



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

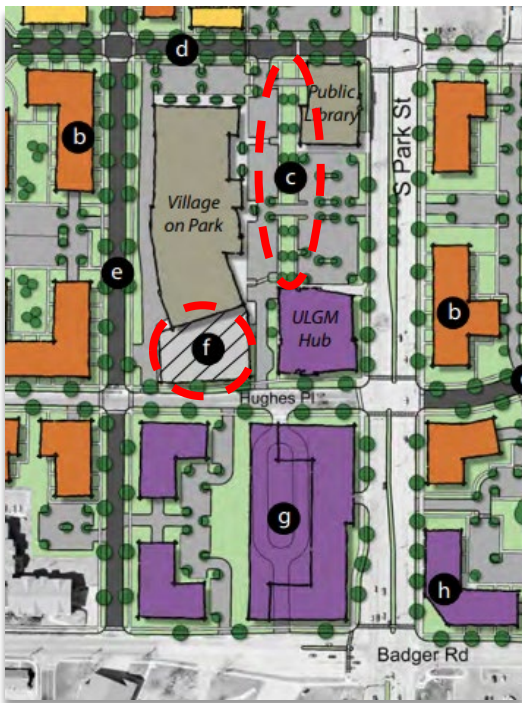
Project Address: 2300 S Park Street
Application Type: Public Project, Village on Park Parking Structure in Urban Design District (UDD) 7 Initial/Final Approval is Requested
Legistar File ID #: [73349](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Matthew Wachter, City of Madison | Peter Tan, Strang, Inc.

Project Description: The applicant is seeking an Initial/Final Approval for the construction of a 6.5-story parking structure providing of 295 parking stalls for The Village on Park development. The proposal also includes modifications to the central parking area to include a central greenspace.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request when it comes forward both in their review of public buildings and for the site’s location within UDD No. 7. As such, the UDC shall review the proposed project using the design requirements and guidelines of [Section 33.24\(14\)](#).



Adopted Plans: The project site is located within the South Madison Plan (the “Plan”) planning area. The project site is identified as a focus area known as the “Village on Park.” As noted in the Plan, this area is anticipated to be the town center for Madison’s south side, with anticipated phased improvements over the coming years, including the construction of a parking structure to be located on the project site. This development proposal will bring the Plan’s recommendations to fruition as shown in the graphic at the left.

As noted in the Plan, building heights are limited to five stories, referencing the codified height in the Zoning Code, which is five stories/78 feet in the CC-T zoning district. Generally, staff believes that the since the overall proposed building height, at just over 54 feet, is less than other types of five-story buildings (e.g. office, residential), this aspect of the proposal could be found to be consistent with the Plan as it relates to the UDC’s considerations.

As an additional note, the Plan states that, “the requirements in UDD 7 should be adjusted to reflect the heights recommended in Map 7 of the Plan. The bonus height guideline in Section 33.24(14)(d)3.b.i should also be amended to **not** apply within the Plan boundary so that the maximum recommended heights in the Plan are followed” (Page 36, South Madison Plan). The review and evaluation of urban design districts for consistency with adopted plans will take place as part of the UDC Code Changes Update process.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff requests that the UDC review the proposed development and provide findings and recommendations based on the aforementioned standards, as well as the comments noted by the Commission in their Informational Presentation comments:

- **Building Height.** As noted in Section 33.24(14), UDD 7 has both requirements and guidelines related to building heights, mass, and bulk. As a reference, UDD 7 Building Height standards require buildings to be of least two stories. In addition, the advisory guidelines note that new buildings should be generally limited to four stories with the following caveat: *“However, building height bonuses of up to two stories may be allowed depending on the quality of the design and the effect of the development on the adjoining neighborhood and contribution of the project to: the mix of activity in the vicinity, and the character of the street.”* UDD 7 guidelines also note that buildings above three stories shall incorporate a stepback at the third floor.

Based on the submitted height information, it appears that at the building’s tallest point, the structure would be just over 54 feet in height, which is less than the maximum height in feet for a five story building (78 feet) per the Zoning Code. Staff believes that the height could be found to conform to the underlying UDD standards, and could be found consistent with the guidelines that allow up to six-story buildings. Staff further notes that the guideline requiring a third floor stepback has not been required on other projects within proximity to the site, including the adjacent “Hub” office building.

As part of their action, Staff requests that the UDC include specific findings related to the overall bulk and height characteristics of the building.

- **Parking Structure – Materials.** As shown on the elevations, the building material palette primarily consists of masonry elements and precast concrete with perforated/corrugated metal screens, metal panel, and cable railings. Several material-related comments were provided in the Commission’s Informational including cohesiveness of materials, treatment of the proposed perforated metal screen (including utilizing a more design-oriented screen), integration of louvers, and overall effectiveness of screening.
- **Parking Structure - Landscape Plan.** As noted in the UDD 7, Landscape and Open Space guidelines, well designed landscape and open spaces are encouraged to establish continuity between buildings and define edges. As part of their action, staff requests the UDC consider the proposed landscape plan, especially as it relates to providing year-round color and texture for the parking garage along the street level, and in screening blank walls and vehicles. Staff refers the Commission to the comments offered at the Informational Presentation, including those related to increasing the amount of foundation planting, as well as over-story trees.
- **Central Green Space – Landscape Plan.** As noted on the plans, the central parking area will be redesigned to provide a central greenspace for the development. As part of their action, staff request the UDC give consideration to the following elements, noted at the Commission’s Informational Presentation comments and related considerations including:
 - Providing a protected and separate pedestrian walkway and overall connectivity, including utilizing alternative paving methods or raised crosswalks to delineate vehicular and pedestrian spaces,
 - Utilizing a shade structure or planters and planting beds (at-grade, raised, sunken) provide separate from parked cars and to add visibility, and
 - The overall proposed plantings providing year-round color and texture.

- **Signage.** As shown on the elevation drawings there is a large projecting sign that spans almost the full height of the building. Staff notes that this sign would require special approval through the Comprehensive Design Review process. Projecting signage is limited to 12 square-feet in size because there are ground signs on the same shared zoning lot. In addition, as noted in the Sign Code projecting signage cannot extend beyond the third story. As part of their action on this item, staff recommends consideration be given related to the proposed sign, in terms of location, size, and design.
- **Lighting.** While a photometric plan was not provided, the applicant is advised that a photometric plan and fixture cutsheets, consistent with MGO 29.36, will be required for all new exterior lighting.

Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

As a reference, the Commission's comments from the September 21, 2022, Informational Presentation are provided below:

- 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 difference 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 not 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.