

Design Review Board Process

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Focus of DRB Review

The Design Review Board's review responsibility is the "civic" mission of a project, not its "private" or functional one. This includes review of the project in the light of the 2005 Campus Master Plan, with emphasis on:

- The quality of public open space and landscape, architectural form and exterior appearance,
- The design of primary interior public spaces,
- The relationship of the building and its public interior spaces to the larger campus context including pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns and open space systems.

Format of DRB Session

Generally, a DRB session is one and one-half hours in length and consists of four parts. The individual times are approximate, and may vary due to the nature and complexity of the project.

- First 20 minutes: the design team presents the project to the board. (See Section on description of materials and key discussion points for each review).
- Second 45 minutes: are devoted to a dialogue between the board and the design team.
- Next 15 minutes: The design team is excused while the board summarizes the previous hour's discussion and agrees on a limited number (three to seven) of key points to communicate to the design team.
- Final 10 minutes: The design team is invited back into the room, and the DRB communicates its summary points to the design team. The design team has the opportunity to ask for clarification of any of the points, but not to debate the merits of any of the points. (See Section on process for disagreements)

Number and Timing of Reviews

Typically the Design Review Board will review a project three times; during the conceptual phase, during schematic design, and during design development. Some projects, for various reasons, may necessitate more or less than three reviews.

Materials and Key Discussion Points

Conceptual Phase: This review may take place during programming or earlier, but is likely to occur before any drawing has been done.

Materials which should be provided by the Design Team for this review include:

- Map or aerial photo of district in which the project is located
- Site context plan or plans, showing vicinity of at least one block in each direction, with entry or grade level plans of each adjacent building. Plans should include existing grading as well as location of existing roads, walks, landscape elements, etc.
- Design and Development guidelines graphics and text from appropriate planning studies.
- Photographs of adjacent buildings.

Many of the elements required to generate these materials are available from various University departments. Contacts will be provided by the Project Manager.

Key discussion points at this phase of review may include, but are not limited to:

- Analysis of master plan documents (including other planning studies) for the area in which the project is located
- Analysis of vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns in the area.
- Analysis of architectural context, including scale, detail and materials of existing adjacent buildings.
- Discussion of potential relationships between site and adjacent and campus wide open space systems.
- Discussion of program opportunities such as:
 - Location and organization of interior public
 - Program elements which should or could benefit from a relationship to exterior spaces.
 - Possible/desired entrance locations.

Schematic Design: The schematic design review will focus on the building's relationship to its site, its massing and scale, and its contextual relationships.

Materials which should be provided by the design team for this review include:

- Three dimensional massing studies (physical model or 3D drawing) of proposed building, shown in context with adjacent structures and open spaces.
- Conceptual site plan showing site layout, existing and proposed grading, as well as preliminary ideas about landscape design, such as planted versus hard surfaces, and site circulation
- Conceptual floor plans showing relationship between programmed spaces, particularly entrances, lobbies, general assignment classroom and other shared or public spaces.
- Proposed entry or ground level plan should be shown in site context plan with site layout and entry or ground level floor plans of adjacent buildings.
- Conceptual building sections showing scale and vertical relationship of spaces.
- Conceptual elevations, showing overall height and relationship and proportion of materials or type of material (i.e. glass versus solid), as well as location and proportions of windows, doors and other openings.

Key discussion points at this phase of review may include, but are not limited to:

- Review of recommendations from previous phase and whether these have been addressed successfully or not.
- Massing and scale of building in relationship to surrounding structures and open space and master plan guidelines.
- Landscape concepts – planted areas versus hard surfaces, relationship of site design and organization to larger campus systems (pedestrian, vehicular and service circulation and open space).
- Relationships of major public and shared interior spaces to building site and landscape concept and larger campus context, such as location of entries with respect to entries of adjacent buildings and campus circulation systems.
- Relationship of public versus private zones of building, and of such zones to the surrounding site and buildings.
- Scale and vertical relationship of major public or shared interior spaces.
- Preliminary types and mix of material concepts.

Design Development: Design Development review will focus on refinements of the conceptual design, especially materials selection and ideas for detailing. Material selections need not be final, and may include presentation of options and alternatives.

Materials which should be provided by the design team for this review include:

- Three dimensional studies (physical model or 3D drawing) of proposed building, showing refinement of massing and scale concepts, and indicating material and color suggestions.
- Develop landscape plan indicating character of all outdoor spaces, including topography, plant material suggestions, hard surface material suggestions, and photographs or drawings of suggested site furnishings and amenities.
- Floor plans showing refinement of relationship between programmed spaces, particularly entrances, lobbies, general assignment classroom and other shared or public spaces.
- Proposed entry or ground level plan should be shown in site context plan with landscape design, and entry or ground level floor plans of adjacent buildings.
- Building sections showing scale and vertical relationship of spaces.
- Elevations, showing material suggestions and preliminary detailing ideas, as well as location and proportions of windows, doors and other openings.
- Material samples for building exterior and site.

Key discussion points at the phase of review may include, but are not limited to:

- Review of recommendations from previous phase and whether these have been addressed successfully or not.
- Continued discussion of massing and scale of building.
- Landscape design including overall character of space, plant suggestions, materials and furnishings, and continued discussion of relationship of site design and organization to larger campus systems.
- Continued discussion of relationships of major public and shared interior spaces to site and larger campus context.
- Continued discussion of relationship of public versus private zones of building and the relationship of these zones to the surrounding site and buildings.
- Continued discussion of scale and vertical relationship of major public or shared interior spaces (if necessary).
- Selection, use and mix of building and site materials and preliminary detailing.

Further Review: Occasionally, it may be necessary for the DRB to review a project beyond the typical three reviews. In this case, every effort will be made to expedite review, including holding an “in town” members only meeting. For state administered projects, the DRB may also refer outstanding design issues to the DSF for follow-up during its peer review.

Some reasons why an additional review may be required:

- Design team did not provide adequate materials or was not prepared to discuss typical key points at one of the previous reviews.
- Remaining unresolved issues or areas of disagreement regarding recommendations from previous reviews.
- Significant changes in the scope of design of a project after the final review has been completed.
- Mutual agreement by all stakeholders that additional review is necessary and desired.
- Determination by the University Architect, in consultation with the state for state

administered projects, that additional review is needed.

Documentation and Follow-Up

- The design team will receive a written commentary summarizing the key recommendations of the DRB pertaining to the project Five (5) working days after the meeting.
- The Office of Facilities Planning and Management will be responsible for recording and distributing the minutes.

Process for Resolving Disagreements and Appealing Decisions

- As much as possible, all areas of disagreement with the commentary should be discussed and resolved with the University Architect.
- Issues that remain unresolved with the University Architect may be referred to the Campus Planning Committee (CPC). The decision of the CPC will be final.
- If, as the result of an appeal, the DRB finds that design guidelines or criteria need to be revised, such revisions shall be recommended for consideration to the CPC.

Meeting Schedule, Timing and Deadlines

Generally, The Design Review Board should meet about 6 times a year, with meeting dates set aside for each month of the year to allow for maximum flexibility. At times there will be a reduction in the number of projects which are in design, and the DRB may not need to meet this often.

- A proposed schedule of meetings and projects shall be developed six months ahead (typically covering 3 meetings).
- If a project must be reviewed before the next scheduled DRB meeting in order to stay on schedule, a special meeting could be convened. Such a special meeting link up members via webcast. The design review board coordinator is responsible for collecting and distributing materials to the members before the meeting.
- Materials will be distributed so they are received by the DRB members at least 7 days in advance of the scheduled meeting.
- The project manager is responsible for getting materials from the design team, and providing them to the DRB coordinator no later than 12 days before the DRB.
- 7 copies of these materials should be provided. Clear, legible black and white copies of drawings and photographs are acceptable, but may be no larger than 11x17. Materials should include reduced versions that cover the requirements for the review phase as outlined in Section covering materials and key discussion points above. In place of paper documents, materials for review could also be presented in electronic format. Design team is always encouraged to discuss alternative format and media if it simplifies the process.
- The design team may bring additional materials to the meeting, such as enlargements, electronic presentations, color versions, physical models, and actual materials samples.