



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 448 S Gammon Road
Application Type: Exterior Renovations to an Existing Building in a Planned Multi-Use Site
UDC is an Advisory Body
Legistar File ID #: [79257](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Eric Ohlfs, The Redmond Company | Brent Hess, Johnson Financial Group | West Towne, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing to renovate the existing (vacant) bank building for a new bank tenant. Exterior building modifications include adding windows, new building materials to include brick and stone veneer, faux wood aluminum siding and aluminum composite panels, removal of roof overhangs for new parapets, as well as updates to the trash enclosure, landscaping, and lighting.

Project Schedule:

- The UDC granted Initial Approval with conditions on September 6, 2023.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. [Section 28.137\(2\)\(e\)](#) of the Zoning Code requires that a planned multi-use site containing more than forty thousand (40,000) square feet of floor area and where twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet of floor area is designed or intended for retail use or for hotel or motel use, shall require conditional use approval following a recommendation on the design of any specific proposal by the Urban Design Commission.

In addition, pursuant to MGO [Section 33.24\(4\)\(f\)](#), *“Proposals for additions, exterior building alterations, or site alterations to existing structures currently used for, or originally designed to accommodate, a retail development that has a floor area of forty thousand (40,000) square feet or more shall be approved pursuant to the applicable ordinances relating to the alteration of approved projects and shall comply with these requirements to the extent possible, given the constraints of the existing sites and structures.”* As part of their review, the UDC should refer to Section 33.24(4)(f), which includes design related requirements for customer entries, site design, parking design, pedestrian circulation, and central features and community spaces.

At the September 6, 2023, UDC meeting, the Commission granted Initial Approval of this item with conditions that generally spoke to modifying the exterior building materials, add additional details, as well as various site and landscape modifications. The Commission’s subsequent review and continued evaluation of this item should focus on whether those conditions have been addressed.

Summary of Design Considerations

As noted in the applicant’s submittal materials, the development plans have been modified to address the Commission’s Initial Approval conditions as enumerated below. It is the role of the UDC to review the revised drawings for consistency with the conditions of approval as outlined below. Please note that as conditions of approval, they are required to be met. The UDC’s role is to ensure these previously established conditions are met, however they cannot waive or change these requirements. Staff requests the UDC’s final action to reflect the following:

UDC Conditions of Approval

1. Simplify the quantity of materials, including removing the stone base.
2. Add additional eyebrows above windows.
3. Update the landscape plan to use a salt tolerant plant substitutes, and hardwood bark mulch.
4. Update the lighting plan to be code compliant.

With regard to lighting, staff notes that while refinements have been made to the lighting plan to bring the proposed lighting closer to being in compliance with MGO 29.36, there continue to be discrepancies. As such, staff recommends that a condition of approval be included regarding lighting, in particular whether the review and approval of such could continue administratively as part of the Site Plan Review process.

5. Provide a pedestrian pathway from the parking area to the building and include a justification for why it is being located as such.
6. Update the refuse area to meet screening requirements (if necessary).

Summary of UDC Initial Approval Comments and Action

As a reference, the Commission's comments and action from the September 6, 2023, Initial Approval are provided below.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- Is it the intent to completely strip off all the brick veneer?
 - The existing brick never would remain, and we would install a thin set veneer over top of that.
- Adhering a thin brick over an existing brick?
 - Correct, providing a new drainage plane in front of the existing brick.
- So your units then, are they an 'L' shaped unit wrapped around the corner?
 - Correct.
- I would repeat the comments I had on the previous agenda item and also respond to the staff report, which talks about concern that there's not an economy of materials. You have wood, stone, and masonry. There's something nice and understated about having a nice, simple soldier course at the base instead of stratifying with another material of stone. It could be a little bit more simple and understated and a little more elegant without that adhered stone at the base, which to me is kind of residential in character. Even Chick-fil-A doesn't have that many materials on their building. Other than that it's a pretty handsome expression and a nice improvement, but again I just think one more material than is necessary.
- The most dramatic change for me is the removal of overhangs of the existing building. They're quite heavy on the existing building, you're going for a much more contemporary building style. You do have some projection over some of the fenestration windows but not all of them; can you speak to why you have them where you have them and why not a consistency or seeing more of them?
 - Yes, we're calling them eyebrow overhangs over the clerestory windows as a design feature to accentuate that window.
- And the entrance as well?
 - Yes, that one would be a four-foot deep overhang to provide shelter.

- I'm curious if you studied the option to apply it more? I like it, it's an aesthetic enhancement, you have modulation going for you, it's not just a square box but at the same time it's relatively flat and I like the depth those add, so I'm curious if you might consider applying that more consistently, or more of them.
 - Yes, we can look at the option of adding them to more locations.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Overall this is an improvement to what's there. It looks like the building where plants died and were never replaced. I'd recommend you not follow the previous tenant's use of dyed red mulch, that stuff is pretty hideous. This updated planting plan looks pretty good. I don't know how I feel about the comments about the materials being one too many with the stone base, but a lot of that would be covered up with these plantings if that makes a difference. I would note that you are using boxwoods in various places around building, I like those nice use of evergreen plants that looks good through winter. The ones behind the expanse of lawn behind entrance will be fine, but adjacent to sidewalks, how those are maintained and the use of salt can be super hard on boxwoods. It requires somebody paying attention to that, which isn't always the case. You might want to have your landscape architect consider something more salt tolerant, it's easy to find lists of evergreens rated for their tolerance for road salt. Nice flowering shrubs, appreciate you're trying to keep the existing trees that are there. I would echo the comments about the eyebrow canopies, I like those, I don't need them over every single window, but the northeast corner in particular where one had it and one didn't seemed like a perfect place for both to have it.
- The masonry on the bottom might deserve a revisit. Soldier course is really nice but existing windows go all the way to the ground, you're proposing other windows with a higher sill to them. So how you treat that in the brick would not be a repeated soldier course but a row lock, and you got rid of the stone veneer, you could still have interest and make building look sharp.
- We had some requests for the reduction in the number of materials and revisiting the number of eyebrows/window sun shading, a prohibition of orange mulch.
- (Secretary) There are a couple of items in the staff report relative to landscaping in parking lot areas and pedestrian circulation being consistent with the large format retail ordinance. The commission should make findings with regard to these items.

A motion was made by Bernau, for Initial Approval, noting that the massing and site plan are there, and the comments on the quantity of materials, eyebrows above windows, salt tolerant plant substitutes, and mulch as conditions.

Discussion on the motion:

- Are you looking for a finding that the landscape plan is consistent with the large retail development requirements?
- (Secretary) Yes, in particular they made some site changes where they're shifting around some parking for a refuse enclosure and it speaks to providing landscape buffers, adequate screening, fences, benches, screening around some of those amenities. This is a drive-thru use and we're not considering that because it's existing, but that ordinance does also talk about enhanced pedestrian connectivity through the site. There is currently nothing to take anybody from the outlying parking areas where there are no visual cues through to the site to provide that safe pedestrian circulation through the site. And the lighting does not currently meet code requirements.
- Would you consider an amendment to the motion to establish a public path from the entrance, and compliant lighting?
- Yes, just looking at where that pedestrian path might fall.

- It's an existing condition here. We don't have the benefit of understanding the grade implications of running a sidewalk here or there that may or may not be accessible.
- I think we'd want some reasoning, I'm not sure how someone from the public would be approaching if they're not just parking in the parking lot itself. Some justification for why you would provide it where you're going to provide it. Lighting obviously has to be code compliant. The trash and refuse seems to be mirroring Chick-fil-A, the general location is probably okay, but all the screening requirements around that space are necessary.

Action

On a motion by Bernau, seconded by Knudson, the Urban Design Commission made an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission to grant **INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion noted that the massing and site plan are acceptable, and included the following conditions:

7. The project shall return to the Urban Design Commission for Final Approval.
8. Simplify the quantity of materials, including removing the stone base.
9. Add additional eyebrows above windows,
10. Update the landscape plan to use a salt tolerant plant substitutes, and mulch.
11. Update the lighting plan to be code compliant.
12. Provide a pedestrian pathway from the parking area to the building and include a justification for why it is being located as such.
13. Update the refuse area to meet screening requirements (if necessary).

The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0).

Large Retail Development Approval Standards
33.24(4) (f) MGO

1. Statement of Purpose. The purpose for this section is to provide a regulatory framework to ensure that large-format retail development promotes the efficient use of land and preserves and enhances the urban fabric through a more urban site and building design. In applying this ordinance to the redevelopment, expansion, or remodeling of existing sites, it is the intent of this ordinance to seek improvements, while recognizing that existing constraints will likely make full compliance with all provisions of this section difficult or infeasible.
2. Applicability. All new retail development that is on a single zoning lot and has a total floor area of forty thousand (40,000) square feet or more shall be subject to this ordinance total floor area shall be calculated by adding the floor area of all buildings on a zoning lot. When applying the requirements below, the Urban Design Commission, Plan Commission, and staff shall consider relevant design recommendations in any element of the City's Master Plan or other adopted City plans.
 - a. Any single retail business establishment that has a total floor area of forty-thousand (40,000) or more square feet shall be subject to Paragraphs 3. through 8. below.
 - b. All development on a single zoning lot shall be subject to Paragraphs 4. through 8. below.
 - c. The Plan Commission may waive one or more of the requirements in Par. 3. through 8. below, if it determines that unique or unusual circumstances warrant special consideration to achieve a superior design solution.
 - d. Proposals for additions, exterior building alterations, or site alterations to existing structures currently used for, or originally designed to accommodate, a retail development that has a floor area of forty thousand (40,000) or more square feet shall be approved pursuant to the applicable ordinances relating to the alteration of approved projects and shall comply with these requirements to the extent possible, given the constraints of the existing sites and structures.
 - e. Proposals for alterations to existing developments that currently exceed or are proposed to exceed a one hundred thousand (100,000) building footprint, as described in Par. 3, below, shall be approved pursuant to the applicable ordinances relating to the alteration of approved projects and shall comply with these requirements to the extent possible, given the constraints of the existing sites and structure.
3. Requirements for Buildings in Excess of 100,000 Square Feet. A single new retail business establishment may only exceed a building footprint of one hundred thousand (100,000) square feet as defined by the exterior walls, as provided below. Other separately-owned retail business establishments, entertainment, office, and residential uses not associated with the proposed business establishment shall not be counted towards the size of the building footprint.
 - a. The Plan Commission may consider a single retail establishment exceeding one hundred thousand (100,000) square feet if the design includes one or more of the following elements:
 - i. Multi-story development.
 - ii. Mixed use development.
 - iii. Structured or underground parking facilities.
4. Customer Entrances.
 - a. The side of a building that directly abuts the most traveled public or private right-of-way that provides vehicular and pedestrian access to the site shall feature at least one (1) customer entrance. The entry may utilize a pedestrian plaza, entry portico, or other community feature as described in Par. 8, below, between the building and sidewalk. Corner entrances may be considered to meet this requirement.
5. Site Design. A development must follow one of the following three (3) options adjacent to the street that is projected to have the most pedestrian activity associated with the building(s). The requirements may be met using any combination of buildings on the zoning lot. The site may be designed to utilize any combination of the three (3) setbacks, i. through iii., below. If a zoning lot directly abuts two (2) or more public or private rights-of-way, there are no requirements for additional street frontages.

- a. At least fifty percent (50%) of adjacent street frontage shall be occupied by building facades with a maximum setback of twenty (20) feet. This requirement may be met by using any combination of buildings on the zoning lot. No off street parking facilities shall be located between the façade(s) directly abutting the street and the adjacent street.
 - b. At least sixty percent (60%) if adjacent street frontage shall be occupied by building facades with a maximum setback of sixty-five (65) feet. This setback shall allow for a only a single drive aisle and one row of perpendicular parking with building entrance access and required landscaped buffer as stated in Par. 6.a., below. This setback may be extended to a maximum of seventy-five (75) feet, if traffic circulation, drainage and/or other site design issues are shown to require additional space.
 - c. At least seventy percent (70%) of adjacent street frontage shall be occupied by building facades with a maximum setback of eighty-five (85) feet. This setback shall allow for only a single drive aisle and two rows of perpendicular parking with building entrance access and required landscaped buffer as stated in Par. 6.a., below. This setback may be extended to a maximum of one hundred (100) feet, if traffic circulation, drainage and/or other site design issues are shown to require additional space.
6. Parking. The following requirements apply to the entire zoning lot.
- a. Off street parking facilities shall be located at least ten (10) feet from any property line and/or right-of-way and utilize a landscape buffer that includes trees, shrubs, decorative fencing, benches, flowerbeds, ground covers, or other high quality materials.
 - b. Transportation Demand Management. Any single retail business establishment of forty thousand (40,000) square feet or more with one hundred (100) or more full-time employees or full-time equivalents is required to have a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan, or participate in a Transportation Management Association (TMA), if one is available in the geographic area of the establishment. This requirement shall also apply to any such existing retail business establishment proposing an addition or alteration, and that will have one hundred (100) or more full-time employees or full-time equivalents.
 - i. The TDM Plan shall generally describe the applicant's intent with respect to reducing the number of single-occupant automobile trips and list the methods the applicant intends to use. These methods shall be based on the transportation choices available and indicate if the applicant will provide for either the full price to purchase a monthly bus pass from Madison Metro, or provide for three (3) or more of the following options to all employees: ridesharing/car pool matching; preferred parking for ridesharers; secured bicycle parking, showers and lockers; employee commuting subsidies or awards; emergency ride home program; employer-subsidized bus passes; provision of real-time transit information; or other options proposed by the employer to discourage the use of single-occupant vehicles, and as approved by the City.
 - ii. The employer shall make the provisions in its Plan available to all employees.
 - iii. The Plan shall describe the traffic/parking impacts of the development and shall provide specific details on the measures the employer will use to monitor the traffic/parking impacts.
 - iv. The Plan shall be periodically updated at intervals not to exceed every two years.
 - v. The Plan shall be reviewed by the Traffic Engineer in concert with the Planning Division Director. The Traffic Engineer shall provide comments and suggestions for how the Plan might be improved.
7. Pedestrian Circulation. The following requirements apply to the entire zoning lot.
- a. Sidewalks shall be provided along all sides of the site abutting a public or private right-of-way. Public sidewalks within the right-of-way may be used to meet this requirement.
 - b. Continuous internal pedestrian walkways at least six (6) feet in width shall be provided from the public sidewalk or right-of-way to the principal customer entrance of all buildings on the site. At a minimum, walkways shall connect focal points of pedestrian activity such as, but not limited to, transit stops, street crossings, building and store entry points. Walkways shall have adjoining landscaped areas along at least fifty percent (50%) of their length. These areas shall include trees, shrubs, benches, flowerbeds, ground covers, or other such materials.
 - c. Sidewalks at least eight (8) feet in width shall be provided along the full length of the building facade featuring a customer entrance, and along any façade abutting parking areas and shall provide at least

eight (8) feet in width clear from any merchandise, vending, or other obstructions. These sidewalks shall be located at least six (6) feet from the facade to provide planting beds for foundation landscaping, except where features such as arcades, entryways, or community features, as defined in Par. 8., below, are part of the facade.

- d. Internal pedestrian walkways provided in conformance with subparagraph b., above, shall have weather protection features, such as awnings or arcades within thirty (30) feet of all customer entrances and shall be constructed parallel to the façade of the building but need not extend into driving aisles or parking areas.
- e. All internal pedestrian walkways and crosswalks shall be distinguished from driving surfaces to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort, as well as the attractiveness of the walkways. Walkway materials shall be of durable, low-maintenance surface materials, such as pavers, bricks, or scored concrete. Signs shall be installed to designate pedestrian walkways.
- f. Sidewalks shall connect transit stops on or off-site as well as to nearby residential neighborhoods.

8. Central Features and Community Spaces. The following requirements apply to the entire zoning lot.

- a. At least one (1) of the following central features and community spaces shall be provided for each forty thousand (40,000) floor area of building on the zoning lot. A minimum of two (2) is required and each central features and community space shall each occupy a minimum of 400 square feet in area. (Am. by ORD-15-00033, 4-8-15)
 - i. Patio/seating area.
 - ii. Pedestrian plaza with benches.
 - iii. Transportation center.
 - iv. Window shopping walkway.
 - v. Outdoor playground area.
 - vi. Kiosk area.
 - vii. Water feature.
 - viii. Planter walls.
 - ix. Other deliberately shaped area and/or focal feature or amenity that adequately enhances the community and public spaces.
 - x. Outdoor employee amenities, such as a break area.
- b. All of the above, except outdoor employee amenities, shall have direct access to the public sidewalk network and shall not be constructed of materials that are inferior to the principal materials of the building and landscape.