

April 30, 2012

City of Madison
Members of the Urban Design Commission
Members of the Plan Commission
City Plan Department Staff

Re: SIP Application for Grandview Commons.

During the two-year approval process for amending the Sprecher Neighborhood and General Development Plans, as well as the re-zoning of certain properties, homeowners' in the area were told that their concerns could be adequately addressed during the SIP process. On many occasions the aldermanic representative has said that the design would be the key to minimizing the impact on nearby homes while the developer has stated the final product would be a beautifully designed, upscale grocery store.

As residents of Grandview Commons and Richmond Hill, we remain very concerned about the visual, noise, traffic and light effects on our community. By placing smart conditions on the amended Neighborhood and General Development Plans, the developer and the City can substantially offset some of the negatives associated with those amendments. Adding conditions is also a good-faith move on the part of the developer and the City to reach out to those who oppose the 58,000 square foot grocery, and continue healing the rifts caused by this proposed development.

To that end, we offer the following recommendations for the building design, the parking lot layout, appropriate landscaping and other features for the surrounding areas. These recommendations, while comprehensive, are not limited and may be followed by additional recommendations as the process of the SIP develops.

Building

1. The building will be constructed of natural materials – brick, stone and wood. Materials such as fake stucco and synthetic brick veneer should be prohibited.
2. A second story is highly recommended for greater density as per UDC's recommendation, and to provide residential or commercial office space.
3. A flat roof should not be allowed. Flat roofs detract from the general appearance of a building and create a "warehouse" appearance. The roof should have adequate pitch and detail.
4. The building shall be designed with significant architectural detail to reflect the residential character of the surrounding area. All walls, or elevations, should be articulated with sufficient protrusions and recesses to eliminate the uniform surfaces found on many large commercial buildings.
5. Windows should be required for all building elevations and they should be of a size commensurate with the building. The windows should be strategically located to enhance the recesses and protrusions referred to above, and glass

- should be of the type that minimizes light reflection and pollution from the store to Richmond Hill property owners.
6. Skylights and dormers should be incorporated throughout the store to maximize natural lighting. Photocell-controlled lighting shall be used as a means of artificial lighting throughout.
 7. Air conditioners and all mechanical equipment should be contained within the building. This will enhance the appearance and reduce noise levels.
 8. The loading dock should be underground. This would be a great benefit to those living near the rear elevation. The grade of the land is such that it can be accomplished without an undue burden on the developer.
 9. All dumpsters, discarded food containers, kitchen equipment, pallets, boxes and cardboard should be kept within the building. When a grocery store backs up to a landfill or highway this is not a major issue. In this case, however, there will be homes within 100 feet of the loading dock and the rear elevation of the building. These homes must be protected from garbage, fumes, grease traps and other nuisance factors.
 10. All compacting of materials must occur within the building with doors closed.
 11. The building design and that of the nearby surrounding area should carry the burden of directing people to the entryways. Any signage should be as small as possible and designed attractively.
 12. Strong consideration should be given to requiring the north and south elevations to be designed to give the appearance of two or more buildings.
 13. The setback of the building from Cottage Grove Road should reflect the residential character of the area.
 14. LEED Silver certification for the building should be required.
 15. Liner buildings with supporting retail shops should line both sides and the back of the grocery store similar to Middleton Hills. These liner shops will create a buffer for nearby residential properties and create a greater sense of a town center feel.

Parking Lot and Landscaping

Since parking lots are places where automobiles and people must co-exist, special attention must be given to pedestrians and small groups of people that wish to gather and converse.

1. The parking lot should contain a number of small green spaces, with plantings of trees and raised beds that contribute to the reduction of parking lot run-off and serve to break up the big box parking lot feel.
2. The surface of the central pedestrian walkway shall be constructed of quality masonry materials to distinguish it from the parking surface.
3. The “architectural element” for the central walkway should be a large elegant water feature. Water fountains create a peaceful atmosphere and the pleasant sound of water offsets the noise common to automobile traffic and parking lots. Seating around the fountain shall be provided for customers who wish to eat or have a latte within the peaceful setting.

4. Depressed medians, porous paving stones or pavement on the parking lot, and breaks in curb and gutter to promote on-site filtration of stormwater shall be incorporated.
5. Landscaping adjacent to the north, east and south elevations of the building should be extensive and contain near mature trees. Without it, the mass of the building would visually dominate the area.
6. Parking lot lighting should be designed to minimize light pollution and the impact on surrounding homes. Outside lighting fixtures should be selected from those that have been approved by the International Dark Sky Association.
7. Benches and other seating areas should be provided at various key locations within the parking lot. These areas will be maintained in perpetuity by the developer, not the nearby homeowners or homeowners association.
8. Per the problem cited by Mark Opitz, City Planner of Middleton Hills, there must be a plan to ensure that shopping carts are returned to a central location and not left scattered around the parking areas or nearby homes. The storage location must be contained within the building. We suggest shopping carts that require a coin deposit that the customer recovers upon linking their cart to the next one in the cart corral. (Aldi uses these) A daily “sweep” of the area must be made to collect any stray carts.
9. Holding pond/rain-garden maintenance and upkeep will be the responsibility of the developer, not the homeowners nor the association. There must be a plan for routine inspection, maintenance and dredging/replanting if necessary for perpetuity. Special consideration must be given to restrictions regarding salting/chemical applications to the parking lot in order to reserve a healthy rain garden. Placement of filters on stormwater inlets will be required to trap oil and grease.
10. There must be a scheduled plan for litter removal. This includes not only the grocery store premises and parking lot, but nearby residences abutting and adjacent to the grocery store and parking lot. As with the rain garden, maintenance fees shall be the financial responsibility of the developer.
11. Secure bicycle racks shall be provided within 100 yards of the entrance to each building on the site for 5% or more of all building users (measured at peak hours) to encourage bicycling to the site.

Surrounding Areas

1. Thirty percent green space should be allocated for the entire site (grocery, parking, and liner buildings). This will help reduce stormwater runoff.
2. Traffic access to the store from Big Dipper Drive is to remain closed as depicted in developer’s drawings presented at Urban Design, Plan Commission and City Council meetings and in the submitted application.
3. Traffic signals will be installed at the Cottage Grove Road and North Star Drive intersection, as well as Gemini Drive and Cottage Grove Road with costs paid by the developer. Further action will also be necessary to slow traffic, such as speed bumps (like those on Oakridge by the Jennifer Street market) on McLean Drive on both sides of Cottage Grove Road (Grandview and Richmond Hill) and other streets

that will be used to drive to the grocery store. Cost should be borne by the developer.

4. Traffic calming devices must be installed on all streets that will serve as approaches to the parking areas. These measures must be of a size and angle to be effective (like Oakridge by the Jennifer Street market) and should be placed as frequently as necessary to deter speeding.
5. Both the north and south side of Cottage Grove Road will require additional visual screening. A brick fence along with extensive landscaping will be necessary. Maintenance and replacement of such screening shall be paid for by the developer in perpetuity.
6. Commercial truck traffic to and from the store shall be limited to Cottage Grove Road and Gemini Drive. Commercial truck traffic will be prohibited on all residential/neighborhood streets. Signs are to be placed on nearby streets depicting “No Trucks Permitted” and a “No Right Turn for semi trucks” sign will be placed at the exit from the parking lot onto Gemini Drive, restricting access to neighborhood areas and from the front of the library.
7. A detailed storm water run-off management plan (including construction and maintenance of rain gardens) and restrictions on chemicals used to salt the parking lot shall be required.
8. The temporary improvements to Cottage Grove Road will need to be comprehensive to ensure auto, pedestrian and bicycle safety as well as the free flow of traffic.
9. Consideration should be given to the construction of a pedestrian / Bike Bridge over Cottage Grove Road to safely connect neighborhoods south of Cottage Grove Road to the store and town center.
10. Between 1 and 3 percent of the total project budget shall be set aside for the incorporation of public art projects on the site. This is consistent with City requirements for public improvement projects.

Fiscal and Community Impact

1. Developer shall be required to make payments to the City to pay for unanticipated costs associated with the town center and parking lot such as extra policing and emergency responses. Payments shall be determined by the City.
2. The developer should be required to donate \$25,000 to a local Youth Center to offset the risk that youth will congregate at the store or parking lots.
3. The grocer should agree that at least 50% of its annual charitable contributions will go to local charities.
4. The developer should provide a bond or an escrow account in the amount of \$250,000 to pay for future damage to Cottage Grove Road caused by increased traffic.

Operations / Miscellaneous

1. Hours of operation shall be restricted to 7:00AM to 10:00PM. This will help reduce impacts on nearby residential neighbors, reduce police calls and otherwise mitigate the impact of a large commercial retail center.

2. All delivery trucks (not just those owned or operated by Roundy's) will be restricted to the hours of 9:00PM and 7:00AM.
3. A maximum 3 minute idle time shall be established for all semi-trucks visiting the site.

Respectfully submitted,

Concerned Homeowners of Grandview Commons and Richmond Hill neighborhoods.

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