

# MPA

MILWAUKEE PRESERVATION ALLIANCE  
2589 North Lake Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53211

Honorable Members of the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee  
City Hall, City of Milwaukee  
200 East Wells Street, Room 205  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

January 13, 2011

RE: Certificate of Appropriateness requesting the demolition of the buildings at 319-323 and 327 East Wisconsin Avenue and at 625, 627, and 629-631 North Milwaukee Street.

Dear Committee Members,

As president of the Milwaukee Preservation Alliance, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, dedicated to advocating for historic preservation in order to foster more livable communities, I respectfully ask that the honorable members of the ZND committee uphold the Historic Preservation Commission's decision requiring Jackson Street Management to make a design change that ultimately improves the project.

The Historic Preservation Commission is charged with the responsibility to safeguard the city's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in landmarks and historic districts. State law declares it a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of improvements of special architectural character or special historical interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety, and welfare of the people.

The Commission, (Mayor Barrett) appointees and volunteer citizen public servants, have been unfairly portrayed as obstructionists. The commissioners reviewed the application to raze historic buildings, designated by the city for protection on behalf of the public good, acted according to the city ordinance governing their commission. The commissioners did their job, working to insure that if irreplaceable buildings are destroyed, and a new building constructed, it's the best possible design and architecture. The Commissioners did their work reviewed the most recent submission on an expedited timeline to ensure due process for the developers. The political atmosphere created by Jackson Street Management's hired marketing firm made the Commissioners' work very difficult. The ZND committee, of all committees, should know that what these developers have been asked to do is minor and within reason, especially considering the prominent location.

Every historic building, neighborhood, and district will be endangered if our Commissioners are pressured to make decisions based on the work of a marketing firm and lobbyist. Our historic preservation ordinance will become meaningless. Not only do we stand to lose Milwaukee's unique character, we stand to lose property value and we stand to lose the financial benefit of tax credits.

If you are serious about job creation then conservation and restoration are the way to go. Preservation creates more local high-paying jobs than new construction does. There are also many other long term economic benefits to historic preservation, such as heritage tourism.

A thoughtful process is fully merited when deciding to demolish irreplaceable legally protected historic buildings, or when constructing new buildings in the most prominent area of downtown Milwaukee.

# **MPA**

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The ruling of the HPC is within reason and should be upheld. Please think hard about what is best for the future of Milwaukee. Think of future generations.

Please oppose the appeal.

Respectfully,  
Dawn McCarthy  
President  
Milwaukee Preservation Alliance, Inc.