

January 31, 2019

City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission  
841 N. Broadway, Room B-1 Milwaukee, WI 53202

Re: Support For Marcus Center to Receive Historic Designation by the City Dear  
Commissioners:

I am writing to support Historic Designation of the Marcus Center for the Performing  
Arts.

As a world-traveled architect new to Milwaukee, I appreciate the city's historic  
architecture and landscape architecture. In particular, I am very taken with Dan Kiley's  
landscape architecture at the Marcus Center. This landscape is a jewel of Milwaukee that  
should be preserved and appropriately maintained and enhanced.

I worked for many years with architect Louis Kahn, one of Kiley's collaborators. I find  
Kiley's treed courtyard and the plaza that faces west and steps down toward the  
Milwaukee River intriguingly similar to Mr. Kahn's courtyard at the Salk Institute  
overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

One reason to preserve Kiley's grove of horse chestnut trees is to retain the intimacy and  
welcoming shade it provides, which balances more open and sunlit areas. Most  
importantly, this grove offers an opportunity to experience and appreciate the artistic  
effort of one of the most significant and beloved landscape architects of the 20th century.  
The art of Dan Kiley has been called the "poetry of space." Maintaining this campus'  
distinctive character will complement all the other arts available at Milwaukee's public  
cultural center.

Proposed renovations to the Marcus Center landscape address the understandable desire  
to increase revenue but do not seem to consider other viable alternatives and important  
values. I believe that a workable solution can be achieved that addresses all the goals  
established by the Marcus Center as well as other worthy goals. This public space should  
also be designed as part of a larger civic space. At its inception, this center was  
envisioned in relationship to the newly created Pere Marquette and Red Arrow parks and  
other nearby assets, including the Milwaukee River.

Respectfully submitted,

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## **Background**

## **Professional Experience**

### **W. Neil Thompson, Architect, BA, MA.**

University of California Berkeley '63

University of Pennsylvania '64

University of Oregon, Taught 5th Year Design Studio

Catholic University, Washington DC, 5<sup>th</sup> Year Design

### **Louis I. Kahn, Architect, Fellow FAIA, 1963 - 1974**

Bryn Mawr College, PA - Women's Dormitories American Wind Symphony Floating Arts  
Center Models Olivetti Underwood Manufacturing Plant, Pittsburg PA. Cultural Center ;and  
Concert Hall Fort Wayne Indiana  
Capital of Dacca East Pakistan (now Capital of Bangladeshi) Architect's Onsite Representative,  
1966-1969  
Kimbell Museum – Resident Architect, 1970  
School of Business Management, Ahmedabad, India  
The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, California

### **United States Information Agency (USIA), Agency Architect 1971 - 1973**

Oversaw South and Central America, Africa, Southeast Asia and Pacific Regions, Design and  
Review of Existing and Proposed new facilities of Libraries, Information and Cultural Centers.  
USIA was an independent federal agency and is now under the domain of the State Department.

### **McCue, Boon and Tomsick, Architects and Engineers, 1974 - 1976**

Opened the Washington DC Office, Director of Business Development in Washington DC, Iran  
and Saudi Arabia

### **U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Architect, 1976 – 2002**

Architect, Environmental Impact Statements for all Nuclear Power Plant Control Room Design  
Reviews after the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant Accident in Pennsylvania.  
Environmental Impact Statements for New Construction, e.g., 1. Green County, NY., and 2.

Montague, Massachusetts

**WNT Consulting, Architecture and Innovative Technology Design 2002 – Present**

**Designed 10 Advanced Research Visualization Centers**

USNRC : 2 for US Nuclear Regulatory Commission

- 1 for US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Rockville, Maryland
- 1 for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, California

UIUC: 5 for University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

- 1 for ACCESS Center, Ballston, Virginia
- 1 for the University of Illinois Center
- 1 for Technology Education and Commercialization Center (TRECC), DuPage Airport, West Chicago, Illinois
- 1 for High Performance Visualization
- 1 for Feasibly Study for CICD computer Technology Center, Center for Higher Learning (CHL), NASA, John C. Stennis Space Center, Gulfport Mississippi area and center at the Army Research Laboratory, Adelphi, MD

Purdue: 1 for Purdue University Envision Center for Data Perceptualization, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana.

- HPTI: 2 for High Performance Technology Inc..  
1 Arlington Virginia; and
- 1 Reston Virginia

**Unique Caseworks** Refrigeration design/MFG Baskin Robbins Units, Seoul Korea; received patents for designs **Sweet Desires** Design and implemented upscale sweet shop, Pasadena, California

**Site Development** of 80 acres and residential compound on Lake Roosevelt, Kettle Falls, Washington; W. Neil Thompson and John Neil Thot Thompson