

AGENDA # 7

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** January 18, 2012

TITLE: 723 State Street – PUD(GDP-SIP), St. Paul’s University Catholic Center. 8th Ald. Dist. (20458) **REFERRED:**
REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: January 18, 2012 **ID NUMBER:**

Members present were: Richard Wagner*, Marsha Rummel, Todd Barnett, Dawn O’Kroley, Richard Slayton, Melissa Huggins, John Harrington, and Henry Lufler.

*Wagner recused himself on this item; Barnett acted as Chair.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of January 18, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a PUD(GDP-SIP) located at 723 State Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Randall Milbrath, representing RDF Planning and Design; Ron Trachtenberg, representing St. Paul’s; Robert Shipley, representing BWZ Architects; Ingrid McMasters, representing St. Paul’s; Mark Landgraf, representing St. Paul’s and Gail Geib. Milbrath addressed the Commission’s previous issues with the project, including lighting patterns, landscaping concerns, architectural comments (front elevation and exterior elevations), address of the original St. Paul’s remnants, and the base of the building at the parking area (southeast elevation). Pilasters at the corner have been brought down in scale and set back the building another 3-feet to widen the space between St. Paul’s and the Pres House. Trees have been more tailored to their location in the landscape plan. Banding has been softened by widening it so it still fits in the architectural style. The corners have been brought down to the ground. He presented examples of architecture from various universities to show the similarities in columns and use of windows. Plans for retaining the existing wall from the old building suggest incorporating them into fireplace mantelpieces with an appropriate nod to the history of the building. Shadow studies were shown on the existing building and proposed and its effect on Library Mall; much of the shadowing falls on their own building and other rooftops because of the stepback. Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Some of the changes shown have made this a more cohesive building.
- The nod to the reuse of some of the historic materials and keeping that element is appreciated but concerned with depth issues.
- It’s really busy. I still am concerned with the busy windows. Your examples show elegance and I think that’s missing here. I worry about the solar impacts outside and inside. I’m not there yet.
- Could you talk about the natural daylighting inside.
 - There are some skylights in the corner at the front, but it is a pretty dark space. We’re providing quite a few more windows than St. Paul’s has now.

- I'm still struggling with the light shadowing. It's adding and solidifying all of that shade. It's going to matter in the spring and fall the most to the mall and is significant.
- The roof should be paving block system at the bare minimum but preferably a green roof.
- What are the front doors made out of? Aluminum front doors are an issue.
 - Probably a bronze colored with heavy handles, will try to do bronze.

There's an old saying that the only thing you're supposed to touch in a building are the doorknobs. I appreciate all the historical reference you've provided, but the front door is such a marginal piece of the building that introducing aluminum seems to be going in the opposite direction.

The difficulty is wood on the north side of the building in this climate.
- The back elevation (south), the color variation between the dark and light brick seems off, the scalloped treatment as the red brick meets the buffed brick.
 - That element is on the side and back as it comes around.

That part just doesn't seem there yet.
- Concern with the detailing of that because the level of material and stylistically that's being pursued is going to require great care in details, to the point where I would request review it at a much more detailed level.
 - Historically the backs and sides of masonry buildings were done in a completely different brick, quite often not very nice at all.

ACTION:

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by Lufler, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-1) with Rummel voting no. The motion provided for the following:

- The red volume on the upper left side of the south elevation should continue to the ground instead of turning to buff colored brick and eliminate the scallops.
- No fake bronze doors on the front façade.
- Look at making the lower roof green.
- Provide details of the articulation within the arches; observed that some arches infilled with brick instead of a lighter material.

After the Commission acts on an application, individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10, including any changes required by the Commission. The ratings are for information only. They are not used to decide whether the project should be approved. The scale is 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding. The overall ratings for this project are 5 and 7.5.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 723 State Street

| | Site Plan | Architecture | Landscape Plan | Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc. | Signs | Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular) | Urban Context | Overall Rating |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Member Ratings | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 7.5 |
| | - | 5 | - | - | - | - | 7 | 5 |
| | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | - | - | 7 | - |
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General Comments:

- One of a kind!
- Mass of red piece at Pres House façade must come to the ground.
- Building is too busy and too tall. Will reduce light on Library Mall.
- More shade added to fall and spring periods to the Mall, when sun is desired.
- The presentation again discussed the spacing and alignment of windows of several precedents, however, the level of initial presentation does not include construction detailing of the proposed aesthetic. My estimated timeframe of the precedents presented was that of buildings that have not been construction within the last 100 years. I will reiterate an often discussed guideline of the City’s Urban Design Commission that buildings should be designed as creations of their own time and copying historic appearance and details is discouraged.
- While the scale and program of the project is one that has been developed to be more appropriate to the context, moving forward to detailing with the use of present construction technology, and as acknowledged by the presenter as construction that would not be cost prohibitive, I can only support a project that is reflects the spirit of its time. I also continue to encourage furthering the respect for elements of the valuable history of both the 1909 and 1967 phases of the construction of the present St. Paul’s.