

STAFF REPORT: DECEMBER 14, 2022 MEETING

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22-8156

ADDRESS: 1241 WOODWARD AVENUE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: LOWER WOODWARD AVENUE

APPLICANT: THOMAS TEKNOS, TEK-ADAMS FOODS

PROPERTY OWNER: KWA1

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: NOVEMBER 21, 2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: NOVEMBER 29, 2022

SCOPE: ALTER STOREFRONT, INSTALL WALK-UP WINDOW

Note: this staff report was revised on 12/13/22 at 11:19 a.m. to include specific Standards as part of the Staff Recommendation.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The 10-story Albert Kahn designed structure at 1241 Woodward was erected in 1919 for the Heyn's Department store. The Lower Woodward Avenue Final Report states: The Neo-classical design is composed of four bays of windows. The dark metal spandrels between fourth through ninth floors recede visually, allowing the piers between the bays to emphasize the building's verticality. Faced with limestone, a band of limestone spandrels separates the ninth story from the tenth, creating a separate strip of windows on the top floor. Each spandrel is carved with a circular rosette in its center.

The original raised cornice was removed in 1961, but the stylized floral pattern and dentil trim which visually served as the base of the cornice remains intact and offers a cornice-like effect to the top of the building. The storefront and exterior cladding material at the first and second floors was installed during the building's rehabilitation in the early 2000s.



Staff photo, November 29, 2022



Google image, September 2022

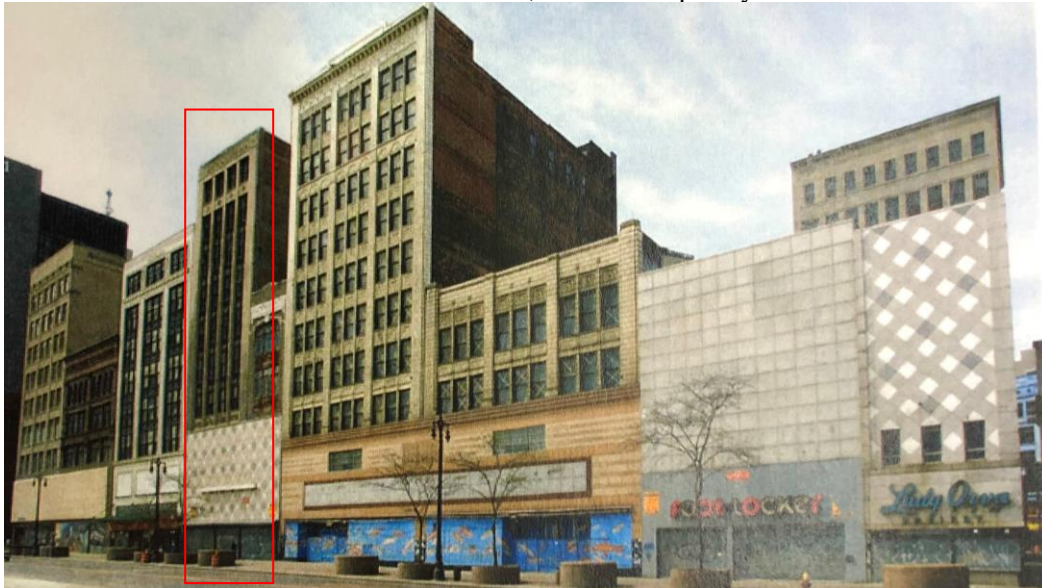
PROPOSAL

Construct an interior vestibule at the current entrance; add additional exit door and window for walk-up and carryout services.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Lower Woodward Avenue Historic District was established in 2001.
- The first remodeling of the building's storefront took place in 1930. The Building Department's permit card files include an additional five permitted alterations, the last dated 1983. The district's final report goes into further detail:

In the 1930's, the first floor of the building was divided into three separate storefronts. Lerner Shops renovated a portion of the facade in 1936 and, in the 1950's, it expanded and modernized again with signage on an enameled steel granite checkerboard pattern over the first two stories. In the late 1960's, the facade reconstruction was continued to visually bind the building with the Field's Building to the north. The two buildings were joined as one facade on the first three stories, removing the original exterior limestone.
- In 2003, the Commission reviewed and approved the rehabilitation of the buildings on the west side of Woodward at 1241, 1249, and 1261, and new construction at 1247. The proposal internally connected the existing buildings to the new construction at 1247 Woodward for one large residential structure "The Lofts at Merchant Row". The below photo shows how the previous storefront alterations at 1241 Woodward extended through the third floor. The façade at the third floor façade was reconstructed to match the historic appearance; the first and second floors received a new wall finish, and contemporary window and storefront openings.



Existing conditions photo from 2003 application

- The existing storefront and entryway are sympathetic to the design and rhythm of the building's upper floors as well as the documented historic footprint of the original storefronts and building entrance. The cladding materials differentiate from the historic limestone and metal, yet are anchored by the symmetrical design and recessed entrance, meeting Standard Nine, "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment."
- Staff believes future alterations to the ground level façade should retain a level of symmetry that works with building's classical design and arrangement of historic openings.



Staff photo, November 29, 2002

ISSUES

- The proposed entrance will disrupt the symmetry of the building, and the proposed walk-up window will further add a distorted window opening through the insertion of a smaller sized sliding window that has its own unbalanced frame. Therefore, it is staff's opinion the proposal is not compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the existing building.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

It is staff's opinion the proposal will alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and its environment. Staff therefore recommends the Commission deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Elements of Design for the district, specifically Standards:

- 1) A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
- 9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

THE HUDSON CAFE



HOURS OF OPERATION
MONDAY 8 AM TO 3 PM
TUESDAY 8 AM TO 3 PM
WEDNESDAY 8 AM TO 3 PM
THURSDAY 8 AM TO 3 PM
FRIDAY 8 AM TO 3 PM
SATURDAY 8 AM TO 4 PM
SUNDAY 8 AM TO 4 PM

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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