

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: March 11, 2015

TITLE: 1004 & 1032 South Park Street – Amended PD(GDP-SIP), Four Connected Mixed-Use Buildings in UDD No. 7. 13th Ald. Dist. (36572)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: March 11, 2015

ID NUMBER:

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 11, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for an Amended PD(GDP-SIP) for four connected mixed-use buildings located at 1004 and 1032 South Park Street in UDD No. 7. Appearing on behalf of the project were Randy Bruce, representing T. Wall Enterprises; and David Voges. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Jane A. Smith. Registered and speaking in opposition were Helen Kitchel, Carrie Rothburd, Daniel Thurs, Cindy McCallan, Jim Winkle and Steve Vanko. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak were Jane Elmer and Kirk Elliot.

The Secretary noted that this body deals with design issues, not land use, not engineering issues, etc. He also noted that this is an informational presentation with no formal action being requested, therefore a referral is not appropriate, nor were postcards mailed.

Bruce presented modified plans based on the Commission’s previous review of the project and two neighborhood meetings. The project now includes 173 dwelling units and 9,500 square feet of commercial space, with 177 surface and below grade parking stalls. Vehicular access to the site is available on Park Street in two locations or from Fish Hatchery Road. A left-turn lane will be constructed onto Park Street to allow turns into the site; no left-turns will be allowed off of the site. Some live-work units are being considered to flex between commercial use or residential use as there is some concern about the viability of commercial space on Park Street. Buildings materials are predominantly masonry, metal composite, glass on the corner and metal siding on the upper levels. Shadow studies were shown.

Helen Kitchel spoke in opposition, citing her primary concern that the development is too large, too tall. The neighborhood would prefer to see it as 2-4 stories, in line with Urban Design District No. 7, which would also be consistent with new buildings in the neighborhood. Making the building smaller but keeping the parking stall

number the same would serve the building much better for residents, visitors, employees and customers. There is great concern about parking in the neighborhood already.

David Voges spoke in support of the building. He doesn't want 6 stories but if that's what it takes to put a development here, so be it. Park Street is in the midst of a transition and it is important to allow growth to happen. The architect and developer listened to the neighborhood at the first meeting and came back incorporating much of what the neighborhood wanted.

Steve Vanko spoke in opposition. Everything over 2-stories will be able to look into all the living areas of his home. This development will increase the Bay Creek Neighborhood about 10-13% in one island. There have been two accidents at this corner since their neighborhood meeting in January. If this corner is going to be blocked it is going to cause a lot more accidents. Water is always the last thing looked at and could be the most important part of this project.

Jim Winkle spoke in opposition but thinks with some improvements it could be really nice. The new design is a lot better, he likes the density but this is just a little bit too much, too high. He hopes this project will incorporate green initiatives. He would like to see very more diversity in the building types. The covered surface parking doesn't sound appealing and may not appeal to customers who could be coming to these commercial storefronts.

Cindy McCallan spoke in opposition. She likes the design of the buildings, the first four floors. The glass and metal on the north side of the building, environmentally doesn't make sense. If it was softened with stone it could look better. Making the columns more Italianate would blend in better with the Bay Creek Neighborhood.

Daniel Thurs spoke in opposition. In reference to the corner, it feels very unconnected to the rest of the neighborhood. To him this elevates that and strikes him as more of a wedge than a bridge. There are ways to develop this that are more in conversation with the rest of the neighborhood. Bring that corner into the space around it rather than setting it apart.

Carrie Rothburd spoke in opposition. These plans do not respect the Park Street Corridor Urban Design Guidelines. The 2006 BUILD Report suggested 30-50 dwellings per acre; this proposal is 2 1/3 times that recommendation. These plans call for buildings that fit into the fabric of the neighborhood. T. Wall himself acknowledges that his plan introduces a variety of challenges arising from the type and mass, but offers no researched solutions to the potential noise, light pollution, traffic dangers, water run-off, parking, etc. The mixed-use aspect of the building should draw people to it, but insurance offices or real estate business are not going to activate this area. Bay Creek and its neighbors are pro-development but deserve more of a project than what is proposed.

The Secretary noted that the adoption of the GDP supersedes the City's development plans for this area, it led to the clinic that is inconsistent with either of the previous plans. The Park Street Guidelines state four plus two; density and height would not be an issue. The GDP approved for the entire site allows for six floors, perhaps seven, with a floor area ratio of five. Bruce noted that this is high value land and requires a higher density for the financial feasibility of the development. This development would occur in two phases: first the corner with the parking and then the second phase being the building itself.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I want to make sure that we win architecturally this time around. What I struggle with is while I like what you're doing at the very tip of the property, everything else looks like something we've seen

before. This site really needs to wow you architecturally, good design doesn't always have to be more expensive. I would really like to see this site being unlike everything else in Madison. It needs to be an architectural gem and not be piece-meal.

- Last time this looked like 3 buildings and we talked about doing something more cohesive so it reads as more of one building. It almost feels like now we've gone back to 4 buildings. The more modern prow, the glass, metal, is something that would be appropriate at that corner. The column in this design solution brings it down to a screeching halt.
- One of the sides could have beautiful suspended cantilever balconies, for the live-work units.
- The engagement of the neighborhood is very important, particularly from the standpoint of massing and use, but from an architectural standpoint we have a commission of design professionals here to make those decisions. This has always been an extremely significant site and needs significant architecture. It should stand out and be significant.
- I do like the modern take. We need to look at the bigger picture, the long-term change of Park Street. What I'm feeling remiss is what this is going to look like for the neighborhood, one of these 3-D models helping people visualize that the whole street is going to change. The other incomplete piece of this is the transportation corridor aspect of this. Where is the vision that shows the BRT, how bikes and pedestrians would be handled? It's a bad intersection. So part of the issue is the piece-meal-ness of all of this. I don't think how Park Street plays into this as a complete street has been worked out at all, and that really needs to be another part of the plan. This is not Monroe or Williamson Street, this gets 90,000 cars per day and is the 3rd busiest corridor in the City. This is not a pedestrian-friendly street.
- It needs to be sustainable. This intersection is a nightmare, it's like crossing 2 or 3 streets.
- The median treatment is going to be very important. If this needs to have a left turn going north that doesn't bother me. Wingra Creek is 2-3 blocks away, there needs to be green somehow, incorporate that.
- Placemaking is a big deal, people need to think this is a great place to go to. Look into what you can do for the neighborhood. This is going to be the signature piece that people will point to for decades.
 - Are you suggesting more open space on this corner?
- Trader Joe's is on a flatiron site, and they created this plaza that is barren, for some reason. I don't want a space that's just a space to be a space, it needs to invite people. Maybe it happens along here where people are going into shops. I think Park Street is more important than Fish Hatchery Road but it could happen in both places.
- If you pulled part of that commercial space in a little bit so there's a notch, and there was a café and seating...everybody is saying this needs to be more than the usual and what we're pretty much seeing is the usual. We're encouraging more though.
- The corner, the prow is a living space? What if it was pulled back one bay and that open corner maybe projected without the column, ultimately because a porch or deck?
 - We talked about the deck but we didn't want it littered with furniture.That's human.
- (Rothburd) How is input and concern from neighborhoods incorporated into the decisions that are made with regard to the buildings?
 - You will have more chances to speak when we have a hearing here. There may be some more neighborhood meetings, I don't know if the Alder is planning on that. So you'll have chances there. There's chances at the Plan Commission, at the Common Council.
- (Rothburd) But that doesn't answer the question of how is that incorporated?
 - We listen to those concerns, we have our own concerns and judgments that we make, and we may or may not agree with you. We've had neighborhoods that want very traditional stuff that blends in, and if that's the case it's going to be the city of total lameness, that's not our goal to create a city that's totally bland. As you heard we've seen these types of designs pop up

constantly and they're all around the city. We think that good architecture sometimes has differences rather than just sameness, so that's what we sometimes challenge the designers to come up with something that's not the same place as everywhere else. We don't think this design is there yet. The key thing for us about the GDP already approved for this site is that it provides a certain number of stories, and we'll get that document so that's clear to us and hopefully clear to you, from that previous action of the City Council, then we're probably not going to look at the question of reducing the number of stories if that's already been approved. You have a concern there but we're not going to incorporate that concern if there's already a GDP that says 6 stories.

- (Rothburd) So those previous planning things are...
 - They are good at the time but there's been an action since then where the City Council adopted a GDP, so you need to be aware not just of those previous things, but of the Council action for the GDP as well.
- Outstanding architecture is amazing; outstanding fashion design is amazing but you don't, most of our bodies can't support it, and even those bodies that can can't live and work in them, and I think there's something to be said for the ability that I'm hearing this commission overlook. You are saying, you're hearing loud and clear from a small portion of neighbors that you are changing what we find livable in our community in a way that doesn't suit us and makes us less comfortable. I understand a beautiful city, I understand setting a direction. But I'm not hearing enough of a balance between the two. I'm hearing a rather patronizing "we're the professionals, we know." You are professional architects, you know design in a way we don't. But we know what it's like to live on these streets.
 - We're also charged with the entire City.
- You are, but every neighborhood in the City should be livable.
- I understand, but the Common Council already approved a General Development Plan that provides for these densities.
 - (Rothburd) Well maybe they made a mistake.
- But we have to go along with that.
- Then you have to get the Council to change, not us. And you're perfectly entitled to do that.
- I think the neighbors are in a really awkward position with an interim Alder, and you will have a new Alderperson in about 6 weeks, so I would just ask the committee to be very helpful with understanding what we do here and how City rules help guide development, because there's going to be new people working on this.

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 rating for this project is 5.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 1004 & 1032 South Park Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	6	5	-	5	-	6	8	5
	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-

General Comments:

- Too conservative and doesn't take advantage of site geometry and location.
- Getting there, could be better. Will be hard to satisfy neighbors and do good design at the same time.