00001 1 2 3	CITY OF MILWAUKEE LICENSES COMMITTEE HEARING
4 5	In the Matter of: GRAND VIEW WINDOWS of WISCONSIN 3917 West Layton Avenue, Greenfield
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8	COMMITTEE MEMBERS
9	ALD. JAMES WITKOWIAK - Chairman
10	ALD. JAMES BOHL, JR Vice Chairman ALD. JOSEPH A. DUDZIK ALD. ROBERT PUENTE
11	ALD. WILLIE WADE
12	JARED ERDMANN - Aldermanic Aide 10th District POLICE DEPARTMENT by SERGEANT CHET ULICKEY
13	CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE by BRUCE SCHRIMPF
14	MICHAEL WHITCOMB, Attorney at Law, 633 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, appeared on
15	behalf of the Applicant.
16 17 18 19 20 21	Proceedings had and testimony given in the above-entitled matter before the LICENSE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE on the 25th day of April, 2006, before Terese M. Schiebenes of Milwaukee Reporters Associated, Inc.

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(All City Personnel previously sworn.)
3	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Jim Milner, Agent for
4	Grand View Windows of Wisconsin, Inc., Home
5	Improvement Contractor application for Grand View
6	Windows of Wisconsin, at 3917 West Layton Avenue,
7	Greenfield.
8	(Speakers were duly affirmed.)
9	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Name and address for
10	the record, please.
11	MR. MILNER: Jim Milner, 3917 West Layton
12	Avenue, Greenfield, Wisconsin, 53221.
13	LEGISLATIVE AIDE: Jared Erdmann,
14	representing Alderman Michael Murphy.
15	MR. WHITCOMB: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My
16	name is Michael Whitcomb. I'm an attorney
17	representing the applicant. Perhaps I can give an
18	opening statement, which would answer a great deal of
19	the questions that this record presents and also
20	perhaps answer the question of why Mr. Milner is here
21	again today after having been granted a home
22	improvement contractor's license last June.
23	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: You admit to receiving
24	the notice; is that correct?
25	MR. WHITCOMB: Yes, voluminous notice.

00003 1 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Voluminous, yes. 2 That's the word of the day. 3 MR. WHITCOMB: With copies of the 4 transcripts from three other hearings. I would note 5 that the police objections all relate to Mr. Milner's 6 son Joseph, and I won't address those specifically. 7 Joseph is not part of this new company or the 8 business. 9 In the records presented before you, a crack 10 investigative team, whoever it may be, noted that the 11 contract for the Euclid property was entered into with 12 Grand View Windows and Siding, Incorporated, which is 13 not licensed in the City of Milwaukee. However, Mr. 14 Jim Milner, as the contractor under New View Home 15 Improvement contractor, the license that was granted 16 last July, secured the permit for that particular 17 property, and that would on its face appear to run 18 counter to the representations that Mr. Jim Milner 19 made to this committee that he would not have 20 involvement or do business for his son's company, 21 Grand View Windows. 22 Might I explain that the Euclid property had 23 been before this committee a number of times on the 24 various license applications by Grand View. The

25 contract was entered into on October of '04, a

1 citation was issued to Grand View for that particular 2 contract because Grand View did not have a license, Grand View Windows and Siding. Grand View Windows and 3 4 Siding came before this committee about this time last 5 year. There were two hearings held, one was held 6 over, and then in April of last year, this committee 7 recommended to the Council and the Council agreed not 8 to grant Grand View Windows and Siding a home 9 improvement contractor's license in Milwaukee. 10 Therefore, Grand View Windows and Siding could not 11 complete the work on Euclid. And if you recall, this 12 Euclid property was involved in civil litigation that 13 was brought to this committee's attention about a year 14 ago.

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15 In order to make good the Grand View Siding 16 and Windows for the Euclid property, Mr. James Milner 17 secured the necessary permit to complete the work 18 because Grand View Windows and Siding could not do so 19 because it was not granted the license. That is the 20 reason why his new company, approved in June of last 21 year, applied for the permit for that particular 22 property because his son's company, of which he owns 23 10 percent, could not complete the work because it was 24 not granted a home improvement contractor's license. 25 The documents contained in the file, most

specifically -- well, the Euclid citation, that was 1 2 eventually dismissed without prejudice. The citation 3 that's noted that is pending, that was to his son 4 Joseph and not to Jim, who sits before me today. The 5 warning letter contained in the file of April 5th, 6 2006 directed to Grand View Windows, the police report 7 -- or the License Division's report indicates that Mr. 8 Jim Milner, who sits before me, was the agent for 9 Grand View Windows. That's not correct. That warning 10 letter from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, 11 Trade and Consumer Protection was directed towards 12 Grand View Windows, and Mr. Jim Milner, who sits 13 before me today, is not the agent in any respect for 14 that company. 15

Finally, the letter of April 3rd, 2006 16 indicating that Jim Milner is the agent for Grand View 17 Windows of Wisconsin, Inc., which indeed he is because 18 that's the new corporation he formed, which that 19 corporation is before you today, that his bond may 20 expire effective at the end of this month, that is not 21 for any reason other than non-payment of premium. He 22 did not want to make that premium payment right now only to ask to have it returned in the event this 23 24 committee and the Honorable Council do not see fit to 25 grant the license.

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00006 1 The real question before you today, which is 2 probably front and foremost, is why is Mr. Milner here 3 today asking for approval of a home improvement 4 contractor's license for Grand View of Wisconsin, 5 Inc.? It's very simple. His son's company, Grand 6 View Siding and Windows, Incorporated, cannot do 7 business in Milwaukee. However, Grand View Siding and 8 Windows does substantial business in southeastern 9 Wisconsin in the suburbs and the surrounding 10 municipalities, does extensive advertising with the 11 name Grand View, his son does, and they do receive 12 inquiries from potential customers from the City of 13 Milwaukee. 14 Grand View Siding and Windows has learned

15 that it cannot do business in the City of Milwaukee, 16 can neither solicit contracts nor can it do 17 contracting work because the City has seen fit at this 18 time not to grant them a home improvement contractor's 19 license. Therefore, it was recommended to them by my 20 office from a business perspective that those 21 entities, those potential customers that respond to 22 Grand View Siding and Windows who reside in the City 23 of Milwaukee, that those customers be referred to a 24 new company, run and owned and operated by dad, Jim 25 Milner, a new corporation, and that corporation will

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1 only conduct the business that is to be conducted in
2 the City of Milwaukee because at times it's sometimes
3 difficult to instruct workers, especially as regards
4 permits and licensing, what the requirements are for
5 Milwaukee versus other municipalities, and therefore,
6 those crews assigned to Grand View of Wisconsin, Inc.
7 would know the Milwaukee rules.

8 I recommended that the Grand View name be 9 used. That name has goodwill attached to it, it does 10 have a brand name, people do respond to it. However, 11 the company Grand View Windows and Siding, Inc. cannot 12 do business in Milwaukee, and so those customers that 13 would go to Grand View Windows and Siding, Inc. for 14 business in response to advertising in the good name 15 in the City of Milwaukee, those customers would be 16 referred to, among other companies, but most 17 particularly Grand View of Wisconsin, Inc., and that 18 business would be operated in conjunction with the 19 business that was licensed -- in conjunction meaning with the same employee staff -- with those laborers 20 21 who work for this other company that is licensed in 22 Milwaukee, but that company, New View, which was 23 licensed last June, that would also do the contracting 24 work outside of the City of Milwaukee, and once it's 25 up and operational, New View may not be doing a great

00008 1 deal of Milwaukee work other than perhaps 2 solicitation, because you need the sales license to 3 solicit work if you solicit in Milwaukee. But the 4 actual performance of the work, either by referral 5 from New View or by referral from Grand View Siding 6 and Windows, would be done by Grand View Wisconsin, 7 Inc. to take advantage of the good name of Grand View 8 Windows and also to avoid customer confusion by having 9 Grand View Siding and Windows not accept a potential 10 new customer and having to explain to them they can't 11 do work in Milwaukee, they would just refer the 12 business to Grand View of Wisconsin, Inc. 13 There is no business relationship, there is 14 no kickback, there is no interrelationship with the

15 companies, but they are father and son. And who 16 better to refer business that a son's company cannot 17 handle than a family member, and that would be the 18 father, the father who started them out in the 19 business to begin with. That's solely what is before 20 you today. There's no involvement of Joe Milner in 21 any way in this new enterprise, and the only 22 involvement of Grand View Siding and Windows would 23 have that that business that responds to their 24 advertising and their good name from the City of 25 Milwaukee would not be done by them, but those

00009 customers would be referred to Grand View of Wisconsin 1 2 to cut the deal if they could. And that's all because 3 -- it's not a statement of criticism -- that Grand 4 View Siding and Windows, Inc. cannot do business in 5 Milwaukee either by way of contracting or by way of 6 soliciting sales. 7 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you. Appreciate 8 that explanation and synopsis of the situation. Did 9 everyone understand that? Are there any questions of 10 members of the committee? Comments from the 11 Alderman's Office? 12 LEGISLATIVE AIDE: I'm appearing to 13 represent constituents, Tim and Allison Tower, who had 14 a contract with Grand View Windows in July of 2005. 15 The work was substandard. There were attempts to 16 repair it, but none were satisfactory, and they 17 complained of strong-arm tactics, including a threat 18 of lien and lawsuit, eventually compelling them to pay 19 the full amount, despite them feeling like the job was 20 not in any way completed, and this was all without a 21 contractor's license. I have copies of that for 22 members. I believe it's part of the record. I 23 submitted it a day or so ago. 24 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Dudzik moves 25 to make the copies part of the permanent record in

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1	this hearing, and hearing no objections, so ordered.
2	MR. WHITCOMB: That, again, relates to Grand
3	View Siding and Windows, the son's business.
4	ALDERMANIC AIDE: Mr. Tower refers to both
5	Joe and Jim Milner in the letter, as having had
6	dealings with both in the course of this.
7	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Thank you.
8	MR. WHITCOMB: May I ask a question?
9	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Go ahead.
10	MR. WHITCOMB: When was the contract entered
11	into?
12	ALDERMAN AIDE: July 14th of 2005.
13	MR. SCHRIMPF: Mr. Chairman, I have a
14	question.
15	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Mr. Schrimpf.
16	MR. SCHRIMPF: Thank you. Was a permit
17	pulled on that job?
18	LEGISLATIVE AIDE: That I don't know. I
19	think that they entrusted the contractor to take care
20	of that. I don't believe the people pulled their own
21	permit.
22	MR. WHITCOMB: It wasn't done under New
23	View. New View, after it was licensed last summer,
24	did pull the permit on the Euclid property.
25	MR. SCHRIMPF: Right. You've covered that.

00011 1 MR. WHITCOMB: But not in this one. 2 What's the address on that property? 3 ALDERMANIC AIDE: 2930 North 73rd. 4 MR. WHITCOMB: The property that Mr. Erdmann 5 mentioned, that was the property that is involved in 6 the citation mentioned in the police report for 2930 7 North 73rd Street, and I understand that that matter 8 is pending, but my client here today, Mr. Jim Milner, 9 had no involvement in that particular transaction and 10 at that time had no involvement in Grand View Windows. 11 LEGISLATIVE AIDE: That is not the claim of 12 our constituents. CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Any questions by 13 14 committee members? 15 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: Mr. Chairman. Sir, you 16 just stated that Mr. Jim Milner had no contact with 17 people at 2930 North 73rd Street, but in their letter 18 they clearly state that they had, in fact, talked to him 19 personally. 20 MR. WHITCOMB: Go ahead. 21 MR. MILNER: Yeah, I was there. My son 22 asked me to go out and look and see what the problem 23 was with the house. I had nothing to do with the 24 work, none of my crews worked on it. I went out and 25 looked at it, I talked to the people, went back and

00012 1 told my son try to correct it or send somebody out to 2 correct it. 3 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: You never told the 4 property owners that they were being too picky? 5 MR. MILNER: No, no, I didn't. In fact, I 6 wrote down exactly -- I don't have a copy of it -- but 7 I wrote down what their complaints were, and I went back told my son, yeah, that's got to be redone. 8 9 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: So you never had any 10 conversation with them whatsoever? 11 MR. MILNER: Yes, I did, sure. I walked 12 around with both of them. The woman was going 13 ballistics on me, but the gentleman was all right. We 14 walked around and looked at it, and I said you're 15 right. They were right. It had to be redone. As far 16 as I know, it was redone and settled. Not my crews, 17 I just went out there to try to resolve it, that's 18 all. 19 MR. SCHRIMPF: And then, Mr. Chairman, I 20 have one more question. People that you identify as 21 your constituents, did they initiate any action 22 against Grand View? 23 LEGISLATIVE AIDE: I don't believe so. As 24 far as I can tell from their communications, they 25 first contacted us last summer, so this is a refresher

00013 for me. But, as I understand, they eventually gave up 1 2 and paid it. They felt intimidated and did not want 3 to go through a legal action attempting to recover 4 their money, so they paid it. 5 MR. SCHRIMPF: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure that the police report has been read up to this point. 6 7 I don't recall if it was or not. 8 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Please. 9 SGT. ULICKEY: There is one incident on 10 here. On 8/17 of '05, Grand View Windows was cited in 11 the City of Milwaukee for home improvement 12 contractor's license. It's scheduled for Municipal 13 Court on May 1st of '06, and the complainant on that 14 citation -- the citation was issued to Grand View 15 Windows, Incorporated, not to James or Joseph Milner 16 -- the complainant on the citation is Mr. Tower, Tim 17 Tower, I believe. 18 MR. WHITCOMB: In the Milwaukee Municipal 19 Court Case Information Sheet on that particular 20 citation using the citation number contained in the 21 police report, it indicates that the violation 22 location was 2930 North 73rd, and that would be the 23 property about which you're speaking? 24 LEGISLATIVE AIDE: Yes. 25 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Any questions by

00014 members of the committee? 1 2 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: Mr. Chairman. 3 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Dudzik. 4 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: Sir, although the work 5 appears to have been done by the company that your son 6 owns --7 MR. MILNER: Yes. 8 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: -- do you know whether your 9 son ever pulled any permits for this location? 10 MR. MILNER: No. 11 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: You don't know or he 12 didn't? 13 MR. MILNER: I don't know. More than likely 14 he didn't if he wasn't licensed. DNS: The last permit pulled was an 15 16 electrical permit back in 2003. 17 MR. WHITCOMB: Do you know what the work was 18 for? 19 LEGISLATIVE AIDE: Windows. 20 MR. WHITCOMB: Permits are required for 21 windows? 22 MR. MILNER: I don't think so. 23 ALDERMAN DUDZIK: It depends upon the extent 24 of the --25 MR. MILNER: Replacement windows, no

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1	remodeling, no openings.
2	DNS: If the size of the opening is changed,
3	it would require a permit. Also, a permit is required
4	for siding in the City of Milwaukee.
5	MR. SCHRIMPF: But in this case, the opening
6	was not changed?
7	MR. MILNER: No.
8	DNS: No permits were pulled.
9	MR. SCHRIMPF: So you're saying to the
10	DNS so you're saying that might not necessarily be
11	a violation of the local ordinances?
12	DNS: Correct. But if siding was done at
13	this location, siding requires a permit.
14	MR. SCHRIMPF: I don't think there's any
15	evidence of that, is there?
16	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Mr. Milner, do you
17	recall being at that house?
18	MR. MILNER: Yes.
19	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: I'm just interested to
20	hear, what were some of the problems with
21	installation?
22	MR. MILNER: Nothing with the installation.
23	It was aluminum trim on the exterior of the windows.
24	Part of it was taken off, wasn't refinished. It had
25	to be redone. And I suggested doing a couple other

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1	ones, because whoever he had do it did it kind of
2	backwards. In other words, water flows down, it flows
3	in, and the contractor Joe had to do it, he had the
4	seams going up instead of down. I says that ain't
5	going to fly, it's going to get water in eventually,
6	and it's going to deteriorate, so I said change it.
7	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: All right. Any other
8	questions by members of the committee?
9	ALDERMAN BOHL: Mr. Chairman.
10	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Alderman Bohl.
11	ALDERMAN BOHL: In terms of even some of the
12	questions from previous hearings when Joe Milner was
13	before us, am I incorrect in my recollection or
14	assumption that Joe Milner had no business taking bids
15	and performing work in the City of Milwaukee?
16	MR. WHITCOMB: I read the transcripts this
17	afternoon. It was unclear. But the way the statute
18	or the ordinance is written, a contractor cannot
19	engage in business in Milwaukee, that is true. As far
20	as solicitation, the salesperson section of the
21	ordinance states a salesperson is one that solicits
22	for sales at anyplace within the City of Milwaukee.
23	So an unlicensed person in the City of Milwaukee may
2.4	solicit work from Milwaukee citizens as long as that
25	solicitation occurs outside the city without being
20	sofferencies occurs ourstue the erey wrenout being

00017 afoul of the ordinance. 1 ALDERMAN BOHL: That is what I recall, as 2 3 well, too. It would have required an individual 4 customer to go to where they are located in terms of 5 his son's business in Greenfield and to sign a 6 contract there at the business in Greenfield or 7 somewhere else outside of the City of Milwaukee proper. I just don't know. 8 9 MR. WHITCOMB: The work would have to be 10 done, however, by a contractor contracting business 11 licensed in the City, of which Grand View Windows and 12 Siding is not. 13 ALDERMAN BOHL: I'm certain -- I don't know 14 if Mr. Erdmann knows whether or not this particular 15 contract was signed outside of the City of Milwaukee 16 or at the individual's home. 17 LEGISLATIVE AIDE: I don't know. 18 MR. MILNER: I do know it was signed in the 19 Waukesha office. 20 ALDERMAN BOHL: The Waukesha office? 21 MR. MILNER: Yes, sir. 22 ALDERMAN BOHL: Thank you. MR. WHITCOMB: The dad may have been -- I'm 23 24 speculating now -- sent in to clean up the mess since 25 Grand View could not do the work itself since it

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1	didn't have a license.
2	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Any other questions by
3	members of the committee? Do you have anything to say
4	in closing?
5	MR. WHITCOMB: No, Mr. Chairman. This is
6	strictly a business decision upon my recommendation to
7	benefit from Grand View business in the City of
8	Milwaukee that cannot be performed by Grand View
9	Siding and Windows and have it be referred to dad's
10	company using the same name so as to avoid customer
11	confusion.
12	And as regards the comments from the
13	Alderman's office, I would remind you that under the
14	ordinance, no recommendation can be made concerning
15	this license based upon the quality of workmanship,
16	which appears to be the complaint of that particular
17	constituent, even though that was not a project that
18	Mr. Jim Milner was involved in other than trying to do
19	the subsequent inspection and clean it up. And I
20	apologize to the committee, I did not know until this
21	time that Mr. Milner had been out there in person. I
22	apologize for misspeaking in that regard. His company
23	did not have any contractual relationship with these
24	people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
25	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: That brings to mind

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1	one thing. I have a question for Mr. Milner. Do you
2	have any employees in common with your son's company?
3	MR. MILNER: No. You mean do I use his
4	subcontractors for any of my work? No, no.
5	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: There are no people
6	that you know of that work for both places?
7	MR. MILNER: I know them, but they don't
8	work for him and me, no. I've had employees that work
9	for me that have worked for him. I mean, after they
10	worked for me, I haven't used them or whatever, and he
11	needed somebody, he's used them, yes. Do I call him
12	up and use his employees or does use mine? No.
13	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: How many employees do
14	you have?
15	MR. MILNER: It varies. I run crews. It
16	depends on how busy on how many I need.
17	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Maximum, minimum?
18	MR. MILNER: I've had a maximum of five
19	crews.
20	MR. WHITCOMB: Five crews?
21	MR. MILNER: Five crews working for
22	different contractors that I work for.
23	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: What's a crew?
24	MR. MILNER: Two men, at least.
25	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: And your son, how many

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1	employees does he have?
2	MR. MILNER: I don't know offhand.
3	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: All right. Anything
4	further by members of the committee?
5	LEGISLATIVE AIDE: May I ask a question, Mr.
6	Chairman?
7	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Please, go ahead,
8	Jared.
9	LEGISLATIVE AIDE: If the son's business is
10	named Grand View and this business is named Grand
11	View, what's the difference? Are they two businesses
12	with the same name?
13	MR. MILNER: They're not the same name.
14	LEGISLATIVE AIDE: What's the difference?
15	MR. MILNER: He's Grand View Windows and
16	Siding, I'm Grand View Windows of Wisconsin, two
17	different corporations.
18	CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: They're separate legal
19	entities?
20	MR. MILNER: Yes.
21	MR. WHITCOMB: There's nothing that's
22	interlocking other than his 10 percent ownership of
23	Grand View Siding and Windows. And the reason I'm
24	using the name is to avoid customer confusion from
25	those people who respond to Grand View Siding and

00021 1 Windows' advertised and rely on their good reputation, 2 they go to Grand View Siding and Windows and 3 they're from Milwaukee, the property is in Milwaukee, 4 Grand View Siding and Windows cannot do the work 5 because they're not licensed in the city, my 6 recommendation is for that work, refer it, keep it in 7 the family, refer it to dad. 8 I recommended to dad to set up a separate 9 company that only does City of Milwaukee work, use the 10 Grand View name to avoid customer confusion, and 11 that's what they have done. 12 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: So we've avoided 13 customer confusion but succeeded in confusing the 14 committee. 15 ALDERMAN WADE: I think maybe our 16 recommendation might avoid some customer confusion. 17 CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: Okay. This matter is 18 in committee. 19 ALDERMAN BOHL: At this point, I would move 20 to deny the application. I believe that honestly 21 we've had too many issues and that there is ultimately 22 not to my satisfaction a sufficient amount of veracity 23 when it comes to what I believe is an intermingling of 24 perspective work between father and son, despite 25 testimony here. I think that rather than simplify the

00022 1 process for their own advertising, which I do believe 2 this would do, the son's and/or the father's, I think 3 that this ultimately would add a measure of greater 4 confusion to the general public here in the City of 5 Milwaukee, and I think that ultimately it would work 6 to circumvent this body's rightful denial of the 7 existing Grand View company.

8 I just don't believe that it is in the 9 benefit of would-be consumers here in the City of 10 Milwaukee to call one number and not know which 11 company functionally they're going to. If we ever 12 checked with inspectors what's the distinction that's 13 going to be drawn, Grand View Windows was here or 14 Grand View Windows and Siding was here, I don't know, 15 they just said their name was Grand View, I think that 16 it would add a great element in terms of confusion of 17 our ability to enforce, to inspect, and a great amount 18 of confusion to the general public, in addition to 19 what it does before this body.

CHAIRMAN WITKOWIAK: The motion by Alderman Bohl is to recommend denial based on items contained in the notice. Discussion on the motion? Are there any objections to the motion? Hearing none, so ordered.

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3
   MILWAUKEE COUNTY )
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5
                  I, TERESE M. SCHIEBENES, of Milwaukee
6
        Reporters Associated, Inc., 5120 West Blue Mound Road,
        Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208, certify that the
7
        foregoing proceedings is a full and complete
8
9
        transcript of my stenographic notes taken in the
10
        foregoing proceedings.
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12
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                               TERESE M. SCHIEBENES
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                               Certified Shorthand Reporter
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   Dated this day of
                                       , 2006.
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