

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** June 18, 2008

TITLE: 515 South Midvale Boulevard - PUD-SIP, **REFERRED:**
 Phase 2, Sequoya Commons, 100 **REREFERRED:**
 Apartments and Approximately 10,650 **REPORTED BACK:**
 Square Feet of Retail. 11th Ald. Dist.

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: June 18, 2008 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Lou Host-Jablonski, Bonnie Cosgrove, Todd Barnett, Bruce Woods, Richard Wagner, John Harrington, Jay Ferm, Richard Slayton and Marsha Rummel.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of June 18, 2008, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** for Phase 2 of Sequoya Commons located at 515 South Midvale Boulevard. Appearing on behalf of the project were John Lichtenheld, representing Joe Krupp; and Joe Krupp. Registered in opposition to the project were Ann Strenski, Mike Bell, Bonnie McMullin-Lawton, Karen Matteoni, Paul Cerutti and Jeanne Daniels. Registered as neither in support nor opposition were Chris Schmidt, Ald. Tim Gruber and Brett Darrow. Due to conflicts with another engagement, Ald. Gruber requested to speak on the item prior to the applicant's presentation. Ald. Gruber distributed a memo to the Commission relative to his position on the project. The memo referenced the PUD standards and criteria for approval as the basis for his support for neighborhood residents' desire to maintain the garage entrance on Midvale Boulevard. In addition, Ald. Gruber noted a second option that provides for a compromised position which would place a garage doors on the north end of the building on both Caromar Drive and Midvale Boulevard, which would act to disperse traffic and break up the "super block." The memo further states his recommendation that the Commission grant initial approval of the project with the Plan Commission placing a condition that the garage door entrance to the Phase 2 development be either from Midvale or from both Midvale and Caromar. As a follow-up consideration for final approval, the building elevations will be brought back for Urban Design Commission consideration. Ald. Gruber further noted that traffic generation is a significant issue and emphasized the need to resolve issues without endless referrals. Following Ald. Gruber's testimony, Krupp noted the following:

- The addition of bump-outs adjacent to the crosswalk at Caromar Drive and Owen Drive.
- The alteration of the stair towers' façade to contain a single row of vertically oriented window openings.
- The intent to replace a proposed Honey Locust as the feature tree at the entry to the courtyard for a Kentucky Coffee tree was noted.

Lichtenheld provided an overview of the traffic study and counts based on the as proposed and previously approved conditions, with a cross comparison to the originally existing shopping center. He also provided comparable numbers to the traffic counts within the study relevant to other similar City streets. Lichtenheld noted that peak hour traffic would provide for 60 more trips attributed to this development. He noted the

preference for the location of the garage door on Caromar, where less traffic counts support it logically as a safe alternative to Midvale Boulevard, whereas Midvale Boulevard has great issues, site distance, conflicts with on-street parking, u-turning issues with southbound traffic, including the crossing of two lanes. He further noted that the new median break at Midvale Boulevard which provides for left-hand turn movement in the southbound lane will reduce projected traffic on Caromar Drive. He noted proposed improvements to the pedestrian crossing at Caromar and Owen Drives with bump-outs at the driveway will effectively reduce the width of the street from 24-feet to 20-feet along with the provision of better crosswalk markings and improved signage. Lichtenheld remarked that speed bumps were OK with the Traffic Engineer, but a neighborhood issue. Relative to providing for a 3-way stop at the intersection of Owen and Caromar Drives, Lichtenheld noted that such measures would be ignored, and didn't satisfy conventional traffic engineering standards to warrant or justify the stop signs Krupp spoke to the dual driveway entries suggested by Ald. Gruber citing a 12% grade issue combined with the retaining wall on the adjacent neighboring properties, along with elimination of a greenspace/rain garden, in addition to landscaping adjacent to units along the north elevation. Testimony from the public noted the following issues:

- Need details on handicapped ramp at drive on Caromar and Owen Drives, as well as address of pedestrian/bicycle accessibility issues.
- Maintain position for 30-foot setback on Caromar Drive.
- Prefer driveway access on Midvale Boulevard.
- Need to address what can be done to make the intersection of Caromar and Owen Drives safer.
- Concern that traffic does not support providing both stop signing and a table top at the intersection of Caromar and Owen Drives.
- The traffic study does not effectively deal with the impact of traffic from Queen of Peace School.
- Need to address safety needs for neighborhood with a lot of kids.
- Midvale Boulevard presents vehicular hazards, versus Caromar Drive providing for pedestrian hazards.
- Need a 30-foot setback to match other areas on Caromar.
- Parking drive on Caromar presents issues, priority, problematic, parking and congestion within the area.

Following testimony the Commission noted the following:

- Need consideration for more improvements in conjunction with Traffic Engineering on Midvale Boulevard to resolve issues and provide further discussion.
- Look at locating driveway entry adjacent to the commercial space off of the surface parking drive access at Caromar Drive.
- Difficult issue with expressed neighborhood concerns. 18,000 vehicles on Midvale Boulevard not a safe setting for this issue.
- Stop sign at intersection (Caromar and Owen Drives) with other improvements can be done to make situation safer.
- Traffic needs to maximize effort to make things safer.
- Need to get Traffic Engineering and developer to put in place more safety mechanisms such as stop signs.
- Trying to make the best of a bad situation after the Urban Design Commission provided clear direction with its recommendation for a Midvale Boulevard driveway entry with the approval of the overall PUD-GDP and first phase PUD-SIP.
- As long as parking on Midvale Boulevard exists, situation is not safe, combined with the volume of traffic and other issues.
- Need to make strong statement on the needed safety improvements to direct traffic from schools.
- Traffic counts aren't insurmountable to make things work.

- Original UDC approval not followed through; rental versus condominium development relative to the driveway location as noted by the applicant with the original approval.
*The applicant noted as part of the original approval that if rental units were developed with the Phase 2 development a Midvale Boulevard drive location was acceptable but with condominium development, the Caromar Drive location was necessary.
- Need to resolve with Traffic Engineering the driveway entry issue as was previously done with the West Washington hotel project (Hyatt).

ACTION:

On a motion by Wagner, seconded by Ferm, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-3-1) with Wagner, Ferm, Barnett, Woods and Cosgrove voting yes; Rummel, Harrington and Slayton voting no, and Host-Jablonski abstaining. The motion included the requirement that the Plan Commission require that effective measures be taken to improve safety at Owen and Caromar Drives such as a speed bumps on Caromar Drive, the provision of stop signs at all points of the intersection, including provisions for a table top. Wagner noted that holding the location of the driveway to Midvale Boulevard was not fair when others opted for providing options with original approval of the project. Further discussion by the Commisison on the motion noted the following:

- The need to resolve with input from Traffic Engineering and need a strong statement involving the history of prior approvals involving Phase 1.
- Compromise to come up with a better solution.
- The issue with cars coming out of the parking garage, not traffic at the intersection of Owen and Caromar Drives, still requires address.
- Capitulate to the conditions in the Gruber memo but think arterial streets in terms of access not local streets are more appropriate for the driveway (Midvale Boulevard) and not willing to give up on issue.
- Appreciate danger of Midvale Boulevard access but is done currently at a controlled intersection, Tokay and Midvale Boulevards.

With further discussion Wagner noted that the motion should be contingent on address of all stated comments, along with the following:

- UDC recognizes that the Plan Commission gave latitude to developer as to the location of the parking entry on Midvale versus Caromar Drive. The Urban Design Commission's original approval provided for the entry on Midvale Boulevard previously; the Urban Design Commission still feels strongly about its previous recommendation based on the way this project is designed.

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 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 515 South Midvale Boulevard

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

General Comments:

- The issues have been presented on vehicle access, but they are not resolved.
- Traffic Engineering’s active involvement would have moved this project forward faster and more harmoniously between UDC, neighborhood and applicant.
- Traffic Engineering is providing very poor service to the City here, to UDC, the neighborhood and to other staff. The applicant’s stonewalling is not helping much either.
- There are solutions for access to this building but not without willingness for developer to be open to different outcomes – AND – for Traffic Engineering to be CREATIVE. We expect TE to help resolve this and address concerns of neighborhood. Try an entry on Midvale. Crossing Midvale has been done successfully by motorists for DECADES. Developer didn’t even really try to resolve, stonewalling isn’t productive or appreciated.
- Great project other than Caromar entry/exit issue.
- Everything but traffic is good. But much more must be done to make this project work with the neighborhood. Whether it is more traffic calming on Caromar or moving the entrance to Midvale.