

AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** January 24, 2007

TITLE: 454 West Johnson Street – PUD-GDP-SIP, **REFERRED:**
Mixed-Use Development with 197 **REREFERRED:**
Condominium Units. 4th Ald. Dist. (05332) **REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: January 24, 2007 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Paul Wagner, Chair; Lisa Geer, Michael Barrett, Bruce Woods, Lou Host-Jablonski, Cathleen Feland and Todd Barnett.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of January 24, 2007, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a PUD-GDP-SIP for mixed-use development with 197 condominium units located at 454 West Johnson Street. Appearing on behalf of the project was Gary Brink. Appearing in opposition was Randy B. Christianson. Appearing neither in support nor opposition was Rosemary Lee. Prior to the presentation, staff directed the Commission to a handout relevant to the “Exterior and Interior Design Criteria for Planned Unit Development Districts in Downtown Design Zones” required to be addressed with approval of the project. Staff noted to the Commission that a finding for adequate address of the criteria was required in order to grant initial approval of the project as previously noted with prior presentations to the Commission. Brink provided a summary of revisions to the plan under consideration based on revised building elevations as follows:

- The four-story corner turret feature has been modified with the removal of its flat faces and replaced with enlarged circular radii which turns itself in and is more full-featured. The revised turret element also features more/narrowed windows and extends an additional story up to 6-stories above ground level. A rectangular window below the corner turret feature is still an issue as previously noted by the Commission.
- The baluster treatment above the commercial/retail second story has been removed in favor of a cast stone treatment similar to that as found on the upper edge of the 12th story with some baluster elements remaining.
- The elevator tower above the 12th floor has been lowered to 12-feet in height and now features additional arched windows on the Johnson Street elevation, with an additional function with its proposed use to house water heating and cooling system, in addition to the elevator override.
- The introduction of false cables to the porte cochere canopy as previously recommended.
- In response to previous comments relevant to the lack of relationship with the architectural treatment between the lower and upper levels on all of the building elevations, Brink noted that he was comfortable with the mix of architectural types as proposed.

Following the presentation, the Commission noted the following:

- The extension of the turret feature creates a problem with the arched elements of the projecting balconies on the West Johnson Street elevation. Brink agreed and felt that the turret should be brick and stop at the 6th floor level as a possible solution.
- It was reiterated that the corner overhang on northerly portions of the West Johnson Street façade was still problematic; Brink noted that it could not be resolved by extending down a base treatment.
- Consider arched supports at the bottom of the entry canopy.
- Consideration for providing above-grade planters to relieve the excess of hardscape on the plaza area as requested by the Commission was not addressed; Brink felt strongly not to install or want to maintain.
- A request to consider rounding the corners of the balcony to relate to the turret feature was not addressed; Brink was unsure on how to accomplish.
- Consider indenting vertical columns around windows or add a change of color of material, texture or plain to provide further vertical emphasis and detailing on all building elevations.
- The issue of a building setback above the 10th story required for the two additional bonus stories for the 12-story building as proposed was discussed at length, no setback has been provided as noted within the design criteria.
- The design criteria in regards to the two additional bonus stories; issue with being an exceptional design.
- The overall massing is improved, especially the first two levels.
- The architecture is on the way to demonstrating that the bonus can be met, but not quite there yet.
- The turret treatment is improved but scale down the adjoining 6th floor balcony treatment in order to reduce conflicts on the Johnson Street façade. In addition, eliminate EIFS for cast stone, masonry or similar stone on the mechanical/elevator penthouse.
- The application packet is incomplete. Site/landscape/grading plans have not been provided within the submittal; including textual materials, especially address of the design criteria.
- The issue relevant to orientation and design of planters in conjunction with bike parking impeding pedestrian access to the plaza along the Bassett Street frontage still not addressed. Conflicts with pedestrian through circulation and lack of greenspace along with too much hard surface problematic.
- Encourage use of a green garden or roof as a means for making a finding on good exemplary urban design.
- No details on the address of the “Interior Building Design” within design criteria have been provided for review.
- The bump-out/corbelled overhang issue on northerly portions of the Johnson Street elevation still needs to be resolved.
- The guts and basic design is heading toward the right direction with some details yet to be resolved.
- Provide more details on the use of green rooftop spaces and size of balconies, including interior spaces.
- Overall if things are addressed, criteria may be satisfied in terms of massing criteria.
- Look at the corner treatment development at the plaza level; steps could be deeper for sitting.
- The cantilever patios/porches can have a small radius on the Bassett Street elevation with a 12”-16” radius.
- Eating or gathering areas can be provided in the plaza with benched groupings and other furnishings.
- Consider repeating the second line of planters at the face of the building to relieve the sparse amount of plantings provided.
- Where obvious an entry should be provided; should provide one at the corner.
- The criteria relative to massing, a transition relevant to the change of scale provided with this building and the block (across Johnson Street) implies 8-stories. Consider a green roof (extensive), corner entry, shops that relate to the street with door insets to the façade.

- Issue on how to transition huge building down to street not provided. Too much coming down to street level.
- The projection of upper stories on northerly portions of the East Johnson Street elevation combining arches and corbelling wants to fall off, canopy entry still problematic, and prefer turret feature as previously proposed.
- Consider the advantages of providing a green roof above the second floor retail/commercial level.
- Not in favor of creating classical style with this building; needs to be less classical and more modern.
- Remove balusters above portions of the first and second floor levels, along with the 12th floor level, too classical for building and area.
- The building design and architecture needs more improvements and refinements according to the criteria; improved but not there yet.
- Need more of the following so it can make a difference:
 - 6th floor balcony/patio treatment on Johnson Street is flat with no relief or architectural treatment; inset arches, emphasize columns, accent the vertical details of the building as a whole especially the façade off of the Bassett Street elevation requiring more vertical emphasis with window arrangement too flat.
 - The lower architectural treatment at corner, especially the West Bassett Street elevation needs more attention.
 - Consider extending window columns down from the turret base at the 2nd floor down to the 1st floor commercial.
 - Consider alternatives to the use of split face cement masonry units on the 1st floor level loading area.

Public testimony from Rosemary Lee representing the Steering Committee of the State/Langdon District Committee of the Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc. spoke to remaining issues with the development relevant to insufficient parking, inconsistency with the provisions relevant to the “Exterior and Interior Design Criteria for Planned Unit Development Districts in Downtown Design Zones” for granting the two bonus stories; issue with exceptional design, as well as height and massing concerns.

Robert Holloway reiterated his concern with gentrification associated project in area creating economic segregation, as well as the need to provide more diversity in housing downtown.

ACTION:

On a motion by Geer, seconded by Feland, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0). The motion to refer required that the applicant provide address of the above and previously stated concerns (with previous reviews of the project) relevant to the architecture of the building and site design prior to any further consideration of the project.

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 ratings for this project are 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 7 and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 454 West Johnson Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	7	-	-	-	-	7	7
	5	5	-	-	-	5	5	5
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
	-	5	-	-	-	6	5	5
	5	7	4	-	-	6	6	5
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
	5	5	3	5	-	5	5	5

General Comments:

- Continued small improvements to the architecture; with more needed. Applicant needs to address the interior elements of the design criteria. Turret needs work.
- Still needs improvements, but has come a long way and greatly improved.
- Cantilever bay still not there yet. Turret is coming along. No EIFS. Green roof, roof garden. Details to be resolved, then see bonus 2 stories as appropriate.
- Still not good enough to meet the intent of the Downtown Design Zone ordinance.
- Entry at the corner is important at the turret. Add bench groups along the façade possibly at building returns. Add at a minimum a secondary row of planters at the columns will add to the depth of landscape. Add more street trees if possible. Possibly green roof at stepback above 2nd floor level.
- This project is a significant building on a significant corner. Further development and refinement needed to justify additional stories.
- The building is massive. The Urban Design District standards requires “appropriate transitions,” not “dominating the surrounding area” and “providing a more pedestrian-friendly quality.” This building overwhelms the 2-4 story buildings across the street, thus it fails to provide a “transition” and “overwhelms” them. A nice portico has been graciously provided for the 35% of downtown residents who drive while providing a concrete desert for the 65% who walk. Why no porticoes for pedestrians? The UDD requires “buildings with obvious entrances contribute to the definition of the public way and