

AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: February 12, 2020
TITLE: 126 Langdon Street – New Development of The Hub II. 2 nd Ald. Dist. (57757) *Advisory Recommendation to Plan Commission*	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: February 12, 2020	ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Craig Weisensel, Christian Harper, Lois Braun-Oddo, Shane Bernau, and Jessica Klehr.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of February 12, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED TO THE PLAN COMMISSION THAT THEY NOT APPROVE** new development of The Hub II located at 126 Langdon Street. Registered in support of the project were Rodney King, Brian Munson, Jeff Zelisko and Peter Fortlage, all representing Core Spaces. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Kathleen Ferrero, representing Saiki Design. Registered in support but not wishing to speak were Kevin Ford, Patrick Rafferty, Luke Schammel, Nik Shah, Trevor Wall, Blake Ripley, Hayden Falls, Ryan Coven, Grace Feitel, Dan Sooley, Scott Watson and Brett Dougherty. Registered and speaking in opposition were Shawn King and Tammy Ehrmann, both representing Delta Delta Delta; Matthew Mitnick, Gene Devitt, Billie Jean Huddleston, Robert Klebba, Barb Garrity, Frances Ingebritson, DeeAnne Shaughnessy and Fred Mohs. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak were William Lizdas and Brandon Springer. Registered and speaking neither in support nor opposition were James McFadden and Michael Stengl.

Munson reviewed the site plan and area context and site setbacks. The building is setback further with units along the back. The northeast corner was adjusted with setbacks of 20-feet from both sides. He showed site lines from across the street. The site is designed the Downtown Plan in mind with an opportunity to provide additional density; a review of zoning was given. The 6th story elements are stepped back. The base height recommendation is 5-stories. The team feels this demonstrates a higher quality building. The balconies have been removed.

Public Comment:

Alder Heck spoke as the alder for this district. The discussion has been robust with a lot of public comment. He asked the Commission to think carefully about the Downtown Plan and how it relates to this development. The development team has done some design in a positive direction but when you hear input, there is still potential for improvement. You'll also hear about design input not related to the two bonus stories. This is the Urban

Design Commission, you'll hear some important points. He encouraged review with the Downtown Plan in terms of scale, character of the area, and the buildings that surround this site.

Kevin Ford spoke as a student who lives in an 8-story building. There is a shortage of housing, this is in demand.

Tammy Erhmann spoke as house board president for the sorority at 120 Langdon Street. The scale on the east side of the building affects them most. It's not proportional to the surrounding buildings and dwarfs buildings in the front. The houses go down in grade but this comes up to be 10 stories from the back. The massive façade is very imposing and dwarfs the rest of the area, the scale feels off. The fire lane is also for the houses. It already feels dark and scary and more mass will make that worse. The pool is now a hot tub? It will be used more than just in summer. We do not have air conditioning, our windows will be open and only 25-feet away from this noise.

James McFadden spoke about the Downtown Plan anticipating this property to be developed. The key is to preserve and enhance the district; this is a big building. Look at the entire thing – the building and the adjacent, the number of beds dwarfs the other buildings. This is three times the size of Kennedy Manor. The developer cannot do this by right, they must get a conditional use. Look at the waterfront, the boundary of the historic district and the relationship. We are in a landmark district.

Fred Mohs spoke as a nearby resident and identified his home location. This is the end of Langdon Street if this is built this way. These neighboring buildings have house mothers and girls that live in a community. This is unsupervised and for undergraduates. This will be something social not seen before. Across the street is a historic house that will be restored. They are building on what was parking lot. The original building was on the east side of the lot. I have concerns regarding noise. Langdon Street will not survive this, it's too big. This is a National Historic District.

DeeAnne Shaughnessy spoke as a house mother across the street. This will add 367 beds. Our house has 37 with adult supervision. It's going to be very hectic.

Frances Ingebretson spoke and added an exhibit item to the record. She lives on Wisconsin Avenue. This whole neighborhood is rich in styles. She discussed a shadow study that showed the same lots and size of houses. The proposed development is bigger in 2/3 of the information; it grew. There are 5 buildings built in, no six-story buildings. The last page shows Gilman and Henry Streets. The historic district brings money into Madison.

Barb Garrity spoke as house director at the sorority next door. This address is unique in character; the large commercial look doesn't work on this site. The residents adjacent have no a/c. The proposed outside speaker system was eliminated and the rooftop does not allow any music. Review of fire lanes and estimates on traffic. The proposed drop-off in front won't work, delivery trucks are always parked in front. This problem will be worse when the fire lane is removed. There needs to be a back-up plan on how to service those houses.

Robert Klebba spoke as the steering committee chair. The Commission received a report from him summarizing issues with the development. The steering committee invested many hours. The development team is requesting bonus two stories. He referenced the Downtown Plan in terms of massing guidelines. The UDC should affirm whether this massing is appropriate. The steering committee does not support this development proposal.

Billie Jean Huddleston spoke as the house director for the Delta Gamma property. We have to abide by historic rules. There are 58 women in two houses; there are concerns regarding Langdon safety. The size of the building does not fit in. The safety lane is going away.

Gene Devitt spoke in opposition, noting that this is a neighborhood. If you go up Langdon Street most of the houses are 2-3 stories. Developers want to build. Look at the scale and history of Langdon Street, it's the most walked street downtown. Walk down Langdon and tell me if this fits in. Same with Kennedy Manor. John Nolen a Model City (handout). He mentioned the rooftop deck. Treat us like a neighborhood.

Shawn King spoke as vice president of Delta house. Safety is definitely a concern with the one-way drive, as is taking away the other side of the building, it's a way to get around the building. Concerned for safety.

Brett Dougherty spoke as a resident of 124 Langdon Street for two years. The old building on the site was an eye sore. Something needs to be built and nothing is better than student housing, there's a real demand for it. The house mothers mentioned security and that is important. Most have a security guard at the door. We would walk friends home. This could be more safe with more eyes on the street. For vehicular safety two lanes makes sense. As for noise, it's everywhere on Langdon Street, the roof is the best place for it to be. You could have speakers shut off by 8:00 p.m. Move-ins could be scheduled with other events. The first Hub is only a couple blocks away and it's massive. We need this future housing for students.

The Commission discussed the following:

- It's making progress, the project is getting better. I like the front of the building on Langdon. There's such a variety of architectural styles among all the Greek houses, we can't wield to one style. This is handsome and fits in fine. The problems for me are on the back of the property, that's where I struggle. It seems too much to me. Losing traffic spaces around it and gaining height as it goes back, that I do have issue with. The whole conversation about access to vehicles and losing spaces are you go around the building, that's getting worse not better. The dead end lane seems problematic. People will park and block access. I don't feel it's being addressed to move forward. Going from pool to hot tub, I'm not sure. I need to see some changes.
 - The site doesn't have fire access now. Fire requested a wider lane. It's the only way to get access for all buildings in this block. This gave them the operable width. When we looked at traffic generation, we wanted residents to bike/walk. As for the rooftop, code requires outdoor usable space, it's either balconies or the rooftop. We can control a single rooftop over single balconies. The length of the façade was a 7 story on block.
- I agree with what Chris said. The street frontage is good, but the criteria for bonus stories, the extra two stories don't improve the design. I'm not sure given the context that a lesser design would be approved. This is the baseline. I don't know how two more stories actually add to the building design.
- To the applicant: I appreciate some building sections, I was hoping to see the adjacent buildings on sheet 27 or a section on sheet 20. This area is really important to understand the fabric of what is going on. To the Commission: I think a project like this is the reason I wanted to be here. This is important. I tend to be of the mindset that change is good. I'd like to point out that the neighborhood is worth considering what is appropriate. Down in the area on Lakelawn they filled the site to its maximum height. The experience is very different and has a big impact. Just be careful, this is pretty special. I'd like us to encourage, to think hard about the 2 bonus stories. There is more down by the lake.
- Also the street frontage of this building seems to stand out. Heard waterfront.
- It's a handsome design in a culturally rich area.
- Good points. This is tough. I walked down here yesterday. It is so special and unique because of the lake and the street, and the way the grade falls. The seven stories is more effectively like 9. I wrestle with it. Density is important but I'm struggling with the 5 plus 2. In what scenario does this work? I don't think it's there. As Craig mentioned, does the two extra stories make it a better design? I cannot say that it does.

- I agree there has been a lot of effort in the brick detailing in trying to be respectful of the neighborhood. I struggle with the mass of the building, it seems overwhelming. Those are the views that are the money shot. In this context I'd encourage less mass. Getting people used to the sky.
 - The building has to be massive for redevelopment of the site.
- The massing plan is 5 plus 2 for area.
- We need to formulate an advisory recommendation per the conditional use standards. The excess height will be granted by the Plan Commission.
- There are three conditional use requests: over 8 units, additional height, and outdoor recreation.
- Because we are on a sloped site, we're talking scale and mass. If the address were by the lake this would be a bigger question. This fits the Zoning Code assuming it's a flat site.
- (Firchow) Height measurement in the downtown district. In this district height shall be measured from parallel street to the site, measured from Langdon. The highest point is on the street facing side.
- (Firchow) I caution the use of initial/final, it does not apply here.
- To clarify: Based on the downtown height map 5 plus 2, an apartment in this area would have more than 8 units.
- In your opinion, the UDC does not recommend approval based on the current design, having to do with the appearance of 9-stories and the amount of site.
- The massing on site, adjacent properties, context with the neighborhood.
- Anything to add or change? Procedurally we will vote on an advisory recommendation statement.
- (Firchow) Any comments on the physical design of the outdoor recreation area?
- It gets to uses and noise. It's less an urban design issue than a land use issue.
- Something that is manageable, there are variables. I have a hard time determining that.

ACTION:

On a motion by Weisensel, seconded by Harper, the Urban Design Commission **DOES NOT RECOMMEND APPROVAL AS DESIGNED**. The motion was passed on a vote of (5-0). The motion provided the following:

- It is the recommendation that the UDC does not recommend this as designed. While the design team worked hard, the excess height does not demonstrate a higher quality building with bonus stories. It does not meet criteria item (b). The other condition, based on the downtown height map, seem reasonable to design a building with more than 8 units.