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December 10, 2010

Ms. Ann Pieper-Eisenbrown  
Chair  
Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission  
City Hall, Room 205  
200 E. Wells St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Ms. Pieper-Eisenbrown:

I understand that the Historic Preservation Committee is scheduled to once again address the proposal for a new hotel near East Wisconsin Avenue and North Milwaukee Street at its meeting on Dec. 13. I urge you and your fellow commissioners to take concrete action at this meeting – which will be the second on the topic – and not delay the process any further.

My recommendation would be for a favorable vote. The buildings that would be removed to make way for the hotel have been altered so drastically over the years that they have lost any architectural and historic significance they once may have had. Only a sliver of the buildings' original façade is original, and the original interiors were demolished years ago.

As someone who is quite familiar with the local real estate industry and whose business has operations downtown, I can tell you that there has been virtually no interest in these buildings for many years. Because they are in such poor and altered condition, restoration is neither practical nor financially feasible. If our City continues to look to the past instead of the future, these buildings are destined to remain crumbling, mostly vacant eyesores along two of downtown's most visible thoroughfares.

Again, I urge a vote in favor of the project. But more than that, I urge a vote, period. The HPC has all of the information it needs. Your job – and your responsibility – is to act on it. Don't delay this project further. Take action and let the process move forward.

I appreciate your time and would ask that my comments be included in the official project file and posted online.

Sincerely,

Jay Mack  
President and CEO

cc: Mayor Tom Barrett  
Milwaukee Common Council members