



Department of City Development
City Plan Commission
Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee
Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation

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December 10, 2018

To the Honorable Members of the
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee
City Hall, Room 205

Dear Committee Members:

File Nos. 180945 and 180946 relate to the establishment of the Harbor District Riverwalk Site Plan Review Overlay Zone (SPROZ) and design standards for properties within the boundary generally measured from the ordinary high water mark or bulkhead line extending 50 feet landward for the properties immediately adjacent to the Kinnickinnic River, extending from the confluence of the Milwaukee and Kinnickinnic Rivers south to Lincoln Avenue, and along the eastern side of the Kinnickinnic River south of the South Channel of the Bay View Grand Trunk Wetland south to Lincoln Avenue, in the 12th and 14th Aldermanic Districts.

The purpose of these files is to create a continuous system of Riverwalks on both sides of the Kinnickinnic River that connect to the City's existing Riverwalk system, expand river access, and ensure integrated urban design within the Harbor District. The City of Milwaukee has placed a great emphasis on achieving the full potential and value to citizens of its rivers, including the Kinnickinnic River and its connections to the Milwaukee and Menomonee Rivers.

Within this overlay zone, the City Plan Commission must approve all projects located 50 feet landward of riverward property lines. For any property located within or partially within the overlay zone, a Riverwalk that complies with the requirements of this overlay zone shall be constructed at the time of any new construction or substantial improvement of a principal structure on the property. This requirement shall apply even in cases where the principal structure itself is not located within the overlay zone.

The design standards include, but are not limited to, noting where the Riverwalk shall be placed on a site, preserving natural river banks where they exist, locations of piers and temporary moorings, and acceptable materials and lighting types for the Riverwalk. The standards also note treatment of river-facing building facades and placement of loading docks and outdoor storage.

On December 3, 2018, a public hearing was held and at that time, representatives from the Department of City Development (DCD) presented the overlay zone and design standards, fielding questions from the commission. Dan Adams, Planning Director for Harbor District, Inc. also spoke in favor of the files. Several people attended and were noted as present, or not in favor or opposition to the file. Some neighbors and property owners within the proposed overlay zone spoke in opposition to the file. Many of the property owner concerns centered around the potential hardship imposed by the Riverwalk on their marine-related businesses or the incompatibility with the Riverwalk and the dimensions of their property. Some who spoke wanted more specificity about certain provisions of the file including what action by a property owner triggered the construction of the Riverwalk. DCD staff responded by stating that new construction, or substantial reconstruction triggered the Riverwalk construction. One commissioner asked about adding a provision about distance between Riverwalk access points, and staff stated that there is language written into the design standards specifically to acknowledge that there are certain points along the stretch of the river where it may not be possible to have a Riverwalk along the river. If the overlay is approved, then it is the intent to more specifically define the design standards for the overlay, including taking a closer look at the unique conditions



that exist and distance between access points. Since the overlay zone and design standards are consistent with the comprehensive plan recommendations, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on December 3, 2018, recommended approval of the subject file.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Perez
Ald. Zielinski