we move forward?
- This is a guideline because the wording of this part of the ordinance says it “should” be, not it “shall” be, therefore the staff report asks us to make a finding on whether it is adequate or not, because staff’s opinion is that the Commission has latitude on this.
- (Firchow) Yes, the word being “should” and not “shall” provides flexibility for the Commission.

- We need to get rid of that in the rewrite. If it's not required, we draft a motion in support speaking to that, we say it's fine as presented?
- My comment was that looking at the overall composition of the design and understanding its function, the elevation looked balanced and appropriate for this particular design. That's how we make a finding is within the context of the overall design and understanding its use.

Action

On a motion by Knudson, seconded by Rummel, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-1-1) with Knudson, Rummel, Bernau, Harper, von Below, and Asad voting yes; Klehr recused; and Goodhart non-voting. The motion passed with the following findings and conditions:

- The proposed window wall ratio is acceptable.
- The applicant shall consider more building design elements that relate to the adjacent building.
- The applicant shall consider the enhancement of the outdoor play space to provide some elements of topography, or other defining elements of that play space.
- The applicant shall consider the south façade glazing, particularly as it relates to the second floor mechanical space.
- The applicant shall review preservation of existing trees, if possible.
- The applicant shall confirm the implications to the site of some preliminary planning of future connection of the two buildings to understand today's design thinking.
- The applicant shall update plans to remove play structures from stormwater detention areas.
- The applicant shall explain how light fixtures, including L2 fixture will conform to full cut-off, to be administratively approved.