

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	PRESENTED: September 1, 2021
TITLE: 341 State Street, 315-319 W. Gorham Street, 321 W. Gorham Street, 322 W. Johnson Street - New Mixed-Use Building for Student Housing, Retail and Incubator Space. 4th Ald. Dist. (63798)	REFERRED: REREFERRED: REPORTED BACK:
AUTHOR: Kevin Firchow, Acting Secretary	ADOPTED: POF:
DATED: September 1, 2021	ID NUMBER:

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of September 1, 2021, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a new mixed-use building located at 341 State Street, 315-319 W. Gorham Street, 321 W. Gorham Street and 322 W. Johnson Street. Registered and speaking in support were Tai Maki, representing Antunovich Associates; Mark Jirik, Tom Neujahr, Rob Bak, representing Core Spaces Manager, LLC; Jeff Zelisko, Susan Schmitz and Brian Munson, all representing Core Spaces, LLC; Bob Klebba and Chuck Bauer. Registered neither in support nor opposition and wishing to speak was Tim Kamps, representing Mifflin District, Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc.

Munson addressed the request for additional height, noting that the proposal is compatible with existing or planned height character of the surrounding area, and is a higher quality building. The mass is lowered on State Street to improve the settings around contributing buildings, a low and moderate income housing component is included, they are seeking National Green Building Standards for mechanical, lighting and overall design; providing usable open space in rooftop amenities, and the stormwater management exceeds what is required for the site. Architectural updates include increased setbacks, elimination of the residential courtyards, improved architectural details, changes to much of the metal panels to masonry to be more in a residential character, changes to the windows along Gorham and Broom Streets to be less vertical, refinement and improvement of the expression of a series of contextual buildings, and a reduction in density and bed count for this new design.

Bob Klebba spoke in appreciation of the inclusion of historic façades, noting that the height maps in this area require the building to step back significantly from State Street, which results in awkward architectural design.

Chuck Bauer spoke as a former State Street property and business owner who also served on the Landmarks Commission. He finds this very impressive and is in favor of the development. The design changes are quite important, glad so much stakeholder and citizen input has been included to this point. Pleasure to see such robust and serious investment in a downtown core hard upon the heels of many recent challenges and serious damage.

Tim Kamps, representing Capitol Neighborhoods, noted they have held 5 neighborhood meetings with the development team, who has incorporated their feedback in terms of design, configuration of building.

Susan Schmitz spoke, noting that Madison is an excellent location for this project. State Street has always been a place to gather, and now it is becoming a residential area. The design provides housing, including affordable, and spaces for small businesses that keep the State Street feel with the setbacks.

Tom Neujahr spoke to balancing community interest with this project, the importance of the future health of State Street and downtown, and meeting the needs of small local entrepreneurial retailers.

The Commission discussed the following:

- Design is very subjective, I thought it was more successful before, was more contemporary. Not every building in Madison needs to be brick or be four-stories. Going with the status quo can be a disservice to a project; now it looks like every other building we see. The punched openings look forced.
- Overall appreciate you took a hard look at the project and were willing to make changes to address comments. Some of what was lost was actually spurred on and in response to our comments on it wanting to look more residential and our response to the verticality of the previous design.
- The fact that we have a three-story proposal on State Street is very compelling. It's a nice scale for the street, the trade-off on the higher portions is well worth that. Appreciate the relief of that 10-story reconfiguration along Johnson because of the pedestrian scale. The Gorham side with recreated façades now makes more sense because there is relief behind those façades. Landscaping is robust and interesting.
- Public comment is really impactful and goes a long way, it really does impact our perception and interpretation of the project.
- This is an improvement, particularly the setbacks along Gorham and Johnson, it will be a much more livable area. Like the pedestrian area on Gorham and Broom. Three-stories on State Street is effective on that corner. You could go a little lighter on Brick #4 for some relief, but I appreciate there is some range there.
- Thank you for breaking up the massing, it's much more successful. Residential vs. modern, there's something about State Street and the quality of it, the human scale and success as it is. It's unique enough to maintain the residential quality. I see traditional and modern, it's not total brick.
- Confused how we could consider final, feel like we don't have enough information.
- Access, delivery, emergency services not part of this conversation? We're not talking much about this. Usually we have a robust conversation about landscaping and cars coming and going.
- Keep in mind the feedback we've been asked to give, particularly with height standards. The long views, the architectural detailing and breaking up of the large masses. With removal of the courtyard they've taken that outdoor space and given it back to the street.
- There's not a whole lot of site. We talked last time about the entries and exits, that Gorham and Johnson are crazy at certain times of the day, and Broom Street a little bit less so, was there any contemplation of taking access off of Broom Street.
 - We had very detailed conversations with City Engineering and Traffic Engineering, they supported the Johnson Street location because the frontage along Broom Street is taken up largely by the future designation of a BRT stop. The parking entry sits roughly where the driveway is now for the firehouse. Made sure the streetscape is accessible from different areas.
- Bikes are in high demand in this area. You don't have a lot of real estate along the public right-of-way. Are the existing right-of-way bike racks to remain, will there be new or additional bike racks and parking along the street frontages in addition to designated guest parking zones?

- There are existing ring racks along the parking meters and signage along all the frontages, and racks on State Street, all will remain as part of the right-of-way.
- The relationship of the façade to the right-of-way, any difference from what is there today, offset the setback any different than what it is today on all four sides?
 - State Street is largely in the same location. Everywhere else we are increasing the terrace and sidewalk combination to meet the 15-foot requirements. It's a greater setback on Gorham and Johnson than what is there today.
- That's an incredible design attribute and benefit to the pedestrian realm.
- On Gorham where the reconstructed building face is moving back, it's a two-story existing façade with a terrace or outdoor space there that is using the window openings with some kind of grid but no glass. What will that space look like walking by or from the inside?
 - We have open space behind that. The Hub is an example with a terra cotta façade with courtyard behind it. This will act in the same way.
- Lattice work or representation of mullions but it's open air, no reflections?
 - Correct.
- On the inside is it faced with brick, metal panel or EIFS?
 - Most likely it will be masonry on the inside.
- These two-story façades are fake?
 - They are not occupied above the second floor, it's open to a courtyard.
- I struggle with the rebuilding of historic façades; it doesn't always make sense. But this has relevance to downtown and I support the rebuilding of those façades. To me if there's an open courtyard behind it I'm supportive of that because it's a vestige.
- I agree, the developers responded to our earlier comments to reserve some of these storefronts in some way. I am not a fan of reassembling as opposed to straight up preserving, but in this case it was a good faith effort on their part to respond to a lot of citizens, not just this Commission. I'm fine with that being open air behind there.
- As this has moved along there has been more stuff to like, a lot of the changes made are improvements. The punched windows do make it look more residential, which is what we were telling them. I'm missing the tall feather treatments on Gorham. The views have improved as far as reducing the mass. I'm keen to see how the green roofs develop; it will require serious maintenance. It's exciting to see something like that on a project this size. A lot of people can't get over the sheer size of it, it was hard to swallow but they make a pretty solid case.
- I believe giving some of the open space back instead of the courtyard is a big improvement. Why skip a horizontal band at the top floor? It's not as elegant when the brick had gone up an extra couple of floors.
 - Previously we were flat across Johnson, we stepped the panel back which gave the ability to do the brick up. Since we moved those stepbacks into the courtyard of the new design; the only change in plane on this revised design is in the thickness itself. It make sense to keep the brick at the wider section not affected by the State Street setback; that's a logical place to transition into the metal panel.
 - We were trying to lighten up the other portion with the horizontal band that separates retail from residential. We're trying to make it feel grounded at the base and lighten as we move up the building façade.
- Maybe either add a band or take one off.
- The transition of materials would be effective if it was up a couple of floors.
- Ald. Verveer spoke, acknowledging that the applicant has worked very dutifully with him and the neighborhood associations. The neighborhood associations have not yet released a formal statement. There is a difference of opinions among neighborhood activists and stakeholders, particularly in regards to the height. The design progression has been in a very positive direction. The target date of September

20th for Plan Commission is not set in stone. He has heard more compliments on the reconstruction of the historic facades in terms of the design of the Hub and the James I. He very much supports reconstruction of the historic façades. There has been significant issue with downtown development of late in regards to the number of street tree removals and missed opportunities for new or replacement trees because of utility conflicts. He requested the Commission include structural soil as a requirement for their right-of-way improvements to help trees reach maturity. He requested that the Commission make specific finds on each of the additional height request standards.

- The Chair read the four criteria for additional height, Section 28.098(2)(h):
 - #1 OK
 - #2 OK
 - #3 N/A
 - #4 OK
 - The Commission is able to make a finding that the project is successful for those criteria.
- It's a dilemma with utility conflicts, I would love to add to the motion that the project supply the number of street trees shown in the plans.
- If this was not an advisory motion it would be a clear initial approval project. With this advisory motion do we ever see this again or is our conversation over?
 - We are allowed to request the Plan Commission require certain things come back to this body.
 - We've used the initial/final approach for PDs that staff take the recommendation of UDC and note that it is recommending prior to final sign off it return to UDC to approve whatever is specified.
- Regarding the void space, I'd ask if you would consider that as another friendly amendment to include allowing us to see it again so we see the option of an infill behind the second story façade.
- The infill is purely a subjective version of the façade to have open rather than interior building.
- Glad the public will still have input, it doesn't feel right not to have the neighborhood's formal decision.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Harper, to grant final approval. An alternate motion was made by Bernau, seconded by Klehr, to grant initial approval with a request that the developer return to the UDC depicting specifically what the design looks like filling the void space behind the façades on Gorham Street. The motion failed to become the main motion.

On a motion by Braun-Oddo, seconded by Harper, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-1-1) with Braun-Oddo, Harper, Bernau and Albouras voting yes; Klehr voting no; and Asad abstaining.

The motion noted the following:

- The project meets the criteria for the additional building height.
- Based on the Alder's statement, the UDC requests structural soil for the street trees to give them a better chance of reaching maturity.
- An advisory statement to the Public Works Commission on street trees.