

AGENDA # 2

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: March 21, 2012

TITLE: 12 North Webster Street – Expand Surface
Parking in UDD No. 4 Following a
Demolition. 4th Ald. Dist. (25505)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: March 21, 2012

ID NUMBER:

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

SUMMARY:

At its meeting of March 21, 2012, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** to expand a surface parking lot in UDD No. 4 following a demolition located at 12 North Webster Street. Appearing on behalf of the project were Anne Morrison, David Jennerjahn and Julie Wiedmeyer, all representing Urban Land Interests; Brad Binkowski, and Ken Saiki, representing Ken Saiki Design. Appearing neither in support nor opposition and available to answer questions were Marilyn J. Martin and Guy V. Martin. Wiedmeyer stated that clients (in a recently purchased building across the public alley) have complained there is no parking in this area and some of the elderly clients find the new parking meters confusing; after the demolition of the two-story warehouse building at the back of the lot they are asking to incorporate 6 surface parking stalls into the existing 36-stall parking lot. A planter area will be extended to the north along the alley; where the existing landscaping is very mature. Binkowski stated that their plans for this lot are much the same as the Block 89 project, which brought retail and vitality to that portion of the Square. This parking would make the commercial space in the building across the alley much more viable. Binkowski noted that this is the last major site on the Capitol Square that is underutilized; where the demolition of this building is a small step to what will be the redevelopment of the entire block. Staff further clarified that the additional stalls would require approval by the Plan Commission as an accessory parking lot; since the new stalls do not strictly serve the tenants of the former “American Exchange Bank” of which the parking was restricted to serve prior to this demolition request. Staff further noted its non-support of the demolition to create surface parking in the downtown area. Traditionally, the number of surface parking lots in the area don’t tend to be short-term uses and is inconsistent with support for structured parking in the downtown area. Comments and questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Did you look at possible alternate housing uses for this building?
 - We never demolished it initially because we thought we could reuse it. At that time there were no plans to redo the entire block. But we could never have it make sense, other than using the ground floor it would never get redeveloped. We’ve spent a fair amount of time on how to best preserve the landmarked and historic properties.

- I can't support this just on principle of removing a building for parking spaces. The potential redevelopment is several years out and that building could end up being incorporated in the redevelopment. Have you discussed with the City potential redevelopment of the ramps?
 - It's not the same as having adjacent parking, particularly for people visiting tenants that provide services. A chiropractor is a great example, her customers aren't going to park in the government lot and walk all the way over to her storefront.
- Who will these be assigned to?
 - Tenants at 24 North Webster and the Center 7 property.
- The original parking was for the bank, which was accessory. By providing for it being non-accessory for another building off the zoning lot it's a different status as a conditional use.
- The footprint of the building occupies more like 9 stalls; why only 6 stalls?
 - Because it's a dead end condition the current parking lot is probably not quite compliant with the backing out space, which is why it's a net gain of 6 stalls.
- I'd like to see it circulate.
 - We recognize this isn't an ideal situation but this is temporary. We had a similar situation on the eastern side with no complaints.
- Seven years is a long time. I too wonder what would happen to that building if it was saved and in 7 years could become part of a larger project. But 6 stalls in terms of the numbers you've mentioned, to remove a building that has a lot of character concerns me.
 - Had we not taken down a building on the Square, Block 89 would not exist. These are critically important steps to maximizing the development potential of downtown and creating current vitality.
- We've already got the well landscaped surface parking area here. I didn't even know there was a building there until I looked at the aerial. If you think about the functionality of that building, our charge is the urban design of the City and thinking about the growth. We have to recognize that sometimes you have to take risks and do things you're uncomfortable with to get an outcome down the road that is better. If we look at outcomes, we have a well landscaped parking lot, we've got one building that's going to be rehabbed that is very important to this area, we've got another building that serves small businesses that are vitally needed, if we think of this broader in terms of what is right for the City it would be unwise to hold on to a building that is beyond its usefulness in hopes of something happening to it someday.

Marilyn Martin spoke as a neighbor and things the little parking lot is a gem with its light and trees. She has walked that street many times and never seen the building. To provide more greenspace and ease the parking for the storefronts seems like the right thing to do.

ACTION:

On a motion by Huggins, seconded by Lufler, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a vote of (4-3) with Huggins, Lufler, and Slayton voting yes; Rummel, Barnett and O'Kroley voting no; and Wagner breaking the tie in favor.

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 are 4, 4 and 5.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 12 North Webster Street

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	4
	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
	5	-	-	-	-	4	4	5

General Comments:

- Would like to see proposed plan for block, not 7-year temporary use without a plan. Temporary signage for parking lot suggests parking is available and not needed.
- Concerned about 7-year window for 6 stalls.

Cleveland, Julie

From: Martin, Al
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2012 4:48 PM
To: Cleveland, Julie
Subject: FW: Support for Blied/Capitol Hill Apartments

From: Susanne Voeltz [mailto:susi@mailbag.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2012 4:34 PM
To: Martin, Al
Cc: Verveer, Mike
Subject: Support for Blied/Capitol Hill Apartments

Hello Al,

We would appreciate it if you could forward forward the letter of support below to members of the Urban Design Commission.

The Mansion Hill Neighborhood Association met with representatives of Urban Land Interests on Wednesday March 7, 2012 to discuss Blied Warehouse and Capitol Hill Apartments. We were impressed by their presentation for minor remodeling to Capitol Hill and have no concerns with the demolition of the Blied Warehouse. While demolishing a building in order to create parking is not ideal under a variety of circumstances; in this case the structure in question is beyond its useful life, essentially hidden from the urban landscape and its removal will have no negative impact on the neighborhood. Moreover, we understand that parking is essential to the improvements that ULI continues to make to adjacent commercial space (Centre Seven) and to the rehabilitation of Capitol Hill both of which will add significantly to the vibrancy and economic health of Mansion Hill. We urge you to support these applications.

Thank you very much and thank you for your public service.

*Susanne Voeltz
James McFadden AIA
Residents of Mansion Hill*

**Susanne Voeltz Public Relations
One Langdon Street
Madison, WI 53703
608/284-0848
susi@mailbag.com**