

## AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** October 4, 2017

TITLE:    502, 506 East Washington Avenue & 7, 11 North Franklin Street –  
Demolition/Relocation of Four Existing Homes and Construction of a New 5-Story Hotel Building in UDD No. 4. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (48451)

**REFERRED:**  
**REREFERRED:**  
**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary      **ADOPTED:**      **POF:**

DATED: October 4, 2017      **ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Cliff Goodhart, John Harrington, Rafeeq Asad and Lois Braun-Oddo.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of October 4, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for the demolition/relocation of four existing homes and construction of a new 5-story hotel building in UDD No. 4 located at 502, 506 East Washington Avenue & 7, 11 North Franklin Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Marc Ott and Joseph Lee, both representing McGrath Property Group; and Michael Metzger. Ald. Zellers, District 2 was present for the presentation/discussion.

Metzger introduced plans for a 5-story building with one level of underground parking, for a 42-45 room hotel. Discussions are ongoing with the Landmarks Commission to evaluate the buildings at this site; those will either be moved or demolished. Because the building is so tight to the property lines, they have recessed the building and given balconies to the units on the backside to allow for window openings. Building materials include a wood base, a metal panel top, an asymmetrical window pattern, and wood at the top to tie the building together. Metal panels will have channels for grids/shadow lines, with a black accent panel randomly to break up the façade. Pedestrian views were shown. A post-tension style construction is proposed, which allows them to push the first floor base back off the street more for a wider pedestrian corridor on both East Washington Avenue and Franklin Street, utilizing planters to help buffer windows. This allows the top to hang over the base to give it a floating feeling over the wooden glass base. Context images were shown.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I like the idea of a very simple form with some texture. I think that strong corner dark doesn’t work for me. Use some of that accent to build the rhythm. I would propose that you not do the enclosure at the top; it’s something that’s drawing your eye and I think you’d want something more similar to the darker material along the base. It doesn’t make sense to me to have this wood all the way around the top.
- It’s a very simple box and elegant in that regard, but it doesn’t read to me as a hotel. The new hotel up the block reads architecturally as a hotel.

- We do have a canopy. We're working out where the temporary loading would be, some of those details are still yet to flush out.
- I don't see the tie to the neighborhood.
- Contiguous urban fabric...this block has already taken on its large, high density development with the Blair Street façade. Another large scale multiple parcel development on this block too greatly erodes that fabric, to have that historic fabric of First Settlement to the other side of East Washington Avenue, especially after we've discussed the Lamp House Block, the area further towards Mendota is planned to be lower scale development.
  - We think this is an appropriate scale and density on the East Washington corridor, especially considering the newer development in the area.
- Today it reminds me of the Lamp House Block, the State Office building against the smaller scale residential; not the most appropriate articulation. While we're in the transition or while we're preserving that fabric.
- We have to decide what we want to preserve and what we don't want to preserve. If we do this, the block is pretty much gone.
- What happens to the whole blocks from East Washington going up to the Square? It's not just this. The residential blocks going down to the lake are relatively established and coherent. This starts to change that dynamic significantly, and basically says you're going to separate the blocks facing East Washington Avenue from the rest of that neighborhood, and that's a relatively large planning decision to make, not just about how this building looks, but about how the neighborhoods are going to interact. The Plan Commission really has to weigh in on that. Something of this size and magnitude is taking that decision and setting it up. Since it's going into the neighborhood it really does set up a different dynamic.
  - From a zoning perspective it's zoned for 8 up to 10 bonus stories. I think it creates kind of an entry into the neighborhood. I thought, as far as scale, this is more in line with the neighborhood than what could be proposed.
- It's our concern how this is going to develop as a design district as well what the zoning is.
- When we were looking at the AC Hotel, that was pushing into another lot that did not have the same zoning. I think this lot is all meeting the present Zoning Code. I also think the days of wood frame two and three story houses along East Washington are numbered. Hotels have a regularity in their program and use; the other buildings in this area do have a regularity of openings and kind of a scale that might be more appropriate as it pushes back into the neighborhood, without getting into historic style.
- Rethink the Franklin Street overhang.
  - We like that as far as an acknowledgement of these porches. The window pattern is supposed to be random to bring more interest. It's not your typical hotel.
- We're trying to create a double row of trees down East Washington Avenue, as part of the East Washington Avenue Plan.
- There's also the context of the neighborhood going down Franklin. Pay more attention to that than wrapping it around the corner. If you're trying to get to that notion of the front porch, maybe it's what's happening underneath that overhang that should change. It presents itself as a barrier.
- It almost needs to setback, gives us some greenspace for the rest of the neighborhood.
- It looks like a wall, like a barrier to the building.
  - There are some units here, we wanted to create some separation, visually and physically and break down the pedestrian scale of this public realm.
- As soon as you start doing turning radii and car widths, you're going to have a lot of pavement right up until the base of that building. Since this isn't a normal hotel, maybe you have the lobby by the parking ramp so you're going under to have the check in area, so you don't have to pave such a large area. It's going to be a problem for a double row of trees.

- In working with Traffic Engineering the loading would be on-street. They're still evaluating that. It's not a conventional hotel; there's not a standard check-in process, no valets or bag handlers.
- I like it, for a boutique hotel, which is the trend, it works. My concern is going down Franklin, I'd like to see that façade a little more "regular." You can keep the entrance on East Washington where it belongs. I would tone it down as it blends into the neighborhood. I understand the concept, my only issue is the façade as it goes into the neighborhood, it's super busy.
- I don't think it fits the context of the neighborhood. I'd step it back more so it aligns with the houses. Planters really don't do a whole lot. Create some lawn space, put some trees in there. Boutique hotels have those amenities.
- If you're initiating this kind of heavy development, and it follows the whole block is going to be this way, what happens to the reverse of the Franklin side?
  - Right now that face is 5-feet from the property line. Theoretically someone could build within 5-feet of ours.
- I think for this area it's appropriate.
- (Alder) Is it still your intent not to have any kind of trash receptacles, no dumpsters?
  - That was based on the neighborhood. My goal was to remove the idea that there would be a large truck coming to empty a two-yard garbage dumpster. To take any traffic off North Franklin Street. Laundry would be off-site as well. Whether there's a dumpster or not won't change the design. There will be a café on the ground floor.
- (Alder) I've heard many concerns from the neighbors:
  - The white house on East Washington Avenue is associated with Leonard Farwell (second Governor of the state).
  - The corner house, they have agreed to move it; it could be going to a much better location than where it currently sits.
  - One of the houses on Franklin Street is a Claude and Starck, which is of concern to the neighborhood and the Landmarks Commission.
  - Stark architecture, fitting into the neighborhood.
  - Exhaust fan placement.
  - Traffic flow going through the neighborhood.
  - Parking compared to other hotels, particularly since these appear to be rooms that are aimed at longer stays because they have kitchenettes. Guests are likely to have cars. Acknowledging there isn't a parking requirement here, but there is concern because parking in the neighborhood is at a premium.
  - These houses are pretty affordable and people living next to them are in housing that's affordable. People who will lose that housing are very concerned about being able to continue living in the downtown.
- How do you preserve the parts of Franklin and Hancock that are expected to remain residential and have a certain character to them if we start changing the character on this part of the street? Where do those transitions need to occur, how do they need to work, how does that work? These are real urban design questions in broader scope than a particular building envelope.
- (Alder) We need to look at UDD No. 4. I've worked more with UDD No. 8 which is well-defined. UDD No. 4 needs a lot of work.
- We need a much better sense of how this transition into the neighborhood is going to work; we're not persuaded that you have something that will work.
- Stepping it down is not the answer, do not do that.

**ACTION:**

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