

## AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** May 7, 2014

TITLE: 626 Langdon Street – Renovation and  
Addition to the “Roundhouse Apartments.”  
8<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (33108)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: May 7, 2014

**ID NUMBER:**

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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 **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** and **PROVIDED AN ADVISORY RECOMMENDATION** on the renovation and addition to the “Roundhouse Apartments” located at 626 Langdon Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Josh Wilcox, Abbie Moilien and Angela Black, all representing Roundhouse Apartments, LLC; Joe Korb, Dave Martin and Curt Brink. Registered and speaking in opposition was Patrick Corcoran. Parking has been modified with the addition of a handicapped stall on the east side of the drive aisle and a 5-foot walkway, four moped stalls, a fence along the east property line, and masonry piers through this area with lights on them. The front patio and landscaping area has been tightened up and now includes a pergola structure; it is intended for the use of the tenants and potential first floor commercial occupant but will be open to the public. In addition to that they have a 12-14 foot wide sidewalk entry point into the property. Three existing terrace trees will be removed during construction with one healthy tree to remain. The east and north setbacks are considered side yards at 5-feet; the building’s footprint and cantilever has been pushed back to the south giving them an 11-foot setback from lot line to the face of the building footprint at the first floor. Trash will be internalized. A small market is proposed on the first floor for the tenants which has to be entered through the building per the Zoning Code. The condenser units will be placed on the roof with some possibly being housed internally with the bicycles. The building is now cantilevered out to 7-feet with a metal band wrapping around to create a “C” shape in front returning down the east side capturing more metal panel. The balconies at the second floor have been omitted and turned into windows. Wilcox then addressed the concerns of Planning Division staff. The cantilever has been strengthened. The floor to ceiling heights are also of concern; 8-foot ceilings are not much different than most houses. The amount of surface parking stalls has been reduced and the project does exceed minimum greenspace amounts. A stormwater management plan has not been fully worked out at this time. The development team has looked at the idea of looking at this as part of a master development but don’t feel that is pertinent to the Urban Design Commission’s review of the project. A full fire protection system will be installed, pressurizing stairwells, accessibility for the entire existing Roundhouse and new addition, more life safety components, and security components will be added to the entire property. Building material samples were shown.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- It's been changed dramatically.
- The pergola in a different brick than either the new or the Roundhouse seems to be a third building. I don't know whether it should be brick or some other material so it doesn't seem like a third building.
  - We struggled with that too. We're comfortable switching that to a smart siding material that would play off the colors of the metal.
- What if it's a structure, just steel?
- If it were steel painted white, that seems less third thing than something that relates to the Roundhouse.
- You've got two really strong masonry buildings, that needs to be a connector or something a little lighter.
- The way that the building addition and entry piece touches the Roundhouse is lacking integrity. That Roundhouse is rigid geometry, you've touched the geometry at the street but your entry piece and the pergola discussion, that as one cohesive piece could somehow get the Roundhouse to have a more appropriate relationship to pedestrians. Studying those two pieces together. It should be glass. Give the street back to the public, rather than the pergola.
- If in fact adding on to the Roundhouse is the solution for this site, your key challenge is to engage the pedestrians around it and somehow do something with the base of the Roundhouse to bring that down to scale.
  - We thought the pergola engaged pedestrians as they walked by, giving your eye something to look at. And with the lower windows as well, you'll be able to look inside. Now you've got a definable space, where before we just watched people as they just walked by.
- You have an entry piece with a lobby and an outdoor space on top of that. I think that piece, if you resolve that geometry and celebrate that, would give this a totally different feel.
- The south elevation, where this new entryway goes into the addition, I'm almost wanting that glass to go all the way across rather than have this brick pillar come down. It seems something that's off-setting.
- I'm not sure another brick is again the solution.
- I'd go all glass.
- All glass and then metal panel across the top.
- Glass railing at the top, let people stand there.
- If the pergola didn't come down quite so far, if there was more openness there, open to that glass.
- In looking at your cantilever I see this very somber building, why not embrace some of the original building's funkiness with an angle or something that makes it a little more iconic, a little more dynamic. No something that's a little more playful with it.
- If your addition becomes a rigid addition, if you take that geometry, this corner piece you've dedicated as brick, which could be more related to the balconies, now your cantilever, it's how you're treating this base.
- They both need to be separate structures.

Patrick Corcoran spoke in opposition to the project. He met with the design team a couple of times to express his concerns, which include the "side" (rear) lot setback of less than 15-feet, the possibility of tenants throwing their trash off the balconies, the inefficiency of bringing the mopeds and bicycles all the way around for parking, the lack of a shadow study and how that will affect his tenants as their windows face south. This should be a stand-alone building because trying to push something into the Roundhouse just doesn't work. This is perpetually bad design.

## **ACTION:**

On a motion by DeChant, seconded by Huggins, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** and **PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PLAN COMMISSION:**

- Look at alternatives to the third brick material for the pergola.
- The entry piece to the Roundhouse and new addition needs to be more cohesive to tie them both together, including the pergola.
- The entry should be glass and a light piece that touches all, with consideration for a two-story element with more daylight (space between pergola and addition; consider a two-story lobby with outdoor space above).
- Eliminate the brick pillar at the entry in favor of more glass treatment.
- Consider an all glass entry with metal panel and glass rail atop and metal pergola.
- Consider angling the outside wall of the addition at the cantilever's edge to relate to the Roundhouse's geometry.
- The cantilever feature as a design is fine.
- Study alternative designs to address the issues as noted that tie the pergola, entry, Roundhouse and addition more effectively for staff approval.

The motion was passed on a vote of (4-0).

No rakings were provided for this project.