



WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

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City of Milwaukee
Department of City Development
City Plan Commission
809 North Broadway
Milwaukee, WI 53202

April 23, 2007

Re: Proposed Parking Structure, 2574-90 North Downer Avenue (City file #070034)

Dear Plan Commission Members:

We have received and reviewed information describing the above referenced project. Pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 44.42 and 66.1111, we offer the following comments.

We understand the City of Milwaukee owns the lot described as 2574-90 North Downer Avenue (hereinafter "Lot"), which is now a surface parking area. The east edge of the Lot defines a segment of the west edge of the State and National Registers-listed North Point North historic district (hereinafter "Historic District"). The City has planned and does plan to sell this lot for development. The current development proposal utilizes virtually the entire footprint of the Lot to create a fifty-five-foot-tall parking structure.

Being in close proximity (less than five feet) to the east edge of the Lot, one contributing property within the Historic District, a residence located at 2623 East Bellevue Place, will be adversely affected by the proposed development project. As well, the Historic District itself will be adversely affected by the proposed development.

Our research indicates that the Lot was not developed prior to 1950. Likely the only improvement to the lot has been creation of the surface parking area currently at the site. Thus, this lot had always provided a view from the commercial area into the residential Historic District. Similarly, the view from the Historic District onto the commercial avenue, had and has been unobstructed. The visual impact of the proposed construction is substantial.

The close proximity of the proposed structure to the contributing residence is extreme. All views from the west façade of the residence will be lost or highly obscured. With the proposed construction, the setting of this residence is altered and diminished irreconcilably. Further, with vibration from heavy machinery during site preparation and building construction, there is significant risk of structural damage to the residence.

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The scale of the proposed parking structure is inconsistent with the majority of the surrounding commercial buildings along Downer Avenue, defining the west edge of the Historic District. The proposed "modern" style of the structure is out of character with buildings located within the Historic District.

As currently proposed, the parking structure project will adversely affect both the North Point North historic district and the contributing residence located at 2623 East Belleview Place. Therefore, pursuant to state law, we require negotiation with you to attempt to avoid, minimize or otherwise mitigate the adverse effects resulting from the proposed project.

With questions, please contact me at (608) 264-6508. We look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your continued attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Chip Harry L. Brown III, J.D.
Government Assistance
And Training Specialist