



Department of City Development

Housing Authority
Redevelopment Authority
City Plan Commission
Historic Preservation Commission

Patricia S. Algiers
Commissioner

Steven J. Jacquart
Deputy Commissioner

May 11, 2004

Honorable Robert Bauman, Chairman
Public Improvements Committee
City of Milwaukee
200 East Wells Street, Room 205

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Department of City Development (DCD) is requesting that the Public Improvements Committee Place on File Common Council File No. 030821, authorizing sale of the City-owned vacant lot at 2816-18 West State Street to the adjoining owner for green space.

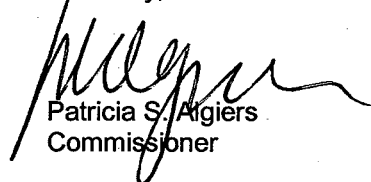
In September 2002, the Common Council designated this and 400 other buildable vacant lots suitable for single-family residential development and directed DCD to market the property. Buildable lots are generally 30 to 40 feet wide (the subject site is 50 feet wide). Since that time, DCD has marketed this and other buildable sites in the newspaper and on our website and has not permitted sales to adjoining owners for green space. If the Common Council approves this resolution, the sale would be unfair to all of the other property owners who have been told that they cannot purchase the buildable lot next to their house. DCD believes we should have consistent application of the policy of selling buildable vacant lots only for development, not green space.

Sale of buildable lots for in-fill development is key to expanding the City's tax base, increasing homeownership opportunities in the City and improving neighborhood stability. In 2003, DCD sold 105 buildable sites for the construction of homes with investment in excess of \$20 million. In the first four months of 2004, we have already sold 57 lots for an estimated investment of \$6 million. Many of these lots were sold for initiatives such as Lindsay Heights where preliminary demographic information indicates higher homeownership and declining crime rates since construction began.

The Common Council also encouraged in-fill development by approval of the Near West Side Comprehensive Plan in March 2004. Plan objectives encourage in-fill residential construction and maintenance of original lot platting to preserve neighborhood scale and context. The lot is also in the Historic Concordia neighborhood that has seen significant investment in home rehabilitation and can support market rate construction. New construction reinforces the investment made by area residents.

Accordingly, we request that you Place on File Common Council File No. 030821 and permit the City to continue to market the site for single-family housing.

Sincerely,



Patricia S. Algiers
Commissioner

c: Honorable Members of the Public Improvements Committee