



Monday, November 15th, 2021

City of Madison
Planning Division
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017
215 Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
Madison, WI 53701-2985

Attention: Tim Parks

Re: Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras' New Home, 1128 East Washington Avenue

Dear Members of the Urban Design and Plan Commission:

Please accept this letter of intent, application, and plans as our formal request to develop a 40,085 square foot rehearsal facility for the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras (WYSO) at 1128 East Washington Avenue. The facility will include three large rehearsal halls, multiple rehearsal studios of varying sizes, practice rooms, administrative offices, and community gathering space and amenities. WYSO is requesting approval for a conditional use under the CC-T zoning district and design approval under Urban Design District Eight.

Team

Architect: Strang Architects
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Madison, WI 53703
Tim Crum
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Civil Engineer JSD Professional Services
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Kevin Yeske
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Landscape Architect Saiki Design
1110 S. Park Street
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Rebecca DeBoer
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Acoustician: Talaske
1144 Lake Street, Unit 310
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Rick Talaske
Rick@talaske.com

Development Consultant: Urban Assets
807 E. Johnson Street
Madison WI, 53703
Melissa Huggins
Melissa@urbanassetsconsulting.com

Existing Conditions

The project site was the home of famed Avenue Bar, more recently renamed The Avenue Club and now permanently closed. The completely paved site abuts Curtis Court to the north, a narrow street that runs between Few and Ingersoll streets. Approximately 30 older homes, some single family and some divided into apartments, line the north side of Curtis Court. A Jiffy Lube is located to the west of the site and an Avis/Budget Rental facility is located to the east. WYSO has also purchased an existing parking at 1138 East Washington, which previously served as overflow parking for The Avenue Club. 1138 East Washington is not part of this application.

Staff and Neighborhood Input

The development team met with city planning, zoning, and engineering staff multiple times over the last five months in order to obtain their input and guidance into the planning and design process. WYSO held three neighborhood meetings and met on site with Curtis Court neighbors in order to discuss plans for the trees and neighborhood bench located on the property. The project was endorsed by the TLNA Council at its November 11th meeting.

Project Overview

From its original program of 83 students in 1966, WYSO now provides transformational musical experiences and opportunities to over 450 students and their families each year through three full orchestras, two string orchestras, the WYSO Music Makers program for beginning musicians, and a variety of chamber music ensembles. For most of its 50 plus years, WYSO benefited from its relationship with the UW-Madison School of Music (now the Mead Witter School of Music). The School of Music helped sustain and grow WYSO by providing rehearsal and performance space, office and library space in the Humanities Building as well as use of some instruments. In 2019, due to a shift in policy regarding the use of the Humanities Building by non-university groups, WYSO elected to become fully independent from UW and the need for a permanent home became pressing.

The goal of the new facility is to provide welcoming, high-quality rehearsal space for WYSO's five full orchestras, chamber orchestras, multiple ensembles (brass, percussion, harp), and the growing Music Makers program which provides lessons and instruments to underserved children. The building includes:

- Three large rehearsal halls for full orchestras, one of which can accommodate 150 audience members for occasional performances
- Eight studios of varying sizes
- Nine practice rooms of varying sizes
- Music library
- Community gathering space
- Recording control room
- Instrument repair workroom
- Instrument storage
- Administrative offices
- Breakroom/kitchen/vending areas

In addition to serving WYSO's programs, the facility will be available for other community arts and educational organizations for rehearsals, classes, lessons, and occasional performances.

Relevant City of Madison Planning Documents

According to the 2018 comprehensive plan, *Imagine Madison*, the proposed land use for the site is Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU). NMU areas include residential, commercial (retail and restaurant), institutional, and civic uses. NMU areas are integrated into walkable neighborhoods with proximity to transit. Buildings should be oriented to the street and close to the sidewalks with building heights of two to four stories.

The 2008 *Capitol Gateway Corridor Plan* (amended in 2016 & 2020) recommends development in this area be compatible with residential development on Curtis Court and that building heights be limited to three stories. This requirement is carried into Urban Design District Eight, which further defines the site, massing, architecture, and landscape requirements.

Zoning

The project site is located in the Commercial Corridor – Transitional (CC-T) zoning district as well as in Urban Design District 8.

Compatibility with Urban Design District Eight

The development of located in Block 5b of UDD 8 and meets the following requirements:

- Maximum building height of three stories or 39 feet
- East Washington and Curtis Court are considered front yards with a 15-foot setback requirement. The East Washington set back is 16.9 feet and the Curtis Court setback is 17.4 feet
- Side yard setbacks are 6 feet in order to accommodate the window openings on future abutting buildings
- Glazing is set back 6 feet on the east and west façades and solid building elements (columns and roof overhangs) fall within the 6-foot zone.
- 16.9-foot terrace is provided between the 6-foot sidewalk and the building increasing the setback/sidewalk/terrace total width to 30.3 feet.
- East Washington is the front façade and includes over 60 percent glazing providing an engaging view into the building and enhancing the pedestrian experience.
- Two main entrances are located at the west and east corners, respectively. The west entrance is located under the drop off area and is situated at the southwest corner of the building in order to be clearly visible from East Washington.
- Mechanical equipment located on the roof is screened from view.
- Trash is located inside the building.

Stormwater Management

The proposed development is considered a redevelopment site and shall meet the applicable standards as follows:

- Reduce peak runoff rates from the site by 15% compared to existing conditions during 10-year design storm
- Reduce runoff volumes from the site by 5% compared to existing conditions during a 10-year design storm
- The required rate and volume reductions shall be completed, using green infrastructure, that captures at least the first ½" of rainfall over the total site impervious area. If additional storm water controls are necessary beyond the first ½ inch of rainfall, either green or non-green infrastructure may be used.

To meet the above standards, it is proposed that a green roof system supplemented by a below grade detention chamber will be utilized to meet storm water standards. These systems will pair well with the urban

redevelopment while providing environmentally sustainable measures that address storm water but also provide aesthetic appeal and value to the site.

An approximate 1,100 square foot green roof, comprised of both extensive and intensive types, is proposed. A larger extensive green roof will be placed on the south building roof deck facing E. Washington Ave. A smaller planter intensive green roof area on the north roof deck facing Curtis Court is also proposed. The underground detention chamber will be a 60" diameter pipe storage tank lying in the plaza space south of the building.

Operations

The facility will be owned and operated by WYSO. The building will be open during normal business hours. Rehearsals will occur during the day on Saturdays and Sundays and during the week from 4 to 9 PM. The facility will also host occasional performances, usually during the weekend.

WYSO students are dropped off and picked up for rehearsals by their parents. A two-lane covered drop off area is located on the west end of the building, by the main entrance, with one-way access off of Curtis Court and egress onto East Washington Avenue. An additional drop off area will be located in the parking lot at 1138 East Washington, a short walk from a second entrance at the south east corner of the building. Parents wishing to stay during rehearsals will be directed to surrounding parking structures (MyArts, The Lyric, WHEDA (under construction) and the city's South Livingston Street garage. The implementation of Metro Rapid in 2024, Madison's first BRT line, will provide an alternative mode of travel for students and staff.

Parking and Bike Parking

No parking is required for the development and none is provided on 1128 East Washington. 1138 East Washington, the former overflow parking lot for The Avenue Club, will provide 28 spaces for WYSO staff and visitors. The parking lot will also serve as a secondary pick up and drop off area.

A total of 124 bike parking is required for the development. Due to the type of use, primarily rehearsals requiring the transport of expensive and in some cases bulky instruments, WYSO will be requesting a reduction to 20 spaces, which will be for staff, music teachers, and visitors.

Public Subsidy

No public subsidy is required.

Construction Schedule

Construction will begin in the spring of 2022 and will be completed in the spring of 2023.

WYSO and the development team look forward to working with city staff and commissioners on the development of this important new facility for the Madison region's young musicians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melissa Huggins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Melissa Huggins, AICP
Principal