

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: August 20, 2014

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

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: August 20, 2014

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Richard Slayton, Dawn O’Kroley, Lauren Cnare, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant and John Harrington.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of August 20, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for 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, Jonathan Bogatay, AJ Robitschek, Jeff Lenz and Nathan Wautier, all representing the North Central Group. Registered and speaking in opposition were Bill Gates and Anne Stoelting. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was Marilyn J. Martin. Bogatay spoke about the AC Marriott brand and their goals for making the hotel a success. Wautier talked about the City’s plans and policies for Planned Developments. They have a specific objective and vision for the entire block that this corner is a part of, centered around the views and promotion of the Lamp House. They will respect the privacy of the residents of the Lamp House while also allowing additional public access to the building by incorporating a public walkway and balconies that would overlook the Lamp House. With the bonus stories request the building would be 10-stories, putting the additional shade impact on the Lamp House at about two hours during the day. Wilcox talked about changes made since the Commission’s last review of the project. The landscaping elements at the corner have been eliminated, the angle of the curve coming in has been revised a little bit to allow for easier snow removal. In addition to that, after discussions with Madison Metro, along the East Washington Avenue corridor there is a temporary drop-off area for special events on the Square; in lieu of built-in landscaping elements there they will use smaller landscaping elements (planters) that could be easily removed if need be. They have maintained the queuing for seven cars with the sidewalk width remaining the same. The valet will be there 24/7. They are providing a 6-foot sidewalk through the rear yard. They are maintaining the generator at that location but will be surrounded by masonry walls with a trellis above it. For the most part the first floor remains the same. The AC Marriott brand is associated with using local artists and their team is already in touch with area artists to commission pieces for the hotel. The 9th floor still has a flex meeting space with storefront curtain walls that will be open to the public, and the rooftop area will have food and beverage service. They feel these are some of the elements that contribute to exceptional design in terms of the requested bonus stories. The cast prairie stone for the base was shown.

Anne Stoelting spoke. She thanked the Commission and the development team for their work and their vision. She stressed how accident-prone Webster Street is, with more accidents occurring as the weather worsens throughout the year. What the developer wants to achieve with their vision really takes from the neighborhood, inflicting increased disruption with traffic, and an intense numbers of cars for downtown events or going through the downtown on the outer ring. Try to give something back to the neighborhood for all you are going to get.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- For it to be truly exceptional design it's going to have to continue to evolve. I'm not particularly opposed to 10-stories. I wonder if it's time to just forget about that fulcrum. The south and east sides are really nice but the north and west sides don't seem to be as refined and simple; the banding doesn't go around the east and west sides. Wrap glass treatment around other elevations. I encourage you to keep refining it.
- Use glass as an enhancement in combination with layering on elevations adjacent to the Lamp House.
- You mentioned how the layers relate to each other, so you've got layers covered. I think the suggestion of having glass on your building might enhance it more than layering does. You've got a great building to have reflections of.
- The view from the south looking straight into the building, it seems very disjointed. The one going east-west seems too prominent and detached to the top pieces going north-south.
- That's what I was suggesting, the fulcrum versus just a nice simple slot at the top.
 - The reason for this element coming up is because that is where all our rooftop mechanicals are.
- The use of the word refinement I think is appropriate. There isn't a particular component to this building that doesn't feel resolved and connected to the rest, but again I will continue to have the sense of the two bonus stories in this location, I just don't find it appropriate. Each piece that you've described, looking at the design, is well thought through. For me it's the mass, the two bonus stories.
 - The design isn't enough to merit that in your opinion, or just the building itself feels like it should be less tall?

Less tall. To me, I don't know what exceptional design feature would display to me that two additional stories was appropriate for this site. Fantastic program, fantastic views, the energy on the site is excellent and the energy on the upper floors is also excellent. Your adding of outdoor spaces facing the Lamp House I think is a very successful move.

- What features merit bonus stories?
- (Kevin Firchow) It's a straight six-stories is the recommendation in the plan and what the zoning ordinance says. The reason they're actually doing a Planned Development, that's the way to get height in excess of the height map.
- I'm going to echo that comment about the height. I like the idea of what you're doing with the Lamp House and interacting with it, but I don't think the landscape going on is there yet. I think you could do a lot better with that. You've got a nice looking building, the rooftop things are nice but they are things that are going to give you profit, they're good for the hotel to have. I don't see them as exceptional, I see them as smart business moves. I'm still concerned with the street, the valet moving in and out, bicycling next to it, people getting out of the cars. It's not the valet I'm worried about but people getting in and out of their cars, not knowing the city. Those need to be resolved for me.
- I don't necessarily have a problem with getting to 10-stories, but I think the more work you can do on the Lamp House landscaping, resolved some of that, have further conversations with Traffic Engineering about how that bike lane can be distinguished. Just some real good information that allows us to evaluate that, and designs that will make it safer through that outer ring.

- Corner of East Washington Avenue seems busy and could be better resolved. It's adding a business. You've got an elegant thing going on here, you just need to tighten it up.
- (Alder Zellers) In regards to the shadow study, they did point out that it impacts the Lamp House for two hours during the day. Two hours in a 24 hour period doesn't sound like a whole lot, but it's 17% of daylight hours that that is impacted and that concerns me. I don't know whether it is enough of a concern overall but it's something needs to be at least considered. If it were to comply with the current height map it would not have that problem at all. It's the additional four stories on top of the six on the house block that is causing that additional two hours.
 - That's why we did the comparison between the six-stories on the North Webster side (right-hand side) versus the left-hand side which is 10-stories. Overall you see the shadows land (at Noon), both at the 6-story and the 10-story were not on the roof. The idea of between 10 a.m. and Noon at that point, just on the vertical face and both options whether we're at 6-stories or 10-stories at 15 North Webster Street. That's our analysis on it, we'll share that model with staff when we sit down and go over everything.

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
Member Ratings	6	6.5	-	-	-	4.5	8	6
	7	7	-	7	7	7	9	7

General Comments:

- Height is still an issue. Exceptional? Not yet!
- Concerned about Webster traffic conflict – unresolved. Building is good, a little too “fussy” at top along East Washington. Would prefer Webster lot component be lower by 2-stories to improve shadow impact on Lamp House. Adding more “green” features will add value.
- Continued improvement. Continue to refine. Less variety on north and west elevations like you’ve done on other two sides. Not yet truly exceptional.