



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

July 12, 2021

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

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 210172 relates to the change in zoning from Detailed Planned Development to a new Detailed Planned Development (DPD) known as Eighteen87 on Water for a multi-family residential development located at 1887 North Water Street, on the north side of North Water Street, west of North Humboldt Avenue, in the 3rd Aldermanic District.

This zoning change was requested by Rule Enterprises (in partnership with Movin' Out) to allow the construction of a 5-story, 79-unit affordable multi-family residential building and associated Riverwalk on the property located at 1887 North Water Street. City Plan Commission also heard two files related to the approval of the Riverwalk, site plan, and river-facing elevations and a request for a deviation from the performance standards established by the Riverwalk Site Plan Review Overlay Zone (SPROZ) to allow the northeast and west segments of the Riverwalk to be 9 feet wide instead of the required 12 foot width.

In 2015, Common Council approved a change in zoning from Industrial-Light (IL1) to DPD to allow a 4-story apartment building with up to 87 units and 100 below-grade parking spaces (File No. 120999). This project never moved forward, and the site still houses a metal one-story industrial building, the former home of Pro Graphics, Inc. This building would be demolished to allow construction of the new proposed DPD. The exterior materials for the proposed building will consist of a combination of a cream-colored utility sized brick, white fiber cement panels and interlocking grey vertical metal panels.

In 2020 the project was awarded 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) through the Wisconsin Housing and Development Authority (WHEDA). As a result, the project will have 16 units rented at 30% of the area median income (AMI), 32 units at 50% AMI, 12 units at 60% AMI and 19 market-rate units. Providing walk-up units is a condition of LIHTC financing, and 7 units will be walk-up townhouse-style units with 3-bedrooms accessible from either North Water Street or the Riverwalk. Additionally, 16 of the units will be supportive housing. The building height is up to 58 feet from the Water Street elevation. The 53 internal parking spaces are accessed from a combined, double-wide driveway along Water Street via a pair of metal garage doors. The main entrance to the apartment building and lobby is located along the Water Street facade.

The Riverwalk is planned to run along the top of the sloped Riverwalk area, close to the proposed building. The Riverwalk connection to the east will be made with a series of three ramps and associated landings that connect to the existing, higher, Riverwalk at 1905 North Water Street (Riverbridge Condominiums). After ramping down from the east connection, the Riverwalk will effectively wrap the building along its north and west sides, before ultimately connecting back to the



street. Ramp surfaces when elevated and supported by piers will be finished with composite resin decking material over steel framing supported by columns and shallow concrete footings foundation. The Riverwalk on the north side will be concrete and constructed as slab on grade concrete sidewalk on the plateaued area.

The City Plan Commission held a public hearing regarding this item at its regularly scheduled July 12, 2021 meeting. The developer and architect team walked through the development process, affordability details, parking calculations, and building and Riverwalk design. Most notably, they discussed their efforts to acquire an easement from the property to the west, which would allow them to shift the building four feet to the west to help address concerns from neighbors about the proposed 5-foot setback and achieve the minimum 12 feet of width for the west Riverwalk segment. Commissioners noted that the design of the gate along the east setback was not designed or positioned to maximize security for building residents, and that the appearance of the first floor of west façade at the grated garage openings needed to be improved given the location along the Riverwalk and visibility from Water St. They also asked about building and Riverwalk accessibility, as well as if there was any outdoor place space for children. The architect said that besides the shared rooftop terrace there was not any outdoor place space proposed.


A dozen members of the public spoke during the public hearing portion of the meeting. Common concerns included the eastern setback, insufficient parking, geotechnical safety related to building along the river, and safety and privacy concerns on the Riverwalk. Alderman Nik Kovac spoke last and said that the concerns voiced mirrored those at a virtual public meeting he held on the development proposal on Wednesday, June 23rd. He voiced his support for the proposal and said that the applicant had alleviated most of his concerns with design improvements, specifically by moving the building four feet to the west to increase the eastern setback from the Riverbridge Condominiums.

Since the applicant was able to address many of the DCD staff design recommendations and adjust the building setback in response to input received during the review process, and because the project was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on July 12, 2021 recommended approval of the subject file conditioned upon:

1. Decking material: providing material specifications for proposed composite resin decking that demonstrate long term durability of the material proposed for sections of the Riverwalk.
2. MMSD Easement area: provide verification that MMSD has approved the construction of the proposed Riverwalk in the portion of the site where MMSD maintains an easement.
3. West façade: make adjustments to west facing façade consistent with the diagram provided to applicant by DCD on July 2, 2021 regarding minimizing the appearance of a blank wall on this prominent facade. These adjustments include re-inserting openings into the garage at this location with opening coverings with a finished quality detailing, adjusting masonry pattern on side bay, and adjusting the corner detail design element.
4. South Façade: make adjustments to south facing façade consistent with the diagram provided to applicant by DCD on July 2, 2021 regarding minimizing the appearance of a blank wall on this prominent façade and window placements. Garage door materials should be adjusted to be fully transparent, or if not possible than should match the color of adjacent brick.
5. North Façade: make adjustments to North façade to include the recessed elements shown on the upper portion of the two-story blank brick wall in the renderings presented at the June 23 neighborhood meeting to provide additional articulation.
6. Adjustments to Exhibits: make the technical corrections and adjustments to DPD submittal documents as communicated by DCD to applicant via memorandum on July 2, 2021.

7. Submit updated exhibits and plan sets to reflect the adjustment of the location of the building moving 4 feet to the west, expanding the east side setback to a minimum of 9 feet and the width of the Riverwalk along the west side of the property to 12 feet.
8. Submit an executed easement to the Register of Deeds for recording from the property owner at 1775-1881 N Water St. that allows construction of a portion of the proposed Riverwalk on the western side of 1887 N Water to be constructed on a portion of the neighboring property consistent with approved plans, and secure any required updated zoning approvals related to the construction of this Riverwalk on the adjacent property.
9. Adjust the placement of the gate/fence at the northeastern section of the building to relocate it to the corner of the building to increase safety for residents and neighbors.
10. Adjust Riverwalk lighting on east side of building to match quality/character of lighting on west side.
11. Adjust proposed parking lot opening covering grates along Riverwalk on west façade. This could include a more attractive finished quality covering, or raised bed planters along the Riverwalk to screen the grates (that maintain the 8 foot unobstructed path requirement).
12. Continue to explore opportunities to incorporate play areas into the development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lafayette L. Crump", followed by the word "for" in a smaller font.

Lafayette L. Crump
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Kovac