

From: Bohl, James
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2012 10:37 AM
To: Peterson, Todd; Lee, Chris
Subject: FW: Proposed State Office Building at 27th and Wisconsin (Our #1 Corner)
[For file. jb](#)

From: John Hennessy [mailto:jhennessy@hennessygroup.net]
Sent: Monday, October 22, 2012 10:20 AM
To: Bauman, Robert; Bohl, James; Murphy, Michael (Alderman); Wade, Willie; Witkowski, Terry
Cc: Marcoux, Rocky; Dennis Klein; June Moberly
Subject: Proposed State Office Building at 27th and Wisconsin (Our #1 Corner)

Dear Committee Members:

In April I endorsed this State office building project. However, it seems some changes to the design are being considered. The enclosure (a letter of summary and supporting documents) relates my current thoughts re the subject. The time needs to be taken to make sure this development (at our #1 Corner) is connected with the community and is done right such that the considerable economic potential of the area can be realized.

Please review the enclosure and feel free to contact me should you wish to discuss anything.

Sincerely,
John Hennessy
Hennessy Group, Inc.
[\(414\)350-6601](tel:(414)350-6601)
www.hennessygroup.net

--the SoHi Building (27th and Wells) has undergone an incredible renovation and has space available for QUALITY RETAIL operations; excellent market numbers.

--the SoHi Building has awesome LOFT/CLASSIC OFFICE space on its upper floors; perfect central location for enterprising firms; space can be built to suit.

--very cool HISTORIC APARTMENTS (2-3 BR) and 4 BR/2 BA CONDO RENTALS available.

HENNESSY GROUP, INC.

831 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233 414.350-6601 FAX 414.276-9094 hennessygroup.net

October 22, 2012

Subject: Proposed State Office Building at 27th Street and Wisconsin Avenue (w/ 6 enclosure pgs.)

As a stakeholder, property owner, developer, committee member, committee chair, etc. I have always considered 27th & Wisconsin to be our #1 Corner—like the “Water Street and Wisconsin Avenue” of Milwaukee’s Near West Side. **And on the #1 Corner we have got to get it right!!!**

Our Master Plan document (See enclosed excerpts.) for the SOHI District (N 27th Street from Saint Paul to Highland), where we state the goal for development is to “create attractive patterns of development that support the Community’s vision”, mentions 27th and Wisconsin as an intersection of “particular importance”. Further, the SOHI District Master Plan Document cites certain guiding principles that evidence the community’s vision as follows:

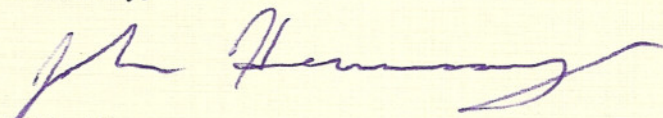
- Create a strong positive identity for the SOHI District
- Quality buildings with a diversity of architectural expression
- Safe and clean streets –well lit, well-maintained
- Enhanced pedestrian experience
- Unique retail and dining to the area

Korb Tredo Architects (architects of the subject proposed State office building at 27th & Wisconsin) in discussing their approach (on their website) to developing solutions state, “Most importantly, we connect our clients with the people in the community that have what it takes to embrace a visionary idea and make it reality.”

Last April, I endorsed (See enclosure.) the subject State office building assuming “certain areas for improvement are addressed sufficiently”, and at that time, it appeared those areas for improvement were being addressed. Now, just as ground is about to be broken, it appears that significant changes have been made to the design relative to what was being put forth in April (See enclosed visual rendering comparison.). Has the design moved closer or farther away from the community’s vision? Is the architect “connecting its client with the people in the community” more in October than it did in April? It really seems that there are some answers needed here and probably some thoughtful work that needs to be done on the design.

It goes without saying that we love the 200 jobs that the subject building brings. But the 200 jobs need to be connected with the community so the true economic potential of the area can be realized. Don’t all the stakeholders (community, developer, architects, State, City, etc.) want to work together to “get it right” and to realize the tremendous potential at our #1 corner?

Sincerely,



John Hennessy

VISION FOR THE SOHI DISTRICT

The aim of the master plan is to provide a vision for a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly district known to be safe and well-maintained. The buildings will represent the strength and stability of the district and house a diverse range of shopping and dining experiences. The right balance of small retail shops and larger anchor stores is key to the success of the development. The goal is for the SOHI district to become a unique area to experience culture, to shop, to live, to gather and to explore.

Quality is stressed throughout the master plan. Homeowners, renters and business owners are encouraged to maintain their properties with pride and dignity. Facade rehabilitation and signage will display a high level of pride, and the mixed-use nature of the SOHI district properties should provide a visual and economic mark of stability.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Create a strong positive identity for the SOHI District
- Quality buildings with a diversity of architectural expression
- Safe and clean streets - well-lit, well-maintained
- Enhanced pedestrian experience
- Unique retail and dining to the area

Ultimately, the goal for development in the SOHI district is to create attractive patterns of development that support the community's vision, and result in the highest and best use of the limited land resources in the district. As the conditions of the SOHI district are understood, the ability to review opportunities for change must also be considered. A range of factors is useful in this analysis including - regulatory, site and/or building, market, ownership and community factors.



Concept rendering for a redevelopment in the SOHI District
W. Palmowski



Proposed development at 27th Street and Wisconsin Ave.
Sherman & Associates

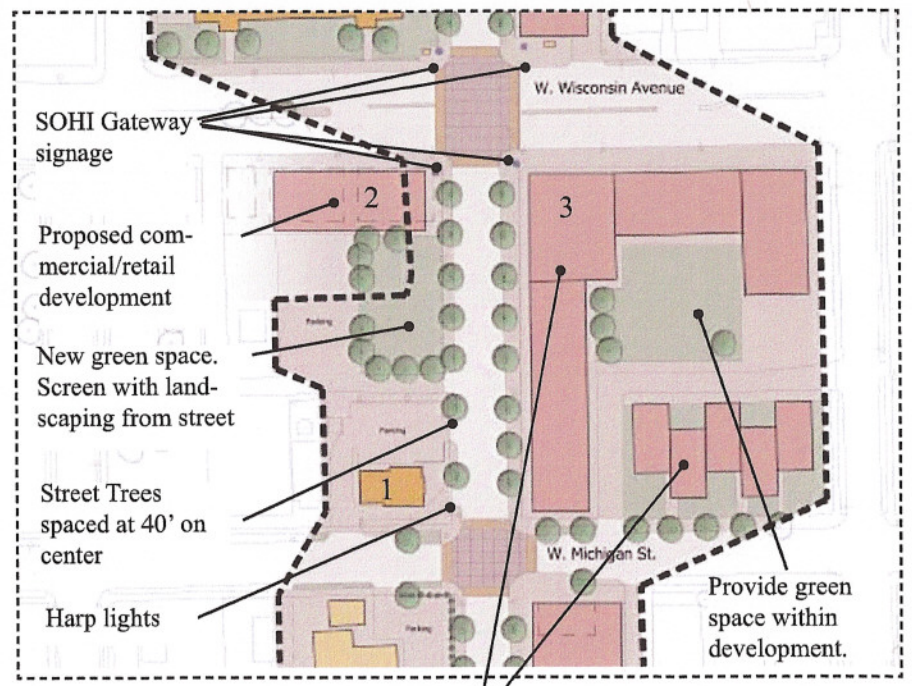
5 27th Street Wisconsin Avenue to Michigan Street

Existing character of block:

The entire block East of 27th Street between Michigan Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue is vacant. A new mixed-use development with both rental units and condominiums has been proposed. Much of the West side of the block is also vacant and properties on the Wisconsin Avenue edge are run down. This intersection is of particular importance because of the high visibility on Wisconsin Avenue. The Gateway signage indicates to passing traffic that 27th Street is the key corridor of the SOHI District.

Proposed Plan Elements:

- New development on sites 2 and 3
- New green space, screened from 27th Street. Public parking tucked behind with alley access. New greenspace to serve those living and working in the area. Also an opportunity for a public art installation
- Addition of harp lights
- Addition of street trees at 40' on center (see Details section)
- Addition of SOHI gateway signage at all four corners as indicated
- Addition of special paving at intersections



Current Building Use & Physical Description:

1. KFC, 1 story franchise architecture with drive-thru. Nicely landscaped.
2. Grand Foods and Get-It-Now retail buildings.
3. Vacant land.

KORB TREDO ARCHITECTS

HOME
 ABOUT KORB TREDO
 PORTFOLIO
 PEOPLE
 NEWS
 CAREERS
 CONTACT

About Us:

Korb Trede Architects is a planning, design and engineering collaborative focused on sustainability in our work and in our community. Our focus is our clients. Our specialty is listening. Our passion is people.

Founded in 2006, our thriving existence is based upon two guiding principles...

First, that the combination of deeply experienced and highly talented people will provide a professional and eager team capable of servicing a wide range of clients.

Second, that we instill a sense of community service in our firm's culture and always remember those people and organizations that have defined our early efforts.

"We design buildings, the grounds they sit on, and the things within them. You provide the inspiration."

Yet it is how we arrive at an effective and emotive solution that positions Korb Trede Architects as a unique provider of sophisticated solutions.

*architectural design
 master planning
 sustainable design
 site design
 interior design
 computer modeling
 furniture design
 feasibility studies
 lighting design
 life safety evaluation
 event design
 collaborative fund-raising
 visioning facilitation
 site selection assistance
 pre & post occupancy evaluation
 facility selection assistance
 building staff training
 relocation facilitation
 construction observation*

Focus:

We are self-described architectural junkies engrossed in a synthesis of ever-changing technologies, design theory, and contemporary design resulting in a revitalization and reinvention of the built environment and the community. Yet, without the people that entrust us with their projects we can accomplish nothing. You are the fuel for our creative engine, and we are driven by the satisfaction that comes from a happy client.

Specialty:

We are skilled in identifying the essential elements that will guide our design process. This is very simply a function of intently listening to what is being asked of us, and careful observation of client operations throughout the life of a project from our initial introduction to project completion. We bring the knowledge and expertise to plan, design and engineer sustainable facilities and beautiful spaces. It is you that teach us what is important to your organization and how you accomplish what makes you great.

Passion:

Our team of planners, architects, engineers and designers are a diverse group of talented professionals. We work with select engineering consultants to bring a wealth of experience in all aspects of professional practice across a vast range of building types. We collaborate with top notch construction managers and contractors to deliver a well-crafted product. Most importantly, we connect our clients with the people in the community that have what it takes embrace a visionary idea and make it reality.



John Hennessy <jhennessy@hennessygroup.net>

A State Office Building at 27th & Wisconsin and Related Suggestions for Improvements

John Hennessy <jhennessy@hennessygroup.net>

Tue, Apr 10, 2012 at 3:16 PM

To: ahamil@milwaukee.gov, rdonov@milwaukee.gov, witko@milwaukee.gov, jbohl@milwaukee.gov, rjbauma@milwaukee.gov, jldavis@milwaukee.gov, jdudzi@milwaukee.gov, mmurph@milwaukee.gov, mcoggs@milwaukee.gov, nkovac@milwaukee.gov, rpuent@milwaukee.gov, Twitko@milwaukee.gov, tzieli@milwaukee.gov, whines@milwaukee.gov, wwade@milwaukee.gov
Cc: Rocky Marcoux <rocky.marcoux@milwaukee.gov>, Dennis Klein <dklein@kbsconstruction.com>, June Moberly <avenueswest@sbcglobal.net>

Dear Common Council Members:

Please note attached summary document endorsing the proposed State Office Building at 27th and Wisconsin assuming that certain areas for improvement are addressed sufficiently. Please feel free to contact me should you wish to discuss this situation further.

Sincerely,
John Hennessy
Hennessy Group, Inc.
(414)350-6601
www.hennessygroup.net

--the SoHi Building (27th and Wells) has undergone an incredible renovation and has space available for QUALITY RETAIL operations; excellent market numbers.

--the SoHi Building has awesome LOFT/CLASSIC OFFICE space on its upper floors; perfect central location for enterprising firms; space can be built to suit.

--very cool HISTORIC APARTMENTS (2-3 BR) and 4 BR/2 BA CONDO RENTALS available.

 L Advocating State Office Building 0412.pdf
19K

Subject: A State Office Building at 27th & Wisconsin and Related Suggestions for Improvements

This brief summary is written from my perspective as having invested for over 25 years in Milwaukee's Near West Side, as the developer/owner of the SoHi Building (for retail and office) at 27th & Wells (1 block away from the subject prospective development), and as the Chair of the SOHI District's (27th Street from I94 to Highland) Economic Restructuring Committee.

The groundwork has been laid over much of the 25 years I have been working in the Near West Side with small to medium sized investments in housing and commercial real estate, a major reduction in crime, the Ambassador Hotel, Marquette University's investments, the Menomonee Valley's redevelopment, the Near West Side Plan, the SOHI District Main Street, stakeholder investments in the SOHI District, redevelopment of the Old Concordia College Campus, etc. Further, Alderman Bauman has inspired a Boulevard Concept for 27th & Wisconsin (our #1 Corner) which will stand out tremendously and will let the world know that North 27th Street (the SOHI District) is a "special place" to invest, to set up shop, to participate in a market for quality goods, food, art, services, etc.

At present we are at (not past) the "tipping point", and we need a "game changer" project. The subject proposed **State Office Building in combination with the Boulevard is the game changer**. We need the 200 jobs, and we want to welcome those 200 employees unto our neighborhood's main street, North 27th Street, the SOHI District. We have and are developing food outlets (e.g. Subway in the SOHI Building), restaurants, offices for service providers, etc.

Judging from the rendering and site plan available on the city's website the design is impressive, and the developer should be congratulated on the efforts that have been made so far. However, in the following several areas improvements to the design should be considered:

1. The design of the "main" door area opening up to Wisconsin Avenue needs to be improved; in the rendering it looks somewhat like an afterthought. Further, employees in the building need a way to exit the building so they can easily walk to various destinations on 27th Street, e.g. to go to lunch, to buy coffee, to access public transportation, etc. Also, the employees need to be able to get back into the building from 27th Street (key card access or equivalent should be a possibility.).
2. The look of the ground level from the street needs some study and some enhancement.
3. The corner design (while somewhat striking) is a focal area which could be enhanced and softened via the use of art; this would help establish a connection to the corner/neighborhood.
4. The city block on the southeast corner of 27th and Wisconsin can easily accommodate another building(s), e.g. office, residential, mixed use, etc. It would make some sense at this point to investigate how other building(s) could be placed unto the site and to discuss the implications. Further, a commitment needs to be made to multistory mixed-use buildings on the other sites at our #1 corner, 27th and Wisconsin.

I endorse the 27th and Wisconsin State Office Building project assuming that the areas for improvements as stated above are addressed sufficiently.

-----John Hennessy, 4/10/12-----



STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

 **KBS** KORB TREDO ARCHITECTS

Rendering from April 2012



Rendering from October 2012