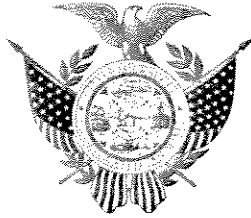


for file



**JAMES N. WITKOWIAK**  
ALDERMAN, 12TH DISTRICT

July 9, 2007

To: Members of the Common Council

From: Ald. James Witkowiak JW/le

Re: Why RIVIANNA Will Be Good for The City, Walker's Point and the Historic Third Ward

1. The General Planned Development file in front of us Wednesday was unanimously approved by the Plan Commission on April 23, and approved by Zoning & Neighborhood Development July 3 by a 4-1 vote.

This general zoning change approves the permitted uses, density and height. Your support will allow the developer to proceed with detailed building and site plans immediately. These will be submitted to you for approval as a Detailed Planned Development and will be heard at a later date, hopefully this fall.

2. Rivianna is at 236 S. Water St., on the Southside of the river, in my district. Rivianna will add \$90 million to our tax base; it will be a 500,000 sq. ft. mixed-use project to include approx. 161 condos, a 61-room boutique hotel, 10,000 sq. ft. of retail, 421 parking spaces (50 dedicated for public use only) and a publically accessible riverwalk. Rivianna will be three 15-story columns sitting on a 3-story base. The site is currently vacant.

This project is at the entrance of Walker's Point, will be catalytic and have a profoundly positive impact in turning this largely obsolete industrial area into a vibrant and contributing area. It will greatly accelerate the progress that has been made.

3. I support Rivianna wholeheartedly and ask for your affirmative vote on Wednesday as does the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Business Development Association and 26 independent property and business owners from the immediate vicinity.

I ask that you vote against any effort to delay this general planned development.

4. Condominium owners on the north side of the river, in the Historic Third Ward and in the 4<sup>th</sup> Aldermanic District, have emotionally opposed this project in meetings with the developer's team, through e-mails and calls to you and the Mayor, even Assemblymen and a radio talk personality. Their concerns are primarily threefold: Rivianna's height, a

Members of the Common Council  
July 9, 2007  
Page Two

sense their property values might decline, and that development on this parcel stop until the completion of the Near South Side Comprehensive Plan in late 2008 or early 2009. I disagree they will be damaged. Walker's Point and the so-called 5<sup>th</sup> Ward may develop differently than the Historic 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward-with its historic construction and rehab guidelines-but, it is a very different part of the city and that development in no way will detract from the very valuable and eclectic 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward, which we all have come to know and love.

Let me repeat-this land on the south side of the river is not in the Historic 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward and needs the bold yet well-designed departure from the sameness that has marked recent development.

No views of the Hoan Bridge, the A-B Clock Tower, the lake or the great South Side will be hurt by Rivianna and the shadow studies from different times of the year and day show a more detrimental impact from a 85' high horizontal building than from the 3 narrow towers that are proposed.

No height precedent is being set. There are already buildings that have been approved taller than the 85'; ie: First Place on the River and Teweles Seed.

5. However, because of the discussion and to show good faith, the developer on his own initiative has reduced the density 25% from 220 to 161 condo units, reduced commercial levels 50% from 2 to 1, reduced the building's base parking structure from 5 levels to 3 and eliminated the helicopter pad and waterfalls. I hope you will see the great benefit this development will offer Milwaukee for many years to come.

6. Further, this project will have the latest in energy efficiencies, will be LEED Silver certified and will entail Community Benefits including union labor, minority participation and training and resident hiring. These will be incorporated into the detail planned development.

7. There will be no request for any TF assistance. Rivianna's financial consultants believe this development is financially feasible and will receive the required support from equity investors and lenders.

8. I look forward to working with all area residents and owners and other members of the Common Council as we proceed to detailed plans for the final design of the project in the near future.