

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: June 20, 2012
TITLE: Steve Cover, Director, Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development on the First Phase of the Development Review Process Improvements. (26760)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: June 20, 2012	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Todd Barnett, Acting Chair; Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins, Marsha Rummel, John Harrington and Tom DeChant.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of June 20, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** on the development review process.

Steve Cover, Director, Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development presented changes to the development review process to make the process more efficient.

1. Projects requiring review by the Urban Design Commission and/or the Landmarks Commission on their way to Plan Commission will be reviewed by the City Design Team before an application is submitted.
 - a. City Design Team is a new group created within the Planning Division, with a key responsibility being to sit down with applicants well before they submit anything. This has worked well and been well-received.
2. They are looking at combining the Urban Design Commission/Plan Commission application for certain projects. This means extra paperwork and duplication of effort.
3. They are meeting with each Commission to go over these recommendations, and will hold a public forum on July 11, 2012 from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in Room 260, Madison Municipal Building.
4. Staff reports will include an economic fiscal TIF analysis for background information.
5. They will be preparing reports for the Urban Design Commission. The reports will be shorter and more precise and will have very clear recommendations, i.e. either recommending approval or denial of a project.
6. Staff would give a one or two minute summary of the application that is before the boards and commissions.
7. Staff will assist boards and commissions in answering questions and setting the tone for the projects.

The City Design Team will consist of Bill Fruhling as the head of the group; current staff will also be included as well as hiring potential members. Cutting edge design concepts will be examined, in addition to wayfinding

signage, street design and look at opportunities to create neighborhood town centers to create more of a sense of community.

The Commission had the following comments and questions:

- The City Design Team core functions are the same mission that the Urban Design Commission has. Assuming that you do your job successfully, what does the Urban Design Commission have left to do?
 - The Commission stays exactly as it is. We're trying to even save the Urban Design Commission some time, by doing some preliminary design focusing so that when it comes before the Commission, it's going to be a better product and the commission can concentrate on some of the more important issues and details.
- I like the idea of reports coming our way.
- I don't want to be playing against the City (the Commission vs. City Design Team Staff).
 - I don't think that's going to happen.
- The applicants will then understand what the goals are that are in the ordinances and UDD guidelines.
- We don't want developers in a double whammy; the intent is to streamline but I share that concern that projects could come to the Urban Design Commission with a favorable recommendation from the team, but the Commission could find fault with it.
- Over time if a project comes back more than once, things change and it would be nice to be able to track changes. The applicant doesn't always submit those materials.
- It would be nice to have applicants come prepared to answer how their project fits in with the appropriate ordinances and UDD guidelines.
- This is really exciting. The only concern I have is that if this design team process can basically tell applicants "there's really no way this is going to fly," that's great but there might be a false sense of security of an applicant that this plan has been well-received here, but the Commission feels differently.
- Are these meetings set up on a regular basis for as-needed for a particular project?
 - That's going to be determined. Because of the different types and scales of projects we see, we might involve others in the team to work on some of those things, scheduling special meetings for those. As part of the development review process, we'll probably meet every two weeks or so.
 - One of the components that we're looking at in combining the Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission application process is the how the calendars all jive and work out. We will have regular meetings but I think who is at the table is going to expand and contract depending on what is before them.
 - I know there is concern about potential overlap. I think this is going to work out great.
- Is this a requirement of all projects or optional?
 - It'll be a requirement for all major projects.

How will you determine major versus minor?

We'll be able to tell based on the project; we won't look at houses putting a porch addition.
- How does this relate to an informational presentation? What you're going to do might shape the project where our most valuable interactions are the informational presentations. They haven't spent a lot of time on the project and we can give our opinions and help shape things. The Urban Design Commission typically makes a better project. It shouldn't be half-baked by the time it gets to us and we're only adding frills.
- Have you thought about having a UDC representative on this team? Maybe just to start off, it may alleviate some concerns.

ACTION:

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.