



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

Lafayette L. Crump
Commissioner

Vanessa L. Koster
Deputy Commissioner

Ald. Perez
12th Ald. District

**CITY PLAN COMMISSION
ZONING REPORT**

Ordinance File No. [211866](#) (zoning change), [220031](#) (East End Menomonee Valley DIZ), and [220063](#) (Deviation from DIZ standards)

Location: 841 West Canal Street (and adjacent land)

**Applicant/
Owner:** Westminster Realty Partners V LP (developer)

**Current
Zoning:** Detailed Planned Development (DPD) – Valley Power Plant and Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) – East End Menomonee Valley

**Proposed
Zoning:** Industrial Light (IL2) (841 W. Canal Street) and 2nd Amendment to the DPD for the net resulting land, approval of the development relating to the DIZ standards, and deviation from one DIZ design standard.

Proposal: These files relate to the 2nd Amendment to the Detailed Planned Development (DPD) known as Valley Power Plant and the change in zoning from DPD to Industrial Light (IL2) for the property located at 841 West Canal Street, as well as approval of the plans for a speculative industrial building as they relate to the East End Menomonee Valley Development Incentive Zone (DIZ), and a request to deviate from one overlay design standard, on the South Side of West Canal Street, west of South 6th Street, in the 12th Aldermanic District. The zoning change requires review by the City Plan Commission and approval by the Common Council. The two overlay files require approval by the City Plan Commission.

The requested amendment to the DPD would remove 841 West Canal Street from the boundary of the existing DPD. The parcel will be rezoned from DPD to Industrial Light (IL2). The DPD will otherwise be unchanged for the properties owned by WE Energies within the DPD boundary.

This zoning change was requested by Westminster Realty Partners V LP and will allow the development of a 180,470 square foot industrial speculative building on 464,172 square feet of land. The development site will be assembled with land adjacent to 841 West Canal Street as part of a land swap with adjacent properties

that are also zoned IL2. The proposed building could potentially serve multiple tenants and create employment opportunities. The East End Menomonee Valley DIZ includes a permitted use list. Future uses within the building will be required to be compliant with the overlay use list. Light industrial uses are permitted and encouraged within the DIZ. Wholesale and distribution facilities are not permitted unless they are operated as an integral component element of a manufacturing, production, or office use.

The proposed building design will feature massing that creates visual interest, including depth and articulation in the building façade and glazing elements on each elevation. The front entrance and approach to the building incorporates human scale elements such as an overhead canopy and street-level glazing. The proposed development will have tenant/employee parking along the eastern building facade with up to 197 parking stalls. Loading docks are located along the western building façade and will be screened via landscaping to the west and a screen wall to the north. Pedestrian access is an important design factor to the development as it is one block west of Milwaukee County Transit System Route 80 (6th Street) which is a high frequency route.

A pedestrian connection to this site is critical as a means to provide a safe pedestrian path from South 6th Street, which is served by a major bus line, to this site. The development team has proposed a mid-block pedestrian crossing from the north side of West Canal Street south to the site to allow pedestrians to access the site safely. DCD and DPW staff have continued to review all possible options for a pedestrian connection from S. 6th Street, as the connection currently shown on the site plan might not be feasible due to the existing Hank Aaron State Trail. It is unknown whether there is enough width in the right-of-way to also provide an ADA pedestrian ramp for the crossing along the north side of Canal Street. Discussions with the development team and the Department of Public Works to identify the most appropriate and feasible option for a pedestrian connection remain ongoing at the time that this staff report was drafted.

Compliance with DIZ: The proposed development is located in the East End Menomonee Valley Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) and as such, is required to comply with the overlay's Sustainable Design Standards. There are also several sustainability-focused guidelines that the applicant is encouraged to incorporate into their plans. The overlay's Sustainable Design Standards and Evaluation Form is comprised of several required standards as well as a menu of others to choose from based on the specifics of the development proposal. The form has a target compliance rate of 85%. The applicant has indicated that they can commit to a compliance rate of 78% and will continue to explore opportunities to increase this percentage as their development plans are refined and once tenants are known. The applicant's proposal to meet the Sustainable Design Standards has been reviewed in conjunction with the Menomonee Valley Partners and found to meet the intent of the goals in the standards and the manner in which they have been applied to past developments in the Valley.

Below is an overview of the portion of standards that most closely relate to the site layout, building design and landscape, and how the proposal will meet them.

See the evaluation form and project narrative for full responses, especially with respect to sections of the evaluation form relating to topics such as stormwater management, site lighting, energy efficiency, water conservation, construction and demolition, and others:

DIZ Standard	Project Standards
Site Design	
Ratio of total gross floor area of not less than 33% for initial site build-out.	Proposed building has a 40% ratio.
Primary street setback either at property line or not exceeding 10'.	Proposed 39-foot setback from West Canal Street. See deviation request below.
Maintain a waterfront setback of at least 25' from the Menomonee River/Menomonee Canal.	188-foot setback at minimum from all waterfronts.
Natural Landscape	
Ensure all disturbed/exposed soil areas are fully stabilized throughout construction and until final plantings are stabilized.	Contractor will be cognizant of this and ensure all disturbed/exposed area are fully stabilized throughout construction and until stabilized
Select native plants and trees tolerant of climate including extended dry periods and heavy rains in summer.	Majority of selected species are included in Menomonee Valley Species Palette
Prepare a site and landscape management plan that includes Integrated Pest Management practices to reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides.	Site and Landscape Management will be coordinated with Westminster and future property manager as necessary.
Parking and Transportation	
Encourage transportation alternatives for employees and visitors.	Pedestrian connectivity is provided via contiguous walkways linking parking areas and building entrance(s). A pedestrian crossing location is being considered for West Canal Street near the proposal, and should be confirmed prior to the issuance of permits. Electric charging stations are provided.
Minimize curb cuts and driveways, preferably no more than two.	Development will have two driveways: one for employees and guests, the second for truck access.
Locate truck loading berths at the side or rear of building.	Truck entrance and loading docks located at rear (west) of building.
Building Design	
At pedestrian areas, use awning, canopies, landscaping, windows and doors to lower the scale of building.	Reference architectural elevations. Human-scale features provided at all proposed entrances

Design a principal façade and obvious main entrance parallel to public street edge.	Site layout incorporates pronounced main entrance with glazing and appropriate signage.
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Deviation Request:

The applicant is requesting to deviate from one of the criteria outlined in the Sustainable Design Standards. Per the zoning ordinance, the following criteria must be met in order to allow a deviation:

1. The purpose of the overlay zone is met.
2. The deviation improves the aesthetics of the site.
3. If applicable, the deviation addresses one or more unique site factors that make application of the standard impractical.
4. The deviation is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

DIZ Standard Requiring Deviation: Primary street setback either at property line or not exceeding 10'. *Project proposal includes a 39-foot setback from West Canal Street.*

Justification for deviation:

Criteria 1: Purpose of the overlay zone is met. The proposed development meets the purpose of the overlay zone to continue sustainable development supporting industry, entertainment, community, and natural resources. The proposed development will contribute to and visually enhance the urban industrial center by creating a functional light-industrial building.

Criteria 2: Deviation improves the aesthetics of the site.

The proposed increase in setback provides ample landscape installation to create a visually pleasing customer entrance.

Criteria 3: If applicable, deviation addresses one or more unique site factors that make the application of the standard impractical.

There are three existing, active, railroad spurs abutting the property line along W. Canal Street which are utilized by adjacent property owner/user, Lone Star Industries. The proposed increase in setback increases pedestrian safety.

Criteria 4: The deviation is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Per the 2015 Menomonee Valley 2.0 Area Plan, the East Gateway redevelopment parcels of St. Mary’s Cement, Stollenwerks, and We Energies coal pile and parking site should be reserved for light industrial land uses, which is consistent as the newly created parcel included a proposed rezoning to IL2.

Consistency with Area Plan:

The proposed development is generally consistent with the recommendations in the Menomonee Valley Plan 2.0, adopted by the Common Council in 2015. The Plan identifies light industrial as the preferred use, as is proposed. By meeting the criteria set forward in the Development Improvement Zone, the proposed development meets the high standards for sustainability and architectural quality that are envisioned the Plan. The railroad spurs complicate pedestrian access to the site; however, the Plan recommends improving and expanding bike and pedestrian links

within the Valley whenever feasible and so DCD encourages the development team to continue to explore options for pedestrian linkages to the site to accommodate workers who may be commuting via transit. The Plan also recommends that, in general, industrial buildings should be built along the street edge to the extent possible. In this particular instance, the railroad tracks prevent the building's placement closer to the street and should be considered a mitigating factor for the deviation from the front setback standards found in the Development Incentive Zone. Further, the generous landscaping in the front of the buildings provides aesthetic appeal.

Previous City

Plan Action:

6/1999 – Substitute ordinance relating to the change in zoning from Industrial (I/A/125) to Detailed Planned Development (DPD), on land located North of the South Menomonee Canal and East and West of the North-South Freeway (I-94), in the 12th Aldermanic District. *This file established the Valley Power Plant DPD. (FN 981360)*

11/2003 – Ordinance relating to the First Amendment to a Detailed Planned Development (DPD), on land located North of the South Menomonee Canal and East and West of the North-South Freeway (I-94), in the 12th Aldermanic District. *This file approved necessary modifications to the site due to construction on the Marquette Interchange. (FN 030908)*

Previous Common

Council Action:

7/13/1999 – Substitute ordinance relating to the change in zoning from Industrial (I/A/125) to Detailed Planned Development (DPD), on land located North of the South Menomonee Canal and East and West of the North-South Freeway (I-94), in the 12th Aldermanic District. *This file established the Valley Power Plant DPD. (FN 981360)*

11/25/2003 – Ordinance relating to the First Amendment to a Detailed Planned Development (DPD), on land located North of the South Menomonee Canal and East and West of the North-South Freeway (I-94), in the 12th Aldermanic District. *This file allows for necessary modifications to the site due to construction on the Marquette Interchange. (FN 030908)*

Recommendation:

Since the proposed development is substantially compliant with the East End Menomonee Valley DIZ and Menomonee Valley 2.0 Plan, staff suggests that the City Plan Commission recommend:

- Approval of File No. 211866, the 2nd Amendment to DPD and change in zoning from DPD to IL2 for 841 W. Canal Street
- Conditional approval of File No. 220031, development plans relating to the DIZ overlay standards. Conditioned on the applicant working with DPW to develop an accessible and safe pedestrian connection to the site, with a final alternative to be approved by DPW and DCD staff based on the technical feasibility and accessibility factors impacting the site. This condition should be resolved prior to issuance of permits.

- Approval of File No. 220063, the deviation from the overlay standards relating to the front setback.