

AGENDA # 9

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: November 7, 2018
TITLE: 674-796 S. Whitney Way – Façade Alteration and Site Improvements to Whitney Square Shopping Center Located in UDD No. 3. 19 th Ald. Dist. (53554)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: November 7, 2018	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Christian Harper, Cliff Goodhart, Jessica Klehr, Tom DeChant, Amanda Hall and Rafeeq Asad.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of November 7, 2018, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a façade alteration and site improvements to Whitney Square Shopping Center located at 674-796 S. Whitney Way. Registered in support of the project were Brad Koning, representing Sketchworks Architecture, and Steve Doran, the property owner.

Doran recently purchased the property from its previous owner of 25 years, who did not do much with the property and have lost a number of tenants because they were unwilling to invest money into the property. The current building is predominantly EIFS and a small building has some old weathered wood paneling. All the parking, rooftop units, and grease trap units are visible and look terrible; those will all be screened with this upgrade. The goal is to replace at least 50% of the EIFS on the buildings with stone or Nichiha panel; EIFS would remain on the signage bands. The columns and walkways will be removed to open up the façade and provide better visibility for tenants. They would like to rip out the existing fence and replace it with something nicer, add a ton of landscaping and screen the trash enclosures. Some of these will require approval of the leased tenants. As of today they are about 60% occupied with the hope of making these upgrades to attract new tenants. Building material samples were shown. There is a large pylon sign existing; they are working on a new signage package that will likely remove that existing sign. The team is looking at additional outdoor eating space when they upgrade the parking lot and landscaping.

The Secretary noted that Planning and Zoning staff have been working with the design team and that the applicant has made an effort to use quality materials rather than EIFS and not to use oversized parapets. She noted that signage will return as a separate application, but requested that they show signable areas relative to the existing roof height, with nothing allowed 4-feet higher than the building.

The Commission discussed the following:

- All the trash faces Odana Road and there's no real inviting façade on that side.

- We have to come together with a trash plan. Things that face the street we would want to enclose. Plus we're trying to figure out what the tenants are going to be which will determine how large and where the dumpsters are located. We're considering a wood fence as well.
- The renderings of the smaller building seem to be more successful. Once you start stripping off those walkways the bump-outs become really abrupt. They don't have any particular rhythm to them, I wonder if you could reconsider the abruptness, whether you go more of what you're doing on the smaller building, or a partial recess on the main wall. To me it's not a great candidate for rustic materials, it's a shopping center. The landscape plan is fantastic. That goes to the cedar fence too, maybe even a vinyl fence or something not wood on a center like this might be more consistent and give it some continuity, be true to itself.
- I like taking away the covered walkway to get the space in front of the building. I wonder if you can think of anything else design-wise to make it more inviting to the center, with something that makes it more of a gateway. Where you come in off of Odana Road.
 - Where we are removing the overhangs will allow for more landscaping and that will help open things up.
- I think he's saying it should be more cohesive. If they were all consistent, regardless of the logo or name, but the architecture behind it tied together more. If those projections for individual stores were more cohesive it would look better. You can still take off the overhang.
- The rusticated stone doesn't get you to a more modern look. It's a contemporary kind of material but it's not modern in that sense.
 - Retailers want the stone because it feels richer.
- It's not really a consistently used material. When this gets near the ground it turns into a sponge and after about five years it's down the sewer. Maybe something a little less rustic.
- This is more urban so it should differentiate itself rather than replicate something.
- Making it more modern may help with the rejuvenation of what you're trying to do. Think of how Hilldale has redone itself in a very modern way.
- The landscaping is off to a great start. We are concerned with large parking lots and the heat island effect. As this progresses along, make sure the plans are legible and readable. Again going to Hilldale, one of the nicest things is their use of planters. I realize the cost and upkeep, but it's minimal and it's huge bang for the buck. If you have an opportunity for those on the sidewalk, especially as you lose the overhang it could help a lot.
- The cantilevered canopies on the small building, do they have lighting?
 - They're just to break up the façade. We're just trying to open it up more and in doing so maybe create more interest and putting these canopies in, we haven't talked about the lighting although I can see the opportunity. Something to tie the masses together.
- If you shift the island with the tree to under the canopy you could create a space there.
- The smaller building with its entrance features and canopy are more successful than the abrupt entrances.

ACTION:

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