



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 3005 University Avenue
Application Type: New Mixed-Use Building in Urban Design District (UDD) No. 6 – Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID # [68731](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: John Flad, Flad Development & Investment Corp. | Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is seeking Final Approval for the development of a new 5-story mixed-use building to include 59 residential apartments, approximately 1,340 square feet of first floor commercial space, structured parking, and a rooftop amenity space.

Project Schedule:

- The Urban Design Commission received an Informational Presentation on December 15, 2021.
- The Landmarks Commission provided an advisory review for the Demolition Permit request at their January 10, 2022 meeting. The Commission’s recommendation to the Plan Commission noted that the building at 3005 University Avenue has historic values based on its cultural significance as a supper club, an important part of social and cultural traditions in Wisconsin’s history.
- The Plan Commission approved the related demolition request on February 21, 2022.
- The Common Council is scheduled to review the related CSM on March 1, 2022.

Approval Standards: The Urban Design Commission (“UDC”) is an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 6 (“UDD 6”), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in [MGO Section 33.24\(13\)](#).

Summary of Design-Related Adopted Plan Recommendations: The current [Comprehensive Plan](#) recommends “Community Mixed Use” uses for the subject property, which generally include two to six story building forms, with more residential units and commercial space compared with development in Neighborhood Mixed Use (70-130 dwelling units per acre). Generally, the recommendation specifies that development and design within CMU areas should enhance walkability, maintain positive building orientation to the street, be transit-oriented, and well connected to adjacent development.

Staff notes that the project is within the [Hoyt Park Area Joint Neighborhood Plan](#) (the “Plan”) planning area. The Plan includes the subject site as part of block G.2, the Hill Street Mixed Use Focus Area, which is recommended for mixed-use buildings with up to five stories.

Summary of Design Considerations

Planning Division staff requests that the UDC review the project, make findings, and base their decision on the aforementioned standards and guidelines for UDD 6. As part of their initial review, the UDC specified the following points that needed to be addressed in order to receive Final Approval:

- Bring the front brick façade over to touch the red banding.

- Refine the masonry materials.
- Recess the guard railing at the rooftop terrace, or provide for visible rooftop plantings.
- Replace the washed stone mulch with shredded bark/wood mulch.
- Suggest switching the Arborvitae to an upright Hicks Yew, using more colorful varieties of Dervilla (Color Splash or Kodiak), grasses to adjust the spacing and quantities of ornamental bulk them up, and add flowering perennials to the mix (Salvia, Black Eyed Susans).
- Provide bike visible public bike parking.

The UDC should review the request to determine that it can be found to meet the applicable standards and aforementioned approval conditions. Note, considerations related to some of these items is described in further detail, below.

As part of this Final Review, staff recommends consideration be given to the following:

- **Rooftop Open Space.** Staff requests the Commission's findings related to the rooftop plantings and railing details, not only as they relate to the Commission's previous comments, but also relative to the creating a successful outdoor space and a positive termination at the top of the building.
- **Landscape Plan.** While the Landscape Plan has been updated to include a more upright screen material along the west property line, staff requests the Commission's findings on the updated Landscape Plan with regard to previous conditions of approval, especially those related to flowering perennials, and plant quantities.
- **Sign Areas.** UDD 6 provides guidelines and requirements for signage. Staff requests UDC provide findings on proposed future sign location areas and types with regard to their appropriateness relative to architectural features, and within the streetscape and district.
- **Lighting.** While a photometric plan has been provided, the light levels noted in the Light Level Statistics Table are not consistent with the City's Outdoor Lighting requirements (Section 10.085, MGO). Staff recommends the Commission consider including **Condition 1**, below, as part of their formal action.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Staff recommends the following conditions be considered as part of the Commission's formal motion:

1. The Site Lighting Plan shall be revised to be consistent with Section 10.085, MGO. An updated Site Lighting Plan shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission Secretary.

Summary of UDC Initial Approval Comments and Conditions of Approval

As a reference, the Commission's comments from the February 9, 2022, Initial Approval are provided below:

- The front of the building still has just a little too much happening. Wondering if the third story masonry cap could run right into the red banding for the commercial portion? Receding of the fourth floor would be more successful if it was just the fourth floor with the masonry hitting the edge of the red.
- Seems kind of weird that the one use that's different is commercial but the different color and material is on the residential portion. The commercial sort of blends in.
- What is the material, a guard rail above the fourth floor?

- That is a railing element, the community room is up on the fourth floor with access to a roof deck.
- It may need to be pulled back a little bit, it's a bit distracting.
- I'm wondering about the front door for the commercial for people driving and parking. Have there been any changes that came about from Bagels Forever and the loading?
 - The commercial parking is located directly under the entry. The building has been adjusted slightly in regards to providing a wider area in the back. It is better proportioned and aligned with their truck docks.
- I keep wondering about that commercial space, if it has two front doors if that's difficult to layout. Windows end up getting covered. On the south side by the existing residential house, can those trees stay?
 - We'll have to study that in detail as far as the footprint of the trees. We are not building any structure in that vicinity, but I don't know if this 30-foot wide turnaround is critical such that if the trunk is within that zone it would not survive.
- The masonry should come over, it's a little busy. I struggle with the guardrail, it takes away from the building. I'm struggling with the two types of masonry so similar in color that don't really do anything special. The more rough stone brick going up to the third story comes all the way to the ground and that's much more successful, I don't know that you need a second masonry element, it's not that big of a building.
 - We liked the larger format material to differentiate for that longer façade down Schmitt Place.
- I don't know that it's successful.
- I see washed stone as a planting bed mulch, we prefer shredded bark mulch to support the plants. In regards to the guard railing on that upper floor, I don't necessarily have a problem with the aesthetic as viewed from the street, getting plants up on that terrace with enough height to be visible from that edge. Take that opportunity to see some plant life, especially some smaller trees with height or planters, pollinators. Where are the bike racks located?
 - We could add planters to the rooftop terrace, it hasn't been fully programmed out yet. All the bike racks are contained in the parking structure inside the building, it's all sheltered.
- Echo those comments about the washed stone. I have concerns about some plant selections along the western edge of the building. While the lower ones adjacent to the neighbor's parking lot are fine, the nine arborvitae on the top are in a tiny alleyway between two five-story buildings. They're pretty adaptable, but that will be a very shady area; I would strongly suggest switching those out to perhaps an upright Hicks Yew. The planters on the commercial corner showing Hop-hornbeam and Dervilla are an interesting take on having plantings by the front entrance. Dervilla has much improved with more colorful and exciting varieties, I would suggest Cool Splash or a series called Kodiak. I would quibble with some of the numbers and spacing of the ornamental grasses down Schmitt Place, those long beds along the parking garage. Everybody is using Calamagrostis nowadays and these are shown spaced way too far apart. There should be more plantings in where you show Prairie Drop Seed at the entrance door, bulk up the numbers of those grasses along the side. You have these planting beds along there with all kinds of opportunities for flowering perennials as companion plants to the evergreens and ornamental grasses (Salvia, Black Eyed Susans). What's going on along that privacy fence?
 - The fence currently exists on top of the retaining wall. The plantings would be at grade on our side of the retaining wall, separate elements at different elevations.
- Second suggestion for plantings on the roof terrace.
- The raised planters with Ironwood species, great selection, but those planters are probably too small and need to be at least twice as big as what you're proposing.
- I do think it's worth having a bike rack or two somewhere on the streetscape. Seems like there is space for a couple along the sidewalk.

- Appreciate the nice detail of the renderings. The windows, depth to bottom section, is this an operable casement?
 - Yes they are operable. We haven't selected manufacturer yet, could be fixed over an awning or casement.
- Can you explain the third section of window on the fourth story?
 - Those are transom above traditional sized windows so that corner unit has a raised ceiling and is more of a feature for more natural lighting.
- I like the expression of that, consider that to be an operable window. There could be some significant heat gains with the roof.
- There are a number of considerations in the staff report that we need to review. Proposed areas for future signage? Maybe a vision triangle issue that Traffic Engineering has but if that revises the design it would have to come back later.
 - We did confirm with Traffic Engineering, they didn't think there would be any needed design changes.

ACTION:

On a motion by DeChant, seconded by Knudson, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).

The Commission discussed the motion as follows:

- Given the amount of commentary, I would like to see some of the suggestions mentioned tonight.
- We are not prescribing the final design, but certainly need to let the applicant know some of the main concerns.
- This is not a big project, I don't know that it needs to come back. Are the concerns that great that we can't move this forward?
- Agreed, we could make a motion for final with suggestions, there isn't anything earth shattering that would require a return visit if the applicant is willing to make the changes we suggested.
- What if we say no to initial so we can go to final, but we don't agree on final?
- A substitute motion could be made to replace the motion in front of the body.
- Good points about how our comments are interpreted. I would second that to be fair to the Commission to make sure everything is interpreted how we think it should be.

The motion for Initial Approval provided for the following:

- Bring the front brick façade over to touch the red banding.
- Refine the masonry materials.
- Recess the guard railing at the rooftop terrace, or provide for visible rooftop plantings.
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