

STAFF REPORT 06-14-2023 MEETING

PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8326

ADDRESS: 1322-1336 BROADWAY

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BROADWAY AVENUE LOCAL

APPLICANT/ARCHITECT: ROBERT J. KRAEMER/PRINCIPAL, KRAEMER DESIGN GROUP

OWNER/DEVELOPER: BROADWAY DETROIT DEVELOPMENT II, LLC

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 05-24-2023, revisions 05-30-2023

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 01-28-2020,

SCOPE: REVISION TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED APPLICATION, APPROVAL EXPIRED; DEMOLISH BUILDING AT 1332-1336 BROADWAY, PARTIAL DEMOLITION AND REHABILITATE HISTORIC FACADES AT 1322 & 1326 BROADWAY, ERECT NEW MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING.



View of existing conditions at 1322-1336 Broadway, looking towards the east. Staff photo, May 31, 2023.

BACKGROUND

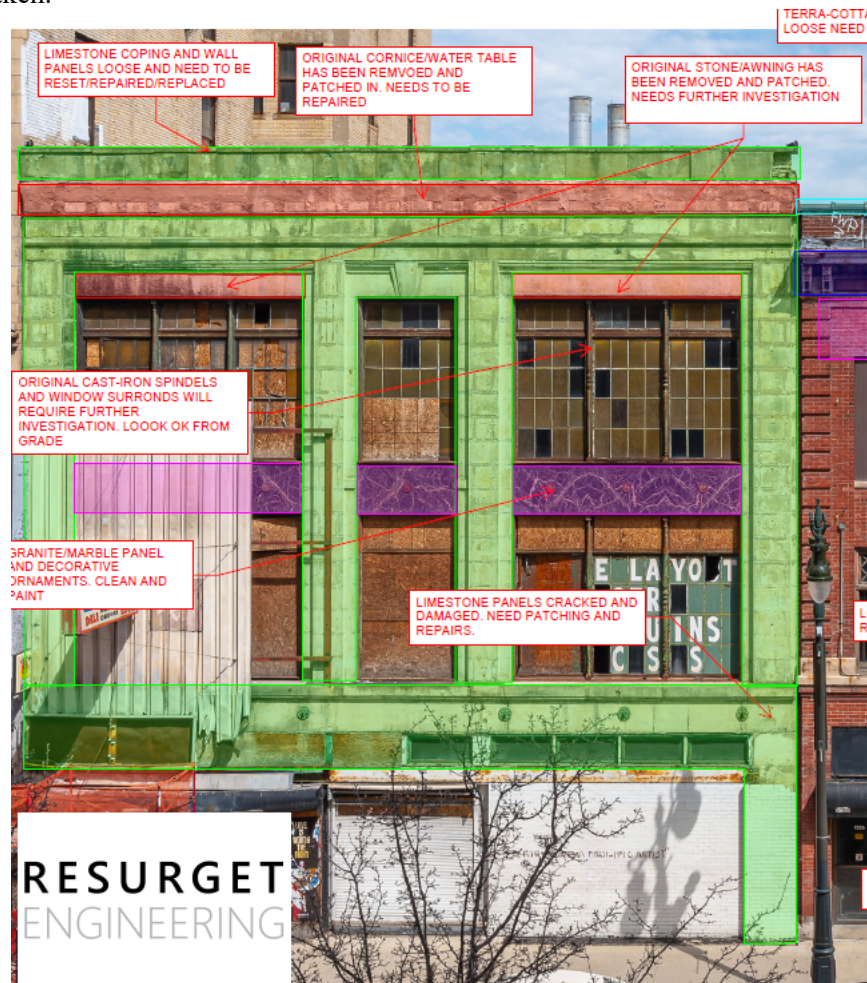
At the February 2020 Regular Meeting of the Historic District Commission, this project was issued a Notice to Proceed, which was immediately suspended in lieu of meeting several conditions. Due in part to the delays and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the following conditions have not been met:

- **any non-minor change in the design of the project voids the NTP and requires applicant to resubmit for HDC review via a new application, at applicant's full risk**
- **the NTP is issued exclusively to this applicant team for this project, and does not run with the properties, individually or collectively**
- **the suspended NTP expires within one year of today's date if not successfully issued**

Per these conditions, the approval period for this and all suspended approvals was extended once during the Commission during the COVID-19 emergency period via a blanket resolution, but this extension has again expired. The applicant team has changed, with Kraemer Design Group having replaced Hamilton-Anderson as the architect. Finally, the project is now proposed to be revised with a substantial change, that being the full demolition of 1332 Broadway, which had previously been approved for a partial demolition resulting in

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- A full staff report previously considered by this Commission, discussing almost all aspects of the project and largely applicable to this current review, is included in tonight's materials. Staff stands by our earlier analysis, and will limit additional comment in this report to the proposed revisions. The most important such revision, in the opinion of staff, is the full demolition of the 1332-1336 Broadway building, whereas the previous approval required keeping the façade intact as part of the restoration of all three Broadway façades.
- Staff has reviewed the technical report, prepared and sealed/signed by Marc Steinhobel of Resurget Engineering, a licensed professional engineer in the State of Michigan, from which the below analytical image is taken.



The findings/recommendations of the structural engineer concerning this façade are thus:

The predominately limestone clad façade with marble spandrel panels and decorative cast-iron elements is in poor condition. The main cause of deteriorated condition is corrosion of embedded steel lintels and masonry ties.

- *Remove cast-iron florets clean, paint and re-install.*
- *Remove clean and paint and reinstall cast-iron posts with new steel lintels.*
- *Repair of steel lintels beams will require the removal of large areas of limestone, all the marble panels and most of the backup walls and structure to allow access for repair.*
- *All lateral ties connecting veneer elements to the backup wall need to be replaced. To replace lateral ties all veneer elements, need to be removed, restored, and reset.*

Due to the overall condition of the backups structure and need to remove all veneer elements for steel repair and installation of new lateral ties it is recommended at the 1336 Broadway façade is removed and reconstructed on new backup structure integrated into proposed new

building.



Detail view of the façade at 1332-1336 Broadway. Visible are the incorrectly treated mortar joints, evidence of water infiltration, and several historic elements (cast iron posts, medallions, stone panels) intended to be salvaged and reused. Staff photo, May 31, 2023.

In the introductory narrative letter to your Commission, the architect provides the following additional analysis:

The existing façade of 1332-1336 Broadway is in exceedingly poor condition.

- **Stone Lateral Ties:** *The lateral ties which attach the limestone cladding to the structural walls behind have been compromised due to years of water infiltration. In order to replace these lateral ties all limestone cladding elements would need to be removed in order to access the ties.*
- **Steel Lintels:** *The steel lintels are corroded and need to be replaced or completely exposed in order to repair them. In order to do this, all elements surrounding the lintels including the limestone cladding, the marble panels and most of the backup walls and structure would need to be removed.*
- **Historic Cornice:** *It is also worth noting that much of the historic cornice and details are missing from the facade. During an earlier renovation it appears that projecting stone elements such as the cornice were 'chopped' off to create a flat plane.*
- **Limestone Cladding:** *The existing stone cladding materials that do exist are in poor condition. Virtually every piece of stone has multiple holes that were drilled in the façade to install the metal cladding that was in place until at least 2007. Furthermore, at some point the mortar joints in the limestone were quasi tuck-pointed by 'smearing' in mortar that is crudely spread over the stone as well. Lastly, the stone was coated with some type of paint like coating.*

Given the preponderance of evidence cited by the structural engineer and architect, staff concurs that the façade in question, having been ruthlessly neglected for decades while hidden and compromised by a haphazardly installed industrial-style screening, has deteriorated beyond the point of feasible and reasonable repair. As an aside, it should be noted that this building was considered as non-

contributing/non-historic in the original HDAB designation report due to the complete screening of the historic façade.

- Considering the new architectural façade intended to replace the historic façade targeted for demolition, staff recognizes that it perpetuates the scale and feeling of the original, while expressing itself distinctly as a modern reconstruction. In staff's opinion, the "open façade" design is appropriate as it preserves the maximum historic character possible for the *district* (in terms of scale and street presence) in the spirit of Secretary of the Interior Standard #9, which states that such new work must be recognizable:

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.



Proposed front facades, compare with original design on page 2. From submitted materials.

- The Planning and Development Department recognizes the "open façade" as an elegant solution that allows the project to achieve the city's mandated RFP goals of providing "maximum density" and "a walkable urban environment." The applicant, in their narrative letter, makes a comprehensive case for an issuance (or in this case, a re-issuance) of a Notice to Proceed (NTP) for this project. Overall, the project appears poised to deliver the same substantial community benefit as it did when the Commission first approved the project in 2020, and still retains a and valuable historic preservation component. Staff concurs with the applicant's argument for a NTP and recommends that such an approval be issued.
- The overall documentation of the revised project is still at the conceptual stage. As such staff recommends that the Commission issue a conditional Notice to Proceed in anticipation of a return to this Body to approve the final detailed design. In this case, your approval today would represent an approval of the overall concept (including the revised demolition scope, and general concept of the nine-story building per the drawings and documentation provided to date), that would allow the applicant team to proceed with other reviews, approvals, and financing, as necessary.

ISSUES

- Staff recommends conditional approval of the conceptual approach via a Notice to Proceed, subject to additional review by the Commission of the final detailed design.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-75, Issuance of Notice to Proceed

It is staff's opinion that the current project meets the high bar necessary to qualify for a Notice to Proceed, based on (1) the particular circumstances of its physical location in the Broadway Avenue Historic District, (2) the historic preservation of two distinctive character-defining facades, (3) the design of the "addition" as a mass spanning three buildings and allowing each building's historic mass to be read, (4) the substantial community benefit achieved via accomplishing the city's goals of increasing residential density in this vicinity, (5) reactivation of long-time vacant retail spaces and associated job opportunities, (6) provision of construction jobs to Detroiters, (7) provision of affordable housing units, and that (8) the proposed improvement program is feasible.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission approve a conditional Notice to Proceed under Prong 2 of Section 21-2-75;

The resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community. Substantial benefit shall be found only if the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals, financing, and environmental clearances, and the improvement program is otherwise feasible

The Notice to Proceed is suspended and not issued until:

- (1) The applicant submits final construction documents (including specifications) incorporating the conceptual approach here approved, for final review and approval by the Historic District Commission.*
- (2) All other necessary approvals, including planning, zoning, financing, and environmental clearances, are documented and provided to HDC/PDD staff.*