

## AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** March 9, 2016

**TITLE:** 1801 East Washington Avenue – New  
Development, One 4-Story Building  
Containing 228 Apartment Units and 8,900  
Square Feet of Commercial Space in UDD  
No. 8. 6<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (40143)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

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

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** March 9, 2016

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Cliff Goodhart, Dawn O’Kroley, Tom DeChant, John Harrington, Lois Braun-Oddo and Michael Rosenblum.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of March 9, 2016, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of one 4-story building containing 228 apartment units and 8,900 square feet of commercial space in UDD No. 8 located at 1801 East Washington Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Michael Campbell, Brandon Davis, Luke Haas, Mike Bach, Jeff Vercauteren, representing Campbell Capital Group/M-M Properties; Cathy Debevec, Bill Breisch and Dorothy Breisch. Registered and speaking in opposition was Anne Walker. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak was Ed Jepsen, representing Friends of the Yahara River Parkway. Campbell discussed the outcomes of various meetings the team has had over the last several months, with both neighborhood residents and the City. The corner of East Washington Avenue and Yahara has been re-graded, eliminating the railing, removed hardscape and raised the tower to open the corner up and is more at street grade. The architecture is simplified and cleaner to be more urban contemporary look. The river side of the project shows the building stepped down to address better the nearby single-family residences and widened the area. Stoops have been added to the Main Street townhomes to engage the public street and open it up to the neighborhood. Plantings will separate the private use from public use. Garden space will be made available for rental to the residents. Along the Main Street exterior they moved the sidewalk further away from the back of the curb to allow for the existing trees that are there to remain. Overall they will reduce the amount of impervious area as it exists today, with the internal courtyards, perimeter greenspace. Just by the nature of the development it will reduce the amount of run-off, and they have underground detention on both Main Street and East Washington Avenue. Hardi reveal panels will be used.

Anne Walker spoke as a nearby resident. She appreciates the improvements on the Main Street side. This is an area that is park and greenspace-deficient. She shared information from the Marquette-Schenk-Atwood Neighborhood Plan of 1994. She mentioned “bright lights, big city” and the peacefulness of the Yahara River Parkway and the lighting concerns this project also brings up. The architecture should reflect the style of the area. This development proposal is the wrong fit in this location.

Ed Jepsen spoke to the need for more parkland with the increase in density. One of the issues with this proposal is the section between East Main Street and the plaza; there isn’t enough separation between the private space

and the public space. If you compare this building to Riverview Apartments, River's Edge Apartments or Yahara Landing, all of those have separations of 20-feet, 40-feet, 45-80-feet. There could be a better solution for this corner.

Bill Breisch spoke as a 40-year nearby resident. He found the original design proposal to be thoughtful and very compatible with the neighborhood. Revisions made from those plans were also very thoughtful. The townhouse appearance and colors are very compatible and attractive.

Cathy Debevec spoke mostly in favor, with some reservations. She appreciates the increase of residential in the area, the public pathways and the buildings on East Main Street that will mesh well with the existing residences. The loss of tree canopy due to the power lines is of great concern to her. She mentioned the importance of night sky lighting.

Heather Stouder of the Planning Division discussed the staff report and what the Urban Design Commission could comment on:

- Review and acknowledgement of the need for a driveway from East Main Street as it pertains to the related guideline in the Parking and Service Areas section of the ordinance.
- Acknowledge that the specific species and placement of trees in the public right-of-way will be determined by Forestry staff at a later date. Make clear to the applicant any expectations for further coordination regarding street trees prior to final approval.
- Affirm the adequacy of the setback on East Main Street as proposed.
- Review of the adequacy of landscaping on all sides of the building, particularly along the East Main Street frontage.
- Review of the lighting details provided, and a request for further detail on the on-building lighting.
- Discussion on the types of cementations panels, including clarification on whether board and batten panels are still being proposed.
- Views of all elevations of the building (particularly east facing the railroad), as well as all of the interior courtyard elevations, for the Commission's review.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- It does raise the question of the auto repair business there right now. What does the plan for East Washington Avenue call for for that particular parcel?
  - (Staff) Right now the Capitol East Gateway Corridor Plan calls for primarily employment uses on that entire half of the block. As staff we put forth a proposed plan amendment to change that from primarily employment to community mixed-use, to support this project. We have proposed to extend that change to the auto dealership property; at this point the owner is supportive of that. In the future we would envision a range, a mix of uses could be proposed for that site. It's about 90-feet deep and we do see it as a potential opportunity for sharing parking with this development.
- (Rummel) Can you respond to Ed's point about the other uses along the river that are set back further than this proposal, and has staff talked about that?
  - (Staff) We have talked about it a little bit. In regards to UDD No. 8 and how that was crafted, our ordinance requires a setback from the Yahara River Parkway ranging from 0-10-feet. The UDD No. 8 ordinance has a minimum and maximum setback, which staff is strongly supporting exceeding that maximum. Right now the building is placed between 11-27 feet from the Yahara Parkway. But given the ordinance we did not have a way to really push for a much greater

setback, particularly when the height of the building is 3-stories along that tightest part along the Yahara.

- Can you speak to the Main Street setback and what is the issue with that, according to our City Attorney?
  - (Staff) This is something that's confusing as the ordinance is currently written. For all of Main Street it looked like the intended setback was 15-feet and yet there's a note at the bottom of the table that says east-west streets that aren't East Washington have a setback of 5-20-feet, so it provides a much greater range. We think it's an internal conflict in the ordinance and that it should probably be clarified moving forward, particularly as things start to happen elsewhere along Main Street. For this particular proposal we felt like the 5-10-setback being proposed is certainly reviewable, it's a conditional use, the Urban Design Commission can certainly weigh in on that. We think that it's probably OK given the fact that it's a 2-story residential façade facing East Main Street, and that there's a relatively wide terrace (12 or more feet wide), which provides more breathing room between the building and the curb.
- Have you made any decisions about green roof amenities?
  - Currently we're not proposing a full green roof. We have a sky lounge in one corner with some greenery on that deck.
- Those two stair towers that face the river, can you describe the glass? It seems like a potential lighting spill all night long.
  - Right now it's some type of tinted glass. If it's a concern we could rotate the windows around so they are internal and the light doesn't spill out onto the river, or we could eliminate them.

We like those windows.
- We didn't have enough information to report back on the lighting plan.
- You're coming along nicely. Your tree species list, I would really encourage some large canopy trees, not just for aesthetics. I do think the setback on Main Street is too small. Provide large canopy trees and use more White Oaks on all sides.
- The tree spacing is fine.
- I would really encourage you to rethink the landscaping along Main Street where you have 60+ feet of daylilies. I would recommend some Hostas in there, it's just too much otherwise. I don't mind some daylilies, just not the entire stretch.
- On the deck it looks like it's going to be very hot. You need some kind of shading in there.
  - That was really just to show where we were going to do the sky lounge.
- Need trellis(s) to handle the heat.
- Particularly along the river, could you provide a comprehensive plan showing your landscape, your topography, your lighting? Because whether your property is park-proper or what the setback is, that really should feel like a park and a continuous stretch along the Yahara. And check your photometrics to be sure you're not spilling light off your property, particularly at the river.
- Try to help us understand the whole river/building interaction. We need more details on the bike path and river area with other relative context to the project.
- Is the sky lounge just for the residents?
  - Yes, just for the residents.
- The fencing at these internalized courtyards, if you could make the case to how necessary that is and why it can't feel more like a public space just because you've internalized so much of your greenspace.
  - We don't want this to be a 24-hour situation. We still have security issues, like a park has hours, but this is private but we're allowing the public to use it.

So if it's fenced, look at how you're landscaping this and how you're not creating a barrier, and how it can feel like a continuation of this public park-like space, even if it is fenced and you shut the gates, just so it doesn't look like such a hard barrier.

- The lack of trees on the Main Street setback – it’s important to get some tall canopy tree plantings.
- The District does require trees on your property, that meet certain standards and still meet Fire access. Right now you virtually have none that are not part of your private property along Main Street except for the courtyard.
  - The reason we don’t is because of the 5-foot setback.

Again, the issue of whether or not it should be 15 is also part of this too, that’s why it’s being brought up (per UDD No. 8 provision regarding setback and trees).
- If we really want to maintain the character of that street you need to have more trees, and I would encourage a larger setback.
- You have to work with the spacing that’s provided. The District does require that you have something in the private area, that’s why it’s a setback, so it relates to what’s happening in the public way.
- It seems like there’s an awful lot of hardscape in the courtyard off of Main Street. Those raised beds for gardens don’t look like they’re going to get a whole lot of sun, for a garden.
  - There will be a bit of shade from the building, but the majority of them will get sun all day.
- Maybe to engage the neighborhood a bit more the planters/gardens are moved from the inside of the courtyard to the outside, and also get more sun. But the hardscape is still too much.
  - If you want us to reduce hardscape we will, I’m OK with that. Just tell us where you want us to reduce it and we’ll do it.
- I do think you could get more shade and more green without reducing the hardscape a whole lot, you do need that hardscape for the public use.
- The fiber cement panels, with the drawings we don’t see a whole lot of detail on those; too much grays and beiges, need more color. There might be some opportunities with some color to bring some more life to these elevations. There are enormous amounts of panel, I’m wondering if there’s a way to bring some continuity throughout the entire project but yet have a little bit more of a bold expression in your design. We encourage the use of a more modern expression and this looks like you’re trying to make it modern but not so modern that the neighbors don’t like it. I don’t think there’s any problems with the project basically, but because of the size of it, I think some of the details, some of the colors, some of the rhythms you’ve got, can just use a little bit more work and expression. Also need more refinement in the architectural character along Main Street.
- Need more detailing on the appearance of the ramp.
- This has also gone to Landmarks, and originally it had orange panels, and they said maybe the building wasn’t so large but it was intrusive to the landmark, which is the Yahara Parkway. So we have a third seat at the table, besides neighbors, the UDC and the applicant. There was an extreme and they moved the other direction.
- So the historic comment is related to Yahara? That face really? An elevation as we’re driving towards the Capitol with the exposed parking structure and articulate what’s really there, we don’t have anything to review in front of us. And Main Street, that’s a residential scale parcel and while I also appreciate the modernism and bring more modernism to this, the rigidity of it and walking along that and having all of these marching along townhouses, there needs to be more refinement and character in that to make it appropriate for that long of a run on a residential street.
- Maybe it’s the lighter brick entryway, but I think especially in that illustration at our table, it looks foreign to the rest of it and I’m wondering if maybe there’s a use of that material elsewhere as well without trying to draw attention that would help lighten the façade of those (East Washington elevation). It is dark gray and maybe the use of that lighter brick somewhere else, whether in a rhythm going across, that would help lighten that.
- Need to pull it all together to create more experiences along that walk (East Washington).
- Need car level perspective renderings.
- Need more variation in the façades along East Main Street.

- I'd like to see all the elevations to get a better view of the entire development site.
- The Yahara setback cannot be approved at this point until the Commission understands the topography and if there's a retaining wall, what's happening along that parcel.
- Provide full lighting details.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by DeChant, seconded by Goodhart, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-0). The motion provided for the following:

- Address of all comments on architecture, site, landscaping and setback.
- The setback on Main Street should be increased to accommodate more canopy trees.
- The Yahara setback is not approved. Need to provide full details on the project's interface with the bike path and river as noted within the comments.

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: 1801 East Washington Avenue**

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

General Comments:

- More canopy trees, pay strong attention to Yahara River and Main Street.