



Date: September 9, 2020
To: Matt Haessly, City Real Estate
From: City of Milwaukee, Design Review Team
Re: 2249 N Humboldt Ave

The Design Review Team (DRT) along with Tim Askin and Carlen Hatala from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) met on September 9, 2020 to review and discuss the Humboldt Gardens Gourmet proposal. Below is a summary of the review and process steps, with future detailed design comments coming from HPC at the appropriate point in time.

The proposal is for the rehabilitation and re-use of the property for a tavern/restaurant type use with an associated food courtyard to the south and west of the building. Numerous other uses are proposed for the upper floors in future phases. It should be noted that the submitted “estimate of repairs” shows floor/site plans that do not correlate to the design concepts. [.](#)

Overall, from a Planning standpoint, DRT is in support of the proposal and believes it generally consistent with the recommendations of the Area Plan and goals for the site as articulated in the RFP. We would encourage the Developer to continue to advance this proposal into the design stage so it can move forward in the City land sale process and preserve this key building. As noted below, depending in the final design, it is possible that the project may require an approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals. Planning anticipates supporting these required approvals if the final submitted plans remain consistent with DRT and HPC feedback.

1. Land Use – DCD Planning supports the rehabilitation and re-use of the property. This is a locally designated building, the site is zoned LB2, Local Business. It is in the Northeast Side Area Plan.
2. Development Proposal Clarity – Please have the developer explain whether the courtyard area is for food trucks or vending stalls as shown in the renderings. If food trucks are proposed, how will they drive into the site? If food trucks, please explain if they will be transient or semi-permanent. Confirming whether the proposal is for permanent food stall structures or food truck parking will inform a number of aspects of the review of this project as it progresses.
3. Building Code – For the project to proceed to a final land sale and secure building permits, the architect will need to prepare a code analysis of general design presumptions for whether the change in use/occupancy on upper floors can work in the building given the class of construction. Items such as the stairs and exiting, elevator access, rest room size, all do raise significant concerns that should be addressed.



809 N Broadway

Milwaukee, WI 53202

Tim Askin of HPC suggested “there are some cost savings to be found in the historic building code. Particularly as it relates to fire and egress. The applicant always has to specifically invoke their right to use this with plan exam. This is a building that is eligible for this alternative code.” Also attached is some information from Tim.

4. Historic Preservation – Once the general building code compliance issues are assured, the HPC will prepare detailed comments delivered to Matt on both the rehabilitation of the existing structure, review of the proposed changes to the building such as new additions for vertical circulation, balconies and fire escapes, any new windows and doors. HPC would also provide comment on the courtyard, its fence enclosure and any new structures built in the courtyard.
5. Plan Exam. The project architect and representatives need to meet with DNS Development Center Plan Exam to assess two major areas:
 - Zoning – How the uses will be classified. If the Board of Zoning Appeals is needed, we can support if the proposal is flushed out and the historic design issues are resolved. Review should include both the initial phase project as well as the future phase.
 - Building Code – Review that the architect’s general design presumption for change in use can work in the building with the proposed new uses. Items such as the stairs and exiting, elevator access, rest room size all do raise significant concern

Upon Plan Exam review of the proposed development, the developer should update their plans in accordance with the Plan Examiner recommendation and resubmit them to Matt Haessly to schedule another DRT and HPC review.

In Summary, once the developer further develops the proposal in terms of building code, HPC will provide detailed comments that will need to be incorporated into the plans. If building code issues are reasonably on track and design expectations are met, Planning can support any Board of Zoning Appeals items that could arise from Plan Exam zoning assessment. The project may then be able to move forward in the land sale process.