

**Mansion Hill District Advisory Statement
for
Proposed Madison College Culinary Education Center**

Introduction

Staff from Madison College (MC) first presented information about their proposal to building a Culinary Education Center at the April 4, 2012 monthly meeting of the Mansion Hill District. A steering committee was formed following that meeting. Members of the steering committee are: Lucas Daily, Gene Devitt, Steven Fabick, Fred Mohs and Ledell Zellers.

The steering committee met with representatives of MC and Strang on April 17 and April 24, 2012. MC presented their preliminary plans at the Urban Design Commission on May 2, 2012. A full Mansion Hill District meeting was held on May 21, 2012. The meeting was noticed with a postcard sent by Alder Mike Verveer and by flyers distributed throughout the neighborhood.

Overall Reception of Proposal

There was significant enthusiasm for the project in terms of design and use. The responsiveness of the design team (MC representatives and the Strang team) to concerns and ideas of residents and the design team's ability to listen and translate ideas into the proposal was particularly noteworthy. The interaction of the space with the street was also identified by neighborhood residents as being exceptionally good with the baking school and other culinary teaching spaces being on the ground floor with large windows to allow pedestrians to see the activity within. The general design was also reviewed favorably with the materials, size of the proposed building, window location/treatment, and entrance treatment all seen as fitting well with the neighborhood. In addition the use and opportunities for the neighborhood to purchase the baked goods and meals prepared by the students was seen as a great amenity for the neighborhood.

Summary of Concerns and Madison College Response

Following are concerns and ideas brought forward over the course of the four meetings held with MC representatives:

- Preliminary location of the logo (placed on top of a high architectural element) was identified as not fitting with the kind of commercial or corporate identification which exists on Wisconsin Ave. It was removed from that location and will be placed at ground level in a design in harmony with the street.
- Concern was expressed about the potential for noise from the HVAC. Residents were assured that the HVAC units would be of high quality and would not be noisy. In addition, Strang indicated that the location of the HVAC units on the roof with walls surrounding them would further minimize the noise.
- The wall of the building facing the Capitol initially had a "back alley" appearance. In response Strang redesigned it to project over the walkway next to the building and to have real windows.

In addition they redesigned the front corner facing Wisconsin and the Capitol to have a more interesting, attractive and inviting presence. These changes resolved this concern.

- Concern was expressed about the bulk of the roof. However, that roof, when seen in elevation drawings, appeared to be in better relation to the overall design. The conclusion was that the heavy appearance was simply due to the way the roof was drawn in a particular rendering.
- Deliveries and garbage were the most persistent issues. The identified location for deliveries is the existing loading dock. Deliveries made to that location will require products to be hand transported from that location to the Culinary Education Center. Concern was also expressed about timing of deliveries. Per MC the vast majority will be made prior to 8 am as that is when they would be needed to be available for use in classes. This timing will be better for usability of the outdoor public/student space adjacent to the route the products and garbage will need to traverse. The Concourse representative noted the importance of keeping Dayton clear during the pre-8 am time since that is one of the most heavily trafficked times both for commuters and for hotel guests. MC expects that only rarely would there need to be delivery vehicles waiting for loading dock space. Additionally they indicated they would not be getting large semi deliveries (like Sysco) so the current loading dock could readily accommodate the delivery vehicles. A suggestion was made to consider making deliveries within the current parking space by raising the walkway from the arch to allow trucks to access that space and possibly eliminating parking and possibly having an entrance on Wisconsin/exit on Dayton or vice versa for delivery vehicles.

Per Strang, garbage would also be handled from the current loading dock location and would be stored at this site pending pick-up as is currently done.

- Increasing the setbacks along Johnson and Wisconsin was raised as a potential improvement to the design (although there was not complete consensus on the need for such setbacks). However the modest setbacks were deemed to be acceptable since this particular block can be seen as being a “transition” block because there are considerable setbacks to the north on Wisconsin Avenue but no setbacks on Wisconsin in the next block toward the Capitol. A similar situation exists for Johnson Street.
- Concern was expressed with the original design as it related to the open area from the plaza into the parking area. Subsequent designs addressed this issue.

Conclusion:

The proposed project is viewed favorably by the neighborhood. The neighborhood steering committee is looking forward to continuing to work with Madison College and their architects/designers as this project moves forward.