



Department of City Development

City Plan Commission
Historic Preservation Commission
Neighborhood Improvement
Development Corporation
Redevelopment Authority

Rocky Marcoux
Commissioner

Martha L. Brown
Deputy Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Plan Commission
Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Martha Brown
Deputy Commissioner

DATE: May 9, 2007

SUBJECT: State Historical Society interest in Downer Avenue project

As you know, the City Plan Commission received a letter April 23, 2007, from Chip Brown at the Wisconsin Historical Society regarding the proposal to construct a mixed use building at 2574-90 N. Downer Avenue. The Society is an interested party because the boundary of the North Point North historic district, which is listed on the State and National Registers, is directly east of the building site. Mr. Brown's letter indicated that, as provided by State Statute, the Society would "require negotiation" with the City of Milwaukee regarding this project.

I will not be able to attend your meetings on Monday, May 14, 2007. However, I thought it would be helpful to summarize what has transpired following receipt of Mr. Brown's letter; hence, this memo.

I talked by telephone to both Mr. Brown and Michael Stevens, State Historic Preservation Officer, on April 23. Both gentlemen explained that the Society's role in situations like this is advisory rather than regulatory. A municipality is asked to provide information about a project in hopes that review by Society staff might generate recommendations about ways the project could be modified to mitigate any adverse impacts on the State and National Register district. The municipality has discretion as to the implementation of any recommendations.

Although I offered to set up a meeting between Society staff and project representatives, Mr. Brown indicated that he preferred to review written material as a starting point. On April 25, we mailed off a package of information, including documents relating to the General Planned Development zoning application, the Detailed Planned Development zoning application, renderings of initial and subsequent designs for the building, and photo-renderings provided by the developer that address questions of the scale of the structure.

We had hoped to have Mr. Brown's recommendations prior to the May 14 CPC and HPC meetings. As of May 9, we have not yet received any reaction to the material we sent. We understand that State statute allows the staff to take up to 30 days for its review.