



**Agenda Item #:** 7

**Project Title:** 2300 S. Park Street - Public Project, Village on Park Parking Structure in Urban Design District (UDD) 7. 14th Ald. Dist.

**Legistar File ID #:** 73349

**Members Present:** Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Shane Bernau, Rafeeq Asad, Russell Knudson, Jessica Klehr, Ald. Juliana Bennett and Christian Harper

**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Summary

At its meeting of September 21, 2022, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new parking structure and proposed greenspace located at 2300 S. Park Street in UDD 7. Registered and speaking in support were Mitchell Branscombe, Peter Tan, and Kevin Yeska, representing JSD Professional Services. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Jim Whitney, representing City of Madison Engineering/Community Development Authority; Matt Gall and Dan Windorski.

As a continuation of the approved Master Plan the UDC reviewed in 2021, the new six and one-half level parking structure is located in the southwest corner, connected to the rest of the Village on Park site, which along with greenspace will create a town center for the south side in line with the Comprehensive Plan. They are taking the building materials of heavy timber, brick, blue metal panel and perforated metal from the existing architecture, as well as trellises and other greenspace elements that relate more to the Hub and library building. The existing drive will be demolished and developed into open space for the community. A pedestrian connection needs to take place between the library and new Urban League building, reflected in the Master Plan as a woonerf that could potentially be shut down during major events, while also developing these smaller nodes and activation spaces. Gathering spaces are anchored by two large pergolas reflective of elements on the Village on Park building (metal, timber) with a large sweeping curve to join those two buildings together. The 295 stall parking garage will be connected to the Villager with one story of public parking and the rest supporting the tenants of the Villager. A commissioned art piece will highlight the entrance, and a mural will go out via RFP through the Madison Arts Commission for the inside of the main circulation tower. It will be lit at night and provide another visual element to the site. They are working to screen the neighboring residences from any intermittent vehicle headlights on the first two levels of the garage.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Ultimately we will be an approving body for the parking ramp, but not for the landscape design.
- I'm glad to see there will be artwork and lighting in the stairwell.
- There are a lot of options for more design-oriented types of screening materials rather than perforated metal, whether its subtle images based on different sizes of perforations, or whether the panels themselves are impressed with designs. Having something along those lines would be a good, relatively inexpensive way to make a parking ramp look better than it might otherwise.
- At least the south-facing expanse along Hughes Place has some street trees. If there's room for some foundation plantings along the base that would be a nice way to soften the base of this building. Some ornamental grasses like upright Switchgrass, Colored Twig Willows, Dog Woods with red/yellow/orange branches, Golden Dwarf Conifers, stuff that looks good year-round and breaks up that hard surface along the sidewalk. The landscape

strip in the middle looks really intriguing, I'm excited to see how that will progress. An area like that in the midst of a parking lot, the best laid plans for how it's used are definitely impacted by our Wisconsin winters. Those spaces between paved areas tend to be repositories for snow. I have concerns over an area that seems designed to attract pedestrians intersecting with a driveway where vehicles may come ripping through rather fast; I'd like to see this continue to be addressed.

- A lot of exciting ideas in the presentation. If it's going to be a woonerf it has to be more than just a curved taper to the crosswalk, it needs to be reflected in paving and other things to signify that this is a vehicle space but also a pedestrian space. Otherwise you're encouraging a crossing with no real safety signal that you're mixing different uses. That has to get beefed up if it's going to be a woonerf. The priority of pulling pedestrians from Park Street to the axial connection to the mall needs more reinforcement, crosswalks, paint markings at a minimum, and sidewalks that are linking you. I love this big idea of this narrow green connector between the different properties, but you're in the middle of a parking lot and at the end of the day that's not a very wide space. You have some lovely precedent images but almost all of those images are big open plaza spaces. You really need to be cognizant of your edges, there needs to be a clear separation so a pedestrian can feel welcome in that space. If you have plant material or trees, make sure at the head of a parking stall that they won't be in conflict with the vehicle overhang.
- Plan view image shows white void spaces (concrete?) that creates some narrow, pointy slices of pavement that feels a little awkward where your big cream colored band sweeps through. Maybe more separation from the head of those parking stalls on the top side of it. Looking forward to seeing it develop.
- It's so exciting, the woonerf central element. Do we have to allow for vehicle traffic to cross there?
  - It was the direction we've received from the City. They were hesitant on the woonerf because of the safety aspect, it does have to stand out. We will raise that platform so the car goes over a speed bump and slows down. It was desired from the CDA that we keep that.
- What are we doing to activate Hughes Place? Having an entrance to parking structure on Hughes Place is one move that starts to encourage traffic, are there ways to let the public know to no go through this middle part? Thoughts on that?
  - We show more of the parking signage along Hughes Place. Programmatically it would be a very difficult move to make to get the entrance off of Hughes Place.
  - The garage entrance has three lanes. Aesthetically it is better urban context to keep the vehicular entrance on the east side, it is then related to the businesses next to that. Preserving the street edge for the building to be more like a façade without any vehicle elements on Hughes Place.
- The entry and exit doesn't necessarily prevent traffic from flying over the speed bump in the middle. That being such a thin, wonderful space for pedestrians, children will want to move linearly through that space. Seems like we're playing with fire. I wonder if it is safer for pedestrians to hug Park Street, as much as it isn't as nice of an experience. Mixing these ideas of beautification elements between this 'island' and improving the pedestrian experience along Park Street.
- The master plan is adopted so they are following along with the recommendation in that plan. This is more implementation.
- Based on that, visibility in that center court seems to be really important, and the planting choices.
- I love the intentionality of the space you've created. The colors don't seem to incorporate on the outside façade, it's just white.
  - The right half is an existing building, we haven't taken the time to model it accurately. The portion to the left is our parking structure, we are trying to bring in existing architectural elements that include some blue coloring. Each tower will have some blue, as well as the mural inside the main tower, and the art piece on the southeast corner along Hughes Place.
- Your influence sheet has a lot of warmth, but this is gray exposed concrete. Comments about adding more plantings along the foundation will go pretty far for the pedestrian experience. Corrugated panels could have a warmer expression, more of that rust tone, you do need to warm up that corner of the building, it's such a high contrast from the rest of the site, it looks very foreign and very cold.

- The definition of a woonerf is ‘flexes between pedestrian and vehicle ownership of the space.’ Other than having a crosswalk it’s firmly a thoroughfare, just painting a crosswalk there doesn’t define it as a woonerf. I wonder if you made that drive aisle narrower, one-way traffic, really slow everybody down. It’s a recipe for disaster to have pedestrian think it’s their territory.
- If you’re not prohibited from screening the parking garage above the second level I would suggest it. Residences might not be looking right into headlights but definitely will experience glare from the lights that will be on inside that space. Look really close that the glare from the lighting inside the parking ramp itself.
  - That is something we are looking at. If we’re not screening it we’re making sure our lighting is appropriately dimming.
  - The drive is 24-feet wide, fairly narrow, what are the thoughts on that? Make this an intentional drive or an intentional crosswalk?
- If you’re bound by the program to allow vehicles through there, then it has to be a safe thoroughfare. Visibility is going to be very important, as well as any physical design to slow the traffic down. I can’t imagine closing it off though, practically you’re going to have to leave it open as a thoroughfare, just make it a safe, well-designed to slow traffic down thoroughfare.
- This parking lot is often shut down for outdoor programming (Unity Day with tents and people in the parking lot, COVID clinics). With the addition of the Urban League Hub, this space south of the greenway will also accommodate outdoor programming for these spaces that brings the community outside. There has to be a careful mix of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, it’s definitely doable, they do it in cities all across the world.
- The terminology makes it feel like more than it is. It should be labeled as a tabletop crosswalk, and have as many safety features similar to Hilldale. I’m not opposed to having it be a thoroughfare, it does make sense for traffic flow. As long as it is queued for both pedestrians and cars.
- The vertical obstructions of the trees proposed here is a sticking point for me. I wonder if the trees are an appropriate design element, maybe a canopy, gazebo or a built structure that adds visibility. It’s the plantings proposed there that might be giving me the most discomfort.

## Action

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