

## AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	<b>PRESENTED:</b> August 4, 2010
TITLE: 5117 University Avenue – PUD(GDP), Erdman Center Project/Mixed-Use Development. 19 <sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (18094)	<b>REFERRED:</b> <b>REREFERRED:</b> <b>REPORTED BACK:</b>
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	<b>ADOPTED:</b> <b>POF:</b>
DATED: August 4, 2010	<b>ID NUMBER:</b>

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Henry Lufler, Marsha Rummel, Melissa Huggins, Jay Ferm and Mark Smith.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of August 4, 2010, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a PUD(GDP) for an Erdman Center project/mixed-use project located at 5117 University Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Brian Munson, Frank Miller, Jane Grabowski-Miller, Jon Snowden, and Bill Suick, all representing Erdman Development Group; and William Whisenant. Appearing neither in support nor opposition were Faith Fitzpatrick; Sally Miley and Janet Loewi, both representing the Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association. Registered and speaking in opposition to the project were Bill Fitzpatrick, representing the Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association; and Michael Kienitz. Munson presented plans for an urban employment center on this 17 acre parcel, with the goal of setting up as much first floor retail as possible. Other components will include office uses, potential for residential components in combination with clinic/medical uses (i.e., Ronald McDonald House). There is potential for off-street structure parking, and the developers are talking to the City about the potential of TIF money. There will be a private architectural review committee that will be reviewing this project to augment the City approval process. He stated they are waiting for a traffic study that will be distributed to staff and the neighborhood just as soon as the developers receive it.

Michael Kienitz noted:

- This is not new urbanism. They are on a wellhead protected area. This supplies water to over 17,000 Madisonians that could become contaminated within five years. There are so many environmental issues here that need to be addressed because this area sits on our drinking water.
- The construction itself and the surface parking are the two leading contributors to ground water pollution. We are going to see a tremendous amount of that. I want people to check out the environmental factors.
- There is a buried oil tank below the hotel on this site.

Sally Miley, President of the Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association noted:

- Issues with the lack of green and open space, building density and height, limited commitment to not increase stormwater discharge or make worse in an area with existing stormwater issues that impact the lakes, parking, provisions for energy efficiency and sustainability, amongst other issues.
- The Spring Harbor Neighborhood Plan has very specific wording about this parcel that requires address.
- The Spring Harbor Neighborhood Association has made recommendations to Erdman Holdings about their concerns as far as stormwater management, traffic and how it will affect the surrounding residential properties. We have requested information that we have not received; it's been a one-way street.
- The low density plan presented would be more in keeping with this neighborhood.
- Because of the size of this parcel, regardless of density it will still affect the neighborhood greatly.

William Whisenant noted:

- The area of surface parking, number of cars projected and salt used to clear the lots is of great concern to the water quality of Well 14.
- Further study of the water quality issue is needed before granting any approvals. This is my family's drinking water.
- I've had a business in this area for 32 years and have been a resident of the neighborhood for 29 years. The development of this parcel would be a benefit to the neighborhood and the City but needs to be done carefully given the size of the parcel.

Janet Loewi noted:

- In general, issues with the lack of communications and response issued from the applicant team with the neighborhood association since the previous review by the Urban Design Commission on April 21, 2010. She noted the lack of a traffic study, neighborhood review and input on "design guidelines," the lack of reference and specificity on the zoning text relevant to a proposed preliminary plat and the number of lots with breakdowns that address bulk and mass, building heights, setbacks and other elements on a lot by lot basis and as further detailed in a hand out.
- I can't say if I'm for or against something if I'm not being given consistent information. They gave the neighborhood association information that was different from what they submitted to the City in terms of square footage.
- The biggest disappointment to me is we've been listening to the Erdman presentations but when we look at the presentation it looks like what they've presented to us is basically fluff.
- We've been promised a traffic study for months.
- Most of the neighborhood likes the basic idea of this project, but when you look at the zoning text there's not much there, so we don't know what it is that will finally be built on this property.
- This is a communication issue. The concept of this seems wonderful but the details haven't been flushed out enough for somebody to commit to it at this point in time.
- As the project progresses we're not convinced the developer will honor the idea of this being a green and urban development.
- On the applicant's commitment to energy efficiency and protection of our lakes, the minimum requirements under City code are not enough for this development.
- The UDC can ask the developer to go beyond the requirements for the benefit of our neighborhood, our city as a whole and our lakes.

Faith Fitzpatrick requested the Commission take into consideration those views as you approach the development. The seven stories would encroach on that view, in addition to other issues noted in a handout to the Commission.

Bill Fitzpatrick requested deferral of action based on the need for the applicant to provide more information on stormwater management based on the excess of surface parking proposed with the project with the need for parking to match the level of infill development, not exceed it.

Ald. Mark Clear spoke about the idea of returning this parcel to an active employment center for the City. He mentioned the importance of potential for stormwater improvements associated with this project. The project is as a good location for a moderate amount of density in order to reduce urban sprawl. There are lots of good transportation options for this parcel with existing bus service, off-site bike linkages and potential high speed rail. He sees this site as deserving more than low density, 1-2 story buildings. Somewhere between the low and the high density would be right for this project. The neighborhood wants more details, and in some ways the details aren't necessarily appropriate at this GDP stage, but I think there can be more details than are in this particular one. You probably have enough information to give it initial approval and let the Plan Commission start their work on this, but there is plenty more to be done either way. Many of the concerns mentioned by the neighborhood are valid; there have been issues with communication. A lot of information does come together at the last minute, but it does make it very challenging for the neighbors and the Alder to feel like they're involved in that process.

Follow-up comments from the developer were as follows:

- The Water Utility will require review of all applications within that wellhead protection area.
- We're trying to create a sustainable urban infill project which lends challenges and opportunities. We can intensify the use on this site within the infrastructure we already have including the designation of a transit-orient development marker and an employment center that's in keeping with the development plan.
- From a stormwater management component, we're not proposing within this zoning document to amend any of the standards for stormwater management; in fact we will exceed them where we can. But typically those are done at certain levels.
- The redevelopment of this site will significantly raise the bar and we will meet the standards for stormwater management.
- The process is establish a framework and then move on to the specifics. We're not proposing any waivers and we are looking at improvements on the site.
- There have been remediation actions on the site and that is a separate process from the zoning. In the redevelopment of this parcel we're going to go through all that environmental review with a fine-tooth comb.
- We regret that we can't present the traffic study tonight.
- The details happen at the SIP; we're trying to establish a framework.
- We anticipate meeting all the codes and exceeding them as far as green energy goes.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Hospital uses, radio and television studios, an indoor theater, these uses all really surprise me scale-wise.
- Concern with all the surface parking. Need trigger point relative to the creation of structured parking to get beyond individual SIP development of surface parking lots.
- I like where you're wanting to go, but how do we get there if we're approving a document that to me looks very suburban. In response Munson and Miller noted:
  - There will be constant review of how each SIP fits within the context of what's around it based upon the proposed uses of each SIP.

- There is a range of possibilities. As things like “whether or not there is rail transit” come up, development of lots will need to be reviewed in context with the transit system.
- We prefer the proposals with the parking ramps.
- Is this the best we can get if there isn’t anything else?
- Other theater projects that have come before us have talked about their huge parking demands. It strikes me that you’d have to change some of your parking issues if you had a use like that.
  - That would have to be very carefully vetted at an SIP level.
- No traffic study as previously requested.
- I believe in your commitment to the sustainable aspect of it, I think your plan could be more concrete in articulating the potential things you’re going to try to work into it. Should be more concrete in stating commitment to sustainability.
- Cut off corner of parking ramp at the southwest corner to enhance the linear park/bike path area.
- You have a lot of knowledge from your work and from Europe but I don’t see that reflected here on paper; that would make it a stronger proposal if you were to put that in.
- 12-foot strikes me as a very wide street for a relatively constrained site; look at reducing with to 10-feet.
  - We need to accommodate some of the potential larger vehicles, i.e. fire trucks. We’d rather have the greenspace if we can, but we need to accommodate truck loading/unloading as well.
- Your bike connections are outstanding.
- Are City Traffic Engineers looking at doing anything with this intersection of University Avenue and Whitney Way?
  - It’s going to be rebuilt as part of the University Avenue reconstruction, but at this point there are no plans for reconfiguration. The biggest change is countdown timers for pedestrian crossings.
- Are there provisions for on-street parking as seen on the renderings?
- Have you met with the Fire Department?
- Concern that in renderings most if not all the buildings have a faux historic feel. Need to look at more modern architecture as previously noted.
- I cannot get past the Lot 13 parking area at the center. The opportunity here to have all the potential plat owners/holders look at that area as almost condominium type parking where everybody could pay some portion of structured parking at that location, with the top very easily being planted.
- It’s a real shame none of the buildings are being reused.
- Concern with the height, mass and bulk of these buildings as they relate to proposed lots; I suggest you go plat by plat, and be very specific in your zoning text as to what you will allow or not allow on each platted lot.
- I think you’re getting close to where you want to be in terms of building height and mass.
- Look at the edge along Whitney Way and University Avenue and think about a 2-story edge and put that in your language. A 4-6 story range further in seems reasonable.
- The massing potential of some of the structured parking along the edge seems pretty extreme. I would urge you to really examine that center plat 13. Everybody doesn’t necessarily get their own parking ramp. It’s going to give you some physical elbow room to get in some more bona fide greenspace at grade where you can mitigate a lot of these potential problems with stormwater, buffers with neighbors, etc.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Rummel, seconded by Smith, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-0). The motion for referral required address of the above stated concerns and the following:

- Address density question (beyond options provided).
- Reexamine center for combination greenspace and structured parking.
- Study keeping the southwest corner greenspace.
- Provide a platted lot by lot specific zoning text.
- Clear articulation of the stormwater management goals and clear articulation of the sustainability aspects over the long-term.
- Need traffic study.
- Specify specific triggers for providing structured parking.

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, 6 and 6.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 5117 University Avenue**

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

General Comments:

- More greenspace and much less surface parking are a deal breaker for me.
- Well head protection/stormwater key issue. Suburban phasing raises concerns about how you will get to the interesting project you propose. Lot 13 needs to be structured parking and green roof.