

Sept. 10, 2012

Alderman James Bohl Jr. - 5th District  
City of Milwaukee Common Council  
City Hall, Room 205, 200 E. Wells St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Alderman Bohl:

Historic preservation provides great economic and cultural value to the City of Milwaukee and positively impacts economic development in the City by creating jobs, attracting tourists, increasing property values and enhancing the City's ability to attract new business and residents.


Overall, the City of Milwaukee's historic preservation ordinance has been highly effective in preserving the City's architectural heritage while simultaneously encouraging development. However, it is in need of updating to assure that it properly and effectively protects the value, integrity, and economic benefits of historic preservation.

Following months of thoughtful discussions and a thorough review and analysis of suggested modifications, a coalition of preservationists, historians and business and community leaders have come together to reach a consensus on proposed elements of a revised ordinance. These elements are:

- Preventing demolition by neglect;
- Improving the timeline for certificates of approvals;
- Prohibiting new installation of a natural gas or electric power meter on a designated structure or on a structure in a historic district on a street facing elevation;
- Requiring the HPC to consider design review recommendations by DCD;
- Reducing the time the HPC may defer decision on a demolition permit from one year to eight months;
- Allowing the Common Council to act upon an item if the HPC does not act on a timely basis;
- Requiring proof of financing of a proposed development before issuance of a permit to demolish an historic structure; and
- Providing a procedure to remove an historic designation where appropriate.

I ask that you and your colleagues approve the inclusion of these elements in the revised ordinance to improve upon our City's history of preserving our rich architectural heritage and encouraging sustainable economic development.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Pionke (former HPC Officer)

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