

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** October 7, 2020

TITLE: 3505 University Avenue – Façade Updates
in UDD No. 6. 11th Ald. Dist. (62144) **REFERRED:**

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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

DATED: October 7, 2020 **ID NUMBER:**

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of October 7, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of façade and site updates located at 3505 University Avenue in UDD No. 6. Registered and speaking in support were Peter Tan, representing Strang, Inc.; and Richard Genin.

The site and façade updates include the removal of the auto oriented gas station canopy, which brings a more pedestrian scale building to the site. With respect to the reworking of the façade by painting the brick, the benefit gives the building more consistency. Tan summarized elements of the site plan, including removal of gas station amenities, enhanced landscaping and striping. The existing curb cuts and one-way traffic flow on the site will remain.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I see and appreciate the desire to conform to the Napa branding, but I don't see that you're painting those Bucky Badgers festooned all over the place, I would encourage you to paint those as well.
- Same on the front façade. The all gray inset looks better. I'm not opposed to painting but would like to see the solid gray on the front façade. The east and west At Home stores that painted their brick turned out a lot nicer than imagined.
- From an overall aesthetic the City has largely frowned on painting brick masonry. In researching other projects I came across something specific to that. I don't think the City and the people who wrote those guidelines were necessarily thinking of a gas station. I can appreciate corporate branding needs. I don't think this is an improvement but I don't think the limited amount of what's there is really going to be an issue, notwithstanding that this is along University Avenue and in an Urban Design District.
- I would caution, brick is a more expensive, higher level design when you look at it. Even though it's old it gives character to the building. Painting as you're proposing it brings the building down to a cheaper level finish, something more industrial. I'm also concerned that brick hides a lot of ills over time, painting takes a lot of ongoing maintenance, and for that reason I'm not in support of painting the brick.

Covering it up prevents you from ever restoring it again, I think that's why the City and some Commission members might not support the painting.

- Agreed. University Avenue is losing its sense of human scale. The brick on here adds to the pedestrian experience. If you wanted a more uniform look, I'd like to point out that you have signage and all kinds of stuff going on around the building, it might be done by taking a second look at all the signs in the windows and how they're lined.
- It appears that in order to do the striping at the top, that part is also brick behind there that you're not adding any kind of aluminum, you're painting right over the brick?
 - Yes. The intersection of the transition of the spandrel panel to the brick is relatively flush.
- You could really achieve what you're trying to do by just painting that panel and maybe the top portion, the fascia, rather than putting a line all the way around the building. The unpainted brick is more in character with the side street, it immediately transitions to residential right behind this building. I think painting it would be detrimental. I would think there's a better solution to make this more in keeping with the rest of the neighborhood.
- If we can preserve the brick and do the branding on the top, from a corporate point of view, would that work?
 - There is some flexibility. As far as the Bucky doors and signage, all that goes with the gas. All of that will be removed when the gas pumps and canopies are removed. 702 Blackhawk is a commercial space behind us.

ACTION:

On a motion by Abbas, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (9-0). The motion provided for approval of painting the trims and panels, with the Napa branding on the top of the façade (panel) rather than the entire building, but no paint on the brick masonry. The motion further approved the site and landscape upgrades, and allowed the Bucky Badger doors to stay as they are.