

MILWAUKEE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



Date	10/6/2025	Ald.	Coggs
CCF	250822	Reviewer	Tim Askin
Address	1747 N. 6 th & 1730 N. 7th	Owner	Salvation Army
District	Central City Plaza	Applicant	Salvation Army / Bray Architects

PROPOSAL

Add 7,100 sq. ft. building between 1730 & 1747. The first floor of the new portion will house a dining hall, kitchen, office space, reception/welcome center and elevator. The lower level will include storage, lounge space for the residents and laundry.

Create a glass hallway that will showcase the architecture on the west side of the 1747 building. This glass hallway will have entrances on each side to be able to access the food pantry and shelter.

The new building will also attach to the NW corner of the 1730 building. To maintain the bed count and client privacy, they are requesting to completely attach to that section of the building.

The 1747 building will become a food pantry, clinic and ministry space. The 1730 building will continue to be have shelter rooms for various categories of users.

Eliminate entry stoop and ramp on 6th Street.

Provide a safe outdoor space for the shelter children to play. Eliminate the current parking in the courtyard of the motel building and create a fenced in green space for the children.

STAFF COMMENTS

Due to the scale of this project and neighborhood importance, this project was presented at two different city bodies for input prior to this report. This project was presented to the Bronzeville Advisory Committee at their September meeting and they had no comments. The project was also presented at the internal Design Review Team (DRT) for their input because of the project's scale and uncommon use type. DRT is a weekly cross-departmental meeting for complicated design and zoning issues.

DRT and particularly the Public Works representative offered the following recommendations:

1. Loading dock location may not viable. It will not be able to serve a typical semi or Sysco Food Service truck. The required turn radius is not possible at that location
2. The loading dock is relatively far from any elevators, which makes it impractical for stocking of the lower level food pantry
3. Emergency exits need to have a clearly defined, fully paved path leading directly to sidewalk for the disabled users.
4. Queueing plan and general plan of operation needed for food pantry services.

5. Zoning technically requires the primary entrance to be directly on 6th Street. The proposed location is likely to receive a needed variance, depending on signage
6. Parking is likely insufficient. Please study current vehicle ownership trends by staff and residents.
7. A detailed plan of operation for all facilities and uses will be needed to establish parking requirements. There are no firm parking requirements for this special use in this zoning district.
8. Some reconfiguration of the spaces in the 6th Street building are necessary to comply with the street-activating use requirements. Placing exam rooms in front of the primary glazing is not ideal due to privacy concerns and prohibitions on permanent curtains. See MCO 295-605-2-i.

Analysis of guidelines

Siting. Siting is generally appropriate and is the best option without creating a taller building. This is not meant to suggest that a taller building is at all preferable. The glass connector is a vital portion of meeting the siting requirement, as it clarifies the original relationship between the original three buildings on the site.

Scale. The new addition takes strong cues from the original structure in form and detailing. A modest increase in height compared to the original buildings allows for better mechanical integration while again clarifying that new piece is an addition.

Form. Windows and vertical emphasis follow from original structure and structural bays create a rhythmic connection to the original north façade of the motel.

Materials. The original structure was pre-cast tilt-up concrete panels. The materials for the addition are not yet settled. No EIFS should be permitted, but flexibility and creative solutions are certainly possible for creating an aesthetic match to the original without requiring the use of concrete. Fencing the courtyard of the motel is acceptable with an ornamental fence that is at least 50% open. The original façade of the motel must remain visible to the general public. Play structures should not be excessively tall to retain visibility of the façade.

Demolition of entry stoop. Eliminating this entrance is not a preferred option under the zoning code, but is a logical change. The entry can be eliminated as long as the openings are maintained in their original configuration with an updated aluminum storefront system that matches the original as closely as possible.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend approval of this design configuration for the exterior. Conduct zoning analysis and vehicle census as next steps. Begin drafting operational plan to address pedestrian and vehicle traffic issues.

PRIOR ACTION

N/A

GUIDELINES

- A. Siting. New construction must reflect the traditional siting of buildings in the Central City Plaza site. This includes setback, spacing between buildings, the orientation of openings to the street and neighboring structures, and the relationship between the main building and accessory buildings.
- B. Scale. Overall building height and bulk; the expression of major building divisions including foundation, body and roof; and individual building components such as porches, overhangs and fenestration must be compatible with the surrounding structures.
- C. Form. The massing of new construction must be compatible with the surrounding buildings. The profiles of roofs and building elements that project and recede from the main block must express the same continuity established by the historic structures.
- D. Materials. The building materials visible to the public should be consistent with the colors, textures, proportions, and combinations of cladding materials traditionally used in the Central City Plaza complex. The physical composition of the materials may be different from that of the historic materials, but the same appearance should be maintained.