

From: Mary Harrison [<mailto:majoha15@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, May 21, 2007 9:58 PM

To: Hamilton, Ashanti; bgreenstreet@mkedcd.org; historicpreservation; lshil@mke.org; Mayor Tom Barrett; D'Amato, Michael; Murphy, Michael; planadmin; RACMinfo; Bauman, Robert; Wade, Willie

Subject: Save Downer Avenue Business District

Dear Mayor Barrett,

We moved to Milwaukee nearly 26 year ago and have shopped at the Downer Avenue stores ever since. We have seen many changes over the years as several small businesses were forced to leave due to the greediness of their landlord. This same property owner let many of his buildings deteriorate and so there is a need for rehabbing some of the buildings on Downer. The solution, however, does not lie with turning the district over to a developer with a Masterplan and a reputation for questionable practices and dubious intentions.

The Downer Avenue business district provides the community with all one needs for daily living...grocery store, bank, hardware store, hair salons, liquor store, bakery shop, dry cleaners, candy wagon, drugstore, restaurants, bookstore, boutiques, two surface parking lots, custard shop, movie theater and more...all within a two block walk. It is an American "Main Street" with the feel and convenience of a European city market place. It is a hub of local commerce which attracts residents of and visitors to Milwaukee. People gather there for shopping, socializing and entertainment.

Adding multi story buildings for a parking structure and cosmetic surgery center does not fit in architecturally or commercially with the tradition and commerce of the Downer Avenue business district. In fact, these enterprises will detract from the eclectic architecture, charm and ambiance of this historic area. I support the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the State Historical Society, merchants and other citizens who vehemently oppose the Masterplan and the sale of the land at 2574-90 N. Downer. I request that you and the other city officials responsible for approving these changes, do not do so and that alternative plans be developed and meaningful community input be sought and honestly considered. Downer Avenue commercial district is a gem which needs to be restored and preserved, not destroyed. Thank you for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,  
Mary Harrison