



187 E. Becher St.
Milwaukee, WI 53207
414-206-1000
wheelandsprocket.com

RE: File# 200695 - Rezoning request for 123 & 147 E Becher St.

City Plan Commission
planAdmin@milwaukee.gov

November 6, 2020

On behalf of Wheel & Sprocket, we are excited by the prospect of the former Filer & Stowell property at 123-147 E Becher St. being improved by Bear Development. Having recently completed our own redevelopment project just east of the proposed site, we have had a favorable experience working with City officials to help navigate the myriad challenges a historic property offers. For several decades together with local partners, we have mobilized to secure bike and pedestrian infrastructure in Milwaukee and beyond. We hope to continue this momentum to help achieve better safety and access to multi-modal recreational and transportation options.

As can be seen in the attached Exhibit, the subject property contains a strip of former railbed which has been vacated. Former rail sections further north and directly south of the property have been developed by the City into the KK River Trail. We believe the Bear Development project should include a provision for an easement that would restore the former rail right-of-way that would enable an off-street trail connection. While an ultimate vision to fully connect the trail sections likely will take several more years, the segment on the subject property is an important link. This segment would not only help connect existing trails, but would bring vitality and engagement to the Bear redevelopment and the neighborhood. It has been consistently concluded that trail development has myriad economic, health, and quality-of-life benefits.¹ As the character of this once industrial area changes and requires rezoning, so too should the supporting infrastructure enhancements.

As part of the City's approval processes, we would support a proposal to include an easement to the City to support connecting the KK River Trail. We otherwise support the rezoning application and welcome new neighbors to the west.

Sincerely,

Noel Kegel and Amelia Kegel, Owners

cc: Ald. Dimitrijevic, Marina@milwaukee.gov

¹
<https://www.railstotrails.org/resource-library/resources/rails-to-trails-conservancy-releases-latest-research-on-net-economic-impact-of-trails-in-wisconsin-during-ceremony-for-2019-rail-trail-champion-award/>

EXHIBIT:

