

Askin, Tim

From: Amber Smith <amber.lee.smith@live.com>
Sent: Monday, September 13, 2021 10:45 AM
To: Historic Preservation Commission
Subject: File 210674 - Resolution Related to Certificate of Appropriateness for Palmer Street

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Good morning, Members of the Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission--

My name is Amber Lee Smith, and I am a proud resident of the Brewers Hill neighborhood in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I have lived in this neighborhood for five of the past six years--first as an owner in Shoeworks Lofts, and currently as a renter at the Vine Street Lofts.

I am a member of the Historic Brewers Hill Association (HBHA). I am invested in our neighborhood, and intend to purchase again in the neighborhood within the next five years. There are many things I love about our neighborhood, including:

- Our neighborhood is incredibly diverse, and we work hard to include people of all backgrounds
- The architecture in Brewers Hill is incredibly unique in the Milwaukee area, specifically the Greek Revival and Italianate architecture, as well as the use of cream city brick
- The passion our neighbors have for horticulture--so many of the homes in our neighborhood focus on native plants over grass, as well as an embracement of vines and moss on the homes themselves
- The ability to feel like a close-knit, suburban community with the benefits of being in an urban environment (within walking proximity to museums, restaurants, and theater)

Having been in this neighborhood for several years now, I am deeply concerned about the plans for a fifty-unit apartment building being built on city grounds and within the designated Brewers Hill Historic neighborhood. The proposed building is another cookie cutter, non-eco-friendly version of the dozens of apartment buildings we see being built in a city where the population has steadily been declining since 1960. I drive past these apartments every day, and there are constantly For Lease signs outside, with major deals being offered for those who sign a lease. Many of these units sit empty, and turnover is a major concern. Of additional concern is who will be managing this property and for how long. I support housing, including affordable housing, when and where it makes sense, and I struggle to understand adding units to an already saturated market.

For Brewers Hill in particular, adding a massive fifty-unit building that stands six stories high as the welcoming architecture to our unique, family-oriented neighborhood is heartbreaking.

Parking is already a huge concern with the recent addition of The Fortress, as well as the welcomed success of the Milwaukee Bucks on game nights. Yes, Three Leaf Development has stated they have ninety-five indoor parking spots built into their plans--however, some of these will be made available to renters at The Fortress. The Fortress previously assured our neighborhood that street parking would be addressed and would not be a concern with surface lot parking available. That said, those spots cost renters an additional \$75-plus a month--far more expensive than street parking. As such, street parking is still a concern. The developers of this proposed building have not been able to assure us that parking will be included for their renters, and I am

confident parking will not only continue to be a major concern--it will become even more challenging for long-term residents and home owners in our neighborhood.

Traffic, and specifically traffic safety, is also already a major concern in our neighborhood. Adding another fifty apartments, around another 100 people, and maybe another 100 cars to what is a highly walkable and bikeable neighborhood (we score 82 and 83 out of 100, respectably) is alarming. The amount of crime--including car break-ins, speeding, etc.--already has us making changes to our daily lives. We don't allow our children to walk our dog or ride their bikes alone beyond our street, as we are concerned about them getting hurt from the higher traffic and high speeds people go on a regular (and I mean daily) basis.

Three Leaf Development invited HBHA and our neighbors to a meeting where they presented us with their plans. They made it clear they could do what they wanted, that they were being "kind" to not build a larger building, and that the meeting was really a courtesy. They stated they love the neighborhood, but clearly fail to see what makes our neighborhood unique and valuable beyond the value of profit.

While we thank them for adding in elements of cream city brick into the updated plans, it's not nearly enough to ease the minds of those of us who are deeply invested in our community. Simply put, the proposed plans are much too large for this space, and they do not include enough of what makes Brewers Hill unique--the very things I listed at the beginning of this email.

I respectfully ask you, members of the Milwaukee Historical Preservation Commission, to do what you can to address the concerns of the people in Brewers Hill, and to stop this development from moving forward as-is. I ask that you challenge Three Leaf Development to stretch their imagination with what they can do to make this a development that makes sense for the community that they say they love--to show us that we're more than just a profitable location because we are near the Fiserv Forum.

Regards,

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