

City of Madison, Wisconsin

---

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** July 31, 2019

TITLE: 780 Regent Street – Decorative Art Panels  
for a New UW Campus Hotel. 8<sup>th</sup> Ald.  
Dist. (54466)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: July 31, 2019

**ID NUMBER:**

---

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

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of July 31, 2019, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of the decorative art panels proposed for the new UW Campus hotel located at 780 Regent Street. Registered in support of the project were Chad Bloedel, representing Kahler Slater; Dave Merrick and Nate Gundrum, both representing Mortenson Development. Bloedel shared images of the panels that screen the parking, views from the bike path on the north and views from the gallery walk. The team had reached out to Karin Wolf, City of Madison Arts Administrator as to how to procure an artist for these panels in a way that connects to the University Campus. They have chosen Daniella Willett-Rabin a Madison-born artist, and he shared a statement from her. Her work is expressed through patterns in a decorative and playful manner, using saturated colors. The landmarks chosen for the panel vignettes focus on five important locations: The Red Gym, the colorful chairs at Memorial Union Terrace, Bascom Hall, the Camp Randall Arch and the Field House. The screen has a ten-year warranty and is made for these exterior elements. The durability of the color will be somewhat protected because the orientation is to the north.

The Commission discussed the following:

- How bright will they be?
  - The rendering shown is a dusk rendering. These panels have a certain translucency, that perforation goes opaque so it will look like one particular image during the daytime and be very vibrant. At night it recedes and you can almost see through it, which is where the light wash will be useful.
- It will be lit at night?
  - Yes.
- This is a great choice. Her work is very colorful. It's cleverly done.
- I'm happy it is not a photo. Because it's an abstraction I think it's great, and I like the selection. I'm not 100% sure if we're approving lighting. The subject of uplighting versus downlighting, I love the

aesthetic of the uplighting and the way it's rendered, but I do have some reservations. What does the lighting mean to the detail, longevity, aesthetic, etc.?

- You really flatter a piece more if you uplight it, it tends to look better. Some value to uplighting these pieces is that we can plant landscaping in front that will almost fully screen the light source. The selection actually has a really choked down area of light projection, meaning the lumens fall off quickly. They can be aimed in such a way that almost all the light is captured on the panel.
- I'm not clear on how the panels will look. Every rendering shows them really muted but you keep saying how vibrant they are.
  - Our intent is that they are as vibrant as they can be. It's stretched over a high quality aluminum screen system so it's basically a canvas in and of itself. It's very finished and it prints at very vibrant colors.
- Does the vibrant compliment the building architecture, or the more muted ones?
  - I think vibrancy is going to be good for the building. Our hope is that they're going to be more vibrant than what you see here. The dimensions are 15' x 21'.
  - You do have a major stepback from the façade of the parking structure to the tower in the front, this allows it to have its own identity.
- I like the work of the artist, and I like the vibrancy. It has to stay vibrant if it's going to be true to her art. If this starts to fade you're going to need to replace them with versions that maintain that vibrancy. If they're not vibrant then it's not the work of this artist that we're approving.
- Addressing those concerns, who would be in charge of measuring that, how would you bank a claim if that faded over time?
  - I agree with that. We definitely have looked at the manufacturer. In terms of the system we're doing as much as we can to see that vibrancy occur and stay there for a long time.

### **ACTION:**

On a motion by Bernau, seconded by Braun-Oddo, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (7-0).