

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: February 21, 2018

TITLE: 4802 Sheboygan Avenue – PD(GDP),
“Madison Yards at Hill Farms” in UDD
No. 6. 11th Ald. Dist. (48873)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

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ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: February 21, 2018

ID NUMBER: 48873

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of February 21, 2018, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a PD(GDP) for “Madison Yards at Hill Farms” located at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue in UDD No. 6. Appearing on behalf of the project were Sean Roberts, representing Summit Smith Development; Barry Orton, Ann-Marie Kirsch, and Tom Rogers, representing Smith Group JJR. Appearing in support and available to answer questions were Bill White and Alan Fish, representing Madison Yards; and Cassie Goodwin, representing Smith Group JJR. Registered and speaking in opposition was Steve Holtzman. The applicant presented plans for rezoning for a Planned Development and will come back with the SIP portion. The existing DOT site will change from SE to PD with the State maintaining the 7 acres to the left (west). The intent is to have a central green with internal streets infrastructure; multiple SIPs will be submitted for the individual blocks. The buildings shown in the PD are meant to be a concept massing, not the final images. Infrastructure diagrams and streetscape views were reviewed.

Steve Holtzman spoke in opposition as a nearby resident. There is nothing exceptional about this development proposal. He has concerns regarding input from the neighborhood, with a fear that the site will be exploited rather than enhanced. He asked the Commission to hold the developer to a standard of enhancement, not to exploit the Orton: live in Hill Farms Neighborhood. We’ve been in discussion with them regarding circulation and infrastructure.

Barry Orton spoke as a Hill Farms Neighborhood resident, and noted that they have been in discussions with the team regarding circulation and infrastructure.

Anne Marie Kirsh spoke as a resident and engineer who works for DOT. She expressed concerns regarding structured parking, noting that this site is underutilized; and pedestrian access on the west side of the parking ramp. She is excited for the opportunity for more development. The development needs to have restaurants. She wants to see more activity and infill.

Ald. Martin spoke as a Hill Farms neighborhood resident who used to work at the DOT and is very familiar with the area. The neighborhood association has been working with the developers to make sure all concerns are considered. She is supportive of these zoning changes. She noted neighborhood concerns:

1. The neighborhood did not like the visuals, but it was explained that this is not final.
2. Parking and transit were of concern. The neighborhood has been working with the developers to address neighborhood parking issues.
3. Marking sure transit is covered if putting higher density in the area. Service should be consistent.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Any parking available from this?
 - The State has some limitations with possible sharing but there are no current plans.
- Do you have a current ratio of parking to number of units?
 - We will have those details when come back for the SIP.
- Can we go over the setbacks – what are they?
 - They are written into the zoning as zero setback. We talked with stakeholders, the intent is to have some massing setbacks. The zoning is written to allow for higher density and will be addressed in the SIP.
- If it's not in the zoning language, I have concerns.
- I have concerns regarding a zero setback. We made a strong comment last time regarding the wall on University Avenue that wouldn't pass. Establish something now that makes it clear.
- These are not set in stone, still the whole structure feels isolated, internalized, not looking to the outside at all. It's not embracing Madison, it's embracing itself. Create zones for trees, they should have a minimum of 10-feet. Think about the maximum building heights around the courtyard to make sure they are not shaded.
- One comment from last time – this is very fortress-like. Reinforce that, look at design goals language.
- Agree – if you had a farmer's market, people driving by wouldn't see the activity because the site is turned in on itself. Wondering if it would benefit by making more of a boulevard and greenspace rather than the doughnut hole. Pull from Hilldale. Have a bigger light alley than a tiny thing in the middle with massing around it.
 - We've struggled with the topography. Madison Yards Way – there will be a large stormwater storage tank under the greenway. It's driven by the State office left over, topography, and intent for a greenway. The central green is internalized and won't have a view from driving by – can work to bring buildings down. Trying to pull people into the site. How do we have an internal facing area and make an active zone. We have looked at some of the solar effects.
- Blocks 1 & 2 – setback of two buildings. Encourage to pull back setback.
 - The intent is for a dense neighborhood shopping district. If it's too far apart, it's a challenge for retailers. Look at setback. Lower levels closer for neighborhood shopping with the larger massing pulled back.
 - Tom Rodgers – landscape architect JJR. We've wrestled with this in the design process. How do we create a great greenspace? Trying to create a destination that was flexible – activate spaces. Could make the green flexible enough. Reduce shade cast on it. Want to activate street.
- If trying to invite people in, they need a visual connection. If we approve the PD, we need some language in the text that addresses this. Where are cars coming in if they are going to the retail stores – how visually welcoming and easy to understand will it be? Not sure what street C does – wondered whether Block 4 slid closer to Block 5.

- Get some hierarchy here. Having these two streets next to each other seems confusing. I know it's not a boulevard, but it has the feeling of a boulevard and when you see all the building setbacks, they're further back where here and here you're coming in really close. The character, part of the PD is responding to the context. It would help us to have some context views of Sheboygan Avenue of what that will feel like on the street level.
- I would still encourage you to play with Blocks 1 and 2. There are some massive areas that could be opened up with some articulation. You're also showing large trees in places where they're not going to grow. You shouldn't give that misinformation, you need to be honest about that.
 - Point well taken. I believe some of the trees on Segoe are existing that we will try to retain.
- Increase the greenspace in front of buildings – make it more inviting to those who don't live and work in this block.
- I like the front but I would definitely, Gardener and Madison Yards within this project, those would be my widest streets, not necessarily green but the widest, almost plaza-like. This is what we want to do, but not pulling it back. Wider sidewalks will get people in there – those should be your maximum setbacks. Those major thoroughfares are what's going to get people into this space.
- I want to reinforce the idea of bringing in Blocks 4 & 5 together and then widening Gardener to give visibility to the central green from Sheboygan.
 - Are you suggesting to move Street C?
- No, to shift Block 4 westward literally making Blocks 4 and 5 one entity, instead of having two narrow streets, having one large entryway into that square off of Sheboygan.
- Street C does not have to continue all the way to Sheboygan.
- That's one of the things that might be helpful. My assumption is that most people are going to approach this project from University Avenue or Segoe Road. Making those the ways that relate most easily to people's visual and functional uses.
- What if street C was pedestrian between Blocks 4 and 5?
 - I know it's based on an access for Block 5. Traffic studies have been based on having more means of egress out of the site.
- You could still have egress without having ingress allowing for a narrower street.
 - We just met with Bill Sullivan from the Fire Department last week. They asked that we make streets fit a fire aerial apparatus lane which requires 26-feet of pavement there and connected to a fire lane. That is one issue, the other is that we consider Street C to be an important connection to the neighborhood. Gardener is also connecting down to Sheboygan but Street C aligns almost directly with an easement that goes down to Rennebohm Park and connects to the greater Hill Farms Neighborhood. We are working on refining the street cross-sections themselves, but the face-to-face dimensions between each of those buildings, we determined using our urban designers and looking at precedents all over the country at different mixed-use developments. If you start to widen that it starts to feel more suburban.
- Our request for you is to establish a hierarchy that shows Gardener wider than Street C. You can work it out with the Fire Department however you want to. Our comments are to stepback and allow more visual access, make the streets more inviting into the center of the development and to respect some of the patterns of development along Sheboygan Avenue with its established setbacks.
- I don't think the street has to get wider, I don't think it will look suburban if you engage it.
- We are transitioning from a suburban area into a more urban area, so it doesn't have to be so abrupt.
- The retail faces all inward, right?
 - Yes.
- Would be helpful to have drawings that show potential uses as well, not just big blocks.
- Wouldn't you want your retail and offices to have terraces that all face that central green? I wouldn't let go of that as the heart of your retail space.

- We've been accommodating that throughout the design. will make sure to have street access.
- You're saying it, but keeping it at a minimum. Do it, just go for it. Everything you're showing is at the very minimum.
- When it comes back if it's not in the GDP, then our evaluation of the SIP...we'd like some of these things in the GDP, not just saying maybe they'll come back.

ACTION:

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

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

- Provide more detail in GDP zoning text
- Concerns regarding zero stepback
- Create zones for trees, minimum 10 feet.
- Increase green space in front of buildings
- Consider maximum heights around courtyard so as not to shade trees
- Development appears fortress-like.....
- Provide more hierarchy in building forms and streets setbacks
- Provide context views of Sheboygan Ave. – street level views
- Provide drawings that show potential uses

- Blocks 1 & 2 - Consider greater stepbacks. open up and provide more articulation
- Blocks 4 & 5 - Consider bringing blocks together and widen Gardener St
- Establish street hierarchy that shows Gardener St wider than Street C
- Consider Street C pedestrian only
- Consider wider sidewalks on Gardener St and Madison Yards
- Respect some of patterns of development along Sheboygan Ave. (established setbacks)
- Consider visual connection to courtyard. Study Street C