

AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: September 22, 2021

TITLE: 1128 + 1138 E. Washington Avenue - New Rehearsal Facility for WYSO (Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra) Located in Urban Design District (UDD) No. 8. 2nd Ald. Dist. (67172)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Kevin Firchow, Acting Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: September 22, 2021

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, Craig Weisensel, Rafeeq Asad, Jessica Klehr, Christian Harper, Shane Bernau and Russell Knudson*.

*Knudson recused himself on this item.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of September 22, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new facility for the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra (WYSO) located at 1128 + 1138 E. Washington Avenue in UDD No. 8. Registered and speaking in support were Tim Crum, representing Strang, Inc.; Drew Martin and Bridget Fraser, representing WYSO. The proposed development would consist of 40,000 square feet for studios, classrooms and offices. This location was chosen because of its proximity to nearby art venues including the new Madison Youth Art Center, the Sylvee, and Breese Stevens. The building would be mainly on the 1128 site with parking on the 1138 site, with a one-way drop off lane off of Curtis Court and the main entrance located on the west side of the building as far forward to E. Washington as possible. A secondary entrance is located on the southeast corner closest to the existing parking lot. There will be three main rehearsal spaces with the rest of the building oriented around studios and practice spaces. They are creating a large amount of open community-oriented space on the first and second floors with visual and audio connections between the two. An outdoor pavilion is proposed on the satellite site of 1138 E. Washington. The architecture concept was driven by music and musical instruments: the materiality, detailing and curves of instruments, and the different metals and intricate detailing as those pieces go together; tension as a force in music and construction; and the Driftless area with exposed limestone ledges, curves matching instruments and hills/landscaping. They will retain as many existing trees as possible with some slated for removal due to health reasons. Proposed building materials include limestone, metal panels, and darker wood soffit and eave. Green roof areas are being considered. On the Curtis Court side they have created an outdoor patio on top of the first floor with a trellis mimicking the curved forms of the roofs.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I like unique architecture and this is definitely unique. The precedence from the instruments and curves, I like the way it transformed into the building. Struggle with the material, more durable by the thickness of the roof but the heartiest of the stone, don't know if this much is needed. Want to see the back more

without the trees covering so much of that, what it looks like. Like the way it's coming together but look at the materials, lot of dark naturalness, might be too similar and close in color and texture.

- Big shout out to the curves, nice to see a different shape, the fact that the curves continue inside and not just on the roof. Curtis Court is such a tiny little street, with the loading dock coming off there, bless the people who live on Curtis Court. That's a tough sell for those residents.
- Exciting project. Agree with the materials comment, your inspirations of instruments and tension forms, this building is super heavy while the inspirations have a lightness to them and a fineness to them. The drive aisle feels claustrophobic. Not sure where the driftless comes in because we're not in a driftless area, the stone could use some finessing. Like the green area for Curtis Court, the project should be really respectful of the scale of that housing and how narrow that street is. Because there's this gap between the parking and this building I want to see some nice pedestrian access, even on the Curtis Court side.
- When you look at the WYSO logo it's light and airy like musical notes. The heaviness also takes away from the youth aspect. The new performing arts building is colorful and playful, youth buildings are always more colorful and playful and light. This is heavy and sophisticated. Don't be afraid to put some color in there.
- You mentioned tension, are you looking at using a cable truss systems in the wall to reduce the mullion sizes, or on the roof trusses where you're making some of that visible?
 - Yes absolutely. It's still early on but some trusses with exposed tension element and curtain wall systems.
- I love the expressive architecture, when you see this you immediately recognize it as something dedicated to the arts, that's really successful. Shout out to curves, that's really refreshing. My eye keeps going to the height of the limestone base, the way it follows a curve at the top and ends in a level datum that wraps around the building, I strikes me as odd. It's less pleasing than the rest of the form. To me the language on the left doesn't really fit with the rest of the building. Take that lower sweep and pull that horizontally more across that façade. Part of it is probably the rendering too. We'll want to see details on where the limestone meets the ground and what kind of limestone it is.
- Love it specifically because it is in contrast to almost everything new on E. Washington Avenue. Also agree with the lightness, keep the curves, lighten it up and make it more playful.
- The performance areas, the traffic noise may impact that and cause echoes, it's up to you to be sure the design responds to that in some ways vs. making this spandrel glass.

ACTION:

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