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July 9, 2013

Via Email: jowcza@milwaukee.gov

Jim Owczarski, Clerk
City Hall of Milwaukee
200 E. Wells St., Room 205
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Via Email: mjarosz@uwm.edu

Matt Jarosz, Chair
Historic Preservation Commission
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Re: City of Milwaukee Plaque Program

Dear Matt & Jim:

Since our meeting, I have had an opportunity to think more about the potential for a plaque program. I thought it might be best if I put my thoughts in writing and perhaps the Commission can use this as a foundation for whatever proposal we ultimately craft and ask the Common Council to implement. As we discussed a potential plaque program, I see it really with three prongs:

1. Plaques would be made available to all individual properties that are designated by the City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission. To me, it only seems logical that a plaque program carried out by our Commission recognize those properties that we have designated as historic.
2. We need to generate a plan to allow properties that are not designated as historic by our commission to obtain a plaque through this program. In our brainstorming, one of the options appeared to make it a competitive

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process where nominations were received and 10 or fewer plaques were awarded in any given year. This would appear to be a program we could administer with our existing staff and would accomplish the goals expressed to us by Alderman Terry Witkowski to recognize properties with owners who are, for whatever reason, not interested in getting a full designation from the commission. It seems, however, that if we were to make it a competition we could not ask the recipients to pay for the plaques and we would need to find a budget for them.

3. An alternative to the competition for the format laid out in paragraph 2 would be to allow any property owner to apply for a plaque, to somehow recognize a property for its historic merits. If we did this without limiting the number of applicants or recipients, we may have to look to an outside organization, such that a Milwaukee County Historical Society, to administer the program. This would also require us to determine the criteria for receiving such a plaque. This is an area that we would have to think about in great detail as I would not expect staff to provide us with the sort of detailed reports we get for property owners that want full designation. Instead, either an outside organization or the property owner would need to provide us with the research evidencing that the property should receive designation. In this case, however, a property owner could be required to pay for the plaque costs. If we had staff time involved, we could also conceivably charge an application fee in addition to the costs of the plaque to offset staff expenses, with Common Council approval.
4. The final component would be interpretive signs for our existing historic districts. These signs could be put at the major entry points for our districts. These signs would appear to fulfill the Common Councils' desire to increase the education of our community about the Historic nature of the architecture, neighborhoods and districts in our city. The cost of these plaques would clearly be the responsibility of the City.
5. Given that some of the proposals above would incur costs on the part of the City, I think we have an obligation to think about how those costs would be funded. I have discussed with staff and Alderman Baumann the potential for soliciting sponsorships for the Cream of the Cream City Awards. It seems to me that we would have the ability to solicit sponsorships in the neighborhood of \$3,000 to \$5,000 per year in order to conduct the Cream of the Cream City awards. It is my understanding that we have spent approximately \$1,000.00 in outside costs to put on the

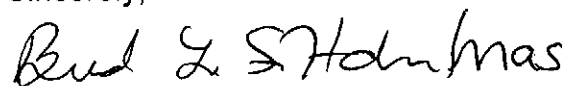
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awards program. If we were able to solicit sponsorships in excess of the costs of the event, it would seem appropriate to specifically designate those revenues for covering the costs of the plaque program.

Again, I offer these ideas purely as a jumping off point for further discussion and hopefully as a foundation for us to develop a plaque program that will continue the education of Milwaukee citizens about its history and will meet with the approval of the Common Council.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad L. F. Hoeschen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brad L. F. Hoeschen

BLFH/mas