

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** July 15, 2015

TITLE: 2500 Winnebago Street – PD(SIP), Two 4-Story, Mixed-Use Structures with Underground Residential Parking in UDD No. 5. 6th Ald. Dist. (35780) **REFERRED:**
REREFERRED:
REPORTED BACK:

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

DATED: July 15, 2015 **ID NUMBER:**

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of July 15, 2015, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a PD(SIP) for two 4-story, mixed-use structures with underground residential parking in UDD No. 5 located at 2500 Winnebago Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Marc Ott and Ted Matkom, both representing Gorman and Company. The landscaping around the underground parking entrance has been improved. Changes to the buildings include fewer colors (now at four) and less verticals/stripes for a much simpler palette. The corner elements have changed to the square, which works better with the other building. Overall the development is simpler and less randomized.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- What’s the neighborhood reaction to the changes?
 - We haven’t had any more neighborhood meetings on this. We haven’t had any new comments from the neighborhood even though they’ve been included on all the tweaks we’ve made.
- Going back a few meetings to some of the bigger comments about the architecture; you have the opportunity to create an entire street, and with the chaotic form you’re introducing and simply replicating and changing the color, you’re really not creating a composition of a street, which is a great opportunity that you have and with more study on the architecture and creating a composition, you could really have a great impact on this site.
 - We all have our opinion.
- Can you speak to the architecture precedent for each of the roof forms and stylistically what the precedent is for the composition as a whole?
 - It’s kind of a craftsman style multi-family building. Based on comments from the neighborhood, they replicate Ingersoll, Park Central and City Row. Kind of the form, style and colors are based off of those kinds of projects, what the neighbors asked for, for their streetscape. As far as more study, more refinement, when we started this was a whole different project. That building might have been more liked by others, but not by the neighborhood. I worry that we made the tweaks

that have been asked and again, this might not be everybody's style but that's a different debate than what's approvable. Again you asked us to make these tweaks and now you're asking us to go back to the drawing board. This is a WHEDA funded project, we've got the tax credits and if we don't start by a certain time period we lose those tax credits. I don't "have time" to start over, we really made great effort for how far we've come.

- We reviewed these plans prior to the meeting, and one of my comments to Jay Wendt, Principal Planner, as well as his comments to me, we didn't think, as far as the elevations, that you really didn't respond to eliminating a lot of these little vertical strips and changes without creating an A, B, C composition, which is in several reports. Something that holds the corner, changes elements, maybe another broader proportional element, this has been part of the record of comments (staff).
- Less reliance on late 19th early 20th Century architectural features.
 - That's your opinion.
- I'm voting.
- I'm voting too.
 - That's your one opinion on one style of building. This style is around the City of Madison all over and has been done successfully. It's approvable and people like it.
 - Do you guys think this is cliché?
- This doesn't create a sense of place. You have this central plaza between two buildings that you're trying to draw people to and nothing in these elevations queues me as a member of the public that that's a public space for me to walk through.
 - Again the landscape plan is in your packet.
- This is architecture. If the corner were treated differently, and I'm not speaking to just someone's dining room or bedroom, but if there were actually a gesture in the massing, the corner were treated and returned as something special, rather than another somebody's unit.
 - I understand what you're saying, but this is a WHEDA, affordable housing, multi-family project. I can't have unusable space, this has to be a bedroom and this has to be a living room. I can't make it one three floors, on two buildings some grand gesture, it still has to be a building that we build for a purpose, people have to live there, we don't have infinite funds.
- We're not talking about changing the building and the purpose of the building, it's how you're articulating the building and these are examples that are very much a "wrappable" façade on that building that exists. So it can just be wrapped differently.
- I had the same sense, that this is a great opportunity that's been missed. But I also know that this is a project that the neighborhood has worked so long and hard on, is it approvable? We've tried to nudge this in so many ways, but nudging has not worked.
- We also talked about the residential entrance and bringing some prominence or some improvement to that.
 - We have tried to make that prominent, pulling that out, having a different canopy treatment to signify from the rest of the retail entrances that this is your unit entry.
- (Alder Rummel) I hear your concerns, and I also agree with Dick (Chair), I don't really know how to advise you. I want to see a legacy building we're all proud of for years to come and I respect your judgment. I look at that corner and get what you're saying, the awkwardness, but I don't know how to solve that. I want you to approve it but on the other hand we want something we can be proud of.
 - Legacy building, etc. This is one building in an entire development so you have to look at the internal, but this development as a whole. The stuff we're doing in here, and we'll be back in a few weeks, it's very exciting as a whole development. Yes this is a building on that development and we can all have our opinions, but as it works together, we've worked really hard to make sure the whole thing works well together. The neighborhood is going to love this.

- It looks like there was a lot of effort spent trying to make this building appear as though it's a series of buildings that evolved and were built by separate designers and developers. The one you brought a few weeks ago, it was designed as an overall composition and it made a clear distinction between its retail/commercial first floor use and the residential uses above, and it was much more successful. I think we gave it a fairly positive reception here. This one we've been very clear about our comments and consistent.
 - I get it, and I've been very consistent with how we got here and this style of building. This particular style is driven by the year-long neighborhood meetings we had, and when we asked them, they said they wanted this style building and a similar style to the co-housing group, and that's the style they want when they walk down their street. That's how we got there.
- The process requires approval by this body. It requires approval of all parties involved and the neighborhood, everybody, it represents a consensus. One doesn't rule out the other, and you still have to get approval of this body. I talked to our Director about this, I said it was the same comments we had the previous time, and it's the same comments again tonight. Same issue, and the words are you have to get this body's approval. The neighborhood process is the neighborhood process, but a project represents a consensus of all those shareholders involved. To say "this is what the neighborhood wants," you said it last time and you're saying it again today, again, you're at the Urban Design Commission and you need the Urban Design Commission's approval. You know the issues, they're in both reports (staff).
- Based on your comment that this is a WHEDA project, even though it's a WHEDA project, you are a designer, and I would think that this opportunity at building a whole block does not come every day. Therefore I think you would have really put your best foot forward, because I only know of one project that took up a whole block. Just because it's WHEDA doesn't mean that you don't put your best foot forward. You made that comment before and I just think that you need to eliminate that comment.
 - The WHEDA comment, I think it's an exceptional quality building for any development to be honest, it's more based on our budget constraints that we have with a project of that type, it's not an unlimited funded project, there are cost caps, and our timeline that we're constrained to, we're locked into a certain tax credit return. That's what I was getting at with the WHEDA comments, not so much the quality or lack thereof because of that.
- (Alder Rummel) I heard Cliff say that the other building was maybe more OK? An earlier iteration was better? I just want to make sure I understand your comments.
- That was very, very preliminary. It wasn't relying on historical gimmicks, it was well composed, it had a real clear distinction between its commercial base and residential. And between the two differences it had subtle differences between the two buildings, it had a real nice composition and rhythm, it wasn't as chaotic as it is here. We're not asking you to spend more money on the materials, however, simplifying details, the little parapet tops and a consistent roofline, would save some money. We did give it initial approval.
 - I would ask that we call a vote, if it's a negative vote we would love to have some comments.
- I think you had the comments before. They've been repeated twice.
- The comments haven't changed.
 - I feel, when I was at the last meeting, that he was addressing those.
- We've already said twice that they weren't addressed, they weren't addressed last time and they said they weren't addressed last time, they're in the report from last time, and again in reviewing the project myself and talking to you, it doesn't appear to be addressed.
 - In the report we went from 6 to 3 masses and simplified it quite a bit. That's where I feel we are addressing it, I've worked hard and I'm trying to address the comments that I heard. In my opinion, we tried to address the comments that we heard. The A, B, A comments, again we did our best.

- I think you did address quite a bit of what we talked about in the landscape plan, I'm fine with the driveway. The only thing I would suggest very strongly for you is where you have your trees, instead of putting sod in here, it's so inefficient and it's going to wreck the trees. Get rid of the grass.
 - We just actually had that conversation today, I agree.
- Where are we at in terms of the approval process?
 - (Secretary) They've gotten everybody's approval except for our final approval. They're all done except for us. They're here for final to meet the same conditions that we established with the initial approval. You may feel that you meet them but conditions being met is based on the votes at the table. One of the things we talked about at staff and the joint meeting was perhaps when things aren't cooked that they should be taken off the agenda, but at this point in time it's already on the agenda, let the Commission do its job. If it feels it merits approval, fine, if it feels that it doesn't, tell him what to do.

ACTION:

On a motion by O'Kroley, seconded by Goodhart, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of this item. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-0).

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 6.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 2500 Winnebago Street

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