

City of Madison, Wisconsin

---

**REPORT OF:** URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION      **PRESENTED:** March 11, 2020

**TITLE:** 825 E. Washington Avenue – New 8-Story,  
81,232 Square Foot Hotel with 151 Guest  
Rooms in UDD No. 8. 6<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist.  
(59850)      **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 and Christian Harper.

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of March 11, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a new 8-story hotel located at 825 E. Washington Avenue. Registered in support of the project were Josh Wilcox, representing North Central Group; Dustin Presen, representing GBA; Andrew Inman and Ryan Burton. Inman presented the site plan, a review of the arrival sequence and an introduction to the Moxy brand and culture, as well as a review of the architecture, noting that primary parking will be off-site through valet or self-park options. The team has met with Ald. Rummel and Ald. Heck, the neighborhood and have incorporated their comments. The site itself is challenging being 65-feet wide. It will have conventional type hotel uses on the first floor, with guest rooms stacked on floors 3-7, with an elevated public space for the guests as well as local residents of the neighborhood as a restaurant. The project is in UDD No. 8 and will require a conditional use for the hotel, outdoor and rooftop amenities. The footprint overall is relatively small and dictates a long linear building with small depth guest rooms as a classic urban infill development. There will be 151 guest rooms. They are required to have a 15-foot setback along E. Washington Avenue, but hold off of the E. Main Street edge. There are two façades that are most visible: facing E. Washington Avenue that will be most activated, and the north elevation, with the Main Street façade being most visible to the neighborhood. The two-story front of house space will give more of a nod to the historical aspects of E. Washington Avenue with a more industrial feel to the design. The body of the building has challenges as well as opportunities, and will use a vertical rhythm to create a simple, elegant and timeless façade that blends into the Spark building. The building has movement to it as you experience it from different directions and as the light hits the building. The 8<sup>th</sup> floor is a cap with the community spaces, indoor/outdoor seating and patio areas, and will act as a beacon at night with a lot of different activity going on. The Main Street perspective is more the neighborhood part of the site and they are considering a large art piece on that façade. Four building materials are being considered to be a good transitional piece to the neighborhood.

The Commission discussed the following:

- It is nice, simple and elegant with a variety of bays moving from Main Street to E. Washington Avenue. Were it not for the big black mass on E. Washington Avenue, I think it says industrial and gritty enough without that big black mass. It has a lot of steps, but if you were to look at the restraint of Hotel Indigo works against the old warehouse building, it's a simple statement and could be an improvement not having the grid in front. I really appreciate the challenge it must be to squeeze this in. The elegant brick and vertical slots with the windows work well but it gets fussy along E. Washington.
- I like the black but could it be the same as on top?
  - There's a Moxy in Chelsea that has that two-story atrium space where we carried that up, giving a nod to the industrial nature.
- I like it, I just thought maybe the bottom and top could have the same language.
- This is brick?
  - We're considering different options, right now it's proposed as EIFS with darker colored insets and metal down on the historical aspects, concrete insulated panels along the drive aisle to protect that.
- The north edge seems a little institutional to me. I don't think the variation of pier sizes is dramatic enough, I'd almost rather see something that undulates a bit more. I don't mind the manufacturing look of the front, it's dramatic, but I don't like the guard rails above them, I want the parapets to go up and get rid of those to clean it up. It detracts from the simplicity of those forms.
- I really like this idea of optical illusion. The black box on E. Washington doesn't have to be black to be successful, but I like it being continuous through those floors, it's a dramatic statement, it's simple, industrial. I personally like it. I don't know about EIFS.
- One comment on the Main Street side, near the short-term parking there's a bump out that's just concrete, along Main Street that could be planted with landscape.
- Your renderings aren't marked as EIFS.
- It doesn't say it, it doesn't look like it and it shouldn't be it.
  - We've done a lot of EIFS different ways over the years to have enough texture. The example is the Home2Suites on Rimrock Road and the Beltline, from a distance it does look like larger composite panels or wood panels. This is an extension of that thought process for a more cleaner, modern feel.
  - Pedestrians along E. Washington Avenue will see metal. It's hard to discern what that material is from a distance. We're also in the shadow of the Spark building.
- The material on Page 18, there's a stripy effect and I think that's cool, you've got little bits of color throughout.
- The EIFS to get that wood grain and nice texture would take some convincing.
- Since all of the parking is off-site, as more hotels pop up in this area, as well as event spaces and restaurants, I assume you're looking at the new ramp nearby as being the recipient of your guest parking. What kind of thought goes into that when you take into consideration multiple events taking place on any given day, coinciding with a home football Saturday?
  - We're working with Sabrina Tolley with Parking. We're not over-building parking lots in the Downtown Core and it's complementing the off-peak demand the City has in parking garages. Our guests are parking overnight where overall the occupancy overnight drops to below 20%. The type of guests staying here are ones who will want to attend those nearby events, like a hotel and concert package with the Sylvee or Breese Stevens.
- Or they're taking an Uber and not parking anywhere.
- This will be an interesting addition to the adjacent wedding event venue, I think it will be successful.

**ACTION:**

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