

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: February 8, 2017

TITLE: 715 West Dayton Street – SERF
Replacement Project. 4th Ald. Dist. (43950)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: February 8, 2017

ID NUMBER:

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of February 8, 2017, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of the SERF replacement project located at 715 West Dayton Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Gary Brown, Walter Johnson, Aaron Williams and John Horn, all representing UW-Madison; and Shane Bernau, representing Ken Saiki Design.

Johnson presented the revised plans for the SERF project with a new site plan that moves the bus stop to the west side of East Campus Mall, showing revised façades of the building, entrance, and landscape plan. The primary north façade is presently 70% glass; more expression has been added with extended caps on the curtain wall to pick up the expression on the south side of the facility. Building material samples were shown, including glass, precast and metal, chosen to coordinate with other University buildings in the area. Bernau presented an updated landscape plan with the south side mostly unchanged except for the displacement of bike parking stalls and significant perennial planting on the East Campus Mall side. The geometry of the driveway to the Kohl Center would remain as is in order to protect utilities, underground basin for stormwater and existing trees. The north side will look the most different, with a revised layout of the entry plaza. Previously they had large planting areas tucked underneath the overhang; that has been changed to 48 bicycle parking stalls that will be protected by the overhang. A dissipation basin will take water from the roof that will be conveyed to pockets of plantings in raised planters in pipes and in sections through wall cap as a passive irrigation system. Brown addressed the Planning staff report, specifically items 2, 3 and 5. The recommendation was to articulate the east façade more, especially at the ground level. He noted that this is significantly “down in a hole” with a retaining wall and a sloped grade. The lowest level at grade on the east façade is actually down below the retaining wall, behind the trees; they will likely not see a lot going on there, and most people are not going to walk along that east façade of the building, unless they are parking behind the building. Their intent has always been that this side of the building should give deference to the Kohl Center.

Tim Parks of the Planning Division staff remarked on the non-window treatment of the eastern façade. Even taking into consideration divers’ safety, staff would encourage the Urban Design Commission to look at ways to

pattern that façade so it has more visual interest. The wood treatment (on the upper façade of the building) adds an unnecessary element of fussiness and doesn't seem necessary.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- The wood treatment is not necessary, based on placement and application.
- Look at the non-window treatments utilized on the west façade to pattern the east façade to have more visual interest.
- The extended mullions are only at the sprint track elevation (north)?
 - We've also got that along the east and west sides where we've got those larger volumes of glass. I'm not convinced that following that sprint track is really a good idea. I don't know that it really helps the building. I would think you'd want to keep that mullion extension a bit in a more rectilinear responding to the geometry of the building rather than what's behind it (sprint track). The read of the red stripe of track is on its own with the extension of the vertical mullions responding to the exterior. If wood panel is used it should be more of a wood color or look at red treatment with a wood panel appearance.
- Did you look into bird friendly glass?
 - This glass is electro-chromatic so it turns a darker color to make it harder to see in, and it helps control the glare. It will reduce bird accidents but not prevent them.
- The red (upper façade) matching the track edge might be more effective.
 - We actually prefer the wood because it won't fade.
- What are the canopy trees along the street?
 - They're in clusters of three, Honey Locusts nearest the entry, Hybrid Elms and Maples. Across the street is also a mix of Hybrid Elms and Maples. They're all canopy.

I would really encourage you to start looking at other trees besides Maples because they're getting overused. The side facing the Kohl Center looks like it wasn't given any attention at all. I know you want it as a background building but it's toned down too much. Can you have the landscape pull out from that building and embrace it, maybe double rows of canopy trees (along the east façade)?
- What is the basis around the material selection, because in the old rendering even though it's not as articulated, the materials at least provide some interest. Why not make it a bit more pronounced?
- The mullions look unfinished (north façade), they're not grounded in anything or tied with anything.
- I agree, it either needs to come all the way to that lowest point or follow the first horizontal piece. I like the red.
- The difference in materials are too close; need more contrast. Agree with extended mullion comments, need to not just stop, needs resolve.
- In support of what everyone else is saying, including staff's concerns, I think it can be improved (east façade) without compromising the interior function or adding complexity with maybe adding some relief on it? It seems really flat. Maybe recessed back an inch or two? As the sun moves you'd get some shadow lines on there without really changing the design or introducing any openings or complexity. A little subtle texture and giving it some rhythm. Provide relief on the east elevation with more recess panels or recess openings, use fluted panel or use subtle texture to give rhythm and depth, incorporated fluted precast as on the west elevation.
- On the light fixture, do you really have to extend that to the south side of the street?
 - It's all part of the East Campus Mall.

All these buildings are contemporary and well designed, then I see this that looks like something out of Sherlock Holmes.

 - It's the full 7 blocks of the mall.
- What do you think of a green wall (east façade) on there, with vines?

- It's mostly a cost and maintenance issue for us. It's an issue from the State perspective too. A double row of trees might start pulling that building back in (along the east façade adjacent to the Kohl Center lawn). That building needs to somehow reflect that it's part of campus.

ACTION:

On a motion by Goodhart, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (8-0). The motion required address of architectural and landscape comments as noted.