



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. Coggs
6th Ald. District

CITY PLAN COMMISSION ZONING REPORT

Ordinance File No. [211898](#)

Location: 1872 and 1872-adj North Commerce Street

**Applicant/
Owner:** Chris Socha, The Kubala Washatko Architects (applicant) / Russ Klisch, Lakefront Brewery (owner)

**Current
Zoning:** Redevelopment District (RED), Riverwalk Site Plan Review Overlay Zone (SPROZ)

**Proposed
Zoning:** Site and exterior building changes within the Riverwalk Site Plan Review Overlay Zone (SPROZ)

Proposal: This file refers to building modifications on the river-facing facade and improvements to the seasonal outdoor beer garden area for Lakefront Brewery located at 1872 and 1872-adj North Commerce Street, relative to the Riverwalk Site Plan Review Overlay Zone (SPROZ) established by Section 295-91.0021 of the former Milwaukee Code, in the 6th Aldermanic District.

More specifically, this proposal will allow for the replacement of the existing river-facing exterior stair and balcony. The existing metal stair, corrugated metal enclosure, storage space below, and the concrete landing are to be removed and replaced with a new, exposed stair. To maintain code-compliance for the new stair, some existing windows within the brewery's south wall will need to be removed and infilled with brick. The new stair will have painted steel-framing and painted steel-plate and wire-mesh guard-rails. It will also include a balcony overlook at the beerhall level which will be covered by a new corrugated metal awning. Two single-user restrooms and storage space will also be included beneath the stair. The western restroom will have a tray-system green roof, and both restrooms and storage space below the stair will be clad in Douglas fir wood siding. The Design Review Team (DRT) requested that some sort of sign or artistic element is added to the river-facing walls of the restrooms in order to provide visual interest to these otherwise blank spaces. The applicant has agreed, and

noted on Sheet A3.0 (elevations) that these were areas for potential art opportunities, to be thought through as they work through the working drawings.

Additionally, this project will include improvements to the seasonal outdoor beer garden area beneath the Holton Street Bridge. The design includes a new covered bar-rail structure along the riverwalk, which will be constructed of painted steel framing, with painted metal planters along the Riverwalk-facing edge of the beer garden space. The bar-rail structure will be detailed in such a way as to be removable if needed for bridge maintenance. The beer garden area will have a new concrete-paver hardscape along with outdoor furniture and a seasonal bar structure.

Seating is restricted along the planting wall/outer edge of the beer garden structure in order to ensure that a minimum 8 foot wide clear path is maintained at all times. The seating along the river's edge will remain and, per the applicant, will stay outside of the 8 foot clear path.

Adjacent Land Use:

The subject site is bordered to the southeast by the Milwaukee River and is within the Redevelopment District (RED) zoning designation. Adjacent sites to the northeast, northwest, and southwest are also within the Redevelopment District (RED). Sites directly across the river are zoned as Mixed Activity (C9G).

Consistency with Area Plan:

The project is within the boundaries of the Northeast Area Plan, adopted by the Common Council in 2009. The plan identifies this section of the Milwaukee River as the "Downtown Riverwalk District", an area that embraces the urban conditions found in this section of the Milwaukee River Corridor and prioritizes pedestrian amenities and connections. The proposed improvements are consistent with the recommendations of the Northeast Area Plan.

Previous City Plan Action:

6/1998 – Common Council adopted a resolution to vacate the City right-of-way for North Holton Street between North Commerce Street and the Milwaukee River, to declare surplus and authorize conveyance of the land to the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee, and to approve a lease for the property between the Redevelopment Authority and Lakefront Brewery, Inc., in the 6th Aldermanic District. **(FN 980086)**

9/29/2014 – Resolution approving the Riverwalk and building design for a brewery and office facility for Lakefront Brewery, located at 1890 North Commerce Street, relative to a Site Plan Review Overlay District (SPROD) established by Section 295-91.0021 of the former Milwaukee Code, in the 6th Aldermanic District. *This resolution allows for a 25,000 sq. ft. expansion to the existing brewery for production, packaging, storage, office, and event spaces.* **(FN 140805)**

4/13/2015 – City Plan Commission approved a resolution to improve the existing Riverwalk for Lakefront Brewery, located at 1872 North Commerce Street, relative to a Site Plan Review Overlay District (SPROD) established by Section 295-

91.0021 of the former Milwaukee Code, in the 6th Aldermanic District. *Improvements include the addition of a new guardrail bar top system and a canopy for outdoor dining. (FN 141864)*

1/27/2020 – Resolution approving the replacement of an existing tent and other improvements to the existing Riverwalk for Lakefront Brewery, located at 1872-adj. North Commerce Street, relative to a Site Plan Review Overlay Zone (SPROZ) established by Section 295-91.0021 of the former Milwaukee Code, in the 6th Aldermanic District. *The proposal for replacement was due to unrepairable wear on the existing tent, and allowed for the construction of a new tent underneath the Holton Street bridge. (FN 191525)*

**Previous Common
Council Action:**

7/7/1998 – Common Council adopted a resolution to vacate the City right-of-way for North Holton Street between North Commerce Street and the Milwaukee River, to declare surplus and authorize conveyance of the land to the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee, and to approve a lease for the property between the Redevelopment Authority and Lakefront Brewery, Inc., in the 6th Aldermanic District. **(FN 980086)**

Recommendation:

Since the proposed building alterations and improvements to the seasonal beer garden are consistent with the goals of the Riverwalk overlay and will further activate this zone, staff recommends that the City Plan Commission approves the subject file.