

AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: November 25, 2013

TITLE: 17, 19, 25 North Webster and 201 East Mifflin Streets – Construction adjacent to Landmark- deconstruct 4 homes and construct 6-story-68-unit apartment building, 2nd Ald. District. Contact: Fred Rouse, Rouse Management (31119)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: November 25, 2013

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Stu Levitan, Chair; Erica Fox Gehrig, Vice Chair; Christina Slattery, Jason Fowler, David McLean, Marsha Rummel, and Michael Rosenblum. Fowler left during the discussion of Item 3.

SUMMARY:

Randy Bruce, representing Fred Rouse, registering in support and wishing to speak. Bruce briefly presented the proposed project adjacent to the Lamp House.

Bruce explained that the proposed design considered the views of the Lamp House from Webster and Mifflin Streets and views from the Lamp House off the site. He explained there are existing views of Lake Mendota to northeast and to the Capitol dome. He explained the shape of the proposed building footprint and how it works with the views and that the building footprint allows for green space at the back and the side of the Lamp House to provide a buffer. He explained that the proposed development provides a staging area on the site for group tours near the parking garage entrance. Bruce also explained that the proposal provides a first floor Lamp House interpretive area.

Bruce provided images showing assumptions of the possible future build out of the context and how the proposed development sits within that future context.

Bruce explained that some sites on the block are not adjacent to the Lamp House and would not require Landmarks Commission review.

Jack Holzhueter, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Holzhueter explained that any dwarfing of the Lamp House by 2 or 3 stories taller than the existing affects the integrity of the Lamp House. Holzhueter stated that Frank Lloyd Wright is the greatest architect in history and that Madison is his hometown which allows Madison to poise itself in a favorable light to Wright tourism. He explained that the Lamp House is not in the Prairie Style and instead it is in a transitional style.

Levitan asked if any new development would not be acceptable. Holzhueter explained that smaller residential buildings would be appropriate on Webster Street adjacent to the Lamp House. A 6-story building is not acceptable. A 3-story building with appropriate stepbacks would be acceptable.

Holzhueter explained that the Lamp House cannot be shrouded by new development, and that the green space buffer is very considerate.

Fred Rouse, registering in support and wishing to speak. Rouse explained that the Lamp House was located at the mid-block to be hidden. He explained that the view from Mifflin Street would be retained and that the green space would provide a buffer that would enhance the Lamp House. Rouse explained that the proposed building will transition nicely from the larger developments toward East Washington Avenue. He explained that consideration of the entire area would provide the most successful results.

Michael Bridgeman, registering in opposition and wishing to speak. Bridgeman explained that the development is so large and visually intrusive and affects the integrity of the landmark. He explained that the Downtown Plan is flawed and the Zoning Code is also flawed. Bridgeman explained that the adopted policies currently allow that the Lamp House be shrouded.

Levitan asked what buildings would not be so large or visually intrusive.

Bridgeman explained that the buildings of existing scale would be appropriate.

Bill White, registering in support and available to answer questions. White explained that the buffer area would be landscaped and the proposed development would provide an enhanced visual experience.

Gehrig asked if this landmark has a different standard than other landmarks. Staff explained that any project adjacent to any landmark would be reviewed against the same standard, but the fact that this is a Frank Lloyd Wright building cannot be ignored.

Levitan asked which view or element is important to maintain integrity. McLean noted that landscape elements may block the views. Rosenblum explained that the building will dominate the view from Butler Street. Rummel explained that smaller building would provide a different solution and feel than one monolithic building.

Levitan asked for an update of the Lamp House Ad Hoc Committee and how the actions of that committee relate to this action. Zellers explained that the Committee is still working and should be finished by the end of the year. Staff explained the work of that committee is a completely separate issue and does not affect the review of this proposal by the Landmarks Commission.

Staff explained that the proposed development will request a rezoning to UMX and that it is currently zoned DR-1 which requires 60 foot maximum building widths.

Zeller explained that the project team has worked with the neighborhood steering committee, but that she was disappointed that this development was submitted for review before the Ad Hoc Committee's work was more complete even though they have the ability to do so.

Rummel and McLean asked if stepbacks or an undulation in the roof/upper story would break up the visual impact.

Staff noted that in response to staff comments, the project team has provided the interpretive area on the first floor and the green space which positively impact the Landmark.

Bruce suggested that the project team receive feedback from the Urban Design Commission and then return to the Landmarks Commission with a revised design incorporating comments from both bodies.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Rummel, seconded by McLean, to refer this review to the December 9 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.