

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION **PRESENTED:** April 29, 2020

TITLE: 3040/3046 Commercial Avenue and 709 McCormick Avenue – New Residential Building Complex. 12th Ald. Dist. (58983) **REFERRED:**
REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Janine Glaeser, Secretary **ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: April 29, 2020 **ID NUMBER:**

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of April 29, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a new Residential Building Complex located at 3040/3046 Commercial Avenue and 709 McCormick Avenue. Registered and speaking in support was Paul Cuta, representing Gregg Shimanski. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Jon Hanauer and Gregg Shimanski. Cuta walked through changes to the project, noting the previous storage building will be removed and the two residences at the north end are being maintained. The two buildings on the corner are not part of this project. With the goal to create identity while maintaining privacy, it was only possible to front one building on Commercial Avenue and turn its back on the rest of the development. This creates a better common space. The common amenity area will house a fitness center, bike wash and dog run amenities. The landscape plan reinforce the edges of the building, creating a little bit of future screening to E. Washington Avenue to the east (added trees), adds three rain gardens and a bioorientation area. The development has been reduced to three buildings instead of four to let them breathe and have more usable open space around them. Building materials are the same as presented before. There are no rooftop mechanicals proposed.

The Commission discussed the following:

- I really appreciate the changes, particularly the window patterning. My only comment is access from the parking lot to the three units, I understand unifying going to the same point to meet, but I feel like people are going to cut across to the units. A secondary access may be good.
- A lot of the planting beds around the edge could be simplified. The architecture is a clean aesthetic, having more clean boxes of plantings and supporting those buildings would be better than seemingly random swooping edges. It would make a stronger project as a whole.
- I have some concerns about the community building.
 - It's a small fitness room with mailboxes out front. Then the bike room and bike wash.
- What led to that design of that structure versus the other ones?

- It's really a combination of looking at everything on the site, using some of the materials, and a spirited form that has a little bit more energy where that common space is. Even the two buildings that are not part of this project have a similar palette so there's continuity to the overall campus.
- It's so simple it's almost shed-like. Nothing about that drawing speaks community room or center to me. It's similar to the garages in scale and design.
 - I would respectfully disagree. I think it's a simple, clean building that doesn't necessarily draw your attention to it.
- I think the term "community building" is a misnomer, it's kind of utility with pet washing and bike repair.
 - You're right, it's common amenity. It's not a community room.
- I'm wondering if that's what's bothering you Rafeeq because it's not something that's going to draw attention.
- I didn't actually see the landscape plan or schedule in the submittal. If you could provide just a brief summary of the plant palette you're using.
 - The idea, I noticed the simplicity and Scandinavian theme as well. I tried to use blocks of plants to keep it simple. I curved it to have some more key elements on some of the corners of buildings, and then it's easier for maintenance. Some sort of Evergreen element at each entry for color. Japanese Tree Lilacs, Spirea, Flowering Crabapples, mixtures of Maples and Oaks, a few Honey Locusts, a lot of native perennials, ground covers that will fill in so it's not just mulch, some Blackeyed Susans, Hydrangeas, I tried to get a lot of color in the plan. We added a lot of Evergreens along E. Washington to block some of the headlights coming in at the second story.
- I think blocks of plants, I meant not only in massing of species but geometry, what would fit with the architecture more is having longer straight beds with key species at the corner. I don't think you have to curve in and out.
- With the three 8-units in the middle there were some trees in the intersection, that might feel the safest space for a family to stretch their legs without being exposed to vehicular noise. Maybe the trees should frame it more instead of occupying the space.
- When you end here at the cul-de-sac, people go through the dirt path to E. Washington to get the bus. I know you had a discussion with the DAT team, did we decide if there would be stairs or path so people can easily go up and down to E. Washington Avenue?
 - (Joe) I haven't been a part of that discussion.
 - (Janine) I don't have any information on that at this point.
 - (Cuta) Traffic mentioned it at the DAT meeting, Metro mentioned it. That's a City staff issue I guess, what the City's going to do to address people walking up and down that hill.

ACTION:

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (8-0).

The motion provided for simplification of the planting beds for a cleaner aesthetic to support the building architecture.