

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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**REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION**

**PRESENTED:** November 4, 2020

**TITLE:** 402-414 E Washington Avenue, 8-12 N Franklin Street, and 9 N Hancock Street; Urban Design Dist. 4; 2nd Ald. Dist.: Consideration of a demolition permit to allow seven buildings to be demolished; consideration of a conditional use in the Urban Mixed-Use (UMX) District for a multi-family dwelling with more than eight (8) dwelling units; consideration of a conditional use in the UMX District for outdoor recreation; consideration of a conditional use in the UMX District for a new building greater than 20,000 square feet and more than four stories; and consideration of a conditional use to construct two additional stories in Area H of the "Additional Heights Area Map" in MGO Section 28.071(2)(b), all to allow construction of a ten-story, mixed-use building containing 1,200 square feet of commercial space and 148 apartments. (62096)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

402-414 E. Washington Avenue, 8-12 N. Franklin Street and 9 N. Hancock Street – Ten-Story Mixed-Use Building with 1,200 Square Feet of Commercial Space and 148 Apartments in UDD No. 4. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (62383)

**AUTHOR:** Janine Glaeser, Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

**DATED:** November 4, 2020

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Lois Braun-Oddo, Tom DeChant, Jessica Klehr, Shane Bernau, Syed Abbas, Russell Knudson, Christian Harper.

**SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of November 4, 2020, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** of a conditional use for additional height, and **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a new mixed-use building in UDD No. 4 located at 402-414 E. Washington Avenue, 8-12 N. Franklin Street and 9 N. Hancock Street. Registered and speaking in support were Angie Black, representing Wash Haus Development, LLC; Randy

Bruce and Duane Johnson, representing Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC. Registered in support and available to answer questions was Justin Zampardi, representing Vierbicher. Registered and speaking in opposition was Anthony Brylski. Registered neither in support nor opposition and available to answer questions was Eli Judge.

Black presented this revision of a project previously approved by Landmarks and UDC, and placed on file with the Plan Commission. The developer has collaborated with the neighborhood, City staff and the steering committee. They have reduced the height by one floor level and the density from 156 to 148 units. A procedural issue resulted in the Plan Commission holding a second vote to place it on file. The current iteration meets ordinances and the Downtown Plan, procures a high quality project to provide density and addresses the neighborhood comments. Johnson presented the updated renderings, with the site maintaining its UMX zoning, site on proposed BRT line. Existing street images show the existing character of the block. One commercial space on corner of Franklin Street has been retained. Vehicular access is still a one-way flow in and out to keep traffic out of the neighborhood. The building is maintaining the same setbacks for a lot of landscaping. The roof level has now become the main community space with the main mass of the building moved back and used as plaza space. This level is now being considered a story, so they dropped a story off the building height but by the Zoning Code are still considered 10 stories. Bruce continued the presentation, noting they have replaced one commercial space with residential and removed a canopy. The original was 125 in height, this new proposal is 116 feet in height. It is substantially the same architecture after hard work with this Commission and works well with the neighborhood aesthetic, as well as being within the height limits. He showed how much of the buildable area is not being used. By moving most of the massing away from the neighborhood, they have reduced heights even more, using about 50% and achieving an appropriate design on a high density corridor. A shadow study was shown, casting less shadow than an 8-story building would. The landscaping plan shows changes along Hancock Street in response to concerns by neighbors, leading to more private yards on Hancock Street and allowing for interaction with passersby. The 6<sup>th</sup> floor roof deck is a common use element where it was previously private. Two on-site loading stalls were added coming in off Franklin Street under the building.

Anthony Brylski spoke, noting appreciation for all the design changes made, like the rooftop area and determination to eliminate one commercial space and loading zones. His opposition is purely about affordability at this point. Even 10% of the units at some reduced rent to make up for the units being demolished.

Bob Klebba spoke having chaired the steering committee, and thanked the development team for their collaboration. This was not generally welcome in the neighborhood, although a few more members this time were supportive of the application but have serious concerns addressed in their report. This proposal includes 26 units of affordable housing being demolished, those residents have had to move elsewhere and are no longer part of the conversation, while others have tired. There was lively testimony from the first application. They are encouraged by the street level activation, the developers were responsive to many issues brought up. Most pertinent to UDC are the excess height and design that integrates with the neighborhood. The height causes shading, winter will be unlivable, the massing does not match the rhythm and flow in the neighborhood, the excess height is inappropriate and should be denied.

Mariah Renz spoke, agreeing with what Bob Klebba has mentioned as steering committee comments. She appreciates the way developer has communicated with the neighborhood, but still strongly believes building is too tall and too large to integrate appropriately with rest of neighborhood.

The Commission discussed the following:

- We discussed this to death in the earlier iterations. I'll remind Commissioners our final vote for this was 5-2 in favor for final approval. I'm happy to see it shrank a little bit, clearly not enough to make a significant portion of the neighborhood happy with it. E. Washington is being developed this way, the

way the City has pointed the development through plans and allowances. The Galaxie, the Constellation, the Lyric, those buildings were also immediately adjacent to blocks with two and three story buildings, they've found a way to co-exist. The issue of this being part of James Madison Park, barely, it's on the very edge and fits squarely into the Downtown Core and checks most of the boxes of what we're looking for. It's a handsome building, nice to see something not quite as modern as the others. It is fulfilling the requirements we asked for to get the bonus stories. I like the changes on the ground level. Admirable project.

- The E. Washington façade in the hip roof area in the dormers, appears now glazing was inserted. Assuming that's because you're now occupying that floor with communal spaces? Is that necessary or expendable, hip roofs more attractive if they're solid.
  - There is a penthouse plan with a small balcony.
  - That is an area for people to go out onto from the community area.
- Not as elegant as the rest of the hip roof but wanted to know it did indeed have a function.
- We wouldn't see that straight on in elevation like this.
- I'm curious about the swimming pool on the top floor.
  - We have relocated the pool, it was on the lower roof, that was pulled up to the upper roof level. When we moved the community space the pool moved with it. It also includes an exercise room and so forth for the residents.
- I like the project because it provided density on a BRT, and sustainability fits really well. Glad to hear they worked with residents and decreased some shading. Good to see the swimming pool moved to the upper floor to create the gap between houses. I like it as it is, but I am curious about the public comment of removing 26 affordable housing units. Did you work with the neighbors about adding some affordability into the building?
  - We worked with the neighborhood quite a bit on trying to address the affordability issues and had quite a bit of discussion. The reality is we don't have the financing tools available to us to provide affordable apartments at this spot. We have looked at rent levels that are projected for this building and compared them to rent levels WHEDA currently has, there would be many listed as affordable in that regards. This is a market-rate project. Providing more apartments in the central City helps relieve limited housing supply pressure and reduce rents everywhere.
- It's important to have affordability in the downtown area. I really hope moving forward your group and others think about affordability and make projects more inclusive.

Ald. Heck spoke, recognizing the active work of the steering committee with the developer. It is true that it's a shame that a lot of the people who were involved have moved on because of the threat of their apartments being demolished, and all of those people are not participating in this process. Similar to what you considered the first time, give credit for reducing some negative impacts. Although they do remain, they have been mitigated to some extent. Activating Hancock Street is good. Concerns about the impact on the neighborhood continue.

- I continue to think the project is attractive, appropriately scaled given its context and location. It's a lot of turf grass lawn for this kind of urban context. I don't think that's appropriate, a robust planting contributes much more to that pedestrian experience. There may be some appropriate locations of limited lawn for pets/dogs but could also be reduced. Notice no street trees on Franklin and Hancock Streets depicted. There's enough space on Hancock that you should consider one or two ornamental trees in the space between the building and sidewalk, like you have on Franklin. You get some sort of pedestrian scale buffer. I also noticed Stella D'Oro daylily in the planting plan, please don't cheapen the landscape design with that plant and replace it with a substitute perennial.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by DeChant, seconded by Knudson, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** of the conditional use and **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of the UDD No. 4 aspect of the project. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (7-0).

The motion to approve the height noted that the additional two stories are substantially below the maximum allowed height and it does lead to a better proportion of the building creating a better design.

The motion to approve the UDD No. 4 aspect of this project provides for address of the landscaping comments to include the addition of ornamental trees on Hancock Street and the replacement of Stella D'Oro Daylily with a substitute perennial.