



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

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September 22, 2016

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

Dear Committee Members:

File No. 160466 relates to a Minor Modification to the Detailed Planned Development known as Milwaukee Metro Center, Phase 1 for additional signage at 11330 West Metro Auto Mall, located on the north side of West Metro Auto Mall, east of U.S. Highway 41 and 45, in the 5th Aldermanic District.

This Minor Modification was requested by the Russ Darrow Group, and affects the former Smart Car building on the north portion of the subject site and the east façade of the former Hummer building on the south side of the building. When the Smart Car building was constructed, it included 5-story architectural display element on the north side of the building that had display bays on two sides of the tower (one on each level). The bays displayed cars within them, and were glazed with a clear aluminum curtainwall window system. Now that the Darrow Group has acquired this site for their Mazda dealership, which is within the former Hummer building, they would like to utilize this architectural display element as signage to advertise the models of vehicles offered at the dealership. This will improve the aesthetic of the tower, which is otherwise blank. It will also create more visibility for the dealership, which is otherwise not very visible from the highway. The bays, each of which has two display boxes that are approximately 18' by 10', or 180 square feet each (total of 360 sq ft per level), are not large enough to house actual vehicles, so signage is proposed to be affixed behind the curtain wall glazing system to preserve the intent of the display bays. The top window bay will display the dealership name, and the lower three bays will display vehicle models. The ground floor bay may advertise deals in addition to the dealership name and vehicle models. The backgrounds of the graphics will be designed so as to give the appearance that the content of the sign is within a display window. Additionally, a 250 sq ft sign advertising directions on how to access the dealership will be on the north side of the tower element. The background of the sign will be black to match the color of the building. The tower will be lit internally, and there will also be light shining onto the signage from the ground. The total square footage of building wall signage on this tower element will be approximately 2050 square feet. An approximately 60 sq ft Type A sign will be placed on the east elevation of the Mazda dealership (former Hummer) building on the south end of the site.

Since the proposed minor modification to the DPD allows the tower element of the former Smart Car building to be reused with high quality signage that keeps in the spirit of the display windows as it was originally used, the City Plan Commission at its regular meeting on September 19, 2016 recommended approval of the subject file.

Sincerely,

Rocky Marcoux
Executive Secretary
City Plan Commission of Milwaukee

cc: Ald. Bohl

