

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: April 11, 2018

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

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: April 11, 2018

ID NUMBER: 48873

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of April 11, 2018, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of the 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, Cassie Goodwin, representing SmithGroup JJR; Shane Bernau, representing SmithGroup JJR; Arvina Martin, District 11 Alderperson; and Michael Lawton, representing Hill Farms Association Planning Committee. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak was Jacki Lawton, representing University Hill Farms Association Planning Committee. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was James Griffin. Goodwin walked through the main points of the current proposal and provided history on the background, what has been done and what is different from the Commissioners’ packets. They had a few different constraints: the location of Gardner Road (north-south) was driven by Traffic Engineering, to determine the best location for a new signal on University Avenue; they also wanted to connect to the Frey Street intersection and that set up their street network, along with two connections on Sheboygan Avenue. Stormwater management is slated for the middle of the site. They started to overlap the main drivers for how to create a successful development by having discussions with potential tenants on issues such as visibility, the need for a grocery store, taking advantage of some of the views and higher density along University Avenue and lower density on Sheboygan Avenue. In order to have successful retail and mixed-use, they have created this central spine core, created a destination and also a good model for retail and a central green amenity.

They did review other examples around the country, noting a common theme to create more face-to-face corridors that create a very strong pedestrian environment that allow for frontage of retail to face one another. Two examples of different scaled projects were shown. This is intended to be a space that’s flexible for additional events (West Side Community Market for example), heavily programmed and open to the public. More details will be given at the SIP level. Street widths were examined and researched to create cross sections showing 88-feet from face of building to face of building. Sections show the back-of-curb to face-of-building at 24-feet to allow for pedestrians, seating and amenity spaces. After meeting with Traffic Engineering they have provided some additional amenities in the form of expansion of bike lanes on Sheboygan Avenue, areas of a wider zone within the sidewalk space to allow for more kid-friendly bike zones. Fire apparatus lanes show

where wider streets are necessary and how they decide the size and species of trees. Views from Segoe Road show the massing stepping down significantly from the last presentation to make it feel welcoming and not canyon-like. Activated street fronts on University Avenue will serve both the office tenants and residential lobbies. The team went from block to block in the zoning text for recommendations on setbacks and stepbacks, working with Traffic Engineering for sidewalk and street widths, and added use parameters to massing, showing a zero setback along University Avenue for 80% of the length for Blocks 2 and 3, and then stepping back above that. They will discuss the streetscape in more detail when they return for the SIP approval. They depicted what the Zoning Code allows for height, setbacks and stepbacks, and also what they've included in their zoning text. They anticipate addressing the State parking structure when they return for the SIP approvals.

Michael Lawton spoke in support of the GDP, and will make further comments when the project is presented to the Plan Commission.

Barry Orton spoke as the founder of the West Side Community Market (2005), who has been in talks with the developer about their place in the greenspace. They wish to return to that general vicinity if they are able to.

Alder Martin stated her support of the project, addressing the concerns of City staff, the neighborhood association and the Urban Design Commission.

Kevin Firchow of the Planning Division noted they are requesting the Commission's feedback on three design items:

1. Follow-up to the last discussion, the previous versions' lack of specificity;
2. The Commission's opinion on the adequacy of setbacks, particularly University Avenue. Right now there is quite a bit of distance between the building and sidewalk. The east side is approximately 21-feet from the property line to back-of-curb, with 37-feet at its widest point. The staff report notes that it may be adequate but it is right-of-way, so if changes were made to University Avenue in the future the setback would be possibly reduced.
3. The parking structures and how they interface with the public streets. Staff would request more detail about how that would be handled at the SIP phase (requirements for liner buildings, having parking lots front on public streets is a concern, how could these be treated, there are no specifics in the GDP text). Large parking structures fronting both University Avenue and Segoe Road is a concern. Staff's recommendation would be that the parking structures not come up to the street, or height and design treatment if the parking structure is viewed to be an appropriate design feature. The team responded that they added specific language in the zoning text saying that all visible sides of the building shall be designed to be complementary and shall try to enhance the pedestrian character.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Are you phasing the construction, is there a phasing plan?
 - Yes, it's in the letter of intent. Our current intention is to have the central green and Blocks 2-4 all be the first phase, Blocks 1 and 5 would follow (depending on market conditions).
- Could Kevin suggest if there is some other text in the Zoning Code that might limit the amount of exposed parking structure to certain lineal feet or percentage of the block? We'd like to see that so we could allow a certain portion of exposed parking ramp, but just by saying "should try to have complementary materials" is a little loose.
- (Firchow) The most prescriptive is the Downtown Districts where it requires all public street frontage there shall be liner buildings or active uses. In the other districts I don't believe there are specific percentages, that would be something that would need correcting or a new standard.

- If there's nothing in our Zoning Code that is appropriate, I would ask the applicant to suggest some length or some limit to linear footage, or some percentage of the overall block. If I look at the diagrams here, the teeth is in the zoning text. I see a good portion of the corner near Segoe and Sheboygan could be exposed parking ramp.
- Up to 20% of buildings would be exempt from the maximum setbacks. Can you speak to that?
 - These blocks are so big we wanted to provide the ability for some articulation. We could actually exceed that setback as we design them both on the interior streets and the perimeter.
- So under this language, Madison Yards Way along the retail, 20% of that length could be a surface parking lot then?
 - I don't know if we're allowed to have surface parking.
- I don't see where it's prohibited.
 - We talked about parking being not adjacent to streets.
- With this exemption of maximum setbacks of 20%, it could be anything except parking?
 - Yes, I think the intention was to allow that articulation.
 - You're pointing out a good loophole we might have missed, that's certainly not our intention. We can rewrite that, we're not intending to say there would be surface parking.
- The language on building materials could use some help. It just says materials of durable high quality.
 - A lot of this language we pulled from the East Washington corridor zoning text because we knew that had already gone through a lot of bodies.
- If you look at something in a UDD you might find more specificity on materials. You might limit the use of EIFS at certain locations, or spandrel glass, a little bit more detail to describe the level of quality we can expect. Durable and high quality are subjective.
- (Firchow) East Washington is in many ways the most prescriptive for materials. The actual Zoning Code, Chapter 28 has a very detailed list of materials for commercial and mixed-use district.
- We talked about establishing some hierarchy with the streets. Can you expand on that?
 - We did shift Block 4 over 5 or 6-feet to the west. Madison Yards Way is our commercial corridor so that's the section we focused on. From a gateway perspective, we're trying to keep this open at the corner. We believe we need these access points. The non-flex streets will be built to City standards, but by design that flex street is meant to be different and a special, integral part of the whole concept.
 - We do have a hierarchy with our central spine and central green corridor, with everything else a gateway element coming in.
- When you come in with your SIP, is that a point where you're going to define all the street lighting, infrastructure design elements, etc.? You'll define the level of quality for all the infrastructure?
 - Absolutely. You'll see everything, the design details for all the streets and central green.
- I think this has come a long way. I would encourage you to with your planting zones so you have a minimum of 8-feet, work towards that, the product will be a lot better. I do have concern on the corner of Segoe and Sheboygan, it's one large massive area. I understand the retail and the central green, but don't just forget about those streets. The DOT feels very close to University Avenue, I would look at trying to pull yours back. We need to look towards the future, if you can pull it back at all I would.
- On that idea of the width of University Avenue, does the BRT corridor cover that part of University, because it could cause the widening?
 - Right now it turns down Segoe Road.

ACTION:

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

The motion provided for the following conditions:

1. More information in the zoning text regarding the percentage or lineal footage of exposed parking structure.
2. More information on the permitted materials.
3. Look at the setback along University Avenue to match the DOT building.
4. More information regarding the 20% exemption from the maximum setback.
5. Clarification on architectural features that encroach on the street (non-occupiable architectural features).