

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** May 10, 2017

TITLE: 715 West Dayton Street – SERF  
Replacement Project. 4<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (43950)      **REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Chris Wells, Acting Secretary      **ADOPTED:**      **POF:**

DATED: May 10, 2017      **ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Cliff Goodhart, Rafeeq Asad, Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, and Amanda Hall.

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of May 10, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of the SERF replacement project located at 715 West Dayton Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Gary Brown, Walter Johnson, Ash Lettow, Aaron Williams, John Horn and Ann Hayes, all representing UW-Madison.

The following changes were presented to the Commission:

- Reviewed the mullion caps and looked at a number of alternatives. Decided on the red stripe.
- The red stripe will have a back-painted panel and will provide an edge which will ground the mullions.
- The glass will be low reflective glass and frosted glass to help mitigate bird crashes.
- They have worked with City Forestry regarding canopy trees.
- Two shades of concrete will be used.
- Materials are a combination of those typically used for student facilities with those typically used for athletic components.
- Three options of precast fluted concrete were shown. They’ve talked with diving coaches around the country regarding the importance of safety around dive wells in terms of windows. Provided three iterations (two with spandrel panels).

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- How much modulation exists with the material changes?
  - 3in/6in/9in, depending.
- UDC wanted more than 3 inches.
- Did you add a white panel below red stripe?
  - Yes, that’s the frosted glass (not a spandrel). It also follows the floor line.

- It creates off-shaped panels.
- What is the depth of the mullions?
  - 8 inches.
- I have to push back on that, I think it's a bad decision. The mullions don't meet, there's a gap.
  - We wanted to open up that façade and use the clear glazing wherever we could.
- It's kind of chopped and is missing continuity. When you had the red behind it, with everything like a screen in front of it was preferable. It feels like you're over-emphasizing the sprint track. I like the subtlety of the red edge of the sprint track seeing through the glass and not having it so emphasized with the gymnastics you're doing with the mullions.
- On the west elevation, the two grey metal panels, the first rendition had glass there. Now it feels left-over and it's this massive area of grey metal and I'm wondering if that whole thing could get pulled and expose a little more of the limestone or concrete.
  - We can study that whole mass.
- We talked about it being transparent and permeable. It's still a very taut façade, when if you had a simple curtain wall and behind that you see this red track inside, you're kind of invited in rather than a taut exterior face.
  - If it was a curtain wall without the mullions it might read better?
- Yes. Let us inside, let us see what's happening inside and invite us inside rather than painting it on the exterior. The addition of the canopy helps get some depth so the lowest level on Dayton feels permeable.
- The push and pull of the building works well so you don't need all these extra things making it too busy. Sometimes less is more.
- When I look at this perspective I see really nice rhythm. It's taut but it looks like you have some express mullions. I didn't notice until now but the bend really helps break down the length of the building as you come down Dayton Street. I think this is nice and elegant and well resolved. And the landscaping and grading help it out.
- The right angles and 45 degree turn seem odd. I don't know that it's doing what you want it to do. Either finish highlighting it or change up the angle so it's more direct.
  - The idea was to pull that activity on the outside of the building.
- With the glass...your customer base is young people. Particularly young women working out in tight clothes are not necessarily wanting to be seen from Dayton Street. What was your thought process on that?
  - Looking at the north façade it's important to point out that students have directly influenced what you're seeing. Currently they describe it as a concrete dungeon. They want transparency, we've had many females and males on the core design team, they want to be in a space where they can see the outside and see what's going on inside as they approach the building. Everything you see here wasn't my philosophy, this was driven by student voice. They wish there was more transparency.
- The south side of the building, there are some windows here, I'm wondering what your thought process was on that.
  - First was safety in the pool and glare. The next criteria was the State of Wisconsin wants to reduce the solar heat gain into the space, so the amount of glass on this elevation is at the State's maximum.
- There's a lot of cement on the east façade, I know Arborvitae were a possibility. What else can you do to break that up?
  - There actually is a big cistern right off the corner of the building here where we capture stormwater run-off from the parking lot. I'd like to put more landscaping on that east façade it's just really difficult with the amount of space we have there, utilities underground and a bunch of other factors happening in there.

- One comment from before was that the great lawn should be the dominating factor and to get some trees to emphasize that radius.
  - We added four Crabs and there's also a major steam line running through there.
- Study if adding a tree near the generator would emphasize the great lawn area.
- I wonder if there's a way to break up the ramp with the striping and glass.
  - We had looked at that. To pull it back far enough so campus could maintain that you'd need quite a bit of distance which pushes the ramp further into the space and reduces the amount of fitness space the students wanted.
- What about LEDs or lighting?
  - Once you add lighting you absolutely need that space to get in there and there would be issues with maintenance. The more expression you give that on the inside the more space you need to maintain that which reduces the amount of space you have inside the building.
- What if you took more of those cross pieces so the pattern continued rather than using strange shaped windows.
- I like this building a lot. I don't like the mullions with the frosted glass, they make a weird shape. It's the mullions.
  - We're going to look at that and see what we can do. I don't know tonight what the solution will be.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Goodhart, seconded by Braun-Oddo, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0). The motion provided for refinement of the angle and confluence of mullions and different glass colors to return to staff.