

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 8, 2013

TITLE: 698 South Whitney Way – Demolition and New Construction in UDD No. 3, “Taco Bell.” 19th Ald. Dist. (29740)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 8, 2013

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Melissa Huggins, Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Henry Lufler, Ald. Lauren Cnare, Tom DeChant and Cliff Goodhart.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 8, 2013, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for demolition and new construction located at 698 South Whitney Way in UDD No. 3. Appearing on behalf of the project were Richard Burke, representing L+A Architects, Inc.; and Justin Frahm, representing JSD Professional Services. The intent is to demolish the half vacant existing building and construct a Taco Bell restaurant. City Engineering will take an additional 3-feet along South Whitney Way and 7-feet along Odana Road; they could combine the Taco Bell sidewalks and the City sidewalks into more of a cityscape terrace with plantings.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- What are the materials?
 - Engineered stone material, cementitious brick material (clay based). Our next presentation will have full color materials, this is just informational.
- There is some awkwardness about how the access works on the site. The site plan features conflicts with the queuing of cars and pedestrians access along with the order board.
- The bioretention area, is that for the entire site? Do you have control or is that shared with other parcels?
 - It’s for the entire site.
 It would be nice to have multiple uses for that pond, maybe an area where you could go outside and enjoy being outside in these native plants. I don’t think that it’s possible but prove me wrong.
- We encourage the pedestrian access and we like that to be along the streets. This is one of the worst intersections in Madison as far as pedestrian friendliness. It’s a balancing act with that.
 - That’s part of the reason we want to do the cityscape terrace idea so it bleeds into the neighboring properties.
- I am concerned with the pedestrian circulation on the site. The landscaping by the 6 parking stalls, when you get out of the car what is your route going to be? You’ve got the menu board there, are you proposing they walk behind their car? I see potential for people to cut through the drive-thru.

- This is where ideology is conflicting with common sense.
- I don't see that anchoring this (the building) so far into the corner is going to somehow dramatically improve the urban context of this intersection.
- We're creating a bad design here, by adhering to a rule that generally we like. What is the intent of that rule? It's to create a presence on the corner; are there other ways we could require Taco Bell to do some really nice landscaping right on the corner to create a nice edge to soften the traffic, and allowing them to function in a safe manner?
- If you could make your bioinfiltration part of an urban plaza at the corner, that you create a space for people to be as well as a promenade. It seems like a large area but if that's required...to put it where it would be used in front of the building and that creates a nice presence on the street. You'd have to reconfigure the turning radius.
- Relocate the building where detention is currently and make bioretention area as part of an urban plaza at the corner.
- Do you need to have so many parking spaces?
 - We need five for employees, typically. At the peak times the number of customers coming to the store is significant. Even though 60%+ are going through the drive-thru, Taco Bell likes to keep a minimum of 10, 12 is preferred, but 10 as a minimum number of parking spaces.

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 rating for this project is 4.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 698 South Whitney Way

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	3	5	-	-	5	3	6	4

General Comments:

- Develop a safe, functional site plan with excellent landscaping.