



Department of City Development
City Plan Commission
Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee
Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation

Lafayette L. Crump
Commissioner

Sam Leichtling
Deputy Commissioner

Ald. Spiker
13th Ald. District

CITY PLAN COMMISSION ZONING REPORT

File No. [250588](#)

Location: 3774 S. 27th Street located north of W Howard Avenue, on the east side of 27th Street, west of Wilson Creek.

**Applicant/
Owner:** Mandeep Dhawan (Applicant and Prospective Buyer)

**Current
Zoning:** Local Business (LB1) located within 27th/Howard Development Incentive Zone ([DIZ](#)) Overlay

Proposal: The applicant has submitted a proposal to redevelop the existing historic building and construct a new commercial building on the site located at 3774 South 27th Street, within the S. 27th/Howard Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) overlay. The DIZ overlay was created in 2010 and establishes permitted and prohibited uses, as well as design standards for developments within the overlay zone. The historic building is proposed to be renovated and reused as a restaurant and banquet (assembly) hall. A restaurant is an allowable use, and an assembly hall is also permitted within the overlay zone, but is subject to a public hearing and approval by CPC.

This site is currently owned by the City of Milwaukee. In June 2024, a proposal by a different applicant was approved for this site that included reusing the former Jacob Nunnemacher Mansion (later known as the Wildenberg's Evergreen Hotel) as a sit-down restaurant and 10,000 square foot banquet hall, and constructing a multi-tenant commercial building on the north side of the site. That proposal did not move forward, and a new applicant, Mandeep Dhawan, is proposing a similar development that entails a restaurant and approximately 5,200 square foot banquet hall within the existing building and a historically appropriate building addition. An outdoor patio and sand volleyball court are proposed as part of this project. The changes to the historic building were approved by the Historic Preservation Commission on August 4, 2025. Additionally, an approximately 2,800 square foot single-story commercial building is proposed to be constructed on the northwest portion of the site. The new building will be clad with brick masonry, and will have an outdoor seating area along the east edge. Future uses within the new commercial building will need to comply with the DIZ overlay use

list. The surface parking provided on the site will be shared by tenants and customers of both buildings.

DIZ Review:

The applicant has submitted a matrix evaluating how their proposal meets each of the DIZ standards. Staff has reviewed it and concluded that the proposal does align with the DIZ standards. A table including the applicant's explanation of how the standards are met is available as an attachment to this staff report.

In summary, the placement, height, building materials, and fenestration of the new commercial building meet all of the applicable design standards. A final landscape plan will be submitted to DCD Planning prior to the issuance of building permits, and staff will confirm compliance with the applicable overlay standards. The applicant intends to seek a landscape easement from Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) to allow the DIZ-required landscaping along Wilson Park Creek to occur on the MMSD-owned land. Outdoor seating areas have been incorporated into both the historic building redevelopment and new building plans. The surface parking lot will be shared by all tenants and customers of the site as recommended by the DIZ overlay. Signage is currently unknown, but the applicant intends to comply with the overlay standards. The overlay allows DCD Planning staff to sign-off on compliant signage.

Adjacent Land Use:

This site is located on a heavy commercial corridor and is surrounded by a mix of retail zoned Local Business (LB1) including a furniture store to the south, a large department store and grocery store to the northwest, and a restaurant to the west across the street. Wilson Park Creek is to the east.

Consistency with Area Plan:

The proposed redevelopment of the historic Wildenberg Hotel and construction of a new commercial building within the South 27th Street/ Howard Development Incentive Zone is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. This site falls within the Southeast Side Area Plan, adopted by the Common Council in 2008, and the South 27th Street Strategic Action Plan, adopted by the Common Council in 2017. The Wildenberg Hotel site was the subject of a design charrette during the South 27th Street Strategic Action Plan given its unique historical character and potential for catalyzing redevelopment along the South 27th Street corridor. Their design concept created a pedestrian-friendly, multi-use site with the historic building adaptively re-used as a brew pub or restaurant. The proposed development incorporates many of the recommendations, in particular, the adaptive reuse of a historic property for a restaurant and event space function that can provide a place for community members to gather. Additionally, the new commercial space meets the DIZ standards and includes an outdoor plaza, as envisioned as part of the design charrette. In Summary the proposed development is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Previous City Plan Action:

6/17/2024 (prior proposal) – City Plan Commission conditionally approved the redevelopment of an existing historic building and construction of a new commercial

building on the site located at 3774 South 27th Street, on the east side of South 27th Street, north of West Howard Avenue, relative to the Development Incentive Zone Overlay known as South 27th/Howard, in the 13th Aldermanic District. (FN [240179](#))

10/18/2010 – City Plan Commission recommended approval of a substitute ordinance to establish a Development Incentive Zone on land located generally along the east side of South 27th Street between West Howard Avenue and West Loomis Road (FN [090919](#))

**Previous Common
Council Action:**

9/23/2014 – Common Council granted historic designation to the Nunnemacher Estate/Wildenberg hotel located at 3774 S. 27th Street (FN [140400](#))

10/15/2013 – Common Council approved a resolution authorizing the return of real estate located at 3774 S. 27th Street to its former owner. (FN [130658](#))

11/23/2010 – Common Council approved a substitute ordinance to establish a Development Incentive Zone on land located generally along the east side of South 27th Street between West Howard Avenue and West Loomis Road (FN [090919](#))

**Previous
Historic Preservation
Commission Action:**

8/4/2025 (current proposal) – Historic Preservation Commission approved a resolution relating to a of Appropriateness for an addition to and rehabilitation of the Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel, an individually designated historic property, at 3774 S. 27th Street, for Mandeep Dhawan. (FN [250544](#))

6/3/2024 (prior proposal) – Historic Preservation Commission approved a resolution relating to a of Appropriateness for an addition to and rehabilitation of the Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel, an individually designated historic property, at 3774 S. 27th Street, for Rakesh Rahan. (FN [231653](#))

Recommendation:

Since the proposal restores and adaptively reuses the historic building, which the Historic Preservation Commission approved on August 4th, aligns with the DIZ overlay standards, and is consistent with the Southeast Side Plan and South 27th Street Strategic Action Plan, staff recommends approval of the subject file conditioned on the applicant providing a final landscape plan and landscape easement with MMSD to DCD staff prior to the issuance of building permits.

DIZ Overlay Review Matrix:

Standard	27 th /Howard DIZ (standards here)	Applicant Analysis of Proposal
Uses	Assembly hall is allowed but requires a public hearing before CPC.	We will apply to CPC for approval of the use and anticipate the use to be approvable. It is our intention to comply with all required design standards.
Building Placement Complies with DIZ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position buildings to provide parking opportunities on the sides of the buildings and provide opportunities to create public open spaces, safer walkways and landscaping. Position buildings to allow unifying landscaped perimeter for the entire site and along Wilson Creek. Renovate parking configuration to allow linear perimeter landscaping. Orient the fronts of new buildings and/or building entrances to the primary streets. 70% of primary façade shall face 27th St. Max building setback is 70' from property line to building. 	<p>The main building and addition are positioned to allow parking at three sides of the building.</p> <p>The buildings and site are designed to create safe and convenient pedestrian pathways with alignment of walkways leading to direct path entrances.</p> <p>Heavy landscaping and a 6' vision screen fence are proposed along Wilson Creek. The current site plan shows linear perimeter landscaping on all sides except where the existing building is positioned near the edge of the property.</p> <p>The existing building is setback approximately 80' including the front porch. We will not be proposing expanding the building to the front of the existing building to meet the 70' maximum setback. The existing condition is assumed to be legal non-conforming.</p>
Building Design Complies with DIZ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facades must be articulated to provide visual interest. Building materials must be of high quality Establish hierarchy between building elements by establishing a base, middle and top to the front elevation. Max allowable height for new buildings is 90'. Min allowable height for new buildings is 22'. Prominent architectural elements should be integrated to project above the front façade of a building averaging 22' in height. No one tenant/retailer shall exceed a building footprint of 100,000 sf. 	<p>The building materials proposed for the addition to the historic building shall match the original design of the building in as much as possible. The windows would be proposed as Marvin historic line which are offered in an aluminum clad exterior which we propose as an alternative to wood windows.</p> <p>The new building proposed has been revised to a single building with two commercial units. It has been designed with high quality materials on all sides of the building (including a limestone masonry base and accents, and 4" exterior face brick), and has a base-middle-top to establish hierarchy. No singular commercial tenant space exceeds a building footprint of 100,000 sf. Each unit</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front facades shall be oriented to primary street frontage (S. 27th St). If not possible, very high-quality design and materials will be required. • Unarticulated walls facing 27th St. are prohibited. Facades must be articulated with bays, windows, varying color and texture and/or other details that relate to the human scale. • All facades visible from the street must contain the most architecturally significant materials and fenestration. This includes decorative masonry and block, brick, cut stone, glass, architecturally finished metal cladding and architectural precast panels. EIFS cannot be used on the lower 1/3 of the building. • 75% of glazing on the first floor of commercial buildings must be transparent glass. • Screen mechanical system and trash areas from view of the right-of-way with fencing and/or landscaping. When using shrubs, minimum height must be at least the same height as the equipment/trash containers. 	<p>is approximately 1,400 square feet. The east unit would accommodate an outdoor seating area.</p> <p>The front elevation of the new building has been redesigned to be a primary façade with entrance and 40% glazed (exceeding the LB1-required minimum 30% glazing) with all clear vision glass (exceeding the DIZ requirement that 75% of the required glass is clear). All glass shown on the building elevations will be transparent. The new building has been revised to meet the 22' height requirement set forth by the DIZ. The height of the portion of building along the west end along S. 27th St, wrapping into the site along the south side, has been extended up by 1' – 8" to add additional prominence along the street. The north and east elevations of the new building are proposed to have the same exterior brick/stone materials as found on the other elevations.</p> <p>There is no EIFS proposed for this development. The 22' height allows for a parapet height that will screen all roof top units. The pitched roof of the addition to the new building screen all rooftop equipment located on the flat main area of the roof.</p> <p>A larger scale drawing will be created as landscaping is further developed. Shrubs cannot be shown at this scale but sidewalks are set away from the buildings to allow for perimeter base plantings. Perimeter plantings to be largely native perennial species.</p>
<p>Access, Parking and Circulation</p> <p>Complies with DIZ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site must support multiple modes of transportation, including auto, transit, bicycle and pedestrians. • Provide safe and well-lit parking for bicycles within 40' of building entrances. 	<p>HISTORIC BUILDING: A direct pedestrian path has been provided from the front of the main (historic) building to 27th Street. A ramp will be incorporated to traverse the grade due to the excavated front of the main building which allows for the recreation of a raised front porch.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance opportunities for landscaping within the parking lots and along the perimeter, especially along the backside adjacent to Wilson Creek. • Visually create smaller parking areas with landscape screening within and along parking lot edges. Surface parking lots should have curbed, landscaped islands. • Pedestrian walkways from parking areas to the building must be at least 5' wide and delineated in a different, durable material or color than the parking lot surface. • Provide safe pedestrian connections between public sidewalks, transit stops, and building entrances. • Visually screen delivery areas from view of residential areas with street-type trees spaced no greater than 50' on center. • Max # of parking stalls for new general retail uses is 5 spaces per 1000 gsf of floor area. Max may be exceeded if either the landscaping screening buffer area along S. 27th St. is increased by an additional 2' in width and contains a combination of trees and shrubs. Increased landscape area shall run the length of the surface parking area where the max parking ratio is exceeded. • Provide shared parking where feasible. 	<p>The north entrance of the historic building is the ADA compliant entry. The building will have only one floor elevation on the interior main level.</p> <p>Deliveries to the kitchen and banquet hall would park near the trash enclosure at the southeast corner of the banquette hall. Smaller delivery vehicles would park in a stall at the west side of the building and use the concrete sidewalk that leads directly to the kitchen.</p> <p>NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING: An accessible pedestrian connection will be provided from the sidewalk along S. 27th Street to the walkway along the south end of the building. Additionally, there will be 2 pedestrian connections from this building to the historic building that will be 5 feet wide and 8 feet wide and paved in a stamped and colored concrete.</p> <p>The trash enclosure for the new commercial building will be located on the east side of the second building and will be screened with maintenance-free composite wood fencing with double gates. Delivery vehicles will use the parking stalls near the trash enclosure. Large delivery vehicles are not expected for this size commercial space.</p> <p>AUTOMOBILE PARKING: 103 parking spaces are proposed to be provided for both the historic and new commercial buildings. There isn't an intention to mark parking spaces on the site for specific uses. The parking will be available for all users of the site including the historic building and new commercial building. The desire would be to have complementary uses where someone visiting the restaurant would also visit the commercial building and vice versa.</p> <p>BICYCLE PARKING: The historic building will have two bicycle loops to accommodate four bikes located 32 feet</p>
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		<p>south of the main entrance. The commercial building will have one loop located in front of the building outside of the entry to Unit B.</p> <p>Curbed landscape islands are shown in all parking areas. The pedestrian paths crossing the drive lanes will be stamped, colored concrete rather than painted striping.</p> <p>SCREENING: The east property line will be heavily screen with landscaping and fencing.</p>
<p>Landscaping</p> <p>Goal is to be compliant; final landscape plan and landscape easement with MMSD to be provided to DCD Staff prior to issuance of building permits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape screening at the rear of the sites and delivery areas along Wilson Creek shall include street-type trees spaced 50' on center. Trees shall not be planted closer than 20' from light fixtures. • Landscaping along a street edge must be a minimum of 5' in width. This is required to be increased in width if max parking is exceeded (see above section). • Surface parking lots are required to have interior landscaped and curbed islands to visually divide the lot. Each landscaped island shall measure at least 150 sf in area and 3' in depth. • Each landscaped island shall include 1 deciduous tree (min. caliper of 2.5"); and 1 shrub (2' min height at time of planting) OR 1 native or ornamental grass (min 2-gallon size container); and 10 groundcover plants (min 2" container) or perennials (min 4.5" container) • In parking areas located in the front setback, no parking space shall be located more than 70' from a landscaped area. • Use a combination of ornamental and native plant 	<p>The landscape area along the street side is designed as 10 feet in width to the property line. The sidewalk is further west from the property line. The minimum required width is 5 feet.</p> <p>All islands have concrete curbs and comply with minimum widths.</p> <p>Detailed landscape design will be developed in accordance with the Garden District design standards for the area, as well as the DIZ and LB1 zoning standards. These design drawings will utilize larger scale views of each landscape area. A final landscape plan that includes an overview of how it complies with the applicable standards will be reviewed and approved by DCD Staff prior to the issuance of the building permit.</p> <p>To achieve a 10-foot landscape buffer along Wilson Creek we will request the use of land east of the property line (owned by MMSD) to accommodate new landscaping. A similar agreement was reached with MMSD for the car dealership occupancy to the south.</p> <p>The deciduous trees shown on the east property line are 30 feet on center. We can space them at 40 feet on center if this is preferred. Shrubs would be staggered in multiple rows.</p>

	<p>species for perimeter and interior landscaping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting of trees in the tree border as long as they are not closer than 40' to an existing tree. Will require review by DPW. • Pervious pavement and other stormwater management techniques are encouraged within the site. • Along the Wilson Creek side of the site, provide a 10' deep landscaped buffer. This width may be reduced if a landscape easement is granted for a landscape buffer within the adjacent property owned by MMSD. • Landscaping at the rear lot line should consist of trees (min 2.5" caliper at time of planting) planted every 50' on center and shrubs (3' high at time of planting) in 2 staggered rows, planted 20' on center. 	<p>The plaza on the east side of the retail building could be used for public art. The triangular landscape bed near the main entry on the north side of the existing building could be used for public art instead of the tree that is currently shown on the site plan.</p>
<p>Site Improvements</p> <p>Complies with DIZ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spaces including outdoor cafes, courtyards or plazas are recommended to be located in visible areas such as along the street frontage or at entrances. • Provide site amenities including but not limited to public art in public spaces or landscaped areas. • Site amenities including benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, light fixtures, planters and so on should be coordinated throughout the parcel. • Exterior lighting should be used to enhance the architectural elements of buildings facing a street. • Light poles within parking areas may not exceed 30' in height. Lower height pedestrian lighting 	<p>An outdoor seating area will be placed adjacent to the restaurant at the northwest corner of the historic building. This area will be a raised concrete patio bordered by a brick base and brick piers capped in cut limestone. Between the brick piers will be ornamental iron rails to define the space for restaurant diners.</p> <p>Additionally, there will be an outdoor deck along a sand volleyball area which would be utilized by the bar for leagues and entertainment.</p> <p>Building-mounted decorative light fixtures will illuminate the sidewalks of the buildings. The parking areas will have pole mounted lighting that will not exceed 30 feet in height. Pole mounted light fixtures will be shielded and designed for downward projection of light.</p>

	is encouraged along pedestrian walkways.	The trash area for the banquet hall and kitchen is shown as two separate trash dumpsters. There is room to enlarge this to accommodate three dumpsters in an enclosure.
Signage Anticipated to be compliant. All compliant signage may be staff-approved per the DIZ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place signs so that they are visible below tree canopies. Freestanding signs at major entrances along S. 27th St. must be monument in type. If signs are below 14' in height, one additional monument sign might be allowed (requires discussion with DCD staff). All signs must be Type A. For each development, a tenant sign and directional signs are allowed. 	<p>The proposed freestanding sign would be a monument type sign. Base materials would match those used on the buildings.</p> <p>Signs will comply with the DIZ and LB1 code requirements.</p>