

## AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION	<b>PRESENTED:</b> November 23, 2011
TITLE: 741 East Mifflin Street/754 East Washington Avenue – PUD(GDP-SIP), Mixed-Use Development. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist. (24584)	<b>REFERRED:</b> <b>REREFERRED:</b> <b>REPORTED BACK:</b>
AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary	<b>ADOPTED:</b> <b>POF:</b>
DATED: November 23, 2011	<b>ID NUMBER:</b>

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Members present were: Richard Wagner, Henry Lufler, Richard Slayton, Marsha Rummel, Todd Barnett and Dawn O’Kroley.

### **SUMMARY:**

At its meeting of November 23, 2011, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a PUD(GDP-SIP) located at 741 East Mifflin Street/754 East Washington Avenue. Appearing on behalf of the project were Richard Freihoefer, and Christopher Gosch, representing Gebhardt Development. Appearing in support and available to answer questions were Garret Q. Perry and Otto Gebhardt. Appearing neither in support nor opposition but wishing to speak were David Waugh, Brenda Konkel, and Ald. Bridget Maniaci. The site is bordered by Reynolds Transfer on two sides, Water Utility and a gas station. The program has four major components: a parking structure bordered on three sides with commercial/retail use on Livingston Street, lower density residential use off Mifflin Street, and a residential tower structure on top of that. In regards to UDD No. 8, the project complies with massing but they are requesting an additional 17-feet of height for two more stories. A 30-degree setback line is required from East Mifflin Street that they comply with; there is a 45-degree line from East Washington where the building exceeds 130-feet which affects them. Major objectives for this project are to activate the street with a variety of outdoor spaces and elevation changes. Bicycle parking and pedestrian scale will stand out. Paving patterns will play off of the name “Constellation” with star patterning. Community gardens will be incorporated on the corner of Mifflin and Livingston Streets with some structure to tie to the urban environment. They have also incorporated green roof gardens on top of the parking deck, with the patterns from the streetscape being tied in. There are soil boring and contamination issues with this site; adjacency studies are on-going.

David Waugh spoke as a long-term resident of Mifflin Street and has been voted development chair of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Association. Several meetings have been held with interested neighbors. Feedback has been mostly positive and the neighborhood appreciates having a blighted site fixed-up and the sustainability aspects. Concerns raised include building heights, traffic circulation with East Mifflin being a bike boulevard, working with the City to open up that intersection for full accessibility, Capitol viewability, materials and design, and the parking structure.

Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- The East Washington BUILD Plan calls for a green edge along East Washington Avenue; this project contains a lot of hardscape.
- Livingston – you’ve got a shot at an environment where the across the street relationship is building as much energy as your own.
  - We’re trying to create an environment that will hold an urban space along East Washington. We can pop in more landscape areas outside the right-of-way on the property, but the idea is you need to have that place where people are going to come and hang out and have that separation between the urban space and the pedestrian flow. We’d like to add more trees as far as the boulevard but it bumps up against the idea.

(Maniaci) You have to do more substantial plantings and it’s a requirement. Planters aren’t going to get you there.

- You have three entries off of East Washington Avenue into the commercial space but on the Livingston side there is one office entry and one lobby entry. I think Livingston is your chance to create a space where people might actually want to sit. The feeling on East Wash can be more urban. The treatment of the two façades the same does not seem right.
- One of the four criteria is to create a boulevard. You’re the first ones out and are going to set the tone for adjacent developers and we need to look at that. You have an opportunity to shape the future beyond your own space.
- I like the idea of the constellation.
- The 22-foot dimension between the property line and sidewalk is going to be too wide.
- Why is the front door of the building on a side street?
  - The designated entrance to the upper floors, where we anticipated most of the street traffic being on the first floor, it seemed a much nicer environment for the entrance.

I know you want to hold the corner but I’m not sure about the large mass.

- What materials are on the table, and what is not?
  - Masonry, everything else is off the table.

(Maniaci) I don’t like the brick, the rendering looks really heavy. We have so many background brick buildings, I’m very concerned.

At our next meeting I’d like to bring in samples of polished precast panel in a dark color that we think would look nice.

Did you talk about metal panels?

It came up briefly but was not warmly received. We will have some accents.

A clean sophisticated metal panel system could be really elegant and fit the architecture.

Staff had a strong initial reaction. Once the massing gets worked out we are going to push the discussion to look at some other options, including metal panels.

In terms of height I am a little concerned that you’re already pushing it. Greater density is better in my perspective. The proportion of the top three stories concern me. You’re on the right track in terms of scaling down to townhouses.

- Relative to the overall building mass, the proportions not integrated well with the additional stories atop; the rim below upper stories wants to be moved up.
- I encourage you not to use concrete.
- You need another line of green, some trees along East Washington Avenue.
- I’d like to see planters in your community garden area. The band material needs to be substantial, not concrete. Use raised planters in community gardens for accessibility.

Richard Freihofer spoke as a resident of the neighborhood. At a recent Tenney-Lapham Steering Committee meeting, pretty much everybody agreed, including their past president, that this is going to be a very positive project for the neighborhood.

Brenda Konkel stated she is happy to see this development move forward. She has concerns about the height; she thought the neighborhood meeting didn't cull enough information to make a decision and she prefers to wait for the staff report. She commented that the process for this meeting was not successful. Holding a meeting the evening before Thanksgiving, starting the process at 5:30 even though it was posted for 5:45 p.m. (even if it is an estimate); the City process has gotten worse instead of better. Rushing this through is very problematic.

Further Commission comments were as follows:

- I hope you continue to look at bicycle parking. Look at redistributing the parking.
- As far as the UDD, the key thing in the plan that you are honoring is the 30-degree angle. If that weren't there the impact on the neighborhood could be a lot more oppressive.
- Need to provide address of requirements detailed within the provisions of UDD No. 8 with further review of the project in regards to building location and orientation, landscaping and open space, building massing and articulation, especially treatment of the upper and lower floors of the building, along with the avoidance of blank building walls and façades.
- In terms of determining height please bring back context of the surrounding buildings for a sense of scale.
- The townhouses and apartments reminds me of Market Row. Maybe there are some reminiscent way of tying in retail fronts across Livingston, tying greenspaces together, you've got a chance to start to tie things better and make a bigger collective effort. Start seeing what's there and what you are tying things together with.
- (Maniaci) I'm very concerned with the heaviness of the brick in terms of the corridor. This is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century new employment center; if you look at West Washington Avenue it's very throwback and I don't want to see this going in that direction.  
In terms of what's being proposed across the street, Phase 1 has the building on the other side of the block with this side set to stay as a surface parking lot until the market dictates that they have enough tenant base to build their other office building. At that point the corner would be built on the backside with a parking ramp and townhouses.
- I like the design direction you're going in, in terms of the modern direction.
- When you come back please address specifically all the requirements in the UDD No. 8 ordinance.

Further discussion covered the wall facing Reynolds and various UDD No. 8 requirements that will need to be met with the treatment of that façade and the project as a whole. Outside of the pending ordinance amendment regarding increased height, the Commission noted the need to address all of the applicable requirements of UDD No. 8 as they effect the project in order for the Commission to make a finding that they have been, and provide for a favorable recommendation to both the Plan Commission and Common Council on the PUD development as proposed.

### **ACTION:**

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** no formal action was taken by the Commission.

After the Commission acts on an application, individual Commissioners rate the overall design on a scale of 1 to 10, including any changes required by the Commission. The ratings are for information only. They are not used to decide whether the project should be approved. The scale is 1 = complete failure; 2 = critically bad; 3 = very poor; 4 = poor; 5 = fair; 6 = good; 7 = very good; 8 = excellent; 9 = superior; and 10 = outstanding. The overall ratings for this project is 6.

**URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR:** 741 East Mifflin Street/754 East Washington Avenue – PUD(GDP-SIP), Mixed-Use Development. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ald. Dist.

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
<b>Member Ratings</b>	6	6	-	-	-	-	6	6

- General Comments:
- Good start.