



Agenda Item #: 3

Project Title: 1802 Pankratz Street – Addition to Existing Building for Isthmus Montessori Academy Located in Urban Design District (UDD) No. 4. 12th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 70648

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Christian Albouras, Jessica Klehr and Russell Knudson.

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 11, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of an addition to an existing building located at 1802 Pankratz Street in UDD No. 4. Registered and speaking in support was Alan Theobald, representing Iconica. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Melissa Droessler, representing Isthmus Montessori Academy.

The building layout has been revised by softening and rotating it to face the parking lot, and reducing the amount of ins and outs. The courtyard/playground area has been redesigned to make it more of a seamless entrance from the parking lot.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Along the entryway circle drive, are those panels glazed or blank?
 - Those are blank, that is the back of the stage.
- The original Informational Presentation had the back of the stage facing north. Consider facing north instead of east to avoid this big blank wall staring at us as we drive through the parking lot.
 - We enlisted the help of a theater consultant. The previous layout had you entering at the stage, they suggested flipping it so as people enter they aren't disrupting any production going on, which led to the panels vs. curtain walls. It's easy enough to replace some of these with spandrel panels.
- I'd suggest flipping it 90 degrees, so people are walking through the little break out space that might face the courtyard. The functional things could still be in the same location, but it's the first thing you're seeing and it's the closest to the street.
- The shape of the courtyard is more functional.
- The only element I had any concerns about, if the designers do choose to keep the layout the same, is the brick infill, there may be a nicer, more subtle way to show variation on that wall. Right now it looks like you blocked windows. Maybe some other geometry, looking at the ribbon window element, bringing some more horizontal elements across, some textural difference to enhance the monolithic.
- The landscape plan has no worksheet.
 - The staff report noted concerns and requested Commission feedback in terms of quantity, quality, texture and screening blank walls.
- At a first glance that north elevation seems a little sparse of plantings.

- I was frustrated trying to guess what these plants were based on the acronyms. I get the gist of it for the trees, but not the plants or stormwater areas. You're on the right track for bulking up and foundation plantings, I would love to see some more detail of what that all entails. The open turf and parking lot areas need more trees. I'd like to see those missing sheets to really be able to get a feel for what's going on here. I agree about breaking up that curved wall, it does look like a bricked over window. I just can't get past that, there has to be a more elegant treatment.
- Your choice of fencing (size and scale) could benefit from a second look, or consider more of a wall; this is kind of ornate for the application. The detailing is so very different than the building, it looks miniature compared to the massing and style of the building.
- You have organic curves, then a straight fence, then square paving. The organic shape of everything going on in the plaza doesn't flow into the parking lot and it's separated with a long linear fence. There is opportunity for more connections from the plaza going into the building, part of it is the scale of that fence.
- The fence could be replaced by a wall to reduce the amount of fencing you're presented with. Those really long expanses of fence, no matter what the style is, reads as kind of institutional.

Action

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (8-0).

The motion provided for the following:

- Provide a plant schedule as part of the Final Approval submittal.
- Bulk up the plantings on the north side of the site. The motion further included guidance with the landscape plan as noted in the staff report.
- Break up or change the fencing in the courtyard space to be more organic and complementary to the space that it is in.
- Look at the orientation of the theater and the practice rooms and/or the architectural detail of the curved wall facing the parking lot.