

AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** October 1, 2014

TITLE: 900 East Washington Avenue – Mixed-Use
Development Consisting of Retail,
Commercial and Residential in UDD No.
8. 6th Ald. Dist. (35621) **REFERRED:**
REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: October 1, 2014

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Richard Slayton, Melissa Huggins, Cliff Goodhart, John Harrington, Lauren Cnare.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of October 1, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a mixed-use development consisting of retail, commercial and residential located at 900 East Washington Avenue in UDD No. 8. Appearing on behalf of the project were Kirk Keller, representing Archipelago Village; Curtis Brink and David Korb. Registered and speaking neither in support nor opposition was Michael Soref, representing the Marquette Neighborhood Association. Keller described the project and distributed handouts. They are trying to save two key buildings and working on how to best phase in this development. The first building would be a single residential building with a more modern or brownstone look with a view to the winery proposed for the corner of Brearly Street and East Washington Avenue.

The Chair read through the comments submitted by two Urban Design Commission members not in attendance.

- The Wisconsin Telephone Company building serving as a base for the tower is not appropriate. The building would contribute in the courtyard of the footprint of the new construction and would create an extension of the Brearly pedestrian scale into the development.
- The eroded corner of the 10-story building on Paterson doesn't create a vibrant outdoor environment. Follow the street edge on this corner and create other niches for pedestrians.
- The vaulted roof and cornice are creating a heavy mass rather than lightly reaching to meet the sky. Some lowered massing of the Klueter building is needed to appropriately meet the context and will strengthen the presence on the street and the pedestrian scale. See Build Plan Segment 2 Item 6.
- Again, landscape and City Forestry need to strengthen the connections across East Washington Avenue.
- Isn't this block limited in height to the 10 + 2 story formula that applied across the street? Where does 15 stories fit into any zoning height limits? While the wine bar is a swell idea, the overall proposed building density is overwhelming, I think.

Michael Soref spoke on behalf of the neighborhood association. There will be a committee meeting tomorrow as they have not had a chance to meet about this development. The neighborhood supports the development of

the Klueter building and looks forward to seeing this new proposal. They are in favor of a development that is in compliance with Zoning, neighborhood plans and City plans. He expects a lively discussion about the residential component of this development proposal. The Capitol Gateway Plan calls for the south side of the 900 Block to be part of an employment area, so there will be an issue about whether the residential component is consistent with the adopted plans.

The Secretary noted that front part of the block is 12 stories without bonus stories. The Main Street part is 8-stories without bonus stories. Bonus stories can be up to two extra stories.

Ald. Marsha Rummel has spoken to the development team as well as City staff. As much as she sees this as a key block to the corridor, they're starting with something that's really not permitted or thought of as part of the adopted plans. She will be opposing the residential because the growth here is to create a succession of plans that have been identified to create 14,000 jobs. The Capitol East Gateway Plan specifically does not recommend towers of residential. Maybe limited housing could be envisioned in the form of upper level housing could be considered. But to start with something that's going to be controversial and doesn't meet any of the adopted plans, she cannot support it. She also made clear that people who would come to a community meeting on this development would not be neighbors, there are no neighbors as this is employment.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I agree with Dawn's comments regarding the top of the telephone company building.
- It would be helpful for us to have a better context of how much housing is actually there compared to employment opportunities and so forth.
- The design of this does relate to use but having some sense of how this fits into the overall design...clearly some developments have changed since those plans were made. But we don't have any good information about how the total housing market is working right now in terms of both this small piece along East Washington Avenue and the overall Isthmus.
- How would you like that information, would it be square footage of retail, employment and residential? How would that look for you?
 - For me, a really nice map. It would have to be labeled and identified. I just need to see that whole context.
- I wonder if it would be helpful to have an item on the agenda where we just look at East Washington Avenue. Maybe look at the evolution of plans, including the current one and then an assessment perhaps of what's here now with imagery going up and down the block that would help put this in context.
- The other thing that would be useful is to have some sense of the amount of new office space that's being built in the City.
 - We're looking at getting a planning model in place that would allow businesses to know what they have in the building from the ground up: I get this many parking stalls, I pay this much for that parking structure, I have this footprint, it fits within this determined model of planning which is what we all want to do along East Washington, and to lead the Plan Commission and the Urban Design Commission with a template put in place that allows a business to come and look at this and say "that's fine, I want to put an 8-story building in here, I have this plan already in place, I know what those car stalls cost and where I am in the overall development. Therefore it shortens the timeframe. When I'm asked how long does it take to develop a building in downtown Madison, I say 2 ½ years. I'd like to be able to see a year and a half. And here is this template that works for that. A horizontal planning approach allows us to take, if this building is approved and the parking structure is here, how this can expand horizontally and continue all the way out to East Washington, to set that template in place.

- The space between the residential and commercial buildings, what's the dimension there, why does it need to be that width? Why not move that residential tower closer to the avenue and remove the tower from the top of the WTC building?
 - It makes it very difficult to have a deep enough building on East Washington to develop later on as you push it back, and also the efficiencies of the parking.
- Well you're not getting much parking by that overhang over the AT&T building I don't think. I'd rather see the space narrower rather than the hang over.
 - This is meant to be a true planted green roof so we need to get daylight in there.
- If you don't have a commercial tenant and you get approval to put residential, are you just going to build that gray structure, how do you plan to phase a 12-story commercial building that you have no tenants for?
 - There is no person for any office building to go in any office building on East Washington now. We may not be able to put apartments on East Washington right now with the employment district. We were trying to be able to preserve the one-story building, do residential near Central Park or tie it into that, activate that corner with the residents, get Main Street activated with the people living there, and start the phasing of apartments. How can we start phasing in the parking lot? That's why we're back at Brearly and Main – to be near Central Park and make a nice presence on what should end up being a nice street.
 - It sets a form in place that allows a development to happen, that's the discussion I'm looking forward to having.
 - We have all these venues around here, do we want to create a parking destination potentially here that can utilize that, so I'm looking at numbers. But when we come back I'll show you other options and how the first phase and second phase march along.

ACTION:

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