



Memorandum

To: Common Council

From: Tim Acklin, AICP
Senior Planner

Date: March 6, 2018

Re: Legistar Item #18-0216 - Grounded Specialty Coffee Appeal

At the February 8, 2018 meeting the Common Council referred item #18-0216 (Grounded Specialty Coffee appeal) to their March meeting and directed staff to do the following:

- 1) Send a letter to all of the property owners in the Downtown Historic District to notify them of the requested appeal and notify them of the meeting date and time where they may come and speak for, or against, the item.

Staff sent out a letter to all of the property owners on February 26th. A copy of the letter that was sent to them is attached to the Legislation.

- 2) Research a photograph of the original storefront of the building.

Murphy Library at UW-L and the Main Public Library Archives were a tremendous help in this effort. The photo below is the oldest one we were able to find of the storefront. This photo is dated between 1910 and 1913. The building was built in 1867. It is very likely that the storefront in the photo is the original storefront due to the cast iron columns and the wood framing. Storefronts were typically not altered from wood to metal until the 1910's.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

400 LA CROSSE STREET | LA CROSSE, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512 | F: (608) 789-7318



3) Research the requirements for ADA compliance for historic buildings.

ADA requirements have different levels of compliance between existing buildings and new buildings. New buildings fall under the International Building Code (IBC) and existing buildings typically fall under the International Existing Building Code. (IEBC) The IEBC may reference the IBC so in some cases existing buildings may also have to meet IBC requirements. There are also various levels of ADA compliance for existing buildings depending on the type and level of project that is being proposed. For example, if an existing building is remodeling their restroom they will have to meet all current ADA requirements. If an existing building is remodeling an entire floor that includes restrooms they would likely have to meet current ADA requirements for restrooms and then potentially spend an additional 20% of the total project cost on additional ADA compliance. Additionally, if the cost of ADA compliance exceeds the 20% amount, they can fill out a dis-proportionality worksheet and are then not required to make those improvements. For example, if ADA compliance requirement would include an elevator or a ramp up to an entrance where the cost to supply the elevator or

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

400 LA CROSSE STREET | LA CROSSE, WI 54601 | P: (608) 789-7512 | F: (608) 789-7318

ramp exceeds 20% of the cost of the proposed project they would likely not have to make that improvement. There is also an entire Section in the IEBC related to existing historic buildings. The removal of significant historic features on historic buildings for ADA compliance may also exempt building owners from having to meet ADA requirements.

4) *Hold a meeting with the owner of Grounded Specialty Coffee, Downtown Mainstreet, Inc., and City Staff to determine if a compromise may be reached on the proposed alteration of the storefront.*

With the assistance of Robin Moses, Executive Director of Downtown Mainstreet, Inc., a meeting took place on February 22, 2018 at Grounded. Robin Moses from DMI; Tim Acklin from City Planning; Marcus Zettler from DMI's Design Review Committee; Maria Norberg, owner of Grounded; and Jay Lokken, owner of the Batavian Bank Building located across the street were in attendance.

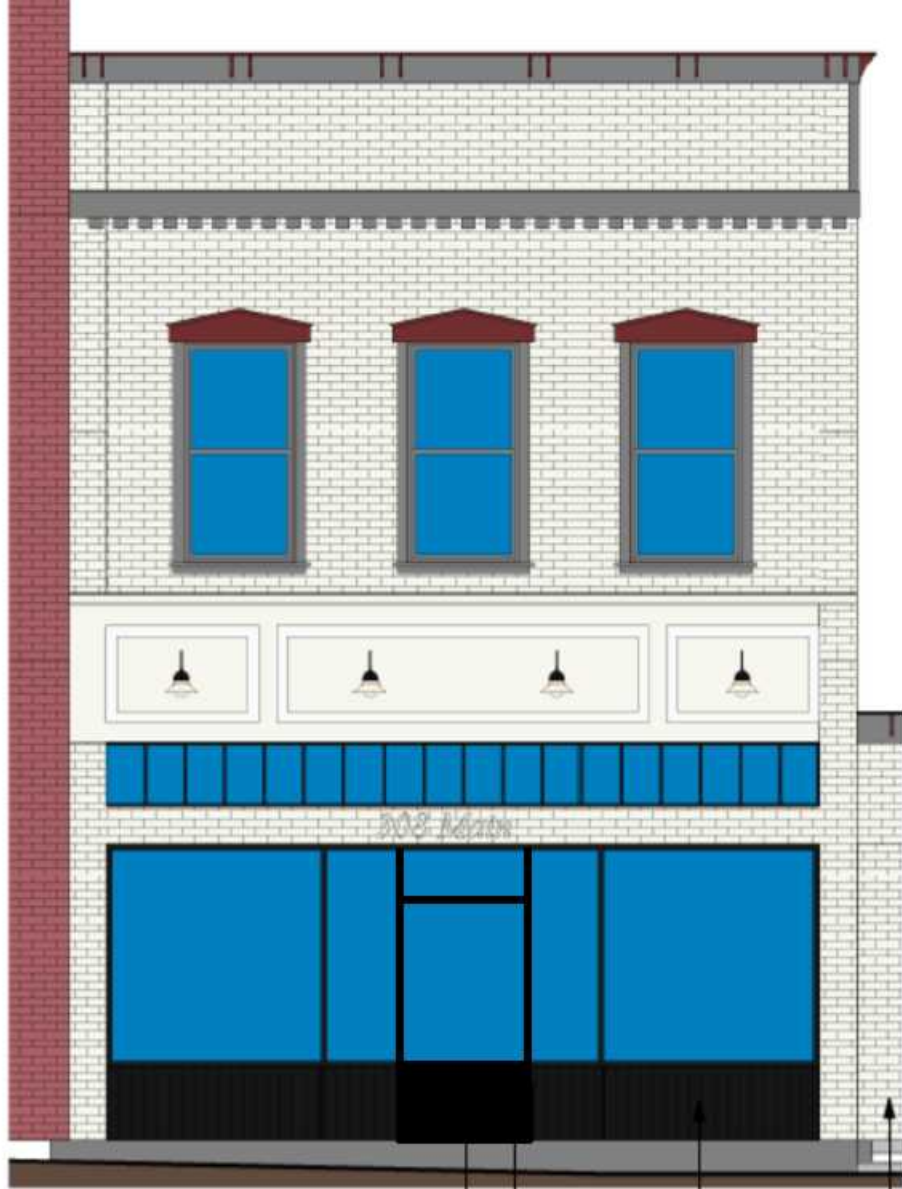
Ms. Norberg explained to the group her reasons for altering the storefront and provided revised drawings. The revised drawings still had the door removed and flush windows but mimicked the existing inset storefront framework to show where the entryway was. Ms. Norberg even offered to offset this section a little. The revised plans from Ms. Norberg were well received by the group and everyone thought it was a great compromise. Ms. Norberg's plans were revised to show an 8" setback/inset for this section. Ms. Norberg's plans are attached.

Staff Analysis

Staff prefers that the original storefront form and shape is not altered. Removing storefronts in this manner can provide a disconnect for pedestrians. It also alters the visual aesthetic/appeal of the streetscape, much more so here as this a National Register Historic District. This particular proposed project seems to have more of a visual impact here due to their neighbor also removing a storefront and maintaining one at the opposite corner.

In these instances where change/alteration is desired the next question to ask is, "can it be reversed?" Staff's opinion is that this alteration could be reversed in the future. No interior structural elements would be compromised by this project.

Ms. Norberg and the group did agree on a compromise.



3 NORTH ELEVATION
1/4" = 1'-0"

