



Agenda Item #:	9
Project Title:	330 W. Mifflin Street - Alteration of a Planned Development (PD), Renovation of the Madison Senior Center Courtyard into a Public Park. 4th Ald. Dist.
Legistar File ID #:	72979
Members Present:	Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Juliana Bennett, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Russell Knudson and Jessica Klehr.
Prepared By:	Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of August 17, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for an alteration to a Planned Development (PD) for the renovation of a courtyard space into a public park. Registered and speaking on behalf of the project were Mike Sturm, representing City of Madison Parks Division; and Abbie Moilien, representing Saiki Design.

The quarter-acre space was originally constructed in the early 1980s as part of a Planned Development (PD) for the block, and is scheduled for transfer to the Parks Division in 2023 as a public park to help address downtown park deficiencies. This renovation project will address long-term maintenance concerns, as well as give the space a refresh prior to opening as a public park. The team has held four input sessions, had the benefit and support of the District Alder, and also held two online surveys to help reinforce the information they received from the community, residents from Capitol Centre Apartments and residents of the Senior Center; this is the preferred option from the community input process that addresses accessibility, safety, with increased greenspace for relaxing, gathering and cook-outs. The space is very paved, does not feel welcoming or public and is often thought to be a private alley. The refresh will reduce impermeable surface by 35% while portraying best practices in stormwater management, with engineered retention areas to avoid standing water. The overall design shows a central space edged by seat walls, a looping path, concrete pavements that will be all fully accessible, two large patio spaces with one being accessible from the senior center, and a natural play space. The entrance will be narrowed down to 12-feet for more a pedestrian scale space while still being wide enough for food carts or maintenance vehicles. The Red Maple and two Honey Locusts in the middle will remain, and quantity-wise the landscape plan achieves almost equal to what is existing. Turf will be used in the ground plantings, along with low level shrubs and perennials based on community input. They have identified potential signage areas to indicate this is a public space, and low level illumination is proposed to lighting the pathways while preventing dark pockets.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I love this, there's a design power in interstitial spaces, you took a fairly rectilinear space and made it into this organic, inviting place. No comments, I like it just as it is.
- Big thumbs up, I like these little pocket parks in cities, it's such a pleasant surprise to find an oasis of green where you least expect to see it. This looks really well done. The poured play surface where the wishbone log is, could you talk more about that material?
 - The idea is that it's a fallen log, probably harvested from the City of Madison. We would remove all the bark and detail it to be maintainable. The base is surrounded by a rubber surface in earthy colors with no loose parts.

- There are still plenty of large Ash trees coming down across the City, that's a good wood for this sort of project.
- Great project. My only comment is I think everyone seems to have a dog these days, I would encourage you to do more than just one of the pet waste bins, maybe one at the entrance closer to the market.
- It's a space that's always been meant to be publicly enjoyed, I'm glad after all these years it's getting the design attention it really deserves, getting nice new trees in there with the few you can rescue. Great job.
 - Does the UDC have any comment on the bicycle parking?
- What did you hear from your meetings with City staff? What's your sense of the need here?
 - We never got really clear direction.
- With the grocery store there it never seems to be enough, you don't want people tying their bikes up to your climbing log. The City has a pretty generous size of bike parking stall, but the park is for people. I hope you're able to strike that balance with the feedback you hear.
- (Secretary) As part of a PD, Zoning could answer the bike parking question.
- The placement seemed appropriate keeping it out of the park, I don't recommend bringing it in.

Action

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