

AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: June 29, 2016

TITLE: 1109 South Park Street – New
Development of a 4-Story Mixed-Use
Building with Underground Parking in
UDD No. 7. 13th Ald. Dist. (42707)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: June 29, 2016

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Cliff Goodhart, Michael Rosenblum, Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, Sheri Carter and Richard Slayton.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of June 29, 2016, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for new development located at 1109 South Park Street. Appearing on behalf of the project Steve Shulfer and Nick Badura, representing the property owner. Registered and speaking in opposition were Carrie Rothburd, representing BCNA Planning & Economic Development Committee; Bonnie Schmidt, Mark Schoendorff and Steve Keidl. Shulfer presented changes made to the project: the driveway is co-located with the existing alley to enhance the Emerson Street side, extra patio space has been added, landscape arbors have been added to the buffer between the residents and the parking lot to minimize the affect of headlights, moved the trash enclosure to prevent trucks from having to pull in and out, retaining walls are proposed to help with the grade change off of Park Street, and the addition of landscape islands throughout the site. Twenty bicycle stalls have been added to the project. The balconies on the Park Street side have been pulled back to create a “Juliette” balcony to minimize the effect of pedestrians below. The rooftop patio remains. The building has been stepped-down internally in response to the Commission’s previous review. In discussions with the Alder and neighborhood, they are trying to work out the possibility of a driveway entry off of Park Street to relieve traffic pressure on Emerson Street. They are also looking at incorporating larger units and reduce the efficiency counts.

Carrie Rothburd spoke in opposition on behalf of the neighborhood association. They still see a divergence between the standards and the building. The plan is at odds with the Bay Creek principles; to assure a smooth transition the association is calling for the developer to hold to the 3-story zoning height, being of a mass and scale appropriate to the footprint of the lot and the neighboring lots, and respecting the established uses and enjoyments of the properties. They have asked for removal of the community room on the 5th story, and requested the 4th story apartment be replaced with street level townhomes that encloses the parking. It would reduce the physical mass and shadow cast by the massing, reduce the number of units, thus cars and parking spaces, and increase the possibility of four-sided architecture. The balance of efficiencies is also a problem for the neighborhood.

Bonnie Schmidt spoke in opposition. She made a big financial investment by purchasing and installing solar panels on her home. The building is too big and very imposing. It will personally affect her solar production and massively impact the surrounding neighbors. Many of the comments from the neighborhood meeting have been incorporated in the newest plans, which she appreciates. In looking at Park Street as a whole, when you put a giant box building that is too big for the neighborhood, and create no sense of it being part of a community, then you're just building more blocky infrastructure that keeps people apart rather than bringing them together. Also if you look at Park Street coming from the Beltline heading to downtown, this will be the largest building on that side of the street that's up against homes. Going towards campus there are business/campus buildings and the triangle that was designed to be a community; those buildings were designed together where there are no private homes anymore. She asked the Commission to recognize that you have a responsibility to come and walk, sit and be in their neighborhood and experience it in order to make decisions about its future. The Chair asked if she had seen any shadow studies related to this building. She asked that the developer do a shadow study that goes beyond 3:00 p.m.

Mark Schoendorff spoke in opposition. He expressed great disappointment that he had to scramble to make this meeting; this is against what the Alder had hoped for, a back and forth dialogue to ensure a good process where the building would work with the neighborhood and everybody would be in agreement. It appears as though much of the overview you received is largely positive when many of the comments at the neighborhood meeting were largely negative. The height is of great concern, 2-stories should be the limit. Many of the changes offered appear to be minor. He has strong concerns about noise and privacy. The addition of the trellis will do very little to nothing to address those concerns. Movement of the garbage bins is not an improvement, rather it increases maneuvering the garbage truck vehicle. The rendering doesn't include any lighting. The drawings do not necessarily appear to be accurately scaled, nor do they have any perspective from the neighbors.

Steve Keidl spoke in opposition. Of concern is the massive scale of the building. A 3-story building would be much more in keeping with the neighborhood. He is concerned about the already existing problems in the neighborhood, including noise, especially with the "echo chamber" configuration.

The Secretary noted that the streetscape along Park Street needs more of an enhancement, right-of-way and setback. Jessica Vaughn of the Planning Division highlighted staff's concerns. The streetscape is important, this is the first domino of what can happen in the future along this side of Park Street. The interface with the alley and how it's treated and will look like in terms of landscaping and screening, and recognizing that we are considerably stepping down in terms of density and building size over here, and how those two things will relate to each other. The TSS zoning district sets the building height at 3-stories; the UDD says 4-stories. The way it sits today from a zoning perspective, this is a 5-story building. The UDD allows for additional stories, but that depends on the quality of design and the building materials. The corner element needs to frame the street and create some sort of distinctive architectural feature, where right now this happens to be a story shorter than the top and is not a solid corner element. The UDD looks for a 15-foot setback at the third floor; the applicant is showing a 5-foot setback. Staff noted that there was concern about this being on the agenda; there is a process in working with the neighborhood and the Alder where we expect that the applicant will coordinate their activities with them directly and inform them when things are happening. The City's responsibility for notification is only when they make a formal application, we are required to send out formal notices on that.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- There's a contradiction with how you're entering the site. We talked about combining the curb cuts, and in the perspective there it appears that the sidewalk is interrupted by greenspace (A 3.3), and in this plan there doesn't appear to be any greenspace to walk across. It's a different plan. It looks very confusing

for traffic, but also you have pedestrians there now crossing a very long curb cut. It doesn't seem safe, is there a way to actually enter the alley and then come into the site so the curb cut can be more restrained?

- That doesn't reflect this, which is the proposal. When we get an application we'll actually know, an artist's rendering is not always what's being proposed.
- What I'm seeing here, it looks unsafe for pedestrians and confusing for motorists.
- If you do increase the sizes of units, the Juliette balconies make the building even more flat. If there's a way to set that patio back and have the patio or garden area or recess on the upper floors so they can face the street.
- The front does seem quite flat. I think there have been improvements but there's a ways to go.
- This alley could be 24-feet wide until it turns 90-degrees into your parking lot. This entire zone can be green or townhouses through here, a 2-foot height could bring it down to the scale of the homes across the street, it would help with the shadow study, and this is creating activity where really Park Street needs to have that created. Anything that starts to slow traffic, activity here would help with that. If you look at The Ideal there are townhouses there, and it blends better with things across the street. The outdoor area needs to relate to this part of the street. Something needs to happen here that really is a buffer; work with the neighbors to help them create a buffer on their property is you don't have the space. You don't have a lot of room to work with, if you lose a few parking stalls your site will be that much more improved. The building is too tall, townhouses on the north side will help reduce that height. If you don't put something blocking this area, this is like a runway to the parking lot. See what you can do to bring in the drive on this side after you get through the alley.
- As I mentioned before about the setbacks, the sidewalks on Park Street are very narrow. If you're going to have a concrete planter here and you're only 5-feet from your property line, you're making it even more narrow than what it normally is. You definitely need to have a 15-foot setback in order to create a decent sized sidewalk. This is a walkable neighborhood. This area of Park Street is not as commercial as going towards downtown, and this development needs to reflect the neighborhood it's in. If you want to do this down by East Washington Avenue, go for it, but if you're going to do it be Olin Avenue and Emerson, it needs to be reworked correctly the next time you come in. The other thing is the community room – this project is too tall, 4-stories are sufficient, I would even go down to three, but the community room needs to be incorporated within the floors that you have and not sitting on top. You need to create an area where the trash trucks are coming and having enough room for them to turn around without parked cars in their way. Reduce the number of efficiencies, 20 is still too many.
- If you were able to do the curb cut off of Park Street, does that eliminate that awkward intersection?
 - This drive off of Park would get a lot of the commercial traffic.
- A lower building mass along Emerson is needed. I'm very concerned that you're building too close on a transit corridor on Park Street.
- You might be able to push the building back and cantilever over your parking if you have enough height. It's already a 63-foot setback from the property line, maybe a few more feet in order to get relief on Park Street.
- I like the smoothness of the front façade.
- Balconies are a wonderful way of starting a neighborhood to have interaction.
- The regulations are pretty clear about the setback above the third floor.
- You have a great opportunity to set the tone here.
- This could become a model for development on this side of Park Street.

ACTION:

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.