URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING REPORT

January 11, 2023

Agenda Item #: **5**

Project Title: 6604 Odana Road - Planned Multi-Use Site. 19th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 74229

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

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

*Asad recused himself on this item

Summary

At its meeting of January 11, 2023, the Urban Design Commission made an **ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION to the Plan Commission to approve** a Planned Multi-Use Site located at 6604 Odana Road. Registered and speaking in support were Randy Christianson, Bruce Bosben, Rosheen Styczinski, John Kastner, and Marc Ott. Registered and speaking in opposition were Clare Boulanger and Colleen Robinson. Troy Jacobi spoke as a non-registered member of the development team.

Updates to the project include bumping out of the front entrance by ten-feet and adding greenspace to the entrance. Cross access easements have defined the developable area of this property. The parking on Yellowstone Drive has been removed and the drive aisle between the two buildings has been narrowed. The materials, windows and architecture have been simplified, the base at the ground floor has been activated and now indicates the retail use with larger windows and a canopy. The balconies are now tucked around the corners so the street façade reads more cleanly and illustrates the uses inside. Outdoor patio amenity space is located directly above the entry space, as well on the building rooftop. Pedestrian access, landscape and window openings related to human scale help treat non-street facades as street facades. Building corners are accentuated with balconies and roof overhangs. The new design meets the Odana Area Plan as recommended for up to six-stories, and this architecture meets the intended character and heights. Shadow studies were updated to show more times of day, showing how the shadows move through the site.

Colleen Robinson spoke in opposition. There is not a compelling case to warrant the extra floor, it is not a meaningful addition to the design and in fact shows a larger contrast from the neighboring structures. This is a tremendous opportunity to be the first developer here, and doesn't need to equate to pushing the limits of what can happen on this very small site. She is still concerned by the shadow studies, there will be more impact than what is depicted. Winter is the most significant time to have that loss of light and warmth. The social outdoor spaces are on the north facing side of the building, right up against the Normandy and will bring noise; consider switching those so the outdoor space has sun and a view and is more neighborly with regard to noise. There is also limited space for snow in this parking lot as it is.

Clare Boulanger spoke in opposition, noting issues of adjacency to the Normandy Square apartments. She had hoped for a scaled down building. How will people access their garage? Normandy parking can only exit onto Normandy Lane; do you imagine there will be a lot of people using that Normandy Lane access to the Market Square parking lot?

The Commission discussed the following:

- The staff report asks us to look specifically at Conditional Use Standards 9 and 12.
- I appreciate the simplification and streamlining done to the design, and suggest revisiting the gray panel where it cuts into the brick as it stands out as somewhat odd.

- The garage door heights seem very low.
    - Its seven-feet, going downhill to get into the parking, and on the other side of the building it's the opposite condition, going uphill.
- The front elevation, you had an entrance that came right off the parking lot. Now there's a ramp going up to the door and to the front entrance. That's a pretty big change as far as the welcoming nature of an entrance, to have that ramp crossing such a large percentage of that façade. What changed here?
    - It was not proper coordination between the 3D rendering and the civil plans.
    - We could do some sloping in there, it's under 5% slope.
    - That would be gone, it's here in error.
- I commend you on the changes you made to some of the plantings around the building in terms of plant variety and appropriateness, vis a vis sunlight exposure. This will look much better in the long run. Nice addition to have the rain garden area, make sure when it is planted that the specified plants are planted in a somewhat naturalistic way rather than large blocks of individual species.
- Regarding connectivity concerns with Yellowstone, if you were to somehow connect between the perimeter sidewalk out to Yellowstone where do you see that running, through the greenspace or between the trees? I'm trying to envision the best solution for that connection.
    - It would probably come off the northeast corner of the building coming across.
- Seems like there should be something there rather than making people walk down the driveways.
- My greatest disagreement with the design was the vehicular space that wrapped around it. Within the constraints you have, you've made some clear improvements. It has moved in the right direction. I would very much agree that it's necessary to have some sort of pedestrian connection out to the street, with a crosswalk through the drive aisle. It would seem appropriate on the northwest and southwest frontages of the internal driveways to have a streetscape with street trees in that terrace. If you could get a handful of columnar narrow trees along that, it would help establish more of a streetscape and less of a building plunked into a parking lot, as well as bring down the scale of the building.
- The Yellowstone Drive side parking stall that bumps out, what is that?
    - That's off our property, we don't control those stalls.
- Appreciate seeing a lot of the changes. There are a number of existing trees in the back of the theater slated for removal for this project. Do you know the health of those existing trees, any exploration to maintain those?
    - We did not do a tree survey. There is a possibility for the northern-most and southeastern trees to be saved. The others are in locations that would necessitate removal.

Action

On a motion by Bernau, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission made an **ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION to the Plan Commission to approve**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-1) with Bernau, Klehr, Harper and Bennett voting yes; Knudson voting no; Asad recused and Goodhart non-voting. The UDC finds that conditional use standards 9 and 12 are met, the proposal is compatible with the intended use of the neighborhood and its context, and does not find that it has a negative impact on the surrounding properties.

The motion passed with the following conditions:

- Revisit the grey metal panel that comes down into the brick on the south elevation; needs revision.
- Update the planting plan to show plantings in a more random pattern versus in large drifts of singular plants.
- Provide a pedestrian connection from the building to Yellowstone Drive with a crosswalk through the drive aisle.
- On the northwest and southwest frontages, incorporate a streetscape design including columnar trees.