

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: January 6, 2010
TITLE: 621 Mendota Court (formerly 617-619 - PUD(GDP-SIP), Residential Development in Downtown Design Zone No. 3. 8th Ald. Dist. (16452)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: January 6, 2010	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Bruce Woods, R. Richard Wagner, Marsha Rummel, John Harrington, Richard Slayton, Jay Ferm, Todd Barnett and Mark Smith.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of January 6, 2010, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a residential development in Downtown Design Zone No. 3. Appearing on behalf of the project were Gary Brink, representing Landgraf Construction, Josh Wilcox, representing Landgraf Construction, Camilla Corcoran, Josh Brodeur, Robert Brodeur, Jim Krause, Dave Penwell, Mark Shumway, Patrick Corcoran, and Mark Landgraf, representing Patrick Properties. Registered in opposition were Gene Devitt, Arlan Kay, Joe Korb, and Harvey Temkin representing The Flying Colonel, LLC. Registered neither in support nor opposition was Chuck Possehl of The Bruce Company. Brink and Wilcox provided an overview of the most recent modifications to the plans emphasizing or highlighting:

- Changes in rear yard moving the barbeque or such outdoor fireplace relocated on the southwest corner of the property more easterly as part of an enlarged outdoor patio area featuring an outdoor seating area combined with landscaping and screening which was accommodated with the elimination of a lower level unit and accompanying recessed garden-level to create an exterior room.
- The addition of a bench outside of the westerly entry at the bike parking court including a raised planter.
- The rear yard outdoor eating area and bikeyard feature the use of decorative concrete pavement as part of the pathway system.
- The elimination of the use of red-colored brick is part of the middle portion of the easterly elevation so as the easterly elevation features the same color brick up to 7th floor level combined with the elimination of spandean panels below windows.
- The elimination of up-lighting in favor of down-lit “pin lights” on the lower elevation. The building’s tower element is taller with the incorporation of the mechanical penthouse as well as the strengthening of the top cornice treatment.
- Elimination of the blank corner at the front of the building (north elevation) with the extending of the bedrooms out with windows combined with reduction in the width/length of balconies.
- Brick returns are provided where it abuts EIFS.
- Strengthen and added more glass at bike storage entry along the easterly elevations.
- A realignment of the lower elevation windows on the easterly elevation.
- The utilization of a lighter color up EIFS on the upper 2-stories of the building.

- Adjustments to the brick colors to provide for more contrast.
- A previously proposed transformer box at the southeasterly corner of the site has been eliminated with it being underground.
- Move laundry room to lower level and convert its previous location on the first floor for bike parking.
- Provide for both interior and exterior seasonal bike storage including the use of vertical, stackable bike parking racks.

Chuck Possehl of the Bruce Company spoke on landscaping issues noting problems with the maintenance of existing elms on the site due to their relevant condition as well as providing an overview on the development and modifications to the “outdoor room” within the rear yard of the building. Brink noted that the building entry needs to remain off of the northwest corner, adjacent to the shared access with the adjoining lot despite issues previously raised by Kay and Attorney Tempkin, representing the adjoining property owner Joe Korb.

Testimony from Tempkin, Kay and Korb in opposition noted:

- Have not received adequate response to issues from the applicant.
- Client concerned with large building being developed on adjacent lot.
- Major focus: the way building is designed doesn’t make sense with this particular site, the street is narrow, where the co-use easement is also narrow. Entry as proposed will create real logistical problems, needs to be done properly, entry needs to not impede access easement and should be on east elevation.
- Mass of building too much for Mendota Court’s size. Entry on westside makes a vehicular access shared easement a pedestrian way which conflicts with its non-pedestrian use, where pedestrian use will create conflicts.
- Massing a building is too much for areas existing densities, want to see building several stories less.
- Move entry to east side with the loading zone. The east side acts as a corner due to its relationship with the existing public walkway right-a-way.
- Need to provide transportation amenities to residents where it makes sense to have a loading zone trash pick-up and pedestrian entry on one side (east).

Gene Devitt spoke in opposition noting the inability of the street in its current context: problematic. He further noted the building is good-looking but in the wrong location where existing buildings on the corridor are all 2-3 stories high with taller buildings oriented to Langdon Street, such as Lowell Hall, etc. The building is too high, should be 3-4 stories relative to the entry issue. Entries are located at the center of the building or suggestion to move to the eastside of the building makes more sense. Discussion by the Commission was as follows:

- In a request to respond to the entry issues, Brink noted that the building was not located on a corner lot where the relocation of the entry to the east side would not allow for functional pick-up of trash due to the lack of space for truck maneuvers.
- In response to comments by the Commission related to density, of the project; Brink noted that the provisions for development within Downtown Design Zone 3 within the ordinance designates this area for high densities where the Landmarks Commission already noted the appropriateness of the project for the area.
- In response to issues related to “the move-in-day” by the Commission Brink noted that units that are furnished will help to minimize impacts where the existing joint driveway access easement on the westerly property line can be managed and posted and additionally noted that representatives of Lowell Hall have noted their opposition to trash pick-up on the east side of the building.

Further comments by the Commission noted:

- Appreciate changes to architecture, the building envelope and the skin of the building. A stronger looking building.
- Would like building satisfied with landscape plan.
- Make sure the Plan Commission addresses issues would access trash pick-up, density and bulk congestion and traffic impacts as relate this area of Mendota Court in regard to their “land-use based decision.”
- Relative to architecture: a great job incorporating all the comments by the Commission, but still need to provide for adjustments on the secondary corner treatment on the tower element; make more elegant as detailed on the first floor level or use a reveal.

Ald. Eagon spoke in support noting the dramatic improvement to the project, the appropriateness of the placement of the door on the west elevation as functional based on activities to the west such as the Union and the University where trash-pick-up makes sense where it is in support of the current design as well as the excitement about the project as the areas alder and neighbor. Continued comments by the Commission noted the following:

- Consider adding a ramp for the movement of bikes with interior stairs.
- Relevant to the Exterior and Interior Criteria for Downtown Design Zones, the Plan Commission should look at the building in regard to impacts on neighboring properties.
- Tinted concrete should be used at the entry to the building as used elsewhere.
- The provisions for Downtown Design Zones were developed to encourage densities as proposed where a maintenance of an existing buildings and fraternities on the lakeside of Mendota Court were supported with larger structures across Mendota Court according to Wagner.

ACTION:

On a motion by Rummel, seconded by Wagner, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0). The motion requested that the Plan Commission provide serious consideration of the land-use issues raised with this project as noted by those speaking in opposition and that signage shall return for further consideration and adjustments to the cornice treatment of the upper façade and the use of tinted concrete be provided at the entry as utilized elsewhere on the building were required.

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 6.5, 6, 6.5, 7, 7, 6, 6, and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 621 Mendota Court

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	6	6.5	6	-	-	6	7	6.5
	5	7	5	6	-	?	7	6
	6	6	7	6	-	7	7	6.5
	7	7	7	7	-	6	7	7
	6	7	6	-	-	6	8	7
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	5	6.5	6	6	-	5	7	6
	6	7	7	6	4	7	8	7

General Comments:

- Massing is supportable within framework of DD2 #3, building is transition between smaller scale buildings and larger towers. But the capacity of Mendota Court will continue to be challenged by future development. How will basic service needs of plowing/deliveries/trash pick up be provided with increasing densities.
- Architectural improvements are significant. Not convinced how the density works with Mendota Court.
- Much improved , nice work.
- Very positive improvements to the architecture.
- Architecture does not currently support proposed signage. Good responsiveness to issues.