

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: April 18, 2012

TITLE: 502 South Park Street - PUD, New Construction (The Ideal) in UDD No. 7, Mixed-Use Development. 13th Ald. Dist. (25508)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: April 18, 2012

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Henry Lufler, Acting Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Marsha Rummel, Melissa Huggins, Richard Slayton and John Harrington.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of April 18, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a PUD located at 502 South Park Street. Appearing in support of the project were Scott Davis, representing Plunkett Raysich Architects; Att. Ron Trachtenberg, representing The Gallina Companies, Chris Reynolds and Joe Gallina. Appearing in support but not wishing to speak was Mike Pudelwitts. Appearing in support and available to answer questions was Robin Pharo, representing The Gallina Companies. Appearing and speaking in opposition were Doug Bingenheimer, Cynthia Williams, Stuart E. Eckes, Kate MacCrimmon, Sue Hoffenberg and Amy Moran. Appearing in opposition but not wishing to speak were Barbara MacCrimmon and C. Snyder. Appearing in opposition and available to answer questions was Aaron Crandall. Appearing neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak were Theodora Zehner, Steve Hoffenberg, Helen Kitchel and Zaccai Lewis. Scott Davis presented the newest iteration of plans culled from previous comments from the Commission as well as the neighborhood. Davis noted that changes include a ramp to a lower level of parking which gives them 24 additional spaces for a total of 78 spaces. To address the idea of covering the parking and installing “garden” apartments, they dog-legged the building so some of the apartments go out over the parking. This gives them additional units for a total of 62 units for a much better ration of units to parking spaces. A rooftop terrace will be located above the first floor with a partially green roof and outdoor terrace space for the residents. Townhomes will no longer work for their unit mix and architecture; the west end of the building still steps down and landscaping will create a series of stepped planters to scale the building down and create a nicer elevation on Drake Street. They have studied the possibility of flat roofs and have a lot of depth on the façade with the balconies. Signage has been scaled down on the tower element and brought to the corner where the retail entry is located. If they cannot salvage the sign that is there they can replicate it in font and character and do it in a more sustainable way with LED lighting. The character of the factory windows on the second floor have been brought into the windows of the new building. The stair tower design has been changed with the addition of more glass on the front to create a lighter expression. The brick has been changed to a fiber cement panel to lighten up that element. The UDD No. 7 stepback guideline in terms of the stair tower creates architectural problems. Robin Pharo spoke about the sustainability aspects of this project.

Kate MacCrimmon spoke as a neighborhood resident who cares about preserving the central neighborhood. She brought the Park Street Design Guidelines and pointed out the height limits of not less than 2 stories nor taller than 4 stories; her main concern is the building height. Rummel asked if she had read the Urban Design Guidelines as those are the ordinances the Commission judges a development on.

Stuart Eckes spoke as a Greenbush resident of 20 years. His concerns deal with the building height as well as how the project will affect the buildings around it. He touched on the UDD guidelines and block face design; his feeling is that the surrounding two blocks are very detailed with older design and he fears the building materials and the size of the building will detract from the surrounding character.

Sue Hoffenberg spoke as a neighborhood resident who has supported multiple building projects in this neighborhood. This project, however, is very different from the others and she thinks will have a significantly negative impact on the neighborhood. It's too all and too bright, 5-stories is too tall, its influence would be proportionate to the size of the building and a taller building would tower over their neighborhood.

Cynthia Williams spoke as a neighborhood resident and finds the height obtrusive to the character of the neighborhood. She also referenced the UDD guidelines and showed neighborhood photos of other building heights.

Doug Bingenheimer spoke to the height of the proposed project. He has lived in the neighborhood for 20 years and finds this magnitude along the lines of St. Mary's Hospital which was a very contentious project. This project would completely change the character with its height and mass. It should be reduced by at least one, perhaps two stories. He sees that the developer and the neighborhood are working together and commended them.

Theodora Zehner spoke about the possibility of taking the façade of The Ideal building and restructuring around that. She also stated that as a Monona Bay neighborhood resident she had not met with anybody until last week. She would like to see examples of how these building materials and colors may look over time.

Chris Reynolds spoke stating that the building design is beautiful and the Park Street corridor is ripe for redevelopment.

Zaccai Lewis spoke to the look of the building. He contrasted the second iteration with the existing one; what stands out to him is that everything has been made more unified by materials, the look of the roofline and from a neighborhood perspective he sees it as a mistake. To treat the two buildings as largely separate pieces would make both of them look smaller and make the west one in particular look a lot more friendly to the street. He would like to see front stoops in this neighborhood; without stairs this building is a neighborhood in itself and does not relate to Drake Street.

Amy Moran spoke as a resident whose house backs up to the alley. She touched on the scale of the building as feeling inappropriate. The neighborhood residents did look at UDD No. 7 guidelines and there is concern that this will marginalize the neighborhood.

Ald. Sue Ellingson stated she is not taking a position at this time.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I appreciate how well you incorporated our comments.

- This is much better than the first time and it reflects well from the standpoint of being located on a major transportation corridor. What is appropriate on major thoroughfares is density.
- I like the solution in terms of the windows and glass. The Ideal brick has a very nice tone to it and I wonder if that could be incorporated.
- Density on Park Street does make some sense. Park Street is evolving.
- The guidelines speak to the restoration and preservation in what remains, it speaks to retaining these buildings and I haven't heard why more of that isn't being retained while still keeping the density. That needs to be studied a bit more which would make this a richer project.
- Problem with the elimination of the stairs to the walk-up units, that's a substantial length of sidewalk in a residential area with zero activity and zero interaction with people. You've solved the parking issues on the alley side of the site; is there a way to not have parking abutting the street?
- The stairs don't seem like friendly comfortable brownstone stairs. It needs to feel more like a part of the neighborhood; this seems very large to me. I don't think the planters fit Drake Street at all.
- I encourage you to work with all the neighbors to see what you can do about putting their concerns about height to rest. Along Park Street, I don't see a problem, but work with them along Drake Street.
- Right now, I don't have a problem with the density but the development doesn't really excite me too much. It doesn't even address Drake Street. I feel like the architecture needs to yet slowly blend back into the housing along Drake Street and it doesn't now. I don't have a problem with the density, it's more the skin.
- On these flat rooftops that have windows that look down onto them, there are things you can do to really liven those up: colored glass or patterns. But Drake Street needs to be enlivened more.
- If what you're really looking for is two separate developments then that changes the development significantly. I want to ask the Commission members what your thoughts are on that.
- I was thinking of that too. I had to look at the map to see that this isn't an entire block development, but that's how it feels. I like parts of it but the problem on Drake Street, a townhouse approach might be better. It looks like one big building and where's the front door? It does feel like it could be two separate buildings if it's articulated.
- From our standpoint we need to think about how is it that we have this hang together for both Park Street and coming back to the neighborhood. This is going to continue to happen because the Park Street guidelines, it's for everything.
- This is doing exactly the opposite of what people want it to do; it's creating a wall. You're creating a buffer between them (at Drake Street elevation).
- Staff noted that all of these issues have been dealt with at a staff level: connections to the street, doing something to relate more to the character of Drake Street, etc. These are design development choices that are being placed on the table at their request. The issue of two buildings versus one has been discussed for weeks.
- Does it really need this concentration definition?
- I would like to see that the architect and the applicant can get to the point where the architecture is significant for us to say absolutely, go up. I think 5 is very comfortable, 6 I don't know.
- I don't understand why you're depressing to the parking.
 - We added more units so we needed more parking.

I look at the rendering and say the second floor level is the second floor level, I look at the dark mass closest to Park Street. It reminds me of the massing of The Ideal. So in terms of preservation, can that be pushed further while still maintaining the density and having a modern form inserted into that building. That can be very successful. This massing and this being one building technically is fine, but if you retain that existing character a bit more, it now breaks it down in terms of scale and the sense of texture. If this face now engages this street there is now activity going on and people can engage.

Slayton stated that they can make the stairs work if they come up to an apartment that has that townhouse look and feel. Huggins suggested creating some community space in front by having a big stoop that creates a second mini lobby area so you have gathering space with steps coming down; creating an entrance here would create semi-public space that could be used and people walking by could engage with residents. Slayton further noted that a line of shade trees would begin to give a canopy which adds a human scale, thereby making the building more friendly; keep in touch with the neighbors because they are “this close” to loving what you’re doing.

ACTION:

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.

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.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 502 South Park Street

| | Site Plan | Architecture | Landscape Plan | Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc. | Signs | Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular) | Urban Context | Overall Rating |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Member Ratings | 7 | 7 | - | - | - | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| | 5 | 5 | 4 | - | - | 6 | 6 | 5 |
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