



May 2, 2025

Project Narrative

Project: 7 Brew Milwaukee
3702 S 27th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53221
File No. 250040

MilBrew Holdings is requesting Plan Commission review and approval for the redevelopment of parcel 19680030 located at 3702 S 27th Street in the City of Milwaukee for a 7 Brew drive-thru coffee shop with associated parking. The existing property currently consists of a restaurant and paved parking with 21 parking stalls. The restaurant will be razed for the proposed 7 Brew development. The property is currently zoned LB1 – Commercial Local Business with a Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) overlay – 27th/Howard. City Plan Commission approval is required for this proposal as it relates to the DIZ use list and design standards. Where the overlay is silent, the LB1 zoning continues to apply. A restaurant with drive-through use is allowed per the DIZ, but subject to a public hearing and approval by the City Plan Commission. The applicable DIZ design standards are outlined below and more specifically responded to in a separate Zoning Review Matrix document.

The overall property size is 0.53 acres (22,955 square feet). The redevelopment will contain the 530 square foot coffee shop with outdoor patio, 250 square foot stand-alone cooler building, (2) drive-thru lanes and parking. The anticipated number of vehicles per day is 650. All drive-thru queuing will occur on site. 7 Brew will offer a full menu of coffee drinks, energy drinks, Italian sodas, smoothies, shakes, teas and more. There is no solid food production as this is a beverage only establishment. 7 Brew staff will take orders from each car individually, using iPads to take orders. They do not utilize a speaker system menu board. Orders will be hand delivered by staff at both lanes.

The City zoning code requires a maximum of 4 parking spaces; the plans are providing 19 parking spaces (including 1 ADA accessible stall) that are within a shared parking agreement. The existing parking stall count on site is 21 spaces. This development is reducing parking spaces by 2, for a total of 19 parking spaces provided. There are existing leases and shared parking agreements in place that require the extra stalls in the developed area. We have obtained a referral letter from the Department of Neighborhood Services' (DNS) Permit and Development Center for the parking over the maximum. The number of parking stalls for this restaurant with drive-thru use is dictated by the zoning code, and Board of Zoning Appeals approval is being sought in order to exceed the maximum allowed number of spaces. Based on the square footage of the building, DNS determined a maximum of 4 spaces are allowed; 19 stalls are being proposed, which is indicated on the referral letter issued by the City of Milwaukee Development Center on April 17, 2025. As part of the BOZA application, our intent is to have DPW-approved permeable paving along the north parking area and enhanced landscaping along S 27th St edge of the site. The existing impervious area on site is 21,294 S.F. (0.49 acres) and the proposed impervious area is 19,032 S.F. (0.44 acres) therefore, the impervious area has been reduced.

There is no “front door” to the building, as customers are not allowed inside the building. While the business model is centered around a drive-thru coffee and beverage shop, there is a patron walk-up door on the coffee shop facing north that is provided for non-vehicular customers underneath the canopy structure. A direct connection from the public walk along S 27th St to the walk-up door is being provided via an 8’ wide concrete walk that passes through the double drive-thru lanes. The enhanced pedestrian pathway will help motorists distinguish between the crosswalk and the drive-thru lanes. The walk-up door for non-vehicular customers will be available during all hours of operation. Non-vehicular customers are treated the same way as customers in the drive-thru lanes. Customers will walk up to the “walk-up” door where an employee will meet them at the door, take their order with an iPad, and hand deliver the order. Orders are dedicated for Lane 1, Lane 2, and the walk-up door.

In addition to the enhanced pedestrian connection through the drive-thru lanes, this project will meet the DIZ principles and standards for pedestrian and bicycle accommodation. To further distinguish between the drive-thru lanes and the pedestrian connection, colored concrete will be provided. Underneath the canopy structure of the building there are (2) picnic tables and a bike provided to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. To improve site safety, light poles and canopy lighting will be provided at appropriate foot candles with minimal light trespass and directed inward toward the development. Enhanced site landscaping is being provided as an additional site amenity.

Site landscaping will exceed the DIZ and base zoning standards. The DIZ requires the landscaping edge along a street to be a minimum of 5’ in width, for a maximum of 7’. This is required to be increased by 2’ in width if the maximum parking allowed is exceeded. This development will exceed the requirements by providing a minimum landscaping width of 10.96’ along S 27th St. The plans provide a combination of ornamental and native plant species for perimeter and interior landscaping. The landscape plan demonstrates that the landscape islands meet the DIZ requirements with respect to minimum square footage, and the quantity and types of plantings within those. Plans provide extra perennials/ornamental grasses along S 27th St, to further enhance the landscaping along the street. Landscape calculations are provided on sheet C1.4 (civil landscape and restoration plan) of the civil plan set for reference.

The building design of both the cooler and the main building will be clad fully in a modular brick siding system which meets the DIZ design standards. The full modular brick siding is being provided as an additional enhancement to offset not meeting the DIZ-prescribed minimum building height (see separate DIZ Deviation Narrative). The building is meeting all other DIZ design standards. There is an established hierarchy between building elements. The base and top of the coffee shop is modular brick siding, while the middle contains clear anodized aluminum. There are also elements of blue break metal fascia to further establish hierarchy. On the cooler, the east and west elevations contain one type of modular brick, while the north and south elevations have a distinguished look between two types of modular brick. The front façade is orientated to face the primary street, S 27th St. The mechanical systems are screened from the right-of-way. Additionally, the front façade is articulated with varying materials, windows, color, texture, and details to meet the DIZ standard.

The property will be transformed into a commercial development that is aesthetically pleasing with high-quality exterior materials on the building along with improved landscaping designed to ensure species resiliency and complimentary style.