

## AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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**REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION**

**TITLE:** 704-734 University Avenue – Advisory  
Recommendation for UW-Madison School  
of Music Performance Building. 8<sup>th</sup> Ald.  
Dist. (35424)

**AUTHOR:** Alan J. Martin, Secretary

**DATED:** December 17, 2014

**PRESENTED:** December 17, 2014

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**ID NUMBER:**

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

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of December 17, 2014, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** as an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission for the UW-Madison School of Music Performance Building located at 704-734 University Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Gary Brown, Peter Heaslett and Susan C. Cook, all representing UW-Madison; Shane Bernau, representing Ken Saiki Design; and Mark Bastian, representing the State of Wisconsin DOA/DPD.

Starting on University Avenue we see a series of street trees and tree grates, concrete terrace with sidewalk the same width as is now, carrying through some of the paving and landscaping elements as the Chazen end. The street trees are offset in an asymmetrical pattern to work with the building as a composition. The building is very horizontal in the center section, with strong architectural elements on the corners to punctuate that horizontal component, and the trees will play with that. A landscape feature at the corner will consist of Allium and Amsonia knee level plantings with one feature tree to anchor that corner. The parking lot will be landscaped according to City standards and the University approvals. Minor changes to the southwest corner of the building include stepping back the rehearsal hall space along University Avenue to create a new west entry.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- The Lake Street side of this building doesn’t activate the street in any sense. It’s rather cold in some ways. Is the next phase going to improve that sense?
  - It should significantly. There will be lighting of the building along that east façade to help play with the shadows, and we do have street trees along there. That all adds to the texture and life along the street.
- How well does this precast panel wear?
  - It’d wear like concrete, so indefinitely. The coloring is to reflect the Chazen limestone, the thought right now is one face would be smooth and the opposite edge would be a texture.

- I appreciate the backing off and expanding the glass along University Avenue. I am a little concerned about the Phase II Lake Street elevation. I see the building as a real rhythm and it's elegantly detailed and I'm not sure the lyrical random windows are as successful as everything else. I'd almost rather see as large windows as you could get in those areas, a regular rhythm of windows that are the same size. It just seems that, I'm not a musician, but it doesn't say anything to me. Since we're really looking for ways to activate the street and lighten that up...I don't know that you'll ever get that perspective.
  - Some of what you're not seeing is the actual texture of the metal pieces that'll be toward the back of the building, there will be light and shadow on that as well.
- Does the landscape wall along Lake Street, does it get higher and higher as you walk towards the lake?
  - The current thought is that there is a foundation wall beneath the precast folds, and that is separate, just a raised curb that follows the grade.
- How long until Phase III, realistically?
  - We don't know.  
You have such nice lines in here, I'd rather see them as two straight lines, but I think to do that it'd help for a second tree in there, and I'm looking at long-range. And technically you should have trees in here too. I really think this would look nicer with straight lines. If it's going to be more than five years.
- I have trouble with the Lake Street façade. You could address it with windows, but I wonder why you ruled out any access from Lake Street.
  - It's really a security issue and it's considered an egress only component.  
But you could connect to your main lobby.  
There are considerations for front of house and back of house.  
You wouldn't have to reconfigure much internally to make that happen. Just a thought.

## **ACTION:**

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-1) with Slayton voting no.

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 rating for this project is 6.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 704-734 University Avenue**

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

General Comments:

- Like how design has evolved, concerned about blank wall on Lake Street (Phase II).
- Activation of Lake Street? Where is this?