

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** July 9, 2014

TITLE: 309 West Johnson Street – PD(GDP-SIP), **REFERRED:**
Mixed-Use Building, **REREFERRED:**
Housing/Retail/Commercial/Fire **REPORTED BACK:**
Department Spaces, Proposed Signage
Package. 4th Ald. Dist. (26346)

AUTHOR: Jay Wendt, Acting Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: July 9, 2014 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Richard Slayton, Lauren Cnare, Melissa Huggins*, John Harrington, Dawn O’Kroley, Cliff Goodhart* and Tom DeChant.

Goodhart and Huggins recused themselves on this item.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of July 9, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a signage package for “Ovation 309” located at 309 West Johnson Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Victor Villacrez and Eric Clappier, representing Ovation 309; and Kevin Morris, representing Hovde Properties. Morris reviewed the comprehensive package. The entry canopy signage will be individual channel letters at the entrance with LED lighting. Three sets of blade signs are proposed; first for advertising the residential leasing portion, as well as for luxury residences in the development. The second phase would be for commercial tenant space on the second floor, with the third phase to identify the parking aspect of the building. They are currently proposing six evenly spaced blade signs across the property for 262 linear feet on Johnson Street. The structure of these blade signs allows panels to be inserted so they can be replaced. The lifestyle is what you’ll experience living here. It’s a self-contained neighborhood to a certain degree; you have retail stores, your neighbors, community spaces, health spas, etc.

Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator spoke to the zoning issues with this signage package. There are no predetermined requirements for signage whatsoever for Planned Developments. The signage is reviewed uniquely, with the Commission always taking the perspective that approvals tend to be nested in consistency with what would otherwise be allowable by Code, but because of the unique architecture and unusual circumstances of certain properties there is that flexibility and ability to approve signage that is otherwise not really right for the property. This is a big public/private partnership, the City has a significant investment in this project, along with the developer. Starting with the canopy signs, the letters on the canopy are sized accordingly with what would be allowed, even if it is a “roof” canopy and allows for a four square foot logo, this proposed logo is 68 square feet. In terms of the three types projecting signs (the marketing brand/lifestyle signs, one parking lot entrance sign and the commercial tenant signs), the marketing signs are not a type seen with that type of message anywhere in the City. Usually signage is proposed for an identification perspective and this has more branding/marketing in it, making it inconsistent with the ordinance. The second floor tenant signs are proposed to be projecting. Since these sign types are going to be on a raceway and on an area that exceeds the

spacing and height of the signable area, it's better to go by size and height rather than to show signable areas. The Fire Department will be reusing the signage from their Dayton Street facility.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Individually I like what you're doing, but I think this is way too many signs. It's not so much the number of signs it's the combination of wall and blade signs all coming together. We need more consistency.
- I would be comfortable with something that omits all blade signs. The architecture speaks for itself. It looks like there is uplighting on all of the columns, why there are signs on some and not others, I think it detracts from the architecture. So I would omit all blade signs, but have the opportunity for you to look at some vertical two-story signage or one-story signage as you enter the parking structure. I think it's creative and brave to go with a big icon.
- (Tucker) There is a regulation that relates to the placement of signs on walls that aren't facing streets. But a parking lot directional sign, which is what we might be able to interpret that as, is something that might be able to happen there.
- It has the texture of feeling like you just left a food court, like in a shopping mall, because it's one big building. I think I'm fine with it all except for the blade signs.

ACTION:

On a motion by Slayton, seconded by O'Kroley, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (5-0) with Goodhart and Huggins recused. The motion for approval applies to the signage for "Ovation" and the "O" logo front and rear of the building, with the first floor tenant signage approved along with more detail per staff request. Second floor signage is to return.

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 rating for this project is 6.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 309 West Johnson Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	6	-	5	6

General Comments:

- Nice signs, but too much blade and wall signs conflict.
- Too much signage, blade signs detract from architecture of building.