

## AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** March 11, 2020

**TITLE:** 414 E. Washington Avenue – New 8-10-Story Mixed-Use Building Containing 4,000 Square Feet of Commercial Space, 152 Dwelling Units and Underground Parking in UDD No. 4. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (58980)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

**AUTHOR:** Janine Glaeser, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** March 11, 2020

**ID NUMBER:**

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

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of March 11, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new mixed-use building located at 414 E. Washington Avenue in UDD No. 4. Registered in support of the project were Randy Bruce, Duane Johnson, Angela Black, all representing LZ Ventures; and Anthony Brylski. Bruce noted they have held neighborhood meetings and made adjustments to the project since their January informational presentation. A review of the site location notes six properties would be deconstructed as part of this development. This site is in the Downtown Core which is the highest density district within the City, and is zoned UMX. The 8-story recommendation on the north side of the site continues along E. Washington Avenue for several blocks, with 12-15 stories recommended across the street. A massing height representation with their building and what the plan proposes was shown with this site being designed as a “redevelopment site.” The site plan has stayed very similar to what was previously proposed. On the Franklin Street side there is 10-feet to the property line with an additional 6-feet to the building itself; on the Hancock Street side it is 10-feet. The traffic pattern for the development is a one-way flow from Franklin into the development and out onto Hancock Street coming out onto E. Washington Avenue only, not impacting the neighborhood. They looked at reducing the height of the building adjacent to the neighborhood but increasing the mass on E. Washington Avenue to address previous Commission concerns, which is more successful in terms of its relationship to the neighborhood. They are showing two different brick colors and are continuing to study that possibility; maybe a tone color difference is appropriate to enforce the massing. There are active rooftop uses with a green roof and active patios, and an outdoor amenity space with a possible pool. The building has a strong two-story base at Hancock, transitioning to three-stories on Franklin, reading strongly as a mixed-use development. Street level views showed what room they have for landscaping that will be relatively intensive for an urban site. A center plaza space will hopefully have a restaurant use to take advantage of the patio space. They looked at doing just an 8-story building with a traditional setback of 3-4 feet to compare the project as it is requesting bonus stories; they feel the larger building gives a better relationship and streetscape experience. The long views on E. Washington Avenue were shown with no impacts on the Capitol view corridor.

The Commission discussed the following:

- This is a much more successful project and appropriate for downtown. The roof was the main thing, now it looks like a cohesive project, appropriate for a downtown high rise. I think you should keep the differentiating the brick colors. The only thing I struggle with is the circular corners above the square balconies, but overall this is a much better project that I could support.
  - That balcony does look odd with the square edge over the rounded piece.
- The circular struggles to fit in.
- I appreciate that you addressed the neighbors a bit more and how that massing goes around the corner. I don't think you need those dormer things on the front of the building, it looks fine without the gables. They looked insufficiently sized but would look weird if they're bigger, I don't know if they're necessary.
  - We struggled with that ourselves. Even in the center of the building we pulled the parapet up a bit, we're trying to articulate that façade enough. My only concern is without the gables, do we start to lose some of that articulation of the verticality? But we'll certainly study it.
- Maybe a raised parapet up there like you have at the center.
- I agree with Lois, simplification is a good idea, and I agree with Rafeeq, this is more successful. Did you work with the neighborhood association?
  - We did and we have a series of meetings set up in the future.
- The way you step the back side down is really successful in transitioning to the neighborhood. It's handsome, very successful, I like the rounded corners. For the courtyard tucked into the north side, I'm curious as to how you'll make that usable space. It feels like a tough space to pleasantly occupy.
  - I don't disagree since it's north-facing. It kind of opens up to the backyards there which helps quite a bit, it's not really closed on the north end. We want to use that for a pet relief area, so it's functional that maybe doesn't need to get the most sunlight.
- Maybe give some sort of ceiling to the space.
  - We can look at a column grid and put in planters.
- I echo the comments from other Commissioners, this is a more successful look. I'm a fan of the rounded corners, like the old Hotel Washington project. I agree that the transitions above the rounded forms don't work, but the rest of it does. As far as the two triangles (gables), when I look at it, I don't find anything offensive but it seems like it was the post-modern touch that everybody slapped on the front of a building. I've seen it so many times on strip malls and all sorts of other applications. I like the fact that there's hip roofs on the top but something about those doesn't quite work.
- The view of the decks from the backside of the building, those appear more to me like they would belong to an apartment as opposed to a common area.
  - Right now we have not quite resolved whether that's common space or private balconies.
- However it turns out it's a nice treatment. I certainly appreciate the green roofs, big thumbs up from me. Stepping down in the back is the right way to go for the neighborhood.
- What is the treatment of the bonus stories, the glazing in the front? Are those super thick mullions?
  - Right now we're in between. We've got some space between the glass that is all part of the metal system. We felt like those vertical metal pieces were too heavy but we haven't quite figured out what we're going to do with that.
- I agree.
- With regard to your change in brick color, my suggestion would be a gray or beige, but not a red. It's still one building. The only objection I have is the center, it says building entrance, and this says corner coffee shop restaurant. I have a hard time seeing this as the main entrance to a big grand apartment building. I can see that whole corner being activated with a restaurant or coffee shop type use.

- There should be a different color for the back part. And possibly changing the railing style of the E. Washington Avenue face to be more formal.
- If the entry is one-way on Hancock, people coming out on Hancock isn't a light controlled intersection, it still seems super problematic.
  - We do have a traffic study out and we'll have a traffic engineer take a look at that specifically.
- Certain times of the day would be nearly impossible to turn left there to get eastbound.

**ACTION:**

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.