

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 20 March, 2017

TITLE: 200 S Pinckney St (Block 88 & 105) –
Judge Doyle Square – New
(Underground) City Parking Facility
& New Mixed-Use Development
adjacent to a Landmark in Ald. Dist.
4.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

CONTACT: Stephen Mar-Pohl, InSite Consulting
Architects, LLC

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 21 March, 2017

ID NUMBER: 46063

Members present were: Stuart Levitan, Chair; Anna V. Andrzejewski, Vice Chair; Marsha A. Rummel, Lon Hill, and Richard Arnesen. Excused was David WJ McLean. Erica Fox Gehrig arrived in the middle of the discussion of this item and did not participate.

SUMMARY:

George Austin, registering in support and available to answer questions.
John Paul Beitler III, registering in support and available to answer questions.
Stephen Mar-Pohl, registering in support and available to answer questions.
Peter Ostlind, registering in support and wishing to speak.

With regard to the limestone across the base of both buildings on both Blocks, the architect wanted to continue the concept of stone across both, in order to keep those two buildings consistent. The lower stone element will be a story lower than what was originally drawn. The stone is at the retail level of Block 105.

Alder Rummel asked for the previous meeting's packet to relate the previous proposal to the current one. Andrzejewski pulled up the previous proposal on her computer during the meeting. Beitler III clarified to Rummel's satisfaction.

Arnesen asked what the height of the street level façade is on Block 105. The Applicant responded that it's at the elevation of the sill on the second floor of the Fess Hotel. There was further discussion about stone base height on Block 105.

Levitan interjected to provide clarification that the Landmark Commission's directive is to determine whether or not the structure is so large or visually intrusive as to adversely affect the historic character and integrity of the adjacent landmark.

Arnesen indicated that the current proposal does not meet the City's street-level façade requirements, and has been made worse because it's now a one-story, street-level façade instead of continuing the two to three story height of the mass at the street. Andrzejewski agreed that the current proposal seems jarring. She asked the Applicant what would be behind the stone on Doty. Beitler III replied that it will be a hotel and restaurant. Arnesen responded that the occupiable space could be brought to street level at two to three stories.

Arnesen feels the height of the retail street-level façade hurts the pedestrian experience. Staff indicated that this particular issue, along with some of the issues being discussed, is probably under the purview of the Urban Design Commission. Staff reminded the Landmarks Commission of directive, and reminded them that any discussion with regard to this proposal will also be part of the Urban Design Commission's record.

Arnesen commented that, though the buildings are as large as they could possibly be, it would still be more acceptable if the architect dealt with the street-level façade in a better way and retained the height at the street that is appropriate in the downtown.

Andrzejewski asked the Applicant if there were any other changes he needed to bring to the Landmarks Commission's attention. Beitler III replied that there are not.

Ostlind addressed concerns about space between adjacent properties. He indicated that they are trying to maintain a pedestrian-friendly downtown. He went on to say that, under the current proposal, the Doty Street opening is much wider than would be needed for a single vehicle access entrance. This makes a much bigger gap in the streetscape. A similar situation occurs on Wilson St.

Levitan asked whether the alley/private drive has gotten wider in the current proposal compared to the previous one. Beitler III replied that it has not gotten wider.

Beitler also stated that everyone has different opinions about what should be done with this space. Every modification makes some people happy and disappoints others. The current plan is what the architect envisions for the project.

Andrzejewski, in looking at the relevant ordinance section, commented that there is some discordance with the rest of the building (stone base against glass) which makes it visually intrusive. It appears heavy and conflicts with the delicacy of the Fess. Beitler III replied that, while it's discordant with the Fess, it's not so with the Madison Municipal Building.

Arnesen questioned why the street level design on Block 105 needs to be consistent with the Madison Municipal Building on Block 88.

Staff indicated that the staff report discusses the adverse effect the buildings' design might have on the adjacent landmark(s), but concludes that the effect to the landmarks is not adverse as to detract from their historic integrity. Staff agrees that there may be a better way to design the street elevations, but determining that is not the Landmarks Commission's purpose in this review.

Arnesen stated that he considers the proposal visually intrusive to a degree that it affects the adjacent landmark. He said that the proposed structures do not enhance the landmarks or the downtown context; they detract.

Rummel asked what the concealed wall of the Fess looks like now, and questioned why it might potentially come back to Landmarks. Staff responded that, because the parking garage currently touches the side of the Fess, we don't know what that side looks like and won't until the project is started. If the project impacts the Fess Hotel, that issue will be brought back to the Landmarks Commission.

Rummel asked how the color of the stone on the proposed buildings relates to the color of the Fess Hotel. The Applicant replied that it will not.

Staff clarified directive again, and Andrzejewski confirmed, saying that the Commission was straying into the Urban Design Commission's territory.

Rummel recommends that the Urban Design Commission examine the color of the brick in contrast to the Fess, especially as more of the Fess gets exposed.

Andrzejewski likes that the proposal allows the Fess to breathe. She stated that she has a lot of issues with the design, but doesn't feel it rises to the visually intrusive level.

Arnesen discussed approval with the caveat that this is an important project, and while he has no problem with the towers, the street-level façade could be much, much better and recommends that the Urban Design Commission examine the height and material at the street level.

The Commission would like to reiterate their continuing concern with and recommends that the Urban Design Commission examine the color, proportion, height, and number of stories of the mass at the street level.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Arnesen and seconded by Andrzejewski to recommend to the Plan Commission and Urban Design Commission that the Landmarks Commission finds that the proposed development is not so large or visually intrusive as to adversely affect the historic character and integrity of the adjacent landmarks. The motion passed by a voice vote.