



# INTRODUCTION

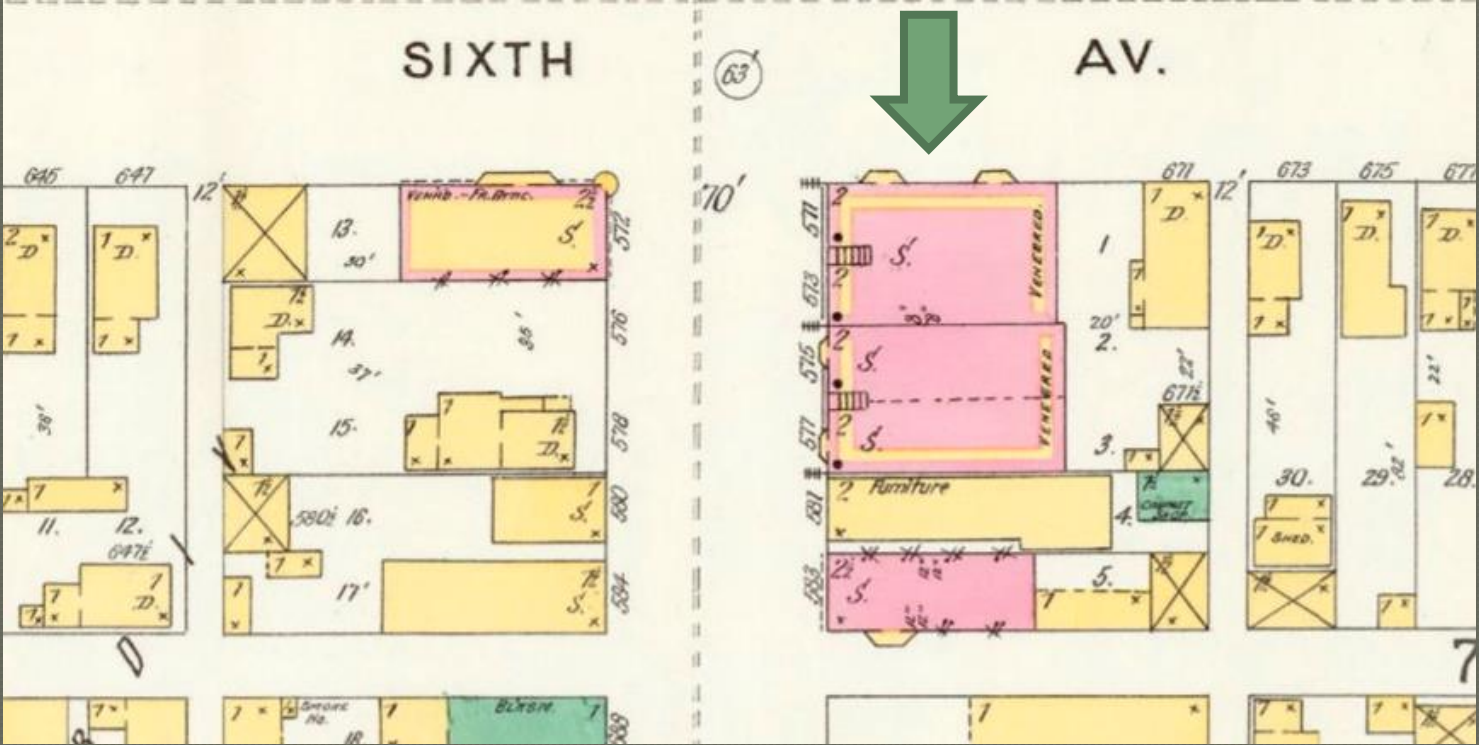
## Ben Rosenberg's The Grand

# Background History

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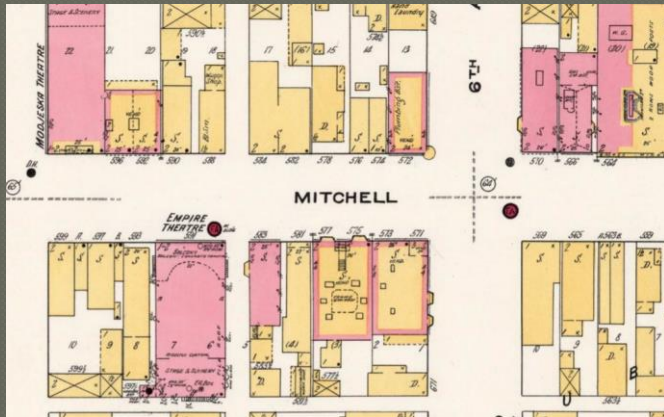
- One of our first historic districts
- Established 1986
- Expanded 2012
- Roughly 90 buildings

Stephen Stemper and Henry Rademacher Buildings constructed 1891, cost \$13,00 total store & dwelling. Barney (Bernard) Kolpacki architect



Ben Rosenberg leased property in 1905 and made first modification in 1907 using the architect Jacob Jacobi

Rosenberg used the same side-by-side buildings built in 1891 and soon joined the two buildings into one store. More additions and modifications followed.



Rosenberg, and later, his son, were loyal to his customers and stayed at this location until closing in 1980.



1926 image showing corner tower and tower toward the west end of the Mitchell St. façade. These were inherited from the original buildings.

A portion of the 1891 façade along S. 11<sup>th</sup> Street still exists.



1/10/2023

Established 27 Years Ago



—By a Wisconsin News Staff Photographer.

#### WOMEN'S WEAR CHAMPION

When The Grand was established, 27 years ago, it was the first store established to deal exclusively in women's wear in the city of Milwaukee. The Grand has long been a Mitchell street

institution and its proprietors have been leaders in promoting the street as the busiest on Milwaukee's South Side.

The Grand in  
1932

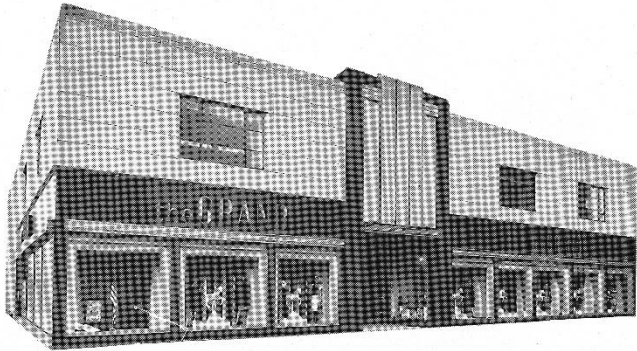
The projecting  
bays on the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
story were  
removed in  
1929. Towers  
have been  
removed as well



1929



# 41 Years of Fashion Leadership



1905  
1946

... that's the story of the Grand ... a beautiful store  
bringing beautiful clothes to the women of Milwaukee since 1905  
... it's an experience to visit the Grand ... pleasant surroundings  
in which to shop ... luxurious selections of merchandise ...  
courteous, helpful service at all times ... you're invited to visit  
THE GRAND TODAY.

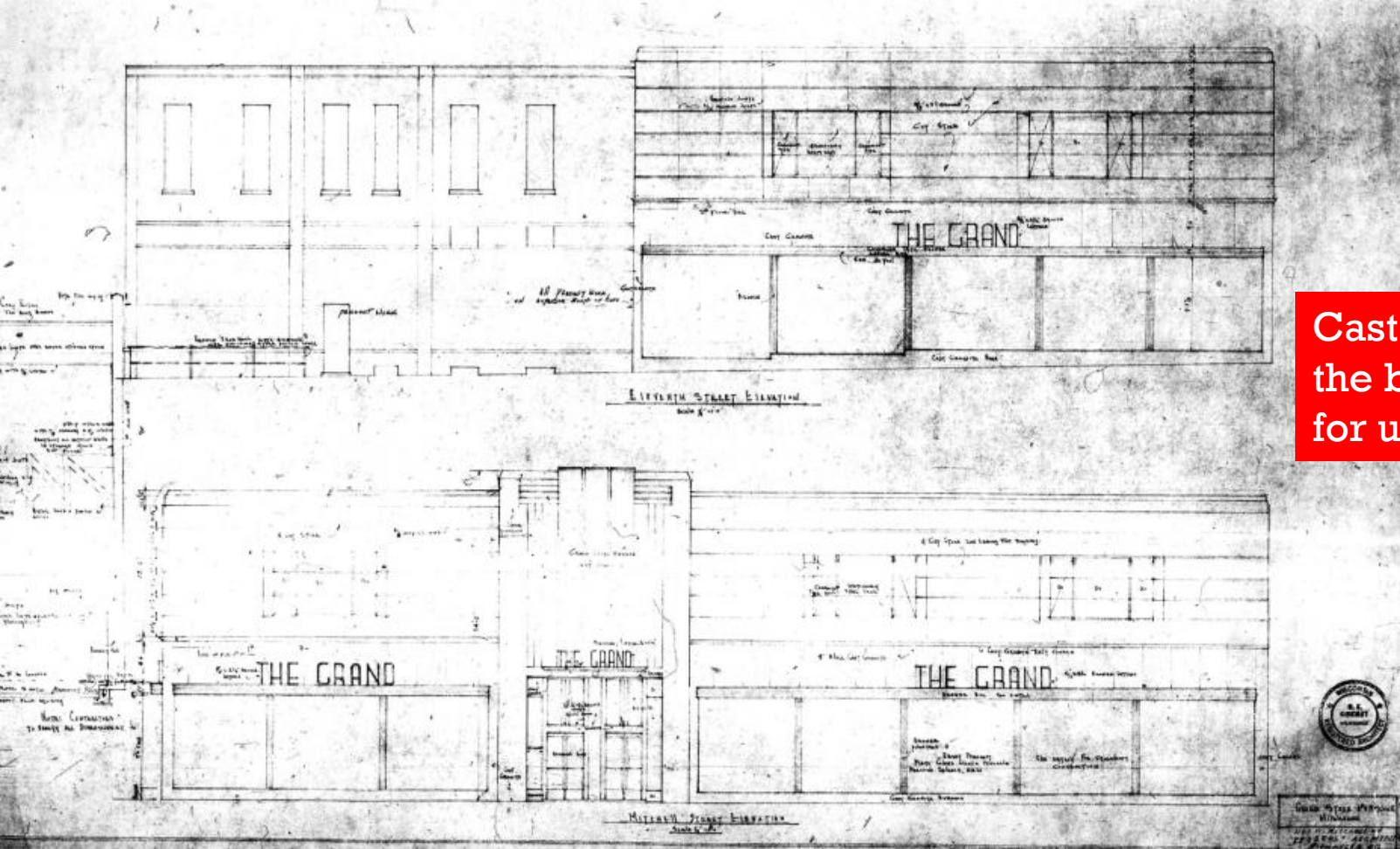
store hours:  
monday and friday ... 12 noon till 9:00 p. m.  
tuesday, wednesday, thursday, saturday ...  
9:30 a. m. till 6:00 p. m.

**the GRAND**  
*mitchell at south 4th*

"WE, THE MILWAUKEE POLES" — 1846 - 1946

The Grand as we know it today.

Having an exclusive ladies wear business required the latest look on the exterior. The façade was remodeled into this appearance in 1937. R.E. Oberst was the architect



Cast Granite for the base. Stone for upper story



1/10/2023



2009 Google Photo

1/10/2023

## Facts about The Grand

Was established by Benjamin Rosenberg, a Russian Jewish immigrant, in 1905

Was the first and oldest exclusive ladies wear store in Milwaukee and regionally

Five branch locations opened between 1952 and 1972

This building remained his flagship location until closing in 1980

Walgreen's Pharmacy and Holzman Furs were later occupants in the building

# CRITERIA FOR DEMOLITION

## 1. CONDITION

The current façade was installed in 1937 to update the original 1891 building. The engineers report does not state the building is unsafe. The interior floor plates differ as a result of remodels and additions. The building does not accommodate the plans of the developer and it was purchased with the intent of demolition. No raze orders have been issued by the city. Self-created hardship is not a reason to grant demolition. The fact that the building was under one ownership for such a long period of time resulted in a building that still has its architectural integrity.

**This criterion is not met.**

## 2. IMPORTANCE

There are a handful of buildings along Historic Mitchell Street that are significant beyond their presence in a historic district. The Grand is one of them.

The building was the flagship of an exclusive ready to wear women's store that was known not just to South Siders but to the Milwaukee metro area. It later branched out to 5 other locations but retained this flagship location. The demolition of this building would erase the history of a unique business story of prominent Jewish immigrant merchant family who started on Mitchell Street and expanded to citywide and regional fame. It is architecturally important as a rare example of the Deco/Moderne style in the City.

**This criterion is not met.**





1/10/2023

# Wauwatosa Welcomes "THE GRAND"



Executive Offices

*The Grand*

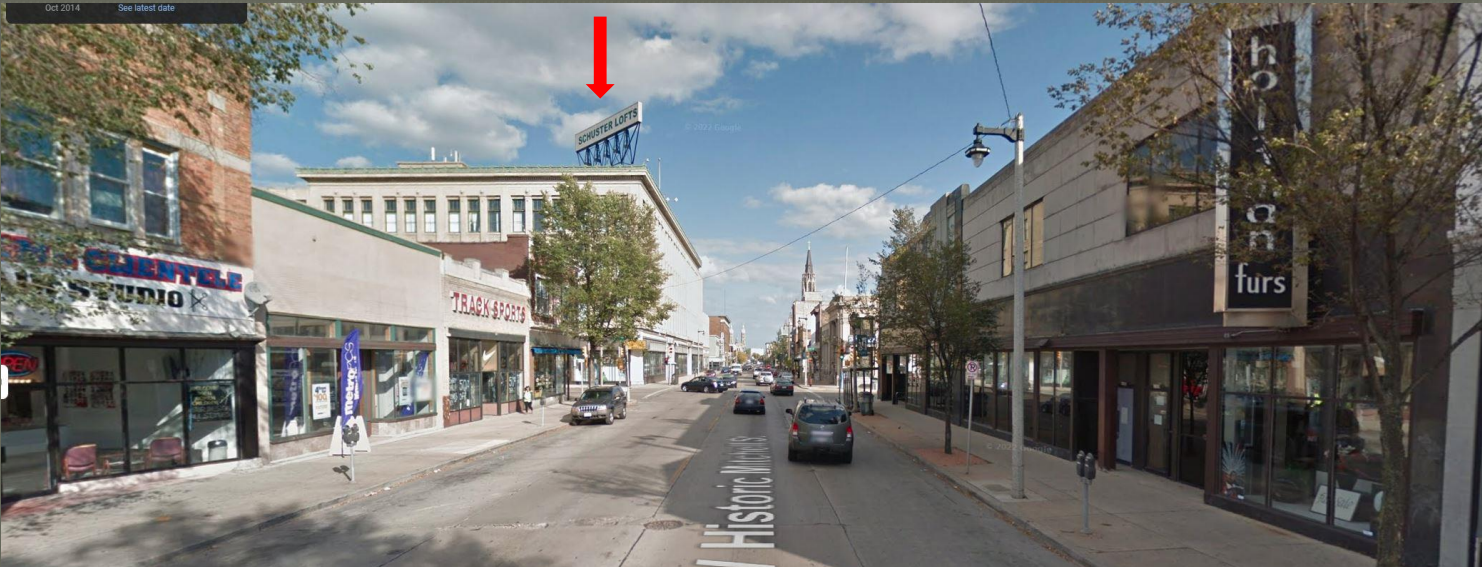
MILWAUKEE

- Mitchell Street
- Brookfield Square
- Capitol Court
- Southridge
- Wauwatosa
- Whitefish Bay

November 9, 1972

### 3. LOCATION

The current building fits into the streetscape of mostly two and a few three story buildings. It does not overwhelm adjacent buildings.



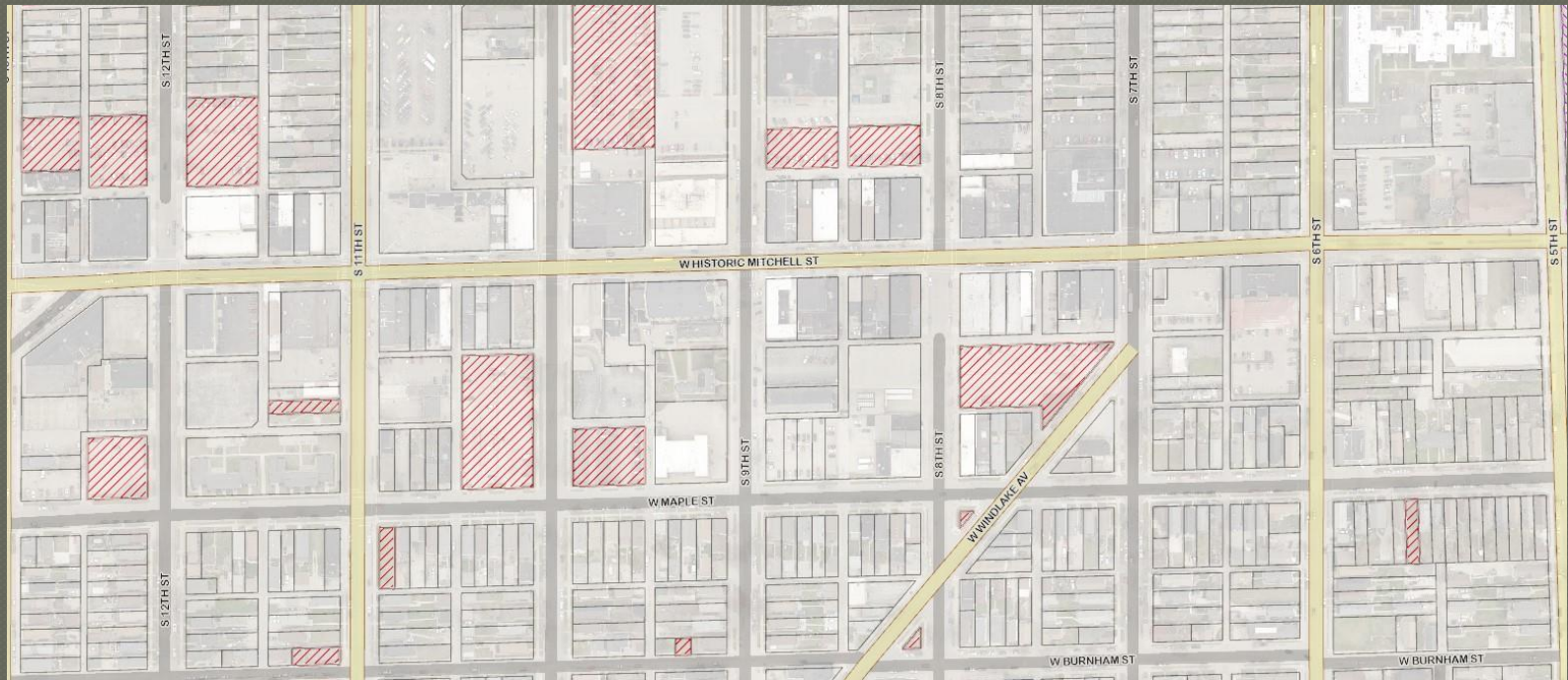
**A five story building would reach to about the top of the Schuster Lofts rooftop sign**

# Location



Parcels near Mitchell Street where surface parking is the sole use.

# Location



City-owned surface parking in vicinity

## 4. POTENTIAL FOR RESTORATION

- Good Candidate for restoration/rehabilitation.
- Occupied after The Grand closed with little degradation from 1984-2011. (Walgreen's, Holzman Furs).
- Historic Tax Credits available for restoration/rehabilitation because Mitchell Street is listed in the National Register.
- The report from Jendusa Design and Engineering does not say that NO rehabilitation can take place only that it doesn't meet the goals of the developer.
- A Certificate of Appropriateness cannot be issued if the hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner is self-created or the result of demolition by neglect.

**The building can be restored/rehabilitated.**

# Preservation Tax Credits

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- ◉ Kunzelman-Esser, 710
- ◉ Schuster's, 1020-30
- ◉ Ritger Building, 828
- ◉ Mitchell Building, 601
- ◉ Juneau Theater, 609
- ◉ Las Palmas, 600



## 5. REPLACEMENT

The current building was designed in the Art Deco/Moderne style and is the only such building on Historic Mitchell Street. The new proposed building does not meet the same aesthetic function as the original. Replacement of buildings in a historic district begins the unraveling of the district. The introduction of increasingly large buildings into a relatively low scale streetscape interrupts the visual cohesiveness that was part of the importance in creating the historic district.



6. WHETHER RETENTION OF THE STRUCTURE WOULD PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE CITY AND STATE BY ENCOURAGING THE STUDY OF AMERICAN HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN, OR BY DEVELOPING AND UNDERSTANDING OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND

The story of The Grand illuminates the history of a successful immigrant, a business that was the first in Milwaukee to cater exclusively to women, a business that expanded into suburban locations yet retained its flagship store. The story of The Grand might otherwise not be known if the building were gone.

# Ordinance Criteria for Demo

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- h-1. Whether the structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the city.
- h-2. Whether the structure, although not itself an individually-designed historic structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the district as a whole and should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the city.
- h-3. Whether demolition of the structure on a historic site or within a historic district would be contrary to the purpose and intent of this section and to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable district as duly adopted by the common council.
- h-4. Whether the structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture or material that it could not be reproduced without great difficulty or expense.
- h-5. Whether retention of the structure would promote the general welfare of the people of the city and state by encouraging the study of American history, architecture and design, or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
- h-6. Whether the structure is in such a deteriorated condition that it is not structurally or economically feasible to preserve, restore or use it, provided that any hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner which is self-created or a result of demolition by neglect cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness.

# Appeal Criteria

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The council may...reverse or modify the decision of the commission if, after balancing the interest of the public in preserving the subject property and the interest of the owner in using it for his or her own purposes, the council finds that, owing to special conditions concerning to the specific piece of property, failure to grant the certificate of appropriateness will preclude any and all reasonable use of the property or will cause unreasonable economic hardship for the owner, provided that any self-created hardship or failure to maintain the property in good repair shall not be a basis for reversal or modification of the commission's decision.

## Staff Recommendation:

### Deny Demolition

This particular building tells the story of immigrant success in America, a story still vital and living in the Mitchell Street community today. Are Historic Districts important?

Collectively they tell the history of a neighborhood, industrial achievements or commercial districts. Once that continuity and architectural integrity is broken, the historic district becomes vulnerable to more losses.

If approving, require that the project be shovel ready before approval is issued. The Gugler Lithographic Building was an “urgent” demolition for development in 2004. The site is still vacant. DCD is willing and able to review financing.