

## AGENDA # 6

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

PRESENTED: November 10, 2010

TITLE: 501 East Badger Road – Resilience  
Research Center. 14<sup>th</sup> Ald. Dist. (20459)

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Alan J. Martin, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: November 10, 2010

ID NUMBER:

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Members present were: Marsha Rummel, Mark Smith, Todd Barnett, Richard Slayton, R. Richard Wagner, Melissa Huggins and Henry Lufler, Jr.

### SUMMARY:

At its meeting of November 10, 2010, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL** of the Resilience Research Center located at 501 East Badger Road. Appearing on behalf of the project were Kate Stalker, Joe Sensenbrenner, and Catherine Cruickshank, all representing the Resilience Research Center; and Mark Hanson, representing Hoffman, LLC. Sensenbrenner gave an overview of the plans, briefly describing the uses for the center. The overall purpose of this site is for research with proposed functions and proposed interactions. The cornerstone of this project is food: the attractiveness of food, the civic engagement that follows, interactions around food, education that occurs around food for the neighborhood or in a classroom, and the distribution of food and roots in the community flowing from these activities. There is an urban agriculture aspect to the project; they will have four (4) acres for urban agriculture purposes. The second element will be a project-based charter school. A curriculum has been put together and received approval from the Madison Metropolitan School Board. Over time every student in the City of Madison will have an opportunity to visit the site and take advantage of intern opportunities. The third element of the site is a neighborhood support center. They will work with the neighbors on what kinds of activities they need/want. They have a neighborhood support center group that is looking into what kinds of activities would be needed based on the ages and interests of the neighborhood. MG&E has expressed interest in being the principal lead operator and supporter of the geothermal and other methodologies, as well as monitoring those methodologies. They will have an on-site mixed-use coffee shop, something along the lines of the Goodman Center, with Food Fight as the food operator, using the food grown on the site. They look at this as a neighborhood gathering place with healthy food options; bringing the neighborhood together to cook and have conversations, using ingredients from their heritages and explaining their holidays and traditions. They believe that these activities will increase the general concept of civic virtue and knit the neighborhood together. Their philosophy is to strengthen a neighborhood, not rescue it. There are a number of at-risk conditions in this neighborhood and they believe this project can really make a difference. They will be in intense fundraising mode in the coming year and would like to break ground for the school soon so that by August they can receive the education they envision.

Heather Stouder of the Planning Division spoke to the conditional use aspects of the project: 1) the urban food production; 2) the fish farm; 3) the outdoor eating area. Stalker then spoke to these issues, stating that every

piece of food produced on this site is to be edible. There is nothing ornamental here. The students and the neighborhood center will both be assisting in the production and maintenance of these plants. The urban agriculture is considered to be the main focal point or “hub” of this project. They have a lot of accessory structures with the agriculture: greenhouses, hoop houses (temporary), garden sheds for tools, a mud room and a laundry room, a room for washing produce and everything that comes in from the gardens, a garden pavilion, community gardens run and managed by Growing Power. All stormwater will be stored on-site, as well as over 2 acres of stormwater run-off from properties uphill from them to alleviate some of the flooding in the neighborhood as well as use the water for the plants. They have plans for “living walls” of which there are no others like it in the Midwest; they will use the rooftop water run-off to water those walls. She then discussed “aquaponics” to take place in the greenhouses as a year-round operation to grow and harvest fish. Growing Power currently delivers fish and produce to local restaurants, then returns to pick up their scraps for composting. They have land about ¼ mile from this site that will be used for composting. Stalker explained that the front entrance to their facility is at the back of their building to encourage people to use alternate means of transportation. They are working with Madison Metro to find the best location for a bus stop. They have also heard from sponsors who want to fund their community gardens.

**ACTION:**

On a motion by Lufler, seconded by Barnett, the Urban Design Commission **RECOMMENDED APPROVAL**; noting that the plans and design of the project are more than adequate and appropriate for the use. The motion was passed on a vote of (6-0).

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 6, 7, 8, 8, 9, 10 and 10.

URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION PROJECT RATING FOR: 501 East Badger Road

	Site Plan	Architecture	Landscape Plan	Site Amenities, Lighting, Etc.	Signs	Circulation (Pedestrian, Vehicular)	Urban Context	Overall Rating
Member Ratings	6	5	6	-	-	6	8	7
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
	10	6	10	-	-	7	10	9
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10

General Comments:

- Terrific idea, I wish the architecture was more interesting.
- Great premise/components.