

March 31, 2008

To the Honorable Common Council
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 071500 relates to the change in zoning from Downtown High Density Residential (C9A(a)) to General Planned Development (GPD) on land located at 700 and 711 East Kilbourn Avenue, in the 4th Ald. District.

This file approves a general plan for two mixed use buildings; each up to 20 stories and 230 residential units along with retail and commercial space on the first floor. The mixed-use building on the north site will be approximately 407,500 sf and the mixed-use building on the south site will be approximately 483,800 sf. Two underutilized vacant properties would be developed and provide downtown rental housing.

The purpose of the general planned development is to establish zoning parameters for future site development. The proposal is consistent with the spirit and intent of the current high density residential district; however, the proposal exceeds the permitted floor area. The parking levels at each building will be screened or enclosed and be internally ventilated. The exterior walls at these levels will not be blank. Also, the facades along the street levels will not be blank and glazing will be incorporated at the commercial areas.

On March 31, 2008, a public hearing was held and at that time several people stated that they were in favor, unsure, or opposed to the proposed zoning change. A few abutting property owners opposed the proposal. Questions were asked regarding how the proposal will affect the existing alley on the south site. The northerly portion of the alley in the block bounded by E. Kilbourn, N. Cass, E. Wells, and N. Van Buren was vacated several years ago. The remainder of the north-south alley will remain as is and will not be affected by the proposal. Though some neighbors were concerned about the proposal being consistent with the surrounding neighborhood, the existing Downtown High Density Residential zoning allows for substantial development and would not have limited the height of the building if it was built as of right. In advance of the meeting, an owner of adjacent apartment buildings stated that he was okay with the proposal so long as the 10 foot side setbacks remained. Alderman Bauman expressed his support for the project, stating that it allows for public input on the design, parking, and other issues. Since the proposed change complies with the Zoning Code and City plans for the area, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on March 31, 2008 recommended approval of the subject file.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Robert Bauman