



**Agenda Item #:** 3

**Project Title:** 307 E Wilson Street - Facade Alterations for Summit Credit Union in UMX Zoning. 4th Ald. Dist.

**Legistar File ID #:** 76206

**Members Present:** Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Jessica Klehr, Shane Bernau, Russell Knudson, Amanda Arnold, Christian Harper, Marsha Rummel, and Rafeeq Asad

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

## Summary

At its meeting of June 14, 2023, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of façade alterations located at 307 E Wilson Street. Registered and speaking in support was Alec Hembree.

The new canopy element will introduce a more contemporary front entry, with paint renovations and copper metallic panel proposed for the John Nolen Drive side, in coordination with the E Wilson Street façade. The front entry volume height has been reduced by a minor amount and the depth has been increased for a better proportion and to have it align with the top of the existing building. While they did study decreasing the amount of paint colors, they determined to keep the number proposed.

Questions for staff and/or the development team:

- Did you change anything?
  - Yes, we lowered the entry volume and increased the depth. We also provided additional information and more detail about where we are using materials.
- There is a tree shown in the landscape on the site plan, viewed from E Wilson Street, but I don't think I saw that in the planting plan. I notice an electrical pole close to that. I'm wondering if you can provide justification as to why the bikes are shown there, as opposed to the other side of the driveway where it would be closer to the entry. Would you consider moving those racks to the other side of the landscape, so you can have space for a small ornamental tree? Something of smaller stature like muscle wood, service berry, or crabapple.
  - It should be noted that the canopy that extends over the entry to the parking lot has significant amount of depth to it, roughly 10-12-feet wide to the adjacent building. We had significant concerns about planting trees in that area because they would be completely underneath the canopy. We don't want to plant something we know is going to die. There used to be a tree where our rendering shows a tree that I believe has been removed.
- That tree must have been removed in just the last few years. [Looking at page 33 of 34 of the UDC submittal materials] You can see where the bike racks are, I think if it's feasible it might make sense to have that pad on the other side of the driveway, and have more space where the bikes are currently shown for a small stature tree, or a high branching larger shrub for more green screening from the street to the parking lot behind. I would ask that you consider that for a stronger site plan design.
- What's the program in this entry volume, is it just stairs to the roof?
  - Yes, it's an entry vestibule as well as a stairway going down to the basement.
- What's the height floor to ceiling?
  - Roughly 23-feet from floor to ceiling.
- From the finished floor to the ceiling, 23-feet?

- Correct.
- What is the height of the second level, what is that height?
  - It is a one-story building on the E Wilson side.
- From the roof of the first floor to the roof of the second floor?
  - 12'-6".
- You have a seven-foot door or an eight-foot door?
  - We are aligning with some of the existing window heights there, I can't tell you off hand what the height of the windows are.
- I still think this is way too tall. This elevation is a little misleading, you're not going to experience this volume like this. I wonder if you could just have enough room for the door and that be the maximum height. This volume is way too tall.
- There were a number of comments on the number of materials on this building. I don't know that sticking with this number is the right move, those concerns are still here. Now I'm even more concerned where you have an orange colored grout between the brick.
  - No, that is a sample. The brick has some layers of fiberboard between the coursing of brick. The grout is not going to be that color.
- I can go either way on one more shade of gray or one less shade of gray, but that volume is still way too high from the E Wilson Street façade and looks out of place.
- There's a lot of excitement over what's happening out on Lake Monona and John Nolen Drive. Is there anything proposed at all from a public experience perspective on the backside of this building? Other than what's happening on the building itself, any plantings, anything to speak to on the John Nolen side?
  - Not on this project, we are working within their budget for these façade changes.
- It's something noteworthy from planning this building to accommodate and be contextualized with some improvements to the public experience back there.

The Commission discussed the following:

- They really didn't change very much. I was surprised to hear there was any change to the front entry lobby, I think the increase in depth must be pretty insignificant, I didn't notice it in trying to compare the Informational Presentation to this presentation. The Commission was pretty clear about the two-story entry volume being too high, not too shallow.
- Last time we had comments about the pillars holding up the entryway, the landscaping felt skinny and unsubstantial. We suggested considering a small wall in that area, I still support those comments. I worry about maintenance and it looking shabby without more substance to the design.
- Is this volume existing currently?
- No, there's the arched entryway.
- Behind the second arch over the building, there's nothing behind there?
- No. It's just a parapet.
- I don't know where that height comes from then, it is way too tall.
- I think the existing building is better looking than the proposed. The John Nolen side is probably okay, but I don't think it's there yet on the E Wilson Street façade.
- Any other discussion by members. We are the approving body here, so it would be appropriate for a motion.
- (Secretary) I do have some draft conditions if that helps with a motion.
- There were quite a few comments during the Informational Presentation that I believe still apply here, because mostly it hasn't changed. I'm not hearing a lot of support after hearing the explanation. If you would read the draft conditions that you have heard.
- (Secretary) Relocate the bike parking to the other side of the driveway, closer to the front entry and incorporate a tree into the landscape plan to replace the tree that was removed; incorporate a landscape wall into the E Wilson Street façade; reduce the height of the entry volume to be more in line with the second floor window datum (dark gray datum or where the proposed Summit sign is located) on the E Wilson Street elevation;

minimize number of gray colors on the John Nolen Drive elevation; and lighting shall be revised to be consistent with MGO 29.36.

- Any additional comments or a motion?

A motion was made by Arnold, seconded by Klehr, to Refer consideration of this item with the conditions as noted by the Secretary.

Discussion on the motion:

- The height of that volume did not particularly bother me. I'm curious speaking to the architects on the Commission, what do you envision happening to that to make it palatable to you? A certain point of bringing it down would conflict to the physical usability of it. I'm fine with the back, the three colors of gray with the copper accent is a perfectly acceptable number of colors. We should keep in mind that there are grand things planned for this stretch of John Nolen but quite a ways off in the future. We should be thinking in terms of something that is clean, modern and decent looking, which is what they have here. The landscaping choices are some nice selections but probably not going far enough. I always thought the arches were weird looking. Bringing it down real far, I don't know.
- It's all about scale and proportion. You have this tower that just sticks up, the thinness of it, compared to everything around it is out of scale and out of proportion. A thicker volume for more program would be more justified. A singular stair tower that pops up, as it relates to everything else in the project is out of proportion. It's literally the scale of that on the project. It has the John Nolen portion elevated so you'll see it even more.
- During the presentation it was stated that the stairs go down to the basement, not up to the roof. It's an expression but not a requirement. In the condition you mentioned a recommended height, you said to the top of the upper gray banding.
- We understand highlighting the entry for more hierarchy, but it's just out of scale.
- The shadow line cast underneath where the orange comes down, is it prowed of the brick, and if so why? It's also on the other façade. I find it a little odd.
- Is there a perspective of the metal panel, how that's going to look three dimensionally? Maybe to keep that off the ground and touching the sidewalk, it could use a masonry base if you're not comfortable with it approaching but not touching the ground.
- It's pretty heavy to be hanging there. If we're going at proportions hanging there, that wide and that deep is odd.
- An amendment to the motion would allow them to explore a way to terminate the bottom of the orange metal panel accent feature on both sides. We're not dictating what it does, but a more purposeful termination.

## Action

On a motion by Arnold, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item to a future date. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0). The motion included the following conditions:

- Relocate the bike parking to the other side of the driveway, closer to the front entry and incorporate a tree into the landscape plan to replace the tree that was removed.
- Incorporate a landscape wall into the E Wilson Street façade.
- Reduce the height of the entry volume to be more in line with the second floor window datum (dark grey datum or where the proposed Summit sign is located) on the E Wilson Street elevation.
- Explore a way to more purposefully terminate the bottom of the metal panel accent feature on both sides of the building.
- Minimize number of gray colors on the John Nolen Drive elevation.
- Lighting shall be revised to be consistent with MGO 29.36.