

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: May 7, 2014

TITLE: 617 North Segoe Road – Rezoning from
NMX to PD – 12-Story Apartment
Building. 11th Ald. Dist. (32843)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: May 7, 2014

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Dawn O’Kroley, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant and Melissa Huggins.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of May 7, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a rezoning from NMX to PD for a 12-story apartment building located at 617 North Segoe Road. Appearing on behalf of the project were Randy Bruce and James Stopple. Registered and speaking in opposition were Ms. Balakhovsky, Karen Schwarz and Belle Frink. Revisions to the project include rotating the building and elimination of a drive with on-grade parking, the mixed-use component has been removed in favor of an all residential building. The rotation of the building is occurring because of the proposed roundabout that is going to occur at Sheboygan and Segoe Roads, and it allows them to orient themselves towards the circle. It also opens up some of the view lines for Weston Place. One of the conditions in the staff report is the provision for guest parking and loading/unloading. A loading zone is located at the back of the building for larger vehicles, with the potential for having three parking spaces off of the drive. It may take some work with the neighbors over this shared access point. The base of the building is cast stone with some variation in color for richness, with some rough faced stones to give it a rusticated base. Buff colored standard (utility) sized brick is proposed for the upper floors.

Ms. Balakhovsky spoke in opposition. There are two exits on the east side of the building that come up as hallways. My question is are those emergency exits only or are they for daily use? And in earlier designs you had a retaining wall along the east side. What are you planning on doing now because there is a significant grade different between there and the greenspace that belongs to Weston Place. Right now there’s a row of arborvitaes that present erosion and prevent people walking through. What are you planning on to prevent the erosion there?

- They’re really emergency exits that lead from the stairwells and have to connect directly to the outside.
- Our plan would be to expose portions of that lower level, almost the entire lower level is exposed, it’ll taper up into the corner to no exposure and that takes up much of that grade differential. There will be a slope coming off of that that will match into your yard there. Obviously when construction occurs that will be disturbed and replanted, that’s part of our discussion with the condominium association.

And how does that exposure interact with the patios of people living on the first floor?

- They're going to be really restricted to that patio area up top.

If you look at the wedge between Weston Place and the north edge of your building you can see that it's funnel shaped. Right now with the two-story building there and without the funnel shape there's a significant wind velocity already existing, to the point when the winds are high it opens our doors. When you factor in a funnel shape and a 12-story building that wind velocity is only going to increase. Is there anything we can do in terms of plantings or walls or barriers or something to cut that wind velocity down. I'm not just talking about people walking. We appreciate that you moved the bike racks but we were wanting, since it's a high end building, if there's any possibility of moving all of the bikes to the side, that would improve the look of the building. Is the metal going to reflect sun? Or is the zinc finish more dull and just reflects the color?

- It's a metal that will have some reflection but because of its weathered texture and variation, it's not like a smooth shiny surface. As far as the bicycles go, we do have 16 bicycles inside, we do have about 6 outside.

But they end up being out of character with the rest of the neighborhood. There are no outside ones at Coventry, Weston Place or the senior center. The ones that are outside at Overlook end up looking like trash heaps all winter long. It's bike parking, not bike racks.

Karen Schwarz spoke in opposition. From the standpoint of compatibility of other structures with adjacent properties this proposed building is a much greater intensity and far exceeds what is considered reasonable by the City's Comprehensive Plan. The building setbacks are minimal, the Sawyer Terrace building is 60-feet from us but that's corner to corner, this proposal has an 11-story exposure to Weston Place at all residential levels, which significantly diminishes quality of life due to limited natural light and extreme closeness of the buildings. It should be noted that the Sheboygan Avenue apartments are adjacent to a large open space and the building façades are greatly separated, where this is an extremely close distance between buildings. The lack of adequate parking has a negative effect on the function and access for everyone in this immediate area. A smaller physical envelope in terms of height, density and physical separation would address most of our major concerns which are function, access, compatibility with immediate surroundings and most importantly quality of life.

Belle Frink spoke in opposition. Are there any examples around town where we could see the type of glare from metal panels? Being so close (45-feet) from this proposed building, all the residential buildings will suffer from sun glare. I wasn't clear about the exits, can those doors be locked or are they alarmed?

- We did not plan on locking them. We hadn't thought about that as a need. We can talk to Jim Stopples about whether he wants to lock them or alarm them.

If they use them it seems they will be going out through our greenspace. Presently people come down all the time over our hill. With 115-units that's a lot more people. Aesthetically it would be helpful if the bike racks were internalized.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- What is the window material?
 - To match the metal, that's the idea. Same color everywhere.
- The louver near the garage door, it'd be nice if you could have it align with something above, even if you're making it larger than it needs to be.
- Some of the issues we've heard tonight are not design issues, they're Plan Commission issues.

ACTION:

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by Goodhart, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (4-0).

No rakings were provided for this project.