



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

Lafayette L. Crump
Commissioner

Vanessa L. Koster
Deputy Commissioner

Ald. Spiker
13th Ald. District

CITY PLAN COMMISSION
ZONING REPORT

File No. [240179](#)

Location: 3774 S. 27th Street located north of W Howard Avenue, on the east side of 27th Street, west of Wilson Creek.

Applicant/
Owner: Rakesh Rehan of NVS Investments LLC (Applicant and Prospective Buyer)

Current
Zoning: Local Business (LB1) located within 27th/Howard Development Incentive Zone ([DIZ](#)) Overlay

Proposal: The applicant has submitted a proposal to redevelop the existing historic building and construct a new multi-tenant commercial building on the site located at 3774 South 27th Street, within the S. 27th/Howard Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) overlay. The S. 27th/Howard DIZ was created in 2010 and establishes permitted and prohibited uses, as well as design standards for developments within the overlay zone. The historic building is proposed to be renovated and reused as a restaurant and banquet (assembly) hall. A restaurant is an allowable use, and an assembly hall is also permitted within the overlay zone, but is subject to a public hearing and approval by CPC.

This site is currently owned by the City of Milwaukee. NVS Investments, LLC plans to purchase the site and redevelop the former Jacob Nunnemacher Mansion (later known as the Wildenberg's Evergreen Hotel) into a sit-down restaurant and an approximately 10,000 square foot banquet hall. A historically appropriate building addition and outdoor patio are proposed as part of this project. All changes to the historic building will require Historic Preservation Commission approval. Additionally, a one-story multi-tenant commercial building is proposed to be constructed on the north portion of the site. The new building will be constructed with brick masonry, and will have an outdoor seating area between two of the tenant spaces. Future uses within the multi-tenant commercial building will need to comply with the DIZ overlay use list. The surface parking provided on the site will be shared by tenants and customers of both buildings.

DIZ Review:

The applicant has submitted a matrix evaluating how their proposal meets each of the DIZ standards. Staff has reviewed it and concluded that the proposal does align with the DIZ standards. A table including the applicant's explanation of how the standards are met is available as an attachment to this staff report.

In summary, the placement, height, building materials, and fenestration of the new commercial building meet all of the applicable design standards. A final landscape plan will be submitted to DCD Planning prior to the issuance of building permits, and staff will confirm compliance with the applicable overlay standards. Outdoor seating areas have been incorporated into both the historic building redevelopment and new building plans. Signage is currently unknown, but the applicant intends to comply with the overlay standards. The overlay allows DCD Planning staff to sign off on compliant signage.

Adjacent Land Use:

This site is located on a heavy commercial corridor and is surrounded by a mix of retail zoned Local Business (LB1) including a furniture store to the south, a large department store and grocery store to the north west, and a restaurant to the west across the street. Wilson Creek is to the east.

Consistency with Area Plan:

The proposed redevelopment of the historic Wildenberg Hotel and construction of a new commercial building within the South 27th Street/ Howard Development Incentive Zone is consistent with the comprehensive plan. This site falls within the Southeast Side Area Plan, adopted by the Common Council in 2008, and the South 27th Street Strategic Action Plan, adopted by the Common Council in 2017. The Wildenberg Hotel site was the subject of a design charrette during the South 27th Street Strategic Action Plan given its unique historical character and potential for catalyzing redevelopment along the South 27th Street corridor. Their design concept created a pedestrian-friendly, multi-use site with the historic building adaptively re-used as a brew pub or restaurant. The proposed development incorporates many of the recommendations, in particular, the adaptive reuse of a historic property for a restaurant and event space function that can provide a place for community members to gather. Additionally, the new commercial space meets the DIZ standards and includes an outdoor plaza, as envisioned as part of the design charrette. In Summary the proposed development is consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.

Previous City Plan Action:

10/18/2010 – City Plan Commission recommended approval of a substitute ordinance to establish a Development Incentive Zone on land located generally along the east side of South 27th Street between West Howard Avenue and West Loomis Road (FN [090919](#))

Previous Common Council Action:

11/27/2018 – Common Council approved the Department of City Development to issue an Exclusive Right to Negotiate to Scott Crawford, Inc. for the City-owned property located at 3774 South 27th Street (FN [181128](#))

9/23/14 – Common Council granted historic designation to the Nunnemacher Estate/Wildenberg hotel located at 3774 S. 27th Street ([FN 140400](#))

10/15/13 – Common Council approved a resolution authorizing the return of real estate located at 3774 S 27th Street to its former owner. ([FN 130658](#))

11/23/2010 – Common Council approved a substitute ordinance to establish a Development Incentive Zone on land located generally along the east side of South 27th Street between West Howard Avenue and West Loomis Road ([FN 090919](#))

**Previous
Historic Preservation
Commission Action:**

6/3/2024 – Historic Preservation Commission approved a resolution relating to a of Appropriateness for an addition to and rehabilitation of the Nunnemacher Estate / Wildenberg Hotel, an individually designated historic property, at 3774 S. 27th Street, for Rakesh Rahan. (FN [231653](#))

Recommendation:

Since the proposal restores and adaptively reuses the historic building, which the Historic Preservation Commission approved on June 3rd, aligns with the DIZ overlay standards, and is consistent with the Southeast Side Plan and South 27th Street Strategic Action Plan, staff recommends approval of the subject file conditioned on the applicant providing a final landscaping plan prior to the issuance of building permits and updating their plans to reflect DPW's comments with respect to the entrances of the historic building and accessible connection to the sidewalk along S. 27th Street.

DIZ Overlay Review Matrix:

Standard	27 th /Howard DIZ (standards here)	Applicant Analysis of Proposal
Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assembly hall is allowed but requires a public hearing before CPC. Restaurant use is allowed. Future tenants of the commercial building will need to comply with the DIZ use list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is the applicant's intention to comply with all required design standards.
Building Placement (compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position buildings to provide parking opportunities on the sides of the buildings and provide opportunities to create public open spaces, safer walkways and landscaping. Position buildings to allow unifying landscaped perimeter for the entire site and along Wilson Creek. Renovate parking configuration to allow linear perimeter landscaping. Orient the fronts of new buildings and/or building entrances to the primary streets. 70% of primary façade shall face 27th St. Max building setback is 70' from property line to building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing main building and addition are positioned to allow parking at three sides of the building. The buildings and site are designed to create safe and convenient pedestrian pathways with alignment of walkways leading to direct path entrances. Heavy landscaping and a 6' vision screen fence are proposed along Wilson Creek. The current site plan shows linear perimeter landscaping on all sides except where the existing building is positioned near the edge of the property. The existing building is setback approximately 80' including the front porch. Applicant will not be proposing to expand the building to the front of the existing building to meet the 70' maximum setback. The existing condition is assumed to be legal non-conforming. The new commercial building has an entrance facing S. 27th Street and will be set back 10' from the property line along S. 27th St.
Building Design (compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facades must be articulated to provide visual interest. Building materials must be of high quality Establish hierarchy between building elements by establishing a base, middle and top to the front elevation. Max allowable height for new buildings is 90'. Min allowable height for new buildings is 22'. Prominent architectural elements should be integrated to project above the front façade of a building averaging 22' in height. No one tenant/retailer shall exceed a building footprint of 100,000 sf. Front facades shall be oriented to primary street frontage (S. 27th St). If not possible, very high quality design and materials will be required. Unarticulated walls facing 27th St. are prohibited. Facades must be articulated with bays, windows, varying color and texture and/or other details that relate to the human scale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building materials proposed for the addition to the historic building shall match the original design of the building in as much as possible. The windows would be proposed as Marvin historic line which are offered in an aluminum clad exterior which the applicant proposes as an alternative to wood windows. The proposed new building entails two separate buildings with a plaza between them serving as the formal pathway to the potential additional parking available if a negotiated agreement with the adjacent property owner is secured, as well as providing an outdoor dining space with deep roof canopies on the facing elevations of the two divided buildings. It has been designed with high quality materials on all sides of the building (including a limestone masonry base and accents, and 4" exterior face brick), and has a

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All facades visible from the street must contain the most architecturally significant materials and fenestration. This includes decorative masonry and block, brick, cut stone, glass, architecturally finished metal cladding and architectural precast panels. EIFS cannot be used on the lower 1/3 of the building. • 75% of glazing on the first floor of commercial buildings must be transparent glass. • Screen mechanical system and trash areas from view of the right-of-way with fencing and/or landscaping. When using shrubs, minimum height must be at least the same height as the equipment/trash containers. 	<p>base-middle-top to establish hierarchy. There is no EIFS proposed for this development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No singular commercial tenant space exceeds a building footprint of 100,000 sf. • The front elevation of the new building has a primary façade facing S. 27th Street with entrance and 36% glazed (exceeding the LB1-required minimum 30% glazing) with all clear vision glass (exceeding the DIZ requirement that 75% of the required glass is clear). • All glass shown on the building elevations will be transparent. The new building meets the 22' height requirement set forth by the DIZ. The height of the portion of building along the west end along S. 27th St, wrapping into the site along the south side, has been extended up by 1' - 8" to add additional prominence along the street. • The 22' height allows for a parapet height that will screen all roof top units. The pitched roof of the addition to the new building screen all rooftop equipment located on the flat main area of the roof.
Access, Parking and Circulation (compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site must support multiple modes of transportation, including auto, transit, bicycle and pedestrians. • Provide safe and well-lit parking for bicycles within 40' of building entrances. • Enhance opportunities for landscaping within the parking lots and along the perimeter, especially along the backside adjacent to Wilson Creek. • Visually create smaller parking areas with landscape screening within and along parking lot edges. Surface parking lots should have curbed, landscaped islands. • Pedestrian walkways from parking areas to the building must be at least 5' wide and delineated in a different, durable material or color than the parking lot surface. • Provide safe pedestrian connections between public sidewalks, transit stops, and building entrances. • Visually screen delivery areas from view of residential areas with street-type trees spaced no greater than 50' on center. • Max # of parking stalls for new general retail uses is 5 spaces per 1000 gsf of floor area. Max may be exceeded if either the landscaping screening buffer area along S. 27th St. is increased by an additional 2' in width and contains a combination of trees and shrubs. Increased landscape area 	<p>HISTORIC BUILDING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A direct pedestrian path has been provided from the front of the main (historic) building to 27th Street. A ramp will be incorporated to traverse the grade due to the excavated front of the main building which allows for the recreation of a raised front porch. • The north entrance of the historic building is the ADA compliant entry. The building will have only one floor elevation on the interior main level. • Deliveries to the kitchen and banquet hall would park near the trash enclosure at the southeast corner of the banquette hall. Smaller delivery vehicles would park in a stall at the west side of the building and use the concrete sidewalk that leads directly to the kitchen. <p>NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An accessible pedestrian connection will be provided from the sidewalk along S. 27th Street to the walkway along the south end of the building. Additionally, there will be 2 pedestrian connections from this building to the historic building that will be 5 feet wide and 8 feet wide and paved in a stamped and colored concrete. • The trash enclosure for the new commercial building will be located on the east side of the second building

	<p>shall run the length of the surface parking area where the max parking ratio is exceeded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide shared parking where feasible. 	<p>and will be screened with maintenance-free composite wood fencing with double gates. Delivery vehicles will use the parking stalls near the trash enclosure and any larger delivery vehicle will park along the east sidewalk directly south of the trash enclosure.</p> <p>AUTOMOBILE PARKING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 parking spaces are proposed to be provided for both the historic and new commercial buildings. Applicant does not intend to mark parking spaces on the site for specific uses. The parking will be available for all users of the site including the historic building and new commercial building. The desire would be to have complementary uses where someone visiting the restaurant would also visit the commercial building and vice versa. <p>BICYCLE PARKING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The historic building will have two bicycle loops to accommodate four bikes located 32 feet south of the main entrance. The commercial buildings will each have one loop located in the middle of the front of the building, outside of the entries to Units B and E. • Curbed landscape islands are shown in all parking areas. The pedestrian paths crossing the drive lanes will be stamped, colored concrete rather than painted striping. <p>SCREENING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The east property line will be heavily screen with landscaping and fencing.
<p>Landscaping (goal is to be compliant; final plan and landscape easement with MMSD to be provided to DCD Staff prior to issuance of building permits)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape screening at the rear of the sites and delivery areas along Wilson Creek shall include street-type trees spaced 50' on center. Trees shall not be planted closer than 20' from light fixtures. • Landscaping along a street edge must be a minimum of 5' in width. This is required to be increased in width if max parking is exceeded (see above section). • Surface parking lots are required to have interior landscaped and curbed islands to visually divide the lot. Each landscaped island shall measure at least 150 sf in area and 3' in depth. • Each landscaped island shall include 1 deciduous tree (min. caliper of 2.5"); and 1 shrub (2' min height at time of planting) OR 1 native or ornamental grass (min 2 gallon size container); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape area along the street side is designed as 10 feet in width to the S. 27th St. property line. The sidewalk is further west from the property line. The minimum required width is 5 feet. • All islands have concrete curbs and comply with minimum widths set by the DIZ. • A larger scale drawing will be created as landscaping is further developed. Shrubs cannot be shown at this scale but sidewalks are set away from the buildings to allow for perimeter base plantings. • Detailed landscape design will be developed in accordance with the Garden District design standards for the area, as well as the DIZ and LB1 zoning standards. These design drawings will utilize larger scale views of each landscape area. A final landscape

	<p>and 10 groundcover plants (min 2" container) or perennials (min 4.5" container)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In parking areas located in the front setback, no parking space shall be located more than 70' from a landscaped area. • Use a combination of ornamental and native plant species for perimeter and interior landscaping. • Planting of trees in the tree border as long as they are not closer than 40' to an existing tree. Will require review by DPW. • Pervious pavement and other stormwater management techniques are encouraged within the site. • Along the Wilson Creek side of the site, provide a 10' deep landscaped buffer. This width may be reduced if a landscape easement is granted for a landscape buffer within the adjacent property owned by MMSD. • Landscaping at the rear lot line should consist of trees (min 2.5" caliper at time of planting) planted every 50' on center and shrubs (3' high at time of planting) in 2 staggered rows, planted 20' on center. 	<p>plan that includes an overview of how it complies with the applicable standards will be reviewed and approved by DCD Staff prior to the issuance of the building permit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve a 10 foot landscape buffer along Wilson Creek we will request the use of land east of the property line (owned by MMSD) to accommodate new landscaping. The design is not afforded the full 10 foot width so we are proposing centering the landscape directly on the property line in this area. • The deciduous trees shown on the east property line are 30 feet on center with the exception of the northern most tree, which is shown at 50 feet on center. We can space them at 40 feet on center if this is preferred. Shrubs would be staggered in multiple rows. • The plaza between the two new buildings could include public art. The area on each side of the porch of the existing building could potentially be used for public art as long as it does not detract from the art of the original building itself.
Site Improvements (compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spaces including outdoor cafes, courtyards or plazas are recommended to be located in visible areas such as along the street frontage or at entrances. • Provide site amenities including but not limited to public art in public spaces or landscaped areas. • Site amenities including benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, light fixtures, planters and so on should be coordinated throughout the parcel. • Exterior lighting should be used to enhance the architectural elements of buildings facing a street. • Light poles within parking areas may not exceed 30' in height. Lower height pedestrian lighting is encouraged along pedestrian walkways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An outdoor seating area will be placed adjacent to the restaurant at the northwest corner of the historic building. This area will be a raised concrete patio bordered by a brick base and brick piers capped in cut limestone. Between the brick piers will be ornamental iron rails to define the space for restaurant diners. • Additionally, there will be an outdoor plaza area between the two new commercial buildings. This plaza will span the 36 foot distance between the two buildings and measure approximately 40 feet from north to south. A deep, projecting roof canopy on each building will provide shade for outdoor seating in this area. • Building-mounted decorative light fixtures will illuminate the sidewalks of the buildings. The parking areas will have pole mounted lighting that will not exceed 30 feet in height in order to comply with the DIZ. Pole mounted light fixtures will be shielded and designed for downward projection of light. Café lighting may be used on the roof canopies of the plaza space.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trash area for the banquet hall and kitchen is designed to provide a sufficient capacity for the proposed use.
Signage (anticipated to be compliant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place signs so that they are visible below tree canopies. Freestanding signs at major entrances along S. 27th St. must be monument in type. If signs are below 14' in height, one additional monument sign might be allowed (requires discussion with DCD staff). All signs must be Type A. For each development, a tenant sign and directional signs are allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed freestanding sign will be a monument type sign. Base materials would match those used on the buildings. Signs will comply with the DIZ and LB1 code requirements. Signs will be reviewed and approved by DCD Staff prior to issuance of permits.