

AGENDA # 1

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: March 11, 2020

TITLE: 5133-5237 University Avenue – New Development of Three Proposed Buildings with 90 Multi-Family Residential Units and Approximately 8,000 Square Feet of Commercial Use in UDD No. 6. 19th Ald. Dist. (50844)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: March 11, 2020

ID NUMBER:

Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Rafeeq Asad*, Lois Braun-Oddo, Shane Bernau, Syed Abbas and Christian Harper.

*Asad recused himself on this item.

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 11, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a new development located at 5133-5237 University Avenue. Registered in support of the project were William Whisenant, Justin Frahm, representing JSD Professional Services, Inc.; Tom Degen, representing Degen & Associates, LLC; Dale Streitenberger and Jennifer Camp, both representing JLA Architects.

Degen introduced the location noting the grade changes and prominent storm sewer that goes through the middle of the site buried 2-3 feet below the surface. The site is surrounded by residential, a City park and an employment district, and a wellhead protection area. Circulation will be brought in through the center of the site. They maximized setbacks and fire access dictates a number of conditions for parking, creating quality open space where they could and treatment of landscaping for the various uses. Commercial office uses and restaurant uses are planned for the ground floor with residential above. The rear maximizes the open space and usable area, in addition to enhancing pedestrian access from University Avenue. The landscape plan is a number of native species including trees shrubs, perennial mix and foundation plantings. The concept of three buildings creates a uniform pattern within the site to break down the scale. From a commercial standpoint the anchor is at University Avenue and visible from vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian traffic. Materials changes are used to differentiate the commercial from the residential, as well as the use of doorways and fenestration into the retail office component. A sloped roof is proposed in response to comments from residential neighbors. The building material palette was discussed including brick, block and wood tone materials; the accent color hasn't been totally defined yet. Seventy-nine residential units are proposed with 95 parking stalls.

The Commission discussed the following:

- There are a lot of finishes and transitions, but no setbacks or real definitions of transition from material to material. I'm wondering if you can simplify the number of materials because there doesn't seem to be

justification for changing so much on what is essentially the same wall on the building (west elevation of Building B). I'm counting five different materials.

- This component is used throughout, and the difference is occasionally we have the siding coming down. We've got three general materials, there's a base to it.
- I don't have any qualms about the base. There's no change in where that wall is going up the building but there is all this transition in materials that is very flat.
 - We could look at adding more depth and articulation in that particular area.
- That would help, but it could use further simplification. There's usually a change of plane.
 - We could articulate that more so it's stronger. We are after a unified color.
- Maybe you could talk a little to the trees along University Avenue.
 - We do have ornamentals in the central entrance feature and the west corner, that was the design based on the depth of the site and the lower level commercial area. We don't want to block all the visibility into the site. The ones in the corner are ornamentals for fire access and aerial access.
- The ones along University Avenue in the northeast corner could be larger deciduous trees to help the scale of transition, and it wouldn't block the view of signage. I noticed Red Oak was used in several parking lot islands; a different species like White Oak or Kentucky Coffee are better suited to parking islands.
- The parking north of Building C, I like the parallel parking configuration you have in front of B, I'm wondering if you explored doing parallel on both sides of the street as you shift to the east, north of Building C to build more of a streetscape experience and less of a drive-thru parking lot.
 - We did go through a couple of concepts with staff, parallel on both sides, and went back to having perpendicular on the north side. It's both a ratio and fire access, the site gets tight in that area and based on the turn around it was staff's feeling that was best.
- I have concerns too about the Oaks, they're nice trees to have and an investment in the future but I think they are problematic in parking lots. I have more concerns with the four big Sugar Maples back by the patio area on the south end of the property, but the two up by the front, that's a tough choice to put in a parking lot. If you really want to go with those they aren't salt tolerant trees and it causes them to be in a constant state of unhappiness. There are cultivars out there, I would encourage your landscape architects to investigate those.
- Can you remind us why the driveway takes an "S" curve rather than going straight into the property?
 - There's a grade issue that would be a steep incline coming into the site, the queuing issue exiting the site, and then from a traffic speed and safety standpoint, that's the front of the restaurant and patio terrace entrance. Cars zipping through the median and having a straight shot up a hill was not a preferable pedestrian experience. We also discussed with staff the two rear buildings being more residential in nature, and getting them away from the activity zone at the front of the building was also a factor in that design decision.
- Regarding Buildings B and C, there's commercial space described as retail. From the elevations it didn't look like it's really conducive to windows. What kind of interest have you had?
 - We're looking for small insurance agents, financial planners. It's not a sandwich shop or clothing, it's service based.
- You're expecting good interest there? I'm wondering if they could be good first floor residential units.
 - There's a challenge getting residential there. We have the mix of residential we're comfortable with, along with the strong desire to activate that façade. I think there will be demand for office space there that will activate it. We also found through marketing research that a lot of residents would rather not be at the ground floor of an active drive area.
- There appears to be some rooftop equipment behind the pitched roof. What is that and will it be screened?

- That's a vent for the second and third retail spaces, so in elevation it looks as if it's in front but it's way back on the building so we don't have to vent the building with any type of exhaust. It's not visible from the front and it's shielded from the west by the sloped roof.
- We showed it because it's an element within the design for a restaurant or coffee shop, but it's further back and the main restaurant is shielded by screening.

ACTION:

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Bernau, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-0) with Asad recused. The motion for initial approval provided for simplification of the number of materials or change the plane they are in, and alterations to the tree species from Red Oak to White Oak or Kentucky Coffee, and Sugar Maple to a cultivar of that species.