



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

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September 22, 2016

To the Honorable Members of the
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee
City Hall, Room 205

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 160467 relates to the Ninth Amendment to the General Planned Development (GPD) known as Milwaukee Metro Center to allow additional wall signage on the Phase 1 site located at 11330 West Metro Auto Mall, on the north side of West Metro Auto Mall, east of U.S. Highway 41 and 45, in the 5th Aldermanic District.

This Ninth Amendment to the GPD was requested by the Russ Darrow Group, and proposes to increase the allowable square footage of wall signage on the former Smart Car building (tower element) located at 11330 West Metro Auto Mall (Phase 1), within Sub Area B. When the Smart Car building was constructed, it included 5-story architectural display element on the north side of the building that had display bays on two sides of the tower (one on each level). The bays displayed cars within them, and were glazed with a clear aluminum curtainwall window system. Now that the Darrow Group has acquired this site for their Mazda dealership, which is within the former Hummer building, they would like to utilize this architectural display element as signage to advertise the models of vehicles offered at the dealership. This will improve the aesthetic of the tower, which is otherwise blank. It will also create more visibility for the dealership, which is otherwise not very visible from the highway. The bays, each of which has two display boxes that are approximately 18' by 10', or 180 square feet each (total of 360 sq ft per level), are not large enough to house actual vehicles, so signage is proposed to be affixed behind the curtain wall glazing system to preserve the intent of the display bays. Additionally, a 250 sq ft sign advertising directions on how to access the dealership will be on the north side of the tower element. The total square footage of building wall signage on this tower element will be approximately 2050 square feet. The wall signage is currently limited to 245 square feet. Now that the architectural tower element will be reused as signage instead of display windows, the square footage of allowable building wall signage as regulated by the GPD must be increased to permit this.

On September 19, 2016, a public hearing was held and at that time, nobody spoke in opposition to the proposal. Since the proposed amendment to the GPD allows the tower element of the former Smart Car building to be reused with high quality signage that keeps in the spirit of the display windows as it was originally used, the City Plan Commission recommended at its regular meeting on September 19, 2016 recommended approval of the subject file.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Bohl

