AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	**PRESENTED:** April 10, 2019	
TITLE: 929 E. Washington Avenue – New Development of a Commercial/Office Mixed-Use Building Located in UDD No. 8. 6th Ald. Dist. (54198)	**REFERRED:**	
	REREFERRED:	
Referral from Plan Commission Regarding Glare Study	**REPORTED BACK:**	
AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary	**ADOPTED:**	**POF:**
DATED: April 10, 2019	**ID NUMBER:**	

Members present were: Richard Wagner, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Sheri Carter, Cliff Goodhart, Tom DeChant, Shane Bernau, Craig Weisensel, Jessica Klehr and Christian Harper.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of April 10, 2019, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of a glare study for a project at 929 E. Washington Avenue until further information is made available by the consultant. Registered in support of the project were Doug Hursh, Curt Brink, Matt Brink, Matt Browne and Andrew Laufenberg, all representing Archipelago Village; and Mitch Hawkins, representing Viracon.

Ald. Rummel spoke to the Commission regarding the retention of 924 E. Main Street as part of the fabric of the Capitol Gateway Plan. She thanked the development team for working with her and the City to save this façade. She asked the Commission to reconsider their motion regarding 924 E. Main Street in the broad context of this block being redeveloped. She also mentioned the neighborhood has concerns regarding birds and the glare of the proposed building at 929 E. Washington Avenue.

- (Braun-Oddo) I walked by this building after our last meeting, and I just didn't see the value in this façade. What is it about this façade that's telling you to save it?
    - (Ald. Rummel) My inspiration and education came from Jane Jacobs. I believe it adds to some of our history, it used to be the National Biscuit Company. We talk about creating an employment district there, to me it's a layering. But I did agree with their proposal to take down others on E. Main.
- I think they have to take it all apart in order to remediate. Would it be acceptable to use it in a more appropriate location?
    - I never thought about that, but I'm certainly willing to entertain the idea.
- Leaving it may limit a well thought out design behind it. If we give them some latitude with placement maybe that would help.

- (Ald. Rummel) I worry that because Phase 2 is uncertain, it might take years. Building commercial and office space is the recommended strategy; if it were housing you could build it in a second. I just want us to make sure we're protecting the assets we have.

Curt Brink discussed the UDC's decision to take 924 E. Main Street down versus the Plan Commission's motion to retain the façade. The team met with Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner to maintain the façade without the windows. Their thought is to deconstruct the façade, number the bricks and store it in a warehouse. Then they can incorporate it into the design as Phase 2 begins. While it's not a historic preservation project, it is a heritage project.

Doug Hursh spoke to saving the façade of 924 E. Main Street and the difficulty of integrating it into what it may look like in the future. There could be a plaque that discusses what happened in this building. The consultant they have engaged for the reflectivity study of 929 E. Washington Avenue has not yet completed the glare study in full but they do have preliminary thoughts to share with the Commission. The Commission briefly discussed what information they are looking for regarding reflectivity; the Chair expressed concern about procedure and deciding on something that isn't on the table. Brink noted they have been working with glass manufacturers, installers and the consultant to find these answers; the most reflectivity will be on the south side of the building facing the green roof, which is setback from other buildings in the neighborhood. The north side will receive some sun in the afternoon; preliminarily the consultant isn't too concerned but will run a model. The majority of the glass on the east and west sides are higher above grade on the building, so out of the cone of vision. They relooked at the Navitus building at West Place that uses a bit more reflective glass. The Chair again expressed concern that this was referred back to the Urban Design Commission by the Plan Commission to look at the glare study, but the study is not yet complete.

A motion was made by Carter to refer until the glare study is complete and presented to the Commission.

- Is it something we could defer to staff once the study is done? Do we need to see it?
- The Plan Commission asked us to evaluate the study. Carter confirmed that was the directive.
- We asked for information regarding reflectivity on the building. We didn't define that a consultant from Ontario had to do the study. The applicant came and provided information, they studied with other examples and kinds of glass and presented that information to us. We could say the study satisfies the Urban Design Commission.
- The Plan Commission asked for the Urban Design Commission to evaluate the study and I believe that's what the Plan Commission wants. We need to receive a study and not try to second guess whether the Plan Commission understood what they wanted. The summary from Urban Design Commission was very clear, the Plan Commission acted on that. We should receive that study as requested.
- I agree.
- The Plan Commission referred it back because they thought the opinions here would be able to evaluate the study. I appreciate all these thoughts and comments but they are not considered a "study" as was requested. We've seen a lot of shadow studies but we have not seen this kind of a study. The Plan Commission wants us to use our expertise to evaluate the study, it should be here for us to evaluate.
- I recall asking the question about glare. My intent for that, regardless of how the Plan Commission read it, was for the architect to do their due diligence to make sure they're not creating a problem. They're doing their study, I don't think the presentation of the study will allow us to offer any further findings on it. The objective was that the design team look at that; the design is approved as it is. I struggle with having the design team coming back to present it to us.
- It seems like if somebody's doing a study on this, certainly they're in a position to present us with something that is understandable to the general public, to summarize it. To go through the trouble and

expense of doing this study and then have us dismiss it when we asked for it…that seems strange to throw that away.

- Based on your study it's not going to give us a lot of reference. I think it would be very helpful to see some comparisons, samples in the area of reflectivity. That would help me; that would mean more to me than a data-filled study.
- The technical information, I don't know how I'll absorb that. I want to hear the final analysis. I'm counting on the people who run the study to come up with a recommendation that I can understand. The information isn't quite here yet.
- The motion didn't include the façade piece, or did it?
- The motion for referral is simply to refer the matter to a future agenda. The façade piece technically was never on our table since that's a demolition permit and we don't approve those. We had a comment we made to the Plan Commission based on our sense of design about the façade. The Plan Commission asked us to rethink our comment, we can do that if we want.
- Carter amended the motion to include just the reflective study.
- I would like to add to the motion that our recommendation for referral is strictly regarding the reflectivity and that there are no other design concerns other than the glare.

ACTION:

On a motion by Carter, seconded by DeChant, the Urban Design Commission **REFERRED** consideration of the glare study for 929 E. Washington Avenue. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-2) with Goodhart, Klehr, DeChant, Bernau, Harper and Carter voting yes; Weisensel and Braun-Oddo voting no.

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Weisensel, the Urban Design Commission **APPROVED** the plans for the design team to dismantle and store the building materials for 924 E. Main Street, and the Commission will review its reuse in the future. The motion passed on a vote of (8-0).