

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: July 23, 2014

TITLE: 202 East Washington Avenue –  
Redevelopment of the “Pahl Tire” Site for  
a 10-Story, 146-150 Room “Courtyard by  
Marriott Hotel” in UDD No. 4. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald.  
Dist. (33109)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: July 23, 2014

ID NUMBER:

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

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of July 23, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for the redevelopment of the “Pahl Tire” site for a 10-story hotel located at 202 East Washington Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Josh Wilcox, A.J. Robitschek, and Nathan Wautier, all representing The North Central Group. Registered in opposition and available to answer questions was Bill Gates. Wilcox described updates to the project. They have acquired the site at 15 North Webster Street, which will tie the site together. The base of the building has evolved to a ceramic-based product. The signage has been brought down as well and they are working with Marriott on this new brand of hotel. Continuing up the canopy and signage has changed to “AC Hotel Madison.” In terms of the big changes they addressed based on the Commission’s feedback, the heaviness of the middle of the building has been helped with the elimination of louvers on the front façade. Clear vision glass will be used on the bottom and top portions, with gray tinted glass in the middle, to tie into some of the other building elements. In addition, the windows have been enlarged to 7’ x 5’ and staggered in such a way to allow for equal masonry lines coming up through the building. Downlights have been added to allow light to come through the vertical columns.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Moving the sign down so it’s not blocking those lines was a good move.
- Between the windows, is that the same material on a smaller scale? Is it recessed?
  - Yes, it’s pushed in 3-inches. We took to heart the comments about simplifying the materials.
- It looks like you really worked hard at simplifying and refining it. It seems like this view (south facing down towards the east) are not as resolved and refined.
- It does look like you’ve worked out some of the details and the tactile in the base is nice. My overall comment remains the same, particularly looking at context and this is where the urban core meets the residential scale, so specific to this site I do not feel this design merits the two additional bonus stories. I

would suggest the composition would be equally strong omitting floors 3 and 4 from the central mass of the building.

- Where specifically do you think it needs strengthening?

In relationship to context, your immediate context for the foreseeable future will be substantially shorter in scale on the residential portion of the block, the block towards the Capitol I picture the YWCA, I don't know how many stories that lone tower is. I can see dialog that you would have with that side of the street. I don't know the height of the US Bank in comparison to this; with the reduction of two stories I could still see your building having an appropriate dialog with that context, and then a more appropriate dialog with the surrounding smaller residential scale.

Do you feel with this 8-story element here, coming out East Washington Avenue as you look out and step down, that that is a step in the right direction towards that dialog or scale?

Yes that is nice. And seeing the view from East Washington Avenue would be helpful.

- What are you doing to help mitigate this density in the downtown area?
  - In terms of traffic flow, the valet stands out there 24/7 and take care of all the deliveries. The Cap North ramp has 60 stalls and we also have 38 stalls internally, and 60 stalls in Brayton Street. In addition to that there will be 3-5 valet people there during the peak times of day, so from a traffic standpoint we feel like we're identifying solutions to the vehicle route movements. We feel that it'll function correctly. In terms of the bike lane through here we've gone back and forth. Right now we've pulled the building in 3-feet through this area that receives the most circulation so we have a drop-off zone and maintain the fullness of the bike lane through that area. All the discussions we've had with the neighborhood and Traffic are crucial to the success of the project.
- I am a little concerned where you have narrowed that outdoor area on East Washington down to 8-feet.
- It feels to me like it's two different buildings. I understand that's the back of the building but it's the side as you're coming up East Washington Avenue.
  - We wanted to make sure we're on the right track in terms of material, the palette, the overall scale, the composition of how we're handling the windows and the insets, we can extrapolate those concepts and apply them to the other sides of the building.
- (Firchow) We did want to acknowledge that the move away from the louvers was an improvement. But I think the comments we talked about last time (at the meeting of June 25, 2014) are still significant issues.

## **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 ratings for this project are 6 and 7.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 202 East Washington Avenue**

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	-	7	-	-	-	-	7	7
	6	7	5	-	-	5	7	6

General Comments:

- Incorporate sustainability throughout to merit extra stories.
- Not yet exceptional, develop program to deal with density or mitigate it.