

AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: March 21, 2018

TITLE: 2921 Landmark Place – Comprehensive
Design Review for “Landmark Oaks.” 14th
Ald. Dist. (50648)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: March 21, 2018

ID NUMBER:

Members present: Cliff Goodhart, Acting Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Amanda Hall, Michael Rosenblum, John Harrington and Rafeeq Asad.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 21, 2018, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Comprehensive Design Review for “Landmark Oaks” Located at 2921 Landmark Place. Appearing on behalf of the project were Dan Yoder, Sign Art Studio; Doug Hursh, representing MIG Commercial Real Estate; Brad Hutter and Andrew Bauer.

Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator, explained the technicalities of the application and reviewed Zoning staff recommendations. The project has a lot of history and staff have been working with the design team for some time. The Comprehensive Design Review is a tool for achieving exceptional signage that the code would not allow. The project is located about 1000 feet off of the West Beltline Highway on a cul-de-sac. The request is to allow signage that faces the Beltline, also facing west, and face the cul-de-sac. One of the things that is difficult to convey is where and how it sits, out of the ground. Technically an applicant is allowed to have signs on walls up to the roofline, and staff discourages signs above the roof parapet or screening signs. There aren't very many buildings that are setback this distance for comparison purposes (a few in Old Sauk Trails and The American Center), which is why they feel it is relevant to allow signage of a greater size than the ordinance would otherwise allow. There is an exception to the code to allow for highly articulated walls that have signage on screening elements (above roof signs), but in this case those signs wouldn't be large enough for visibility. Zoning's recommendation is the Commission move for the 180 square foot option for two signs that would be visible. The west facing façade is a trickier elevation; there wasn't enough information in the application at the time it was submitted showing how it would be viewed from the Beltline. There is concern that this wouldn't be a viewable sign. Zoning's recommendation is a CDR exception elevation, allowing them signage as would otherwise be permissible, which will allow signs up to the roofline up to 120 square feet. Lastly the ground sign, which is oversized for the area; the case has not been made as to why this sign needs to be so large.

The applicant provided additional views from the Beltline. Code compliant views were shown, that are too cramped and hard to see. There are trees that obscure the building from the Beltline. Various views were shown

where they thought it was appropriate to have signage, in both code compliant size and locations, as well as preferred options for size.

The first view is 120 square feet in signable area; the second view is code compliant at 120 square feet. The third view is 180 square feet shown on screen, plus a night view. The fourth view is 260 square feet shown in the daytime on screen. (Note: Arbor Gate signs were approved at 260 square feet, 150-feet from the Beltline.) In their opinion, this is no different than the Johnson Bank sign (Junction Road). They shared more images of other signage nearby, and other signs above the roof line. Staff supported the lower shown ground sign. They noted that a picture of the west elevation shows a visible side that would be great for signage.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- I think putting it above the roof makes sense on the architectural elements of the building. Proportionally, the 180 square foot signs on the north and west seem the right size for the amount of background available, the others seem a little heavy for the amount of vertical space you have. Is this wayfinding or advertising? Because you're showing it from the Beltline but once people are oriented into finding the building, what is the expectation of the sign?
 - It's twofold, there is wayfinding of course, but it's allowing these tenants to have the same level of exposure they would otherwise normally have if the building had frontage right on the Beltline.
 - The tenants would say it's wayfinding. The doctors of Madison Oral Surgeons are very concerned about their patients not being able to find this building.
- In that case I think the 180 square foot gives you an opportunity, you're already kind of knowing which exit to take and looking for the signage. I think the distance illustrations you're showing are from somebody zooming by on the Beltline, not by somebody looking up and trying to find the building. I think the proportion of 180 square feet is the right scale for the building.
 - On the Beltline I agree, but the other side of that you know how fast the Beltline goes (it's not 55 MPH), if a client thinks they're in the right area, there's still a lot going on around them and they need clear signage. You don't want to have to hunt for signage.
 - We aligned this building so that no signage faces any residential.
- A big part of why we wrote in the staff report all the exceptions that exist, a lot of those aren't even CDR exceptions, they're powers the UDC has to approve signage above the roof on highly articulated buildings, which is exactly what you did. The big questions are more about size and viewability of that north facing façade. It's worth pointing out that the development lacks any signage facing the houses.
- You don't envision any signs going on the building in the future?
 - No sir. There's no intent to come back and ask for more signage.
- I agree with the 180, it's the best proportionally.
- There are staff comments on the north, west, ground sign and varying sizes.
- I'm fine with 180 square feet on the west elevation.
- 180 square feet is better, 260 is too large.
- 180 would be appropriate, but slightly larger would be more acceptable than 260, maybe 200.
 - The north is the biggest concern, we're fine with 180 on the west.
- Even though I can see it, I have to do a lot of things to get there (heading west on the Beltline). Being able to glimpse it, it's not necessarily you need to keep in in sight the entire time you're driving to get there, you should have a good idea where you're going.
- We'd accept possibly 200, but we'd let staff determine whether that's appropriate.
- (Tucker) The way logos and designs work, and how we measure them is interesting. Go with the 180 and if there's a weird logo and design they need to get worked out, and it fits and balances on the façade,

you can work with that. Or you go with 200 if you think they need a little bit more and the rules will be set.

- Are you looking for the Commission to make a finding that the screen wall is an architectural element, for future considerations?
 - Yes, one is to find that it's an architectural element and part of the CDR standards, while at the same time recognizing the high articulation on the wall and that the UDC is empowered to improve signage above the roof all regardless.
- I would mention to fellow Commissioners that we know what 180, 200 and 260 look like, I'm a little cautious on picking a number without seeing it. We've got three options.

ACTION:

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Harrington, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion passed on a vote of (5-0).

The motion provided for the following conditions:

1. The signage above the roof is appropriate.
2. The Commission accepts 180 square foot signs on both the north and west elevations, and the compliant ground sign.
3. The proposed wall sign location is determined as an architectural element, not screening.