

AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION
TITLE: 857 Jupiter Drive – Amended PUD-GDP for Grandview Commons Town Center. 3rd Ald. Dist. (24689)

PRESENTED: January 18, 2012

REFERRED:
REREFERRED:
REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED: **POF:**

DATED: January 18, 2012

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Marsha Rummel, Todd Barnett, Dawn O’Kroley, Richard Slayton, Melissa Huggins, John Harrington, and Henry Lufler.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of January 18, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** an Amended PUD-GDP located at 857 Jupiter Drive. Appearing on behalf of the project were Jeff Rosenberg, Brian Munson and Dan Day, all representing Veridian Homes; Chris Winter and Michael Schmitt, representing Rollie Winter & Associates, LTD.; Dan Farrell, representing Roundy’s Supermarkets, Inc.; and Dan Brinkman, representing DSI Real Estate Group. Appearing and speaking in opposition were Paul Reilly, Barbara Davis, Greg Cieslewicz, Alan Auby (representing neighbors Alan Hunter, Georgette Horne, Alan Sweet and Jerry Miller); Rosemary Jackson and Ald. Jill Johnson, District 16. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak were Joe Wirag, David Sebald, Tiffany Taha, Supervisor Dave de Felice, Robert Montgomery, Carolyn Montgomery, Jacob Wirag, Tom & Nancy McVary, Dean Matuszak, Armando Hernandez, Mike TeRonde, Karen TeRonde, Donna Sebald, Cindy Glaeden-Knott, Michael Knott, Mary Driscoll, Sarah Herwig, Peter Anderson, Heather McFadden, Nicole Jenkel, Larry & Casey Moen, David Rajkovich, Robert & Andrea Hogan, Jill Schaefer and Tammy Rozek.

Rosenberg began by stating how much time and how many meetings have gone into this project. Munson presented a culmination of comments from various City departments as well as the neighborhood. Detailed elevations, cross-sections and materials were covered in display boards. Specific components that have been adjusted include creation of a new public street through the site and the creation of a new central spine through the parking lot. An approximate 50-54-foot wide walkway is now proposed with opportunities for landscaping, breaking up the central parking lot into two areas. Enhancements to the front of the store include either a raised traffic table or along with connecting that walkway to the front of the store, making sure that vehicles have clearly marked routes through that space and can have enough room for drop-offs. Access to Gemini Drive is being proposed as a natural street to offer further connections north-south off Cottage Grove Road. A sidewalk across the entire northern edge of the lot offers another pedestrian walkway. Incorporation of another access point towards the back of the store as a private walkway and connect the sidewalk from Kilpatrick Court through the screening buffer area and to the sidewalk along the northern portion of the grocery store. A summary of a traffic study done by KL Engineering with full build-out show this as a viable mixed-use project that can handle the traffic load.

Paul Reilly spoke in opposition, feeling compelled to write to the Commission for a third time because of a letter sent out by Ald. Cnare. The many meetings have resulted in very few changes. He doesn't believe the development team has been responsive to who is affected. The proposal for a big box store is contrary to all the principles of new urbanism. The size of this store in an existing neighborhood is not a good fit. He concluded that they have given up on the compact pedestrian-oriented structure and are now planning a regional shopping destination, supported by the fact that about 75% of the vacant land will be dedicated to parking. He challenged the statement that there is equal support and opposition for this project. It's not about a grocery store, it's about size and site. The existing neighborhood plan is sound. The burden of defending that plan should not rest with the neighbors.

Barbara Davis spoke about concern for the stated 13-foot grade change between the finished floor of the store and the adjacent home sites. Plans indicate the floor elevation is at 1017; the next page shows storm sewers at 984-feet; between the two that's 32-feet and if your house is on that corner, 32-feet in the air puts your eyes at the floor of Roundy's. That's a very different "grand view" than what we bought into in our neighborhood. This proposal is totally out of scale. All the changes that have been shown are eye candy and gloss. The things that matter have not been changed.

Greg Cieslewicz spoke in opposition. Initially proposed at 63,000 square feet, now reduced to 58,000 square feet is about a 7.5% reduction. In some worlds maybe that's a huge concession but I don't think that's much of a concession. Changes made are purely cosmetic, it's like putting lipstick on a pig.

Alan Auby spoke to his concern of this not fitting the neighborhood. When he purchased his condo talk was for an 18,000 square foot grocery store. Putting a big box grocery store right in the middle of a neighborhood doesn't make any sense. As an example, at their neighborhood meeting with the City this past Wednesday it was obvious that the majority of people are not in favor of this proposal and he doesn't understand why after two years this is still in discussion.

Rosemary Jackson spoke in agreement with the majority of comments. Before purchasing their condo they were given a detailed plan for development and loved the idea for a town center. But they do not need a 58,000 square foot big box grocery store.

Ald. Jill Johnson requested denial of this project. This is a rezoning project, it changes the neighborhood and that's a really big deal. It opens up the possibility that things will be done differently than perhaps what is shown. Once they sell to the developer (Rollie Winter) and lease to the grocery store, Veridian is out of it. Many of her constituents across Cottage Grove Road have concerns because they are within 200-feet of the store site. The neighborhood meeting held last week was held during a snowstorm, and 150 people showed up. For anyone to characterize it (as Ald. Cnare did in her letter to the Commission) as a simple disagreement or 50/50, that simply isn't the case. There is overwhelming opposition to this, any reasonable person looking at this would know that the neighbors are extremely concerned. We haven't had an adequate traffic study to date because it didn't take into account problems being created by people cutting through from Buckeye. We've looked at a lot of pictures and a lot of this is speculative because they won't be built for some time. When asked to give examples of where this has been done in Madison, the developer cannot answer that. If you were to want a walkable store in this area, why wouldn't you site it closer to the higher density housing? This is a really beautiful neighborhood and area and she feels this proposal destroys part of that. It's their right to ask for a zoning change, but it's also our right to say no to that. Just because somebody is persistent doesn't mean we can't say no. This is a wholesale change to the original plan. The adjustments they've made are good, but this proposal does not work.

Munson and Day then addressed some of the issues brought up by Ald. Johnson. The total grade change would be 30-feet across the whole site. The site tapers down to Kilpatrick and McClean Streets at around 992-feet with sloping upward approximately 14-feet to the back parking lot. The first floor of the houses abutting the 14-foot wall would be at about 996-feet. Trying to get delivery at a lower level and shrink the footprint beneath that just doesn't work. After much research and much work this is the town center model that will work economically.

Further discussions by the Commission included the following:

- I really wonder what the viability of the land abutting the grocery store would be in terms of who is going to want to build a single-family residence there.
 - We have a fair amount of experience and we wouldn't be proposing this if we didn't think those home sites weren't viable. There are a lot of folks that would like to be a part of a walkable town center. There is an example on the west side of Madison and the Middleton Hills Copp's grocery store.
- We do have authority as Urban Design Commission because the GDP sets the footprint for the project. Can you help me understand your comments of traffic moving from Buckeye through and across this area.
 - The traffic study was done based on standard procedures, looking at intersections and lane capacities in this area. This proposal is very similar in traffic generation as to what is included there right now. There has already been 150,000 square feet of approved retail space, so these collector and arterial streets are set up to accommodate that. We went one step further taking the traffic study.
- Tim Parks, City Planner stated that the Copp's grocery store on Maple Grove Road on the southeast side of Madison. When the Cross Country Neighborhood Plan was adopted in 1983 it called for a neighborhood center to be located further south on the west side of Maple Grove Road. It was determined in the mid to late 90s that that layout wasn't conducive to development and the plan was amended to relocate the commercial activity closer to McKee Road.
- The three big issues are the size, the traffic and the size of the parking. It needs that traffic to be successful. Have you exhausted looking at ways of trying to reduce the footprint, put parking under the building, etc.?
 - The placement does relate back to the ability to incorporate other solutions, i.e. underground parking. The economics here do not support that. We're leaning on the expertise of Roundy's and this is the lowest they've said they can go. We've talked to others over the years about the possibility of making it smaller but could not find a business willing to do so.
- I'm struggling with this. Is it the one big box store? What if it were split into three 20,000 square foot buildings, would that make a difference?
- The scale, the parking lot is also an issue. We don't know when this anticipated development is going to occur. We don't have the money to build the library any time soon.
- The leap of faith is the grocery store. Along with that you do assume that the other stuff goes forward. The changes are good, but it is still a big building. Part of what seems so forced is the very organic, fluid plan of the whole development and then you plop in a very rigid footprint with no overlap, erosion of something that's more fluid.
- In looking at this store in comparison to what was initially approved, you are still holding to that concept of 150,000 square feet of retail. Today instead of having a grocer, liquor store, a bakery, we have it provided in one tenant. In my opinion the square footage is comparable to the initial intent of the project. The impact of traffic is also something I consider when I say I feel this is appropriate. The site has to modify to the topography. I understand that Copp's and Roundy's have standards to adhere to, but the parking has to adjust to the site. If we're going to include Gemini Drive, which makes sense, there should be parking on Gemini Drive. The sides of those buildings facing the street have to be "fronts."

Parking should be allowed behind the buildings at the Gemini Drive elevation. I do not think that the grocery can be placed at the same elevation of the retail on Gemini Drive. That store is going to have to be at a different elevation to nestle the parking lots into the site plan. There may need to be a ramped or sloped surface that will descend down to the parking lot on the north so we can get rid of that level of retaining to the street. A walk along the north edge will welcome your shoppers to walk to this location.

- Why do this when you can just build more housing? You're not persuading me. We're struggling with how we build these mixed-use centers.
- What I'm seeing here is a mass for a project with a flat site, and these drawings show a level site. I can't vote yes until I see clearly that you are incorporating the topography of the site. Right now this is a flat plan on a flat site, and that concerns me.
- I can't support this because the neighborhood doesn't support it. If I lived in the neighborhood I would support it, because if it's not approved it will lay vacant or become housing. Given the dynamics of retail this is probably as good as it would get. This is better than an empty lot or simply more single-family housing. I'm afraid it'll be a missed opportunity.
- In terms of looking at this as an overall development, we're looking at the proposal with a parking lot because that entire portion east of Gemini would be sold. It's also serving a library and future retail, so how many stalls can you accept as the bottom number you can function on in Phase 1?
 - The grocery store said they want 5 per 1,000. This is about 3.2 per 1,000 for the entire block, so we've already talked them down a significant amount. The reality is that shared parking approach allowed us to bring the stalls down in number, but that will function for the library, but the grocery store needs to have those stalls available. This parking count is lower than almost all of the grocery stores in the area. We're fully encouraging the library to consider a multi-level facility.
- We're trying to fit a round hole into a square peg here. I think it is telling that commercial has been pulled from other "new urbanist" developments. Looking at this from the neighborhood's perspective and what is best for the neighborhood, maybe this is just going to be a residential suburban development. It's not an urban neighborhood and will never be an urban neighborhood. You're just not going to get walkable neighborhoods in a suburb. Let it die a slow death instead of putting a big box that could go anywhere in the neighborhood. I don't think putting a big box there is going to encourage this town center.
- We've learned how to rebuild the urban fabric within the central parts of the City. Is there some middle ground we can find that says maybe this wasn't what we originally envisioned and instead of taking two steps forward, maybe we can only take 1 ½. That's a broader community decision.
- If you really want to create the ambience of something that could be walkable you cannot put the standard Roundy's box there. You have to think about the urban form and set the standard with this particular building. I would move referral to come back with a more urban form of the grocery store with the parking to be more sympathetic to the topography. Come back with something really interesting architecturally that might change the discussion for the neighborhood. Maybe have it not look like a big box.
- I need to see a plan that works with and without the possible library.
- Do the applicants think it is worthwhile to refer this?
 - What's going to end up happening, there are only so many variations with the site plan we can do. I think it's very unfair to characterize that the entire neighborhood is against this. People come in and give us constant letters about wanting to see a town square with a grocery store. If you want to end this then I would reject this. There's just no operator out there that will work with a smaller store.
- Do you feel that if they came back with a successful look, it's still the same size with the same number of stalls, is that something that would work for you and your constituents?

- I'd still have grave concerns about the size.

ACTION:

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by Harrington, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-1) with Slayton voting no. The motion requested that the applicant examine alternatives to the current proposal as noted above.

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 4 and 4.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 857 Jupiter Drive

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

General Comments:

- Too great of deviation from neighborhood plan and present zoning, without neighborhood support. Want elevation showing building height and grade changes seen by housing to the east. Not neighborhood-friendly, suburban development.
- Suburban big box and years of planning a new urban edge neighborhood challenge us, as a City, to figure out the lessons from the last decade and continue to work on building a vital mixed-use neighborhood.