



Agenda Item #:	7
Project Title:	20, 22, 30 N Carroll Street - New Wisconsin History Center in the Downtown Core (DC) District. 4th Ald. Dist.
Legistar File ID #:	77005
Members Present:	Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Amanda Arnold, Shane Bernau*, Jessica Klehr, and Russell Knudson
Prepared By:	Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

*Bernau recused himself on this item.

Summary

At its meeting of April 19, 2023, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new Wisconsin History Center located at 20, 22, and 30 N Carroll Street in the Downtown Core. Registered and speaking in support were Wes Mosman Block, Monteil Crawley and Ivo Rozendaal. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Robert M. Barr, and George Austin.

The new History Center will provide greater access to the collection and fulfill the mission of collecting, preserving and telling Wisconsin stories. The new building will create a new front door to the public and complement the headquarters building that provides research, creating a center that will serve the State and public for the next 100 years. Located at the intersection of Mifflin, Carroll and State Streets, the key goal is to activate and engage the public realm, creating a unique landmark building while respecting the scale of the surrounding area. They are proposing the main entrance to be located on the Mifflin Street side adjacent to Mifflin plaza, positioned to take advantage of the building's corner location and prioritize pedestrian safety, particularly with bus drop-offs on Carroll Street, as most visitors will arrive from parking garages along Mifflin and State Streets. They are creating a strong corner presence with a multi-directional focus, with the upper portion twisting while the base holds to the city grid. The ground floor design is all about creating a welcoming environment that invites people inside, with building materials including a mix of metal, steel and weathered zinc, and terra cotta; they envisioning a lighter touch when it comes to the color of the building. The design creates a dynamic visual experience, offering a different read from different vantage points and a wonderful nighttime presence.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Staff report noted that the entry location shall be on Carroll Street that is non-negotiable with UDC. Until we hear otherwise from Zoning, that will affect the design of the building.
- Going back to a perspective that shows the courtyard entry of the building. The courtyard entry area, I understand the desire to activate the plaza, but you're entering into a lobby. If it's non-negotiable to have the entrance into the same lobby on two different sides...it's a great looking project, it should stand out from everything on the Square and it does. The bird glass ordinance is going to be a thing, good luck with that. I'm liking the direction it's going.
- I really like the serrated elements on the lower half but I'm wondering if it's too much, if you need relief from that severe geometry for the part that's above. When you have too much of a special thing it stops being special. It needs more relief from the main body to the top. Maybe it's the rendering, I'm unsure if it's going to be able to be detailed like that, and if we'll see more lines to cap things, I'm wary of that. Has the design team

thought about taking that strong element and reinterpreting it for the piece above? I agree the entrance should be off of Carroll Street.

- Regarding the entry piece, we do have mass quantities of people coming here.
- We have no power to say it is okay.
 - Regarding the relief in the massing, can you clarify a little?
- You've got this serrated envelope feature all the way up. Seeing it with the skyline beyond it, it's too severe because it's the same element wrapped around. Has there been any consideration in reinterpreting the serrated panel system for the element that is above it? The corner element, it looks nice and taught and it caps that glass element really well. As it goes up it should be less of a huge mass because I think that can be sensitive to these smaller buildings on the Square, could it be reinterpreted, something still interesting and mimicking the feel of that serration but not quite a serrated edge?
 - We'd have to take a look at that conceptualization, it takes longer than 10 minutes to walk you through how we got to where we are. It's symbolically meant to take from different cultures in Wisconsin, headaddresses and how they layer. We have this idea of the building itself twisting and trying to look away from the Capitol. The history and stories of this building go beyond this location.
- I'm not arguing about the twisting, I like the massing, I'm talking about the serration.
 - Having that overlay of the motif that creates that form, once that geometry locks with the bottom volume they want to resolve in some way. It's the same form that's twisting, when they become two different things the story changes and gets lost. That's why that serrated form goes all the way up the building taking shape from the round plane to the top of the building.
- It's a detail that I'll be curious to see how those simple openings and that glass plane work, it looks almost impossible to see that hovering over all that glass without a lot of framing behind it. We'll have to see how that develops. It could be strong element.
- I'm excited by the shade and shadow this façade could cast, it could be really dynamic. I too am exciting to see a little more detail will be interesting. I might say the serrated belongs at the top as well. Questions about the glass façade: I am thinking about how much pedestrian traffic there is around the Square and people seeking places to sit and watch people go by. Is there opportunity with how the building meets the sidewalk to make room for public engagement, perching and people watching? I'm particularly looking at along where the glass ends and you have the serrated edge coming all the way down; if there might be room to imitate the structures in the Mifflin Street plaza area where people can sit and stop and just watch people go by. If that might be an addition you may be willing to consider. There's a lot of pedestrian traffic around the Square; an opportunity for people to engage with the building as well.
 - We are looking into that and how much street furniture we can provide with our design. A transparent piece that engages and widens that streetscape, and be a backdrop for things happening. Trying to create an interior environment that mimics the exterior environment, really engage the public. I agree that is something that we are looking at, what are the ways we can incorporate street furniture. Link around the corner to Mifflin Street as well.
- I would implore the design team to continue to look at light, transparent glass and not do what happened on University Avenue with the School of Music building. The darkness of that glass doesn't really have a functional benefit and would have been nice as transparent glass. What you are communicating here is a transparent glass. What would we expect to see in the upper volume of that top atrium?
 - We have a two-story condition that is the temporary gallery on the second level. We are creating that "atrium-esque" environment along Carroll Street, and could be an opportunity to have artifacts on display or things that talk about interpretive elements in the museum, it's kind of TBD but envisioned to have interpretation for exhibits on the interior of the building. That particular wall will not be glass due to light conditions needed for those gallery spaces, but there is opportunity to have interpretive graphics added to that wall.
- I'm glad to hear that right now you're thinking about it and that it's not an atrium, there's more complexity to deal with. Personally I think that the project would be just as attractive if that top section of glass was potentially made into the serrated material. I think that I'm questioning how that's going to read and whether

that last section of glass at the top is really giving you much from a design perspective. Are we seeing a perforated metal at the top levels there?

- Yes. Where you see glass at the fourth and fifth floor levels that create that L shape are multi-purpose event spaces. The fifth floor is a true rentable event space with dining that spills out into an outdoor event space. The idea is where the glass would stop, where we see the metal wrapping, the building will dematerialize and the metal would dematerialize so the outdoor event space doesn't seem so enclosed. We're envisioning some frit pattern on there as well.
- I don't have a problem with it, just wanted to understand why it looked different than the other sections of glazing. Wonderful project, looking forward to more.
- I was imagining the lenticular panels above the upper roof plaza as just being gone. I can see that this building would seem so much less massive without that large spandrel piece. With the wind and everything it's not going to be held up with those mullions. It's likely to be heavier. I'm imagining the long views, having more interest and certainly a lot less mass by not having that additional upper spandrel piece at the upper terrace.
- Question for Jess (Secretary) regarding the design guidelines and requirements for downtown and it states that street facing facades above the first floor shall have a minimum of 15% window glazing. Does that apply to the Mifflin Street side? The Downtown Design Guidelines that you attached to the staff report.
- (Secretary) To confirm, you are referring to the Zoning Code; item # e 2?
- Item e3.
- (Secretary) Yes, that would apply and ultimately, I haven't sat down with Zoning to look over the proposal, we wanted to get UDC's input first, but that's certainly a Zoning Code requirement that cannot be modified.
- So that the stories are large here, the second story is really above the lobby and that is where we are looking for the percentage of openings that goes for Mifflin also?
- (Secretary) Yes.
- In defense of the design team you're saying the entrance has to be on the street, for the purposes the entrance you're saying Mifflin is not a street, but for the purposes of glazing along that façade you're saying that is a street?
- (Secretary) No, item #3 just says for all buildings upper story openings shall comprise a minimum 15% of the facade area per story, it doesn't really take us back to the street like item #1 does.
- We have a lot of buildings downtown that are right on the lot line, and the code would not allow 15% openings on side elevations, I think that needs to be clarified, there are plenty of buildings built to the property line perpendicular to the street that simply don't have 15%, sometimes they have zero percent openings. Since items 1 and 2 above it specially talk about street-facing façades, I thought #3 was also talking about street-facing façades.
- (Secretary) I'm not reading #3 as street-facing facades, to me that reads as just upper story openings being 15%. Item 1 definitely refers us back to the street.
- I think that should be clarified, again on a zero lot line project that doesn't come into play at all in other projects. It would be good to know exactly how that particularly effects Mifflin Street because again, if it is a street then they should get their entrance there, it's not a street then it shouldn't be required.
- (Secretary) The key to that conversation with the Zoning Administrator has been 'what's the primary street,' and that is Carroll, not Mifflin, and that plays a role in that discussion. I will work with Zoning to get clarification.
 - We understand the requirement for glazing percentages, our understanding is that we comply with that in what you see here today. We will certainly keep track of that as we move forward.
- My concern is of lenticular above the roof and how it effects what the building looks like. You would still maintain the native headdress concept just as effectively to the passerby.
 - Looking at slide nine, that shows the vision of the upper floors and how the top band dematerializes to bring down massing.
- How you effectively break up that wall that's facing west (Henry Street). If you're right on the property line there's not much you can do, but it cantilevers six-feet over, the part below the cantilever is off the property line, maybe there can be openings there. Being able to do something, some variety, some articulation of that façade would be something this Commission looks at very carefully and closely.

- The tall narrow silver gray element separating it from the Churchill building next door, what is the connection between the new museum and that building? I thought I saw a stairwell behind there. Is this building going to go up flush against the Churchill building and cover all the side windows on that building or is there open space behind that tall vertical element at the junction?
 - We are at a zero lot line so the museum will abut right next to it. Its recessed back from the new volume to give some distinct relief between the two but in essence our building will be directly adjacent to the Churchill building.
- There was in part of our packet a public comment in writing from the neighboring property owner with regard to this project.
- That was one of the reasons I asked.
- Certainly an exciting project and an overdue project. We are excited to be part of the process.

Action

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