

April 22, 2013

Alderman Jim Bohl
Chair, Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee, City Hall, Room 205
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Alderman Bohl:

I'm writing in support of the nomination to landmark the remains of the former Franz Falk Brewery (Item 121601) which I understand will shortly come before the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee of the Common Council for consideration. I encourage ZND to look favorably on the nomination and the owners' efforts to stabilize and renovate this site, especially the largest building (the "Refrigerator/Malt House"), thus preserving an important reminder of the significance of Franz Falk and this brewery to the City's and the brewing industry's joint history.

While I am not a Milwaukeean and may seem to have no reason to speak up on this issue, I have been researching the architectural history of the City's breweries for many years. I am an architectural historian who specializes in the architectural development of Midwestern breweries in the pre-Prohibition era. Milwaukee is one of four major brewing centers targeted in my study, the others being Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Chicago. Certainly, Milwaukee's breweries are among the most important in the Midwest, helping us to understand how and why such industrial sites developed as they did, physically and stylistically. These great complexes expressed the important positions Milwaukee's breweries held, as they also expressed the pride their German-born creators held in their American successes. Franz Falk's brewery, even the little that remains of it, was as good an example of that as any, in being among the top breweries in Milwaukee until its merger with Pabst in 1892.

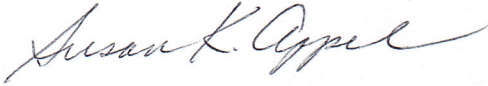
Very sadly, there is more and more destruction of these sites – so much that, until a few years ago, I had thought the Falk brewery was entirely gone. Finding that this is not so, and knowing that what remains is now owned by a group that cares for and hopes to make good adaptive reuse of these structures encourages me that not all of Milwaukee's breweries will be lost. I hope these facts will also encourage you and your committee to look favorably on current efforts to preserve, renovate, and bring these buildings back into a condition where they can contribute again to the contemporary City's needs.

The landmarking nomination for Falk's New Bavaria Brewery provides detailed information laying out how and why this site is highly significant historically. The discussion of the nomination during the recent meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission likewise brought out not only the structural problems of the "Refrigerator/Malt House" building, but also the owners' efforts to develop, with the City's and the University's assistance, a plan to stabilize that building. I respectfully request that your committee recognize the value of this site and facilitate the owners' work with other municipal services and University resources to handle this nomination in a way that best assures preserving the buildings

and avoiding their demolition. It would be more than a shame to lose this site, especially when there are citizens willing to do the work to renovate it effectively.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and of the efforts of the site's owners to realize the opportunity that the site presents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan K. Appel".

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