

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: September 27, 2017

TITLE: 811 East Washington Avenue –
Comprehensive Design Review for “The
Gebhardt Building” Located in UDD No.
8. 6th Ald. Dist. (48454)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: September 27, 2017

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, John Harrington, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Michael Rosenblum and Rafeeq Asad.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of September 27, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of first floor signage, the larger “Gebhardt” sign, but no second or third floor tenant signage for “The Gebhardt Building” located at 811 East Washington Avenue in UDD No. 8. Appearing on behalf of the project were Mary Beth Growney Selene, representing Ryan Signs, Inc.; Bridget Hart, Caroline Altfeather, Mark Schmitz and Joel Plant.

The first sign is the “Gebhardt” on an above-canopy signage band. First floor signage would be a variety depending on what the bar/restaurant elects to do on East Washington Avenue. The letters on the first floor would not exceed 18” and the logos would not exceed 24”. The second floor tenants would not exceed 24” letters and 30” logos and would have signage on East Washington Avenue, one possible tenant on Livingston Street and one possible tenant on the pocket park. Sign type #5 is the third floor with one sign on East Washington Avenue and one on the pocket park. They respectfully disagree with the Zoning Administrator’s description of this being an extension of the downtown. If you look at the UDD No. 8 guidelines for signage and the Downtown Design Guidelines, this complies with regard to signage. A directory wall sign will be inset on the East Washington Avenue elevation by the entry door.

Altfeather from Zebradog representing Frank Productions presented the signage for the “Sylvee.” The signature component is a 2-sided digital marquee with a canopy over their entrance making it visible from the parking structure on Main Street and Livingston Street. Above canopy signage on both sides captures the Sylvee with a vintage look, using channel letters filled with neon tubing and neon going around the perimeter of the marquee. They are proposing two modes of content: standard would be a black background with white copy. The marquee would be active during performances with copy changes 1 time each minute during the show and for one hour after the show; then it would go back to changing one time per hour. The ground floor box office would have wayfinding signage with internally lit channel letters. The second story above main entrance features an art mural as a stylized visual applied with clear view vinyl on the inside of the glass with plans to wrap both sides. A first floor art mural is proposed to the left of the box office. It would change out periodically

as a signature component of the urban environment and photo op for anyone visiting the venue or in the community. It will be heat applied vinyl that can perhaps be changed in the future. The Chair noted that this cannot be advertising, and that staff would need to review and approve proposed design changes.

Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator addressed the Zoning staff report. The 1st and 2nd story signage is acceptable, while eliminating the third story signage. They have no objections to the other signage that fits within the ordinance. On the Sylvee, staff is cautious about regulating murals relative to content; they cannot have a commercial message, and any changes would need to be approved by staff. The balance of the signage for the Sylvee is in keeping with the building architecture and design, albeit for the message board. Across the City in non-Urban Design Districts a message can change no more than once every five minutes. It would be up to the Commission to decide if this changing method is acceptable (immediate information, emergency information, early information for visitors, upcoming shows, security, bag check, etc.). This information would not be flashing.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- You mentioned it's limited to an hour before the show, during the show and one hour after the show?
 - The majority of the time it would be in the standard mode of operation where the content is changing every hour. They plan on about 75 shows per year, in the later evening from 6-11 p.m. or on the weekends. It's a specialized time of when it would take place.
- Who in the neighborhood would see these signs that's not coming to the show? How bright will it be? That's my concern because we do hear from people about signs that are too bright.
 - There's a lot of years ahead for that neighborhood to grow.

ACTION:

On a motion by Rosenblum, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-0). The Commission noted that the first floor tenant signage at the pocket park and the larger "Gebhardt" canopy sign are acceptable, but no second or third floor tenant signage (nothing above the first floor) shall be approved. The "Sylvee" signage was also acceptable as presented with the message change limit during events no more frequently than once per minute (one hour before shows, during shows and one hour after shows). Any modifications to the mural shall be submitted for staff and/or Commission review.