



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

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June 11, 2019

To the Honorable Members of the
Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee
City of Milwaukee
City Hall, Room 205

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 190164 relates to the change in zoning from Industrial Light, IL2, to Industrial Mixed, IM, to allow commercial uses on the property located at 419 West Vliet Street, on the south side of West Vliet Street, west of North Vel R. Phillips Avenue, in the 6th Aldermanic District.

This zoning change was requested by Pat Prabhu and will allow commercial uses on the site. More specifically, Pat and his business partner, Karl Rajani, plan to convert the existing building on the site into an approximately 40-room boutique hotel to be known as "Lofts Hotel Downtown Milwaukee." A hotel is a permitted use in the IM zoning district.

On June 10, 2019 a public hearing was held on the subject file and Prabhu, Rajani, and Carla Cross spoke about the proposed rezoning and plan for the restoration of the historic building, constructed in 1888 and used originally as a paper warehouse. In addition to details about the building, the team also discussed their social justice efforts including a voluntary minority hiring plan and \$12 per hour minimum wage for contract workers. Rajani also spoke about the fact that they needed to sort out the parking situation and they might have to go before the Board of Zoning Appeals in the event that they are unable to meet standards of the IM requirements.

A representative from the Milwaukee Economic and Climate Justice Coalition spoke in favor of the project but expressed concerns about potential gentrification effects and asked the development team if they had considered solar panels. Prabhu said that they were limited by the roof space for solar, but would explore the idea. Commissioner Nemec commended the team for their hiring practices and Commissioner Gould urged them to pursue Historic Preservation Tax Credits to offset some of the costs of construction and restoration. Since the proposed zoning change will allow the building to be reused as a hotel, the City Plan Commission, at its regular meeting on June 10, 2019, recommended the subject file for passage.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Cogg

