

## AGENDA # 8

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**PRESENTED:** June 30, 2021

TITLE: 575 Zor Shrine Place - Residential  
Building Complex. 9th Ald. Dist. (65583)

**REFERRED:**

**REREFERRED:**

**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Kevin Firchow, Acting Secretary

**ADOPTED:**

**POF:**

DATED: June 30, 2021

**ID NUMBER:**

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Members present were: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Craig Weisensel, Shane Bernau, Tom DeChant, Christian Harper, Rafeeq Asad and Russell Knudson.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of June 30, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED** that the Plan Commission return this item to the Urban Design commission for final review. Registered and speaking in support were Mark Laverty, representing Saturday Properties; David Stahl, Michael Jones and Natina James, all representing Cuningham Group. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Matt Schreiner, representing Saturday Properties; Kim Van Dyn Hoven and Spencer Christiansen.

The project shows a future right-of-way on the north part of the site in anticipation of a future grid system in the draft Odana Special Area Plan. There will be a public connection on a north-south path to the site. They are providing something that doesn't currently exist in this area; vacancy rates in this area are about 2%. This is a location with high visibility, an elegant, sophisticated and timeless design while looking fresh and new. They are proposing two buildings with color variations for interest, oriented to have wings facing outward to break down the scale and mass and surround the with active landscaped amenity plazas. The front door entry points mirror each other at the north corners and acts as a visual and physical link between the buildings. Design elements are large windows, spacious balconies with south facing decks for views, familiar and homey exterior materials with long lasting minimal maintenance. They needed to keep the cul-de-sac and make it work while anticipating that east-west connection on the north parcel. There is below grade parking, and they have discussed pushing it further south to move traffic into the site. The main entry to the north creates a presence and awareness of people coming into the site. The spine between the two buildings provides something special that could be activated or closed-off for tailgating and such. There is bicycle parking in the north of that spine. South of the buildings they strategically located loading and off-loading as well as trash. The site is parked to what is required with one building slightly exceeding what's required; they will be EV ready. Amenity spaces include club rooms, fitness and work space/conference space. The Beltline is a unique opportunity for signage on the buildings; this will go through a separate process. Landscaping offers three typologies: an 'urban forest' in a community plaza area with different types of vegetation; an "Oaks Savannah" perimeter softening the edges using trees and grasses and creating opportunities to buffer some areas on the edges; and a "wooded wetland" at the lowest portion of the site, using water movement as an opportunity with different types of plants. The "play

deck” creates more opportunities for engagement with neighbors, while using vegetation to create small areas within and bring the forest edge to that play deck. The “gather deck” is more intimate on the east building, with small zones for grill and fire tables and outdoor flex space. The “relax deck” is more secluded on the more southern portion, a quieter space while still offering engaging opportunities with the neighbors, and raised planters to engage the forest.

The Commission discussed the following:

- What’s the target population, no plans or thoughts for larger bedroom units?
  - Based on our analysis we see a lot of young adults, post-college in close proximity to jobs.
- Tickled by the landscape goals. You have a driveway going right through the zones you articulated. Wonder if the design team thought about trying to get the landscape zone for occupant benefit between the circulation or to create an environment that includes that circulation.
  - We can take that into consideration.
  - The first floor is up approximately 5-feet so there is a buffer between the two. We have outdoor areas focused towards the amenity decks but still wanted lower areas to be as nice as possible. Making that central area an active zone that brings the two buildings together as a community, but on a Tuesday evening is used as parking.
- You could create a more desirable plaza experience, choice of materials for the paving, going really aggressive to something permeable or turf based.
- Appreciate the density of what we’re looking at as a whole relative to what exists currently. To address specific points in staff report about tree preservation: great job with the tree inventory, I don’t see any major issues with what you’re proposing. The Sugar Maple along the east boundary, I’m not clear whether it’s staying or being removed; make a note to keep that one if there’s no reason to take it down (Tree 51). The Ash trees, if not being treated should be removed.
- Love the landscape narrative but can’t help but see lots of surface parking. By count it seems an excess largely driven by the north parcel which will become a City right-of-way. Just north of that is a duplicate whole lot of parking, that’s 60-some stalls that aren’t being factored but still part of the design proposal, with another 14 excess of the 1:1 ratio. There’s potentially 80 stalls surface parking stalls that aren’t really required by code. Can that parking lot to the north can be used in some sort of shared agreement? Agree the parking around the perimeter doesn’t feel like good urban design or a streetscape. This feels more like two buildings surrounded by a parking lot, especially that center spine seems problematic. Without some of that materiality it’s hard to justify that. Love the outdoor spaces you do have. If those were all inward facing to a central open space this may be more successful.
  - This is a location that isn’t very walkable right now. We know we’ll have a parking need of one per bedroom. The north part, we are dedicating that back to the City. We have a minimum to have folks able to live there. The programming in the middle is something we have frequently discussed and we’re continuing to address.
- The north parking lot, are those 66 stalls factored into the 1:1 provision?
  - We are not able to incorporate those because it is a deeded area.
- Those 66 stalls, obviously circulation needs to happen but it could be open space.
- With regard to the building being elevated about 5-feet, I see in the plan basically a masonry wall. Within the narrative of your different landscape zones, if there was some terracing of that landscaping against the wall instead of just a wall coming down to grade, it might help break up that space and ease the transition of the vertical wall.
- This was previously a relatively small building on a large parcel with lots of trees, an underutilized space. We’ve gone from that to every single available space within those property lines with buildings and a parking lot. Better than average landscaping around the buildings and amenity areas to be acknowledged, but it’s a lot of hard surface area. Wondering what the team has looked at in terms of

stormwater management guidelines to follow but any consideration to green roofs, dealing with water in these parking lots, permeable areas, rain garden areas. Future plantings look to shield the building from the Beltline at some point; I'd like to see more shielding of that. The properties on either side, to the right you're up to the property line showing a row of trees, it doesn't look like there's much of a planting areas between those properties. Concerned on that aspect of the landscaping, drainage and water issues. What are you doing to address these issues?

- Proposing a bioretention basin in the northeast corner of the eastern building. That will have live plantings to promote infiltration. Primarily run-off will be taken underneath the parking lots. It's easier to maintain long-term. Meeting the stricter new requirements of the City.
- Orientation and maximizing space. Trying to address the Beltline, privacy, those greenspaces are commendable but by mirroring the buildings and making a courtyard it would make those spaces nicer and provide more of a buffer on that spine. That's an opportunity for the team.
- The north roadway, if you're putting additional parking that might go away, you'll just sacrifice the additional parking on that north parcel?
  - That is the anticipation. The orientation – we've flipped them back and forth a number of times but decided on this orientation because of the connection that goes from Zor Shrine Place and wanting to create public access to this site. Create and promote connectivity to the site to the east as well.
- Access to the building – the ADA entrance is all the way to the south on the back corner.
  - The front will also be ADA accessible.
  - There are entry ramps designed to ADA that meet all current codes.
- It might be worth considering putting ADA spots there in lieu of the back of the building.
- You have some bike parking on the surface. Given the area it's most likely residents will be biking and will probably want to lock their bikes underground. Is there any opportunity to turn surface bike parking to greenspace and put more parking under the building?
  - Most of our bike parking is enclosed. We intentionally put it in a spot that we see as flex use.
- I like the design, it's a nice addition to the City and giving us more needed housing. I like the punches of the fiber cement that add texture. Louvers and the HVAC serving the units, will there be any we are not seeing?
  - We are planning on a system that does not have any grills so what you see is accurate to our plan.
- Could the team help us understand, I think there were some great ideas discussed here about the rotation of buildings that's a huge opportunity. I appreciate your thoughts on future development but I question making design choices around that uncertainty. Is rotating the buildings on the table?
  - We're trying to think bigger picture. There are arguments for both of them but we're trying to think bigger than just two buildings which frankly puts us at risk.
  - Looking at the massing if we face them inboard it does make a nice tranquil approach. You get the desirable side and then the leftover. By flipping the buildings both sides are desirable, either the activated alley and entry or looking out onto the plazas, but it also breaks down the scale to passersby.
- Building articulation was pretty well received. Orientation and open space at issue.
- UDC is advisory on this item. Code requires findings and recommendations.

## **ACTION:**

A motion was made by Knudson for initial approval. The motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion was made by Weisensel, seconded by Bernau, to **RECOMMEND** to the Plan Commission that this item return to the Urban Design Commission for final review prior to issuance of building permits to address the following items:

- Increasing green areas within the site including minimizing parking to the minimum required.
- Addressing orientation of buildings with concerns over the alleyway between buildings and/or rotating one or both of the buildings for a courtyard approach or amenity space utilization.