



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

Lafayette L. Crump
Commissioner

Vanessa L. Koster
Deputy Commissioner

4th Ald. District
Ald. Bauman

CITY PLAN COMMISSION ZONING REPORT

Ordinance File No. [220489](#) and [220490](#)

Location: 1001 North Vel R. Phillips Avenue

**Applicant/
Owner:** MKE BLK23, LLC (220489) and Marquee Ventures MKE, LLC (220490)

**Current
Zoning:** General Planned Development (GPD) known as Arena Masterplan

**Proposed
Zoning:** 2nd Amendment to the GPD (FN220489); GPD to Detailed Planned Development (DPD) known as Block 3 – Arena Masterplan (FN 220490)

Proposal: These files relate to the Second Amendment to the General Planned Development, GPD, known as Arena Master Plan to allow changes to the zoning standards for Block 3 of the GPD and adjacent lands, and the change in zoning from GPD to a Detailed Planned Development, DPD, known as Block 3 - Arena Master Plan, Phase 1 for development of a music venue and associated elements on a portion of 1001 North Vel R. Phillips Avenue, on the west side of North Vel R. Phillips Avenue, north of West State Street, in the 4th Aldermanic District. A Certified Survey Map (CSM) is currently underway to create outlots for a service drive and plaza areas, and lots for the music venue development as well as two future development lots on the east and south portions of the block.

In 2016, a GPD known as the Arena Master Plan was established for the entire Deer District and serves as a zoning master plan for future development within the district.

GPD Amendment

The following items are being proposed as part of the 2nd Amendment to the GPD:

- Modification of the design standards for Block 3. Specifically, the north maximum setback has been increased from 50' to 95' – 105' from the north property line to accommodate a plaza area. Additionally, the current minimum height for buildings on Block 3 is 4 stories. The amendment will allow a reduction in the minimum height specifically for Lot 2 of Block 3 to

38' to accommodate future development on the land between the east side of the proposed music venue and Vel R. Phillips Ave.

- Acknowledgement that the land west of Block 3 that was anticipated to be future public 5th Street will be utilized as a private service drive, and acknowledgement of the previously approved right-of-way vacation of Highland Avenue east of 6th Street.
- Acknowledgement that the applicant has agreed to provide access areas for pedestrian and emergency vehicle access over portions of vacated Highland Av. and the 5th Street private service drive. Terms of this access will be memorialized by written agreements subject to Common Council approval concurrent with the proposed zoning approvals (via Council File #220767).
- Acknowledgement of interim conditions for the balance of Block 3, which consists of Lot 2 and Lot 3.

Block 3 Phase 1 DPD

The development being proposed through the DPD being reviewed by the Plan Commission is for a portion of Block 3 of the Arena District. It is encompassed by the parts of 1001 N. Vel R. Phillips Avenue, including Lot 1 (music venue), Outlot 1 (service drive and north plaza), and Outlot 2 (east plaza) which will be created by a Certified Survey Map (CSM) that is currently underway. A multi-story music venue is proposed for the site, including an approximately 4,000-person capacity room, smaller 800-person capacity room, meeting and event spaces, outdoor balcony, rooftop patio and other uses ancillary to the operation of a music venue. A music venue is classified by the zoning code as a theater, which is a permitted use this block in the GPD, as well as all downtown zoning districts except for C9A, which is primarily focused on residential uses.

As part of the DPD, land to the west of the new building will be utilized as a service drive with access for emergency vehicles and semi-trucks using the venue's loading dock. Pedestrian access is proposed along the sidewalks per the GPD Amendment that is associated with this DPD. The DPD is also proposing additional plaza space be created adjacent to the music venue. A future DPD approval will be necessary in the future for development of the balance of Block 3.

Lot 2, which is the land between the east side of the music venue and Vel. R. Phillips, is not being proposed to be developed as part of this Phase 1 development. The Arena District development team have indicated that they are actively marketing the site for development that will complement the block, including possibly retail or restaurant/tavern uses. Future development of Lot 2 will allow for the overall street activation and build out requirements of the Arena Master Plan GPD for this block to be achieved. Arena District ownership have committed to aggressively marketing Lot 2 and constructing a building on this site that would bring this portion of the block into compliance with GPD standards, and these commitments were a factor relied upon by DCD in the staff review of this proposal and recommendation related to consistency with the overall intent of the GPD.

Building Design & Articulation:

The northern facades of the building feature the main pedestrian entries to the venue and are designated as high activation areas. Lobby, pre-function, circulation corridor, merchandise, and box office spaces are located along the northern portion of the building. These northern facades are designed with a curtain wall system framed by masonry piers or composite metal panel elements. A marquee canopy and roof terrace add dimension to the northern elevations.

The south façade of the building is set back mid-block, which will be partially obstructed from view by the anticipated developments on the southern half of Block 3. The architectural design of the south elevation is book ended with precast concrete base and brick corners. Exposed precast concrete exists where future development is expected.

The east façade, facing Vel R. Phillips Ave., includes a precast concrete base patterned brick with a combination of stack bond and header courses to accentuate the façade. Composite metal panel wraps the fascia and significant soffit extension of the high roof. Two different patterns of brick form an offset pattern in precast panels at ground level, punctuated by a rooftop terrace that extends inward. The blank wall will be screened by the future development on Lot 2.

The west façade, facing the private service drive, includes precast concrete base and patterned brick and composite metal fascia similar to the east facade. Green screens and associate ground level planters relate to the rhythm of the façade.

Site Features:

A comprehensive site and landscape design has been created that follows the GPD guidelines and complements the existing arena district. The ground plane incorporates a mix of concrete, decorative concrete, pavers, and permeable pavers that orchestrate movement and exemplify features of the site. Poured-in-place concrete planters provide seating and add a three-dimensional interest around the site. The project incorporates green features such as permeable pavement and natural plantings.

Circulation, parking & Loading:

No new vehicle parking is being provided on this development parcel. Guests and employees will utilize adjacent parking structures in the district. Existing facilities and options for transit and ride share users will continue.

There are 20 total short term, outdoor bicycle parking spaces located near the north entry of the large venue. Indoor bicycle parking spots will be provided near the building loading area.

Deliveries, staging, waste collection will be off the private drive to the west. Dumpsters will be stored inside rooms of the building.

Due to the significant number of trips that the proposed development will generate, a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) has been requested by the Dept. of Public Works focusing on how guests will arrive and depart the site or parking structures

in the area, including whether additional loading zones or traffic signal adjustments will be required.

Lighting:

Feature lighting for the façade is provided at the marquees and rooftop canopy. LED fixtures are recessed into the exterior envelope to create an integrated look and feel. Up-lighting at the rooftop patio also provides a subtle wash on the columns and soffit above. Site and sidewalk lighting are provided with a series of free-standing pedestrian scale pole lamps and uplight fixtures integrated into landscape beds. Venue entries are illuminated via soffit and canopy mounted down lights.

Signage:

All signage will be designed per requirements of the Milwaukee Zoning Code, section 295-407. Signage types include:

- Temporary construction signage.
- Temporary Perimeter site signage that will consist of a fabric sign material with graphics designed to obscure the construction activity and enliven the block. The fabric sign will cover between 50% and 100% of the perimeter construction fence.
- Wall sign: Internal face lit dimensional letters
- Marquee signage – changeable messaging
- Building identification signs near streets.
- Banner signs

Adjacent Land Use:

This site is located at the corner of N Vel R Phillips Avenue and W State Street, within the Deer District. The Fiserv Forum arena is located directly north of the site and is zoned as DPD Block 1. Turner Hall is located across the street to the east and is zoned as Downtown Mixed Activity (C9G). Other properties to the east, south, and west are zoned as Downtown Mixed Activity (C9G).

Consistency with Area Plan:

The project site is located within the boundary of Milwaukee’s Downtown Comprehensive Area Plan, which was approved by the Common Council in 2010. The proposal is consistent with the GPD zoning, which was previously determined to be in compliance with the recommendations of the Downtown Plan. The proposed theater is a use is permitted in the approved GPD. Of particular note in the Downtown Plan, the proposal is consistent with the following:

- Any new multi-purpose assembly venue that may replace the Bradley (BMO Harris) Center should remain Downtown, preferably in the Old World Third District, between McKinley and Kilbourn and between 4th and 6th Streets. (Chapter 4, pp. 140)
- Encourage new entertainment uses to complement the existing corridor of large venue sites by locating primarily along Old World Third and 4th Street south of Juneau (pp.56, land use strategies and policies)
- Large plazas and atriums with accompanying lighting and graphics should be considered as arena entrance features. (Chapter 4, pp. 140)
- Possible future commercial or entertainment uses related to any new multi-purpose assembly venue or re-development of the current Bradley (BMO Harris)

Center can activate the ground floor, with parking and other commercial uses occupying upper floors. (pp. 140)

- Animate building walls with either activation or high-quality wall design and articulation. (pp. 52)
- Where the street grid has been disrupted, efforts should be made to reconnect the grid. Where motor vehicle connections are not possible, pedestrian connections, at a minimum, should be made. (pp. 77)

Previous City

Plan Action:

11/23/2015 – The City Plan Commission recommended conditional approval of the change in zoning Downtown - Warehouse and Light Manufacturing (C9H), Downtown - Civic Activity (C9D(A)), and Redevelopment - Park East (RED) to a General Planned Development (GPD) for the arena master plan. (FN 150724)

12/3/2018 – The City Plan Commission recommended approval of the First Amendment to the Arena Master Plan GPD to allow temporary banner signs and lighting on the existing parking structure on Block 2 of the GPD. (FN 181157)

Previous Common

Council Action:

1/19/2015 – The Common Council approved the change in zoning Downtown - Warehouse and Light Manufacturing (C9H), Downtown - Civic Activity (C9D(A)), and Redevelopment - Park East (RED) to a General Planned Development (GPD) for the arena master plan. (FN 150724)

12/18/2018 – The Common Council approved the First Amendment to the Arena Master Plan GPD to allow temporary banner signs and lighting on the existing parking structure on Block 2 of the GPD. (FN 181157)

Staff

Recommendation:

A concert venue is a permitted use in the existing GPD that serves as the adopted zoning standards for this site, and the proposed design of the new concert venue and expanded plaza areas are consistent with the design standards in the GPD. The GPD amendment being requested remains consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and generally meets the spirit and intent of the GPD. While Lot 2 is not being proposed to developed concurrently with the music venue, Arena District ownership have made commitments that Lot 2 will be actively marketed and developed in the near future in accordance with the development rules established by the GPD, which will bring this portion of the block into adherence to the GPD standards. Based on these factors, staff suggests that the City Plan Commission recommends approval of the subject files conditioned on:

- The applicant submitting the DPW-requested Traffic Impact Analysis, and incorporating any resulting adjustments to ingress/egress and loading/unloading areas into the final Exhibits that will be presented to the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee for approval.
- GPD: Updating the exhibits to reflect final adjustments related to the pedestrian and emergency vehicle access agreement areas.