



February 26, 2024

To: City of Madison Plan Commission

Re: Applicant Response to Planning Div. Staff Report/CNI Letter/MTHP Letter – Demolition Permit

Dear Commissioners,

The Applicant has reviewed the Planning Staff Report, the CNI Letter, and MTHP Letter, each dated February 21, 2024, in connection with its application to demolish five single-story buildings located at 117 W. Mifflin, 119 W. Mifflin, 121 W. Millin, 123 W. Mifflin, and 125 W. Mifflin, and would like to address certain concerns and issues raised therein.

### Planning Division Staff Report

1. Regarding Standard 4, Applicant reiterates the conclusion of the Wisconsin Historical Society, that the buildings are not designated under the City of Madison's historic preservation ordinance, nor are they a part of any listed historic district.
2. Regarding Standard 6 of the Demolition Permit Standards, prior to submission, Applicant met with DAT to solicit input. Applicant and WHS also met with MFD multiple times to study and address the needs of the fire service at the site. Further, in prior discussions with MPD, Applicant received no indication of concerns from MPD with removal of the buildings, provided that any future use be controlled to dissuade illicit activity. Finally, with respect to the soundness of the structure, the City of Madison's Downtown Plan determined the subject buildings to be "underutilized and/or obsolete", and Applicant had the buildings inspected by a general contractor which determined significant structural deterioration.

### CNI Letter

1. Neighborhood expressed concern that we limit demolition to only the single-story properties. We have addressed this concern by removing from consideration the demolition of 15 N. Fairchild building.
2. Neighborhood expressed desire that demolition be conditioned on the following:
  - a. Post-construction, return the alleyway to its original dimensions and not expand the parking. We agree to this condition.
  - b. No trees to be damaged or destroyed as part of the demolition. We agree to this condition.
  - c. Preserve as much of the terracotta as possible for future use. We agree to this condition.
  - d. Post-construction, if the site is to be operated as a privately-maintained open space until redevelopment, then such use shall have reasonable limits for hours and amplified sound. We agree to this condition.

### MTHP Letter

1. MTHP asserts "...Hovde Properties agreed to provide access to the shared private alley behind the future History Center." This is inaccurate. Hovde Properties has never approved access. Rather, WHS and Hovde have worked collaboratively over the prior seven months to thoroughly examine and study how these projects would work together, the culmination of which is the MOU between the parties which addresses, among other things, how access would work during the construction of the History Center.



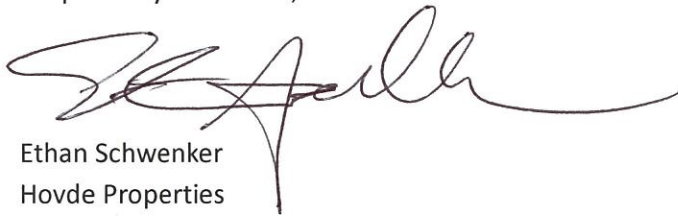


2. MHTP asserts “We have not heard from the History Center developer that this space is needed.” This is also inaccurate. WHS has presented at two public meetings, one in-person and one by Zoom, explaining the rationale and the need behind demolition, both of which were attended by Kurt Stege, representative of MHTP and co-author of the MHTP Letter. Further, WHS has written a letter to CNI (included in the application record) reiterating this rationale and need.

It is worth reiterating, especially given recent public mischaracterizations, that WHS and Applicant have *independently* consulted multiple expert contractors to address the construction challenges this particular project presents on this particular site, especially the need to maintain access. Every site is unique and has different conditions that need to be addressed. Neither party has been forced into an agreement, but instead, both parties have worked cooperatively for months to find the best overall solution for the existing users and the public.

We remain focused on helping to deliver the City’s vision for this block, which includes a world-class History Center, and thoughtful, complementary density, to be enjoyed by future generations for years to come.

Respectfully submitted,



Ethan Schwenker  
Hovde Properties

