

DATE: July 20, 2021

TO: Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development Committee

FROM: Larry Hoffman, Ph.D.

3476-A N. Dousman St., Milwaukee 53212 (Ald. Kovac's District)

RE: Item 12. File #210172

1887 N. Water St.

The owners of 1887 N. Water St. have publicly expressed interest in utilizing solar power. If they do, theirs would be among the first new structures in Milwaukee to run on renewable energy. At Plan Commission, they reaffirmed their interest, but they have not made a commitment. Without one, this might be the appropriate time to oppose the project. While I'm disappointed, **I do not oppose them for three reasons:**

1. The project is run by community-minded African Americans who are trying to lead this city out of a housing crisis. They have asserted publicly that **they will hire minorities beyond the minimums** of the Resident Preference Program.
2. The City-County Task Force on Climate and Economic Equity is developing plans that would place Milwaukee at the forefront of communities nationwide that are acting to limit and mitigate climate change. They are developing a central city green jobs accelerator to make living wage jobs, training, and apprenticeships readily available to our disadvantaged communities. **Yet the Task Force does not yet have a mechanism to support current developers.**
3. Five years ago, when the Bucks' arena was under construction, their owners had an opportunity to step out in front of the world and power their complex with solar energy. But they resisted. So today, whether they end up champions or runners-up, **the Bucks have yet to provide Milwaukee a compelling model for developers to emulate** in the real-life game against climate change.

If the owners of 1887 N. Water St. decide to go solar, climate activists, smart government officials, and an appreciative public will support the project. Advocates for equitable housing opportunities should already support it.