

## AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** August 7, 2013

TITLE:    Amending Sections 28.142 and 28.211 of  
            the Madison General Ordinances to Update  
            Various Landscaping and Screening  
            Requirements and Create a Definition for  
            Hedges. (31108)

**REFERRED:**  
**REREFERRED:**  
**REPORTED BACK:**

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

DATED: August 7, 2013      **ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Melissa Huggins, Henry Lufler and Cliff Goodhart.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of August 7, 2013, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of the changes to the landscaping ordinance. Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator introduced the ordinance spurred by fundamental aspects to landscaping requirements that conflicted with the types of development the code encourages. There are technical errors that need to be corrected and points that need clarification. He worked with a group of five landscape architects to come up with a better landscaping solution related to technical aspects such as the distance between trees and light poles, and attempting to landscape sites that preexist before the current code took effect. A series of changes include more clarification and opportunities for flexibility have been created. These changes include:

- Create an area of disturbance for small building increase allotment (10% change in site, 10% change in building footprint).
- Plants grow at different rates. The current code has a requirements that plans be shown at a 15-year growth rate, which is significantly different between an Oak tree and Spirea.
- Similarly there is a requirement that light poles be an adequate distance away from trees, and landscaping is different sizes, therefore it is appropriate to have the light poles located at the 75% growth rather than 20-feet from the light pole.
- Clarification on what qualifies for generating landscaping requirements by creating graphics in the ordinance.
- Created a process by which landscaping requirements can be waived if building placement precludes the placement of landscaping.
- Recognize that a building footprint could be deducted from the developed area in consideration of the required landscaping (“The Hub” as one example).
- A section of the code that allowed for four trees if one species has been eliminated.
- Clarification on a typo on the plant type charts. It should indicate in the third column on the right that 30% (thirty percent) of the total points is required counted towards those trees.

- The Plan Commission has authority to figure out the best solution where there are district boundaries involved.
- Solid versus not solid fences (screening fences), and hedges were looked at.

This is still the basic same ordinance, it now has a number of modifications, refinements and some more flexibility built into it.

Comments from the Commission were as follows:

- Seems like a fairly corrective type of ordinance.
- The light pole issue – by having the lights at the 75% distance from the tree, what do most contractors use tree islands for – light poles. I'd like to look at that more closely and look at examples where you can have the light poles closer to the trees.
  - The islands will be referred to as landscaping islands. You will still need a percentage of islands in your parking lot.
- Overall this is a very nice adaptation of the ordinance.

In an email by Commission member Harrington, he asked for the ordinance to be approved in a way that it comes back to staff so that he can review it. The Chair noted that this is on the Plan Commission agenda for August 26, 2013 with the Urban Design Commission seeing this again on August 28, 2013; the Plan Commission wouldn't act on this before the Urban Design Commission does.

#### **ACTION:**

On a motion by Slayton, seconded by Lufler, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-0). The motion noted that the Commission may have additional comments after their meeting of August 28, 2013. Wagner noted that it's an approval recommending the Plan Commission take it up with a note that the Urban Design Commission may have some additional comments on the 28<sup>th</sup>.