

AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: July 24, 2013
TITLE: Hoyt Park Area Joint Neighborhood Plan. (30978)	REFERRED:
	REREFERRED:
	REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: July 24, 2013	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Lauren Cnare, Richard Slayton, Cliff Goodhart and Dawn O’Kroley.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of July 24, 2013, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** the Hoyt Park Area Joint Neighborhood Plan. Appearing on behalf of the project were Jule Stroick, Planner IV, City of Madison Department of Planning and Economic & Community Development; Brian Munson, Jason Valerius, representing the Hoyt Park Area Joint Steering Committee; Liz Vowles, Ray White, Anthony Lathrop, representing Rocky Bluff Neighborhood Association; Julianne Dwyer and John M. Hackney. The Hoyt area is bounded by University Avenue on the north, Mineral Point Road on the south, North Franklin Street on the east and Midvale Boulevard to the west. The process started in 2011 with the neighborhood helping to look at the area neighborhood associations, community services, and focus areas. Seventy-five percent of the area is residential with the remaining 15% as open space, which leaves a very small percentage around the edges that is an existing land use of commercial. It is a stable neighborhood with housing options of single-family and a bit of multi-family in the heart of the neighborhood. Major points that came across is what happens on the University Avenue corridor; the Zoning Code allows for 5-stories while the neighborhood is concerned with anything over four and how it would affect the character of the neighborhood, as well as the existing vegetation.

Many of the parcels in the area are small and could be redeveloped as single-family residences. Key areas looked at include a collection of multi-family parcels near Hoyt Park that could be replaced over time in the context of what is around that; the Speedway corners at the golf course were looked at, how they could transition over time but still offer some mix of uses. Much discussion over time has gone back and forth of how to balance the regional versus local, what’s here today versus what could be down the line.

Valerius noted that most of their focus was on the redevelopment areas, with the most attention paid to Mt. Olive, and the east end of University Avenue properties near the Rocky Bluff Neighborhood. Some of the heights indicated in the plan are lowing than current zoning allows. The draft that goes forward to all the committees reflect what the neighborhood would like to see; the starting point for these discussions is what the neighborhood really wants. Various area residents noted the following:

- Liz Vowles spoke as a resident of the area and stated she is comfortable with 5-stories.
- Ray White spoke as a member of the steering committee and neighborhood resident. There was an attempt to have a consensus building process; it's not always the case that the "neighborhood wanted this." Parts of the neighborhood has a lot of affordable, small houses that are starting to be expanded; the walkability of this neighborhood makes it very appealing. The University Avenue corridor is being redeveloped now and will continue to be redeveloped. The increase in density would help block the traffic noise from the neighborhood.
- Anthony Lathrop spoke about the 4-story heights, stating that if they are allowed to build at 5-stories that is an increase in size of over 300% from the current 1-2-stories. Livability, view sheds, pollution, noise, parking, traffic, run-off, neighborhood character cohesion and diversity are all important issues to consider as well and may be negatively impacted by increased density. Too much density would destroy the park-like character and views of this neighborhood. What is in the Zoning Code is permissive not prescriptive.
- Julianne Dwyer spoke about the density issue, it being discussed at neighborhood meetings even though neighbors didn't always agree. The information contained in the plan is valuable for any future planning in this area. To remove the neighborhood's voice by altering the plan to match a City code would silence that voice. She asked that the plan be approved as is.
- John Hackney spoke as a participant of the steering committee. He called attention to the "pocket neighborhood memo." The "Mount Olive" site is not part of the Comprehensive Plan. Residents in the immediate area have been actively engaged in discussions for this neighborhood plan and have expressed a willingness to participate in these changes. A well-designed, deliberately built pocket neighborhood basically epitomizes good urban design, with strong advantages to considering a pocket neighborhood in this area.

The Chair encouraged the development team to use local pictures in future printings of the plan, particularly since the City seldom does an evaluation of what they actually build. He was struck by the high density of owner-occupied housing in this neighborhood and the desire to save that. But when you save that as the core part of the neighborhood you're saying the density has to go elsewhere and "not in our neighborhood." From a City point of view that is something the Common Council has to decide.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Bluff Street is becoming a greater thoroughfare than some of the neighbors want, is there an attempt to slow that down?
 - Yes. Bluff Street is a cut through for the neighborhood. The plan has a recommendation to extend the Kendall Street bike boulevard, and connect it over to Regent Street, as a way of traffic calming. Beyond that we're looking at some opportunities for sidewalks where there aren't any and additional pedestrian connections.
- I strongly urge that bicycle connectivity. That's very important to have.

ACTION:

On a motion by Cnare, seconded by Slayton, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** the plan. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-0). The motion provided that the Common Council weigh these suggestions from the neighborhood as part of the City's overall Comprehensive Plan.

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 7 and 7.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: Hoyt Park Area Joint Neighborhood Plan

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

General Comments:

- Lower density along University may not be in City’s best overall interest.