



7650 E. JEFFERSON AVENUE, DETROIT MI

R. Thornton Brodhead Naval Armory

Narrative Letter Prepared for Detroit Economic Growth Corporation by Kraemer Design Group

KraemerDesignGroup

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August 22, 2022
Detroit Economic Growth Corporation
500 Griswold #2200
Detroit, MI 48226

RE: 7650 E. Jefferson Avenue, Detroit MI (R. Thornton Brodhead Naval Armory)

Dear DEGC:

Kraemer Design Group (KDG) is writing to the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation on behalf of The Parade Company regarding the building located at 7650 E. Jefferson, commonly known as the R. Thornton Brodhead Armory. The Parade Company is seeking approval from the Historic District Commission to move forward with redevelopment plans for the building after several prior HDC applications, communications, and reports between the HDC and The Parade Company. A brief summary of timeline to date is included below for reference. Additionally, the present application outlines a brief historic overview; a history of the redevelopment efforts; organization chart of the team; The Parade Company's vision for the property; the current conditions and detailed scope of work for the property; along with detailed drawings, plans, specifications, and reports from experts including Blackberry Window and Door Systems, RAM Construction, and Historic Surfaces, among others.

The Parade Company's proposed plan for the property involves:

- Rehabilitate the northern portion of the existing building, including full masonry restoration, window restoration, repair of the collapsed roof, and interior rehabilitation of the historic drill hall.
- Preserve and move the historic WPA era murals and other artwork from the southern building into the northern building.
- Once the Conservator has stabilized and moved the historic murals, the southern building will be demolished so the Parade Company can construct a new facility that will accommodate its core mission as a nonprofit: to serve the people of Detroit by planning, executing, and staffing educational, charitable, and civic events including America's Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Ford Fireworks.
- The rehabilitated northern block and the new southern block addition will also serve as a regional destination for community events, educational tours and, in honor of the military history intrinsically linked with the Brodhead Armory site, a designated office and meeting area for use by veteran's organizations.

The items found in the ensuing package provide a detail account of the history, intentions, and proposed scope of work for the site and the rehabilitation of the building and artwork. Please contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Kraemer Design Group, LLC



Brian Rebain, RA, NCARB,
Principal

Brief Historic Overview

Completed in 1930 the Brodhead Armory was designed in a restrained Art Deco style by one of Detroit's preeminent architects at the time, William Buck Stratton of Stratton & Hyde. In the late 1920s Lieutenant Commander R. Thornton Brodhead, the head of the Michigan State Naval brigade, led a drive to establish a new armory as, at the time, the reservist militia was drilling in inadequate, ad hoc spaces. The City of Detroit provided the land and a portion of the funding. After completion in 1930, the Brodhead Armory served as a center for training as well as a site for civic and sporting events.

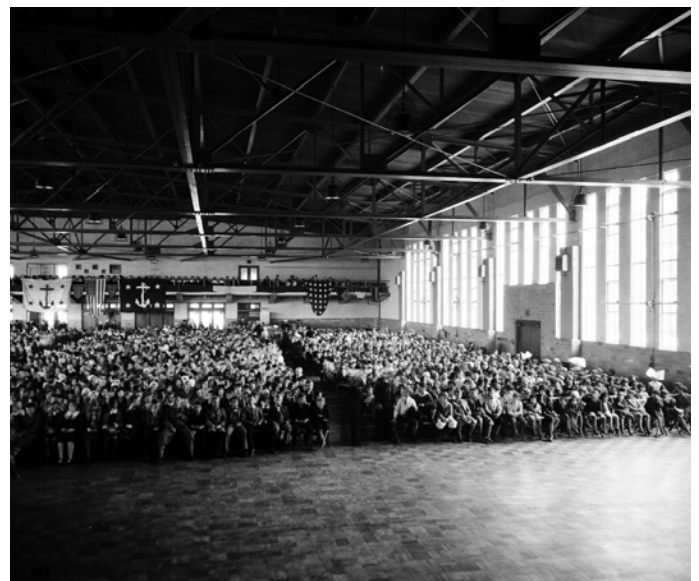
With nearly 100,000 square foot of interior space the building features an Indiana limestone exterior with masonry load-bearing walls. As originally constructed the building contained an entrance, drill hall, and offices in the northern block while the southern block contained offices, a dining room, and lounges for officers. During the Great Depression, Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds were used to remodel the southern block—a motor pool and gymnasium were added to the basement, the third floor was expanded, and a fourth floor was added to house eight visiting officers' quarters. Additionally, artists from the Federal Art Project (an agency within the WPA) were engaged on projects at the armory in 1936 through 1941. Art projects included painted murals by David Fredenthal and Edgar Yaeger, a carved mural by Gustav Hildebrand, wooden doors and banisters carved by John Tabaczuk and a reclaimed steel bulkhead from a mothballed ship the USS Dubuque.

During World War II the building was mobilized as Detroit's reservists were called into active duty. Navy schools for training men were started at the Brodhead Armory including an electric school and a diesel school. After the war and once the hostilities in Korea ended, with repair bills mounting, the State of Michigan leased the building to the Department of Navy. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s the building was used as a basic training facility for new recruits. In 1989 the Navy moved out, but the Marine Corps had reservists in the Brodhead until around 2003. When the Marine Corps vacated, the Brodhead Armory was reverted back to the City under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Department and held as surplus property. In 2008, jurisdiction of the property was transferred to the City's Planning and Development Department to market for sale. The City formally solicited development proposals several times over the years to return the property back to productive use, however no viable proposals were received through such solicitations and the building has since deteriorated.

The Brodhead Armory's historic significance is rooted in its association with the history of Detroit's naval militia community, in its Art Deco architectural design, and in the Depression-era murals and interior artworks. The building is historically designated by multiple entities. In 1980 the building was designated as a Michigan Historic Site; in 1994 the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and in 2001 the City of Detroit desig-



Brodhead Naval Armory, circa 1930



Drill Deck, circa 1930



Brodhead Naval Armory, under construction



Brodhead Naval Armory, undated



Brodhead Naval Armory, 2020

nated the R. Thornton Brodhead Naval Armory Historic District which included both the building and several interior spaces including the interior art. For more information on the history of the building please see the City's Historic Designation Advisory Board Final Report at Exhibit G. As one of Detroit's rare buildings that has an interior local historic district designation, the applicant takes seriously the obligations to preserve and safeguard the art located in the building.

Timeline of Redevelopment Efforts & Prior Historic District Commission Applications

The Parade Company has been in regular contact with the staff of the City of Detroit Planning & Development Department (PDD), the staff from the City of Detroit's Historic District Commission, and in front of the Historic District Commission itself to ensure the proposed Brodhead Armory project meets the City's expectations and to ensure all thoughts and viewpoints are taken into consideration as the proposal develops. Outlined below is a brief timeline of these prior contacts:

- February 2020 - HDC staff and HDC Commissioners James Hamilton and Tiffany Franklin walked through the building with the development team to see the conditions in person.
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- May 6, 2020 - The Parade Company submitted an application to the HDC outlining their plan for the Brodhead Armory.
- May 11, 2020 - The HDC determined that the application was not complete, and The Parade Company began working internally to gather the additional information.

- August 2020 - The Parade Company submitted materials for an advisory review by the HDC.
- August 18, 2020 - At their regular meeting, the HDC completed their advisory review of the August 2020 initial submission. The HDC concluded that "the proposed development will have a demonstrable effect that is beneficial due to the rehabilitation of a substantial portion of the building, subject to the condition that the applicant preserve as much of the character-defining features as possible and provide evidence of need for demolition where proposed." The applicants note the following:
 - o The applicants understand that a finding of "demonstrable effect" would be applicable in instances where a City authorized project "creates a change, beneficial or adverse, in the quality of the historical, architectural archeological, engineering, social, or cultural significance that qualified the property for designation as an historic district."
 - o The applicants understand that the advisory review was an internal HDC advisory opinion given only for the consideration of city assistance and that the advisory review has no bearing on the application now being submitted for full HDC review.
- September 2020 - Pursuant to the August 18, 2020, advisory review, The Parade Company submitted a full package of materials to the HDC seeking a certificate of appropriateness.
- September 23, 2020 - The HDC stated via email that the application was not yet complete enough for the Commission to make a determination. Specifically, the application did not contain the required architectural drawings necessary to provide the commission with sufficient graphic depiction of both the existing conditions (interior and exterior) and the proposed demolition and alterations to these spaces.

- June 8, 2021 - City Council passed a resolution approving the “surplus” status of the Brodhead, approving the sale to The Parade Company, and authorizing the City’s Planning & Development Department (PDD) to execute a development agreement with The Parade Company. The Mayor approved the resolution on June 14, 2021. As a part of that resolution, the City Council stipulated that The Parade Company would be required to meet the following requirements:

- o Renovate the property to accommodate The Parade Company’s operations as a nonprofit entity, including space for the production and storage of its floats;
- o Renovate approximately 28,700 square feet of existing space at the property using commercially reasonable efforts to rehabilitate historical elements of the northern portion of the existing building structure.
- o Include approximately 125,000 square feet of 2-story new construction for high bay areas that accommodate the operations and storage needs of The Parade Company;
- o Work to preserve the existing historical artwork and woodwork found throughout the existing building structure;
- o Designate an event space to accommodate public tours and educational activities;
- o Designate office and meeting space for use by organizations that support veteran-centered activities;

- July 14, 2021 - The Parade Company updated the HDC staff via email that they were refining their plans and continuing to work on the application.

- July 15, 2021 - The HDC staff recommends including technical design (drawings/specs) for artwork preservation.

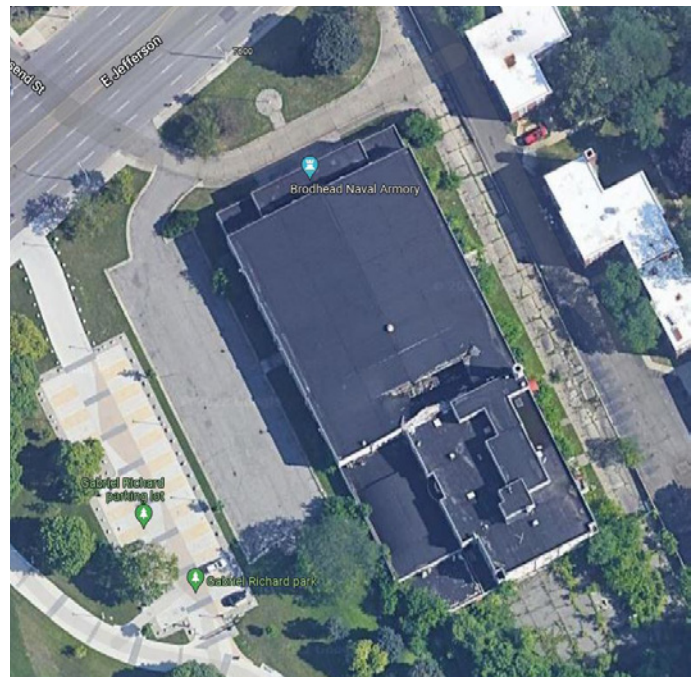
- Summer and Fall 2021 - The Parade Company continued working with art conservators and experts to plan for the stabilization, removal, and rehabilitation of the artwork.

- September 30, 2021 - The Parade Company entered into a development agreement with the City of Detroit to purchase and develop the Brodhead Armory. As a condition precedent required to close on the property, a part of that development agreement stated that the applicant agreed to obtain “Historic District Commission Approval” by allowing the HDC to “review and comment on the transaction contemplated by the development agreement.”

Accordingly, Kraemer Design Group now presents the following application to meet the obligations laid out in the development agreement. Thus, the applicants are seeking HDC approval pursuant to the development agreement via a certificate of appropriateness or a notice to proceed, as applicable.



Parade on Woodward, undated



Google Earth Aerial View, 2020



A portion of the Edgar Yeager mural, 2022



Thanksgiving Day Parade, undated

The Parade Company's Motivation and Vision

The Parade Company currently runs the Ford Fireworks, America's Thanksgiving Day Parade, Hob Nobble Gobble, and the Strategic Staffing Solutions Turkey Trot. Assisted by over 2,500 volunteers, each year The Parade Company hosts these major civic events and greets thousands of children and families as they tour The Parade Company's studio. In addition, The Parade Company helps facilitate events such as River Days and builds animated props such as bobble heads that appeared in downtown Detroit in the spring of 2018. The Thanksgiving Day Parade, now in its 93rd year, has been a one-of-a-kind spectacle of fantasy, holiday spirit, and community enthusiasm.

Building the floats for one of America's largest parades requires ample space as all the floats and costumes are created and constructed in the Parade Company studios. Housed in a portion of a former automotive plant, the current Parade Company studio building is in need of major repairs on top of no longer adequately meeting the current or future needs of The Parade Company. There is no room for additional production space or storage and the tours and events that The Parade Company envisions hosting are hampered by their current space limitations. To satisfy The Parade Company's current operations and future vision, a new facility will need to provide a minimum of 130,000 square feet of high-bay area for the production and storage of floats, big heads, and costumes, and an additional 30,000 square feet for offices and events. The Parade Company envisions expanding its family-oriented offerings and is planning for an increase in

tours and community events. The Parade Company is particularly interested in hosting elementary and middle school tours; educational workshops and internships; corporate events; family and community celebrations such as weddings, graduation parties and bar mitzvahs. Given the Brodhead's military heritage, The Parade Company has also committed to providing designated meeting space inside the Brodhead Armory for local veteran organizations and to collaborate on Memorial Day celebrations and gatherings with veterans-focused groups.

In addition to the limited space, the current Parade Company studio building is located on Mt. Elliott Street north of I-94 in an area that has become a transportation logistics hub—there is near continuous heavy semi-truck traffic on Mt. Elliott and Huber Streets. Also impacting accessibility, the entrance to the Parade Studio is accessed by driving down a secluded road next to train tracks and is difficult to locate and is surrounded by industrial companies. It's location in an industrial area has been a major deterrent to attracting school tours as it is not in an optimal location for the family friendly, community-oriented activities The Parade Company currently hosts.

The final issue with The Parade Company's current facility is the distance from the Parade Studio to the two marquee events The Parade Company hosts: America's Thanksgiving Day Parade which starts on Woodward Avenue in the heart of Midtown Detroit and the Ford Fireworks which take place on the Detroit River directly adjacent to downtown. Setup for these events is a challenge given the distance between the Parade Studio and



Thanksgiving Day Parade, undated

these locations—it's over five miles from The Parade Company studios to the starting point of the Thanksgiving Day Parade and seven miles to the area on the Detroit River where the fireworks are set up. Because of the above issues, The Parade Company has been evaluating sites for a new home for the past nine years and it is their goal to build a parade studio which not only houses all the production work but also opens up new opportunities for the community: tours, events, education, internships, and jobs.

The Parade Company envisions a new home that partners with the Detroit community in a way that sets the gold standard for opportunity, inclusion, creativity, and fun. This new home will be a beacon of light to all and a sanctuary of art and culture similar to the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Detroit Historical Museum, the Detroit Riverwalk, and Campus Martius Park. The artistic, whimsical, and totally unique art on display at The Parade Company studio is the perfect backdrop for furthering The Parade Company's vision which would create a collaborative partnership that opens its doors to all Detroiters and their immediate neighbors at the Detroit River Front Conservancy, Jefferson East Inc., and the Rivertown Detroit Association.

Relocating to the Brodhead Armory will intimately tie The Parade Company to their marquee events—the parade and the fireworks—which are located very close to the Brodhead. The centralized location, adjacent to Belle Isle and the Riverwalk, is strategic because of the easy access it would provide to the parade route and the river. These major Detroit events are viewed by millions and a proper studio at the Brodhead will better house the operations of The Parade Company. The Brodhead

Armory is centrally located which will, in turn, help cement The Parade Company in their role as a premiere culturally and civically engaged nonprofit, central to the cultural wellbeing of the community.

Current Conditions and Detailed Scope of Work

Kraemer Design Group was selected by the Parade Company as the Architect of Record for this transformative project, taking the reins from the design architect, ROSSETTI, who developed the attached schematic design drawings. KDG will be fully developing the design and construction documentation for the project and will be shepherding the work through completion.

The building is essentially comprised of two sections: a north block primarily occupied by the drill hall and ancillary office spaces and a south block which is highly compartmentalized with many separate rooms for offices, barracks, a dining hall, ward-room, and a kitchen. The south block also has multiple changes in floor levels with multiple staircases some of which are half or quarter stairs. A central circulation core provides access via a main staircase from the north block into the south block and access to the upper and lower levels of the south block. The interior spaces that are locally designated as historically significant are the drill hall in the north block and the Depression-era artwork which is all contained in the south block.

North Block

Exterior Condition of North Block: The building has severely deteriorated since closing due to failure of the roof, water and weather infiltration, deferred maintenance, and scrappers who

have vandalized and stolen structural and historic features of the building. The two sections of the building (north block and south block) are addressed separately, below. It should be noted that the applicant has had limited ability to closely analyze current conditions because they do not yet own the property. The scope of work presented here is based upon visual inspection and some limited field condition investigations and the scope may change once work begins and conditions on site are discovered and/or verified.

Masonry Condition: While the exterior masonry of the North Block is generally intact, over the years it has sustained environmental damage that has been neither remediated through repair nor proactively averted through periodic facility maintenance. As a result, deterioration of the exterior is visible in many locations. The limestone panels are heavily stained in places, require repointing, and will require cleaning. Please see Exhibit A, Figures 1-21. There is consistent spalling of the limestone at many of the support clips. This spalling has been attributed to incorrect mortar used in previous joint repair efforts. Additionally, several of the exterior architectural details, including the Pewabic pottery tile and memorial elements, have either been damaged or removed. On the west façade of the north block, there used to be a bas relief plaque memorializing Edwin Denby. This plaque and a portion of the stone surround was removed by vandals sometime after 2004—one section of the stone surround (comprised of an engaged fluted column) is still extant. The stone surround in this area is damaged and the structural elements of the building are now exposed—see Exhibit A, Figure 10.

Masonry Scope of Work: After a review of the exterior masonry by RAM Construction Services it was determined that 100% of the exterior limestone mortar joints will require replacement. Please see Exhibit D which includes RAM’s masonry report along with additional photographs. In addition to repointing the entire exterior, severely damaged limestone pieces will be replaced with salvaged limestone taken from the south block of the building. Dutchmen repairs (inserting new stone where extant stone is damaged beyond repair) will be installed in areas where stone is missing or excessively damaged. The entire façade will be cleaned, and all graffiti will be removed via a water pressure wash. The Pewabic tiles will be cleaned, retained, and repaired. On the west façade, all extant elements around the removed Edwin Denby plaque will be retained and salvaged limestone from the south block will be used to infill the missing components. The salvaged limestone will be set 1” proud of the extant limestone to differentiate the replacement stone from the historic limestone cladding. The applicant plans to install a plaque explaining the history and significance of the Denby memorial and to explain why it is no longer present—the exact details of this plaque have not been fully developed but HDC will be consulted before a new plaque is installed.

Site Conditions: The Brodhead Armory is located just east of the Belle Isle bridge and is sited directly next to the Gabriel Richard



Primary facade of the Brodhead Naval Armory, 2022



Detail of Masonry, 2022

Park. The building is currently located on a 17.41-acre parcel which includes Gabriel Richard Park directly west of the building. There is a circular drive at the northern end of the lot which encircles five trees, a flagpole and a concrete flagpole surround. The flagpole, circular drive, and concrete flagpole surround are in fair condition. There is also a historic stone with a plaque near the front drive. Leading off the circular drive are two curb cuts: one which leads to a parking lot to the west side of the building and another that leads to a long access drive on the east side of the building. There is also a concrete pad located at the southern end of building. The concrete pad and the access drive are both in poor condition but the parking lot on the west side of the site is in fair condition. The southern part of the lot is overgrown and dense with vegetation. Please see Exhibit A, Figures 1-14, 22, 23 for images of the site.

Site Scope of Work: At the northern end of the lot, along Jefferson Avenue, the circular drive, flagpole, and concrete flag surround will be retained and rehabilitated. The historic stone and plaque will also be retained in place. The Parade Company will be partnering with local veterans' groups to host collaborative events for Memorial Day and Veteran's Day events and will also be providing interior office space for these veteran's group (see Interior Scope of Work, below). Minor paving upgrades will be made around the perimeter of the building to improve the condition of the entrances and to provide ADA access into the building. The parking lot on the west side of the building will be repaved while the access driveway on the east will be repaved while also creating some parking on the east side of the building. The repaved parking lot on the west side of the building will accommodate 52 parking spaces while the repaved access drive on the east will provide a total of 28 new parking spaces directly adjacent to the drive. A new loading bay and loading area will be located at the termination of the eastern access drive. A new outdoor plaza is proposed for the southern end of the site. The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy will have an easement on the southernmost section of the site of approximately 66' for the Detroit Riverwalk from Gabriel Richard Park to the Riverwalk further east of the site. Please see Exhibit B for site plans.

Window Condition: In the north block, there are sixty-five divided light, hot rolled steel frame openings in the building which showcase damage throughout including corrosion, failed glazing compound, broken panes, and broken mechanicals. Blackberry Window and Door Systems has conducted an inspection of the north block and examined all the exterior windows on the north block for operation, condition of exterior sill, hardware, sashes, glazing, master frame, and perimeter caulking. In this condition assessment Blackberry determined that the majority of the window openings are structurally sound, and the joinery is generally intact including the operating sashes, whereas the hardware, glazing compound, and perimeter caulking are in poor condition. Because the majority of the windows in the north block are narrow in width, they have been less exposed to weather and water conditions that may have caused more deterioration had

the windows been large format units. Please see Exhibit A, Figure 13-17 for photographs of the windows in the north block. Please also see Exhibit E for Blackberry window report which contains additional photographs.

Windows Scope of Work: Because the windows are still structurally sound and because the remaining north block building will assume the utmost significance once the south block is demolished, it is proposed that all historic steel windows be retained, rehabilitated, and have storm windows installed to increase thermal and energy efficiency.

Roof Condition: The roof of the north block is in fair to poor condition as a large portion of the roof covering the drill hall has collapsed due to removed trusses below, causing stress to the rest of the roof and water to leak into the building. Currently the roof of the north block is covered with a membrane roofing system and is in fair condition everywhere except where the roof has collapsed. Please see Exhibit A, Figures 27-28, and Figures 34-35 for photos of the roof condition.

Roof Scope of Work: Because of the damage and age of the roofing system it is proposed that the missing trusses over the drill deck be replaced with matching trusses and entire north block have a new membrane roofing system installed.

One major consideration in rehabilitating the heavily damaged roof of the north block is that access to the area of damage is challenging due to the configuration of the building. In speaking with expert structural engineer Jay Desai, the removal of the south block will vastly simplify the renovation and repair of the north block roof—without removal of the south block a very large crane will be needed to access the damaged portion. Removal of the south block allows for a more efficient approach and significantly improves the constructability of the project.

Signage Condition: There is a non-historic red Plexiglas (or similar material) sign currently installed over the historic carved stone signage band above the main entrance doors. Additionally, there is a historic sign carved into a band just below the parapet of the main entrance vestibule which reads "HONOR PEACE PATRIOTISM THE BEST DEFENSE OF A DEMOCRACY IS A WELL TRAINED CITIZENRY." The historic sign under the red Plexiglas—which, according to historic photographs, reads NAVAL ARMORY—is believed to be extant, carved into the frieze above the doors.

Signage Scope of Work: The carved signage band at the parapet will be cleaned and retained. The non-historic red Plexiglas sign will be removed from the façade. If the historic NAVAL ARMORY sign remains, it will be retained and rehabilitated. Signage for The Parade Company and their significant donors is anticipated on the building but has not yet been confirmed. The signage currently shown in the renderings is conceptual. The applicant will obtain HDC approval before installing any signage on or near the building.



Drill Deck, 2022

Interior Condition of North Block: Overall the North Block is in fair to poor condition on the interior with some areas (the southern area of the drill floor for instance) in an excessive state of deterioration. The interior of the north block is primarily comprised of an entry vestibule, drill deck, and small offices above the entry vestibule. The drill deck is wrapped on four sides by a mezzanine structure. A series of non-historic small offices were added above and below the mezzanine on three sides. The overall resulting condition of the north block interior is fair to poor with the heaviest damage observed in the area where the roof has collapsed at the southern end of the drill deck. It is proposed that the northern block will be rehabilitated to house Parade Company administrative offices, community group offices, and event space.

The interior of the drill hall in the north block is included in the interior local historic district designation. Excluded from the interior designation are the smaller interior office spaces added around the perimeter of the drill hall on the first floor and mezzanine. Beyond the drill hall, the interior of north block is not covered by the interior HDC designation and therefore only the drill hall is discussed here. As mentioned above, The Parade Company is partnering with local veteran's groups to incorporate a permanent meeting place for veterans groups inside the Brodhead Armory.

Main Entrance, Doors, Vestibule, and Stairs Condition: It is proposed that the northern block will be rehabilitated to house Parade Company administrative offices, community group offices, and event space. The interior of the drill hall in the north block is included in the interior local historic district designation. Excluded

from the interior designation are the smaller interior spaces set within and adjacent to the north block. Beyond the drill hall, the interior of north block is not covered by the interior HDC designation and therefore only the drill hall is discussed here.

Main Entrance, Doors, Vestibule, and Stairs Condition: On the exterior at the main entrance of the building there are historic wooden doors in fair condition with some rot evident. The main entry doors lead into a vestibule which, in turn, leads to another set of doors that open directly into the drill deck. At the northern end of the building, the vestibule is flanked by two staircases in fair condition with utilitarian metal risers, treads, CMU walls, and missing handrails. See Exhibit A, Figures 28-37.

Main Entrance, Doors, Vestibule, and Stairs Scope of Work: The exterior wood doors and first floor vestibule will be retained and rehabilitated. Two offices on the first floor, located on either side of the vestibule, will be rehabilitated into a veteran's group offices and a restroom, respectively. The stairs will also be rehabilitated and will receive new handrails.

Drill Deck Condition: The drill deck is a large open gymnasium-type room with a severely deteriorated wood floor, flat plaster and glazed block walls, and a partially collapsed roof. The plaster walls are in fair condition while the glazed block walls in the drill deck are in good condition although some areas have been painted over. The drill deck is ringed by a series of non-historic office partition walls which create offices and meeting rooms above and below the mezzanine. These partition walls and offices are in poor condition—see Exhibit A, Figures 30, 31, 33.

Drill Deck Scope of Work: The drill deck will receive a new flooring material as the current wood flooring is severely deteriorated. The glazed block walls around the perimeter of the drill deck will be retained. A new tiered seating arrangement will be installed on the drill deck floor at the northwest corner of the space to provide seating for educational presentations and tours. The non-historic partition walls around the edges of the drill deck will be removed to accommodate new partitions for a volunteer room, two multipurpose rooms, and a retail space. The corridor located directly south of the drill deck floor will be rehabilitated to provide access to service spaces including costume storage, costume workshop, restrooms, lockers, catering, and offices.

Mezzanine Condition: At the mezzanine level a former running track encircles the drill deck—the mezzanine level handrail is almost entirely missing. Non historic office partitions, similar to those on the first floor, were added over the track at some point in time and are in poor condition.

Mezzanine Scope of Work: At the mezzanine level, the non-historic partition walls will be removed and replaced with new partitions to create offices and meeting areas. The offices will be constructed under the existing trusses to preserve the open volume of space of the drill hall. The offices and meeting spaces on the mezzanine level will be accessed by the four staircases located near the northern end of the building

Roof/Trusses Condition: The roof of the North Block sustained major damage years ago when scrappers removed at least one of the steel trusses supporting the roof over the drill hall. This caused a large section of the roof over the drill hall to collapse which permitted unabated water infiltration and direct exposure of the interior to the elements.

Roof/Trusses Scope of Work: From the drill deck floor the decking and trusses are a highly visible component of the space. For this reason, the applicant is proposing to carefully reconstruct the interior views of the repaired roof and truss by repairing the wood strip decking and replacing damaged decking to match the decking that was damaged when the roof collapsed.

South Block

Overall Condition: The Brodhead Armory is essentially comprised of two separate buildings connected by one vertical circulation core. The Drill Deck to the north, with its open, double height spaces intended for large groups of people, forms the public “face” of the building along Jefferson Ave. The southern block of the building, closer to the river and generally concealed from view by the Drill Deck, was built to accommodate the private activities of the military personnel who worked and trained here, including temporary barracks, meetings rooms, and a training center. Because the Brodhead Armory was designed and constructed to serve as an armory, a temporary barracks, and as a training center for the state’s military reserves, the accommodation of these different needs resulted in The southern block is thus comprised of a highly compartmentalized floor plans with a

series of small, purpose-built rooms throughout this wing of the building. These rooms are uniquely arranged, without a clear organization in plan or section (exacerbated by the sloping site down to the riverfront), which results in a complex and convoluted space plan throughout the south block including smaller rooms, smaller circulation corridors, and lower floor to ceiling heights—see Exhibit A, Figures 38-67.. The physical limitations inherent in the southern block have limited the development potential of the building as utilizing the whole building would require either a singular tenant who desires the same range in spatial requirements or multiple tenants to fully lease the range of spaces available within the Brodhead Armory—these unique spaces and physical constraints are likely one of the major reasons why the building has remained vacant for so long.

Overall Scope of Work: Because the spaces in the southern block are both in poor condition and not suitable for the purposes of the applicant, it is proposed that the southern block will be demolished for the applicant to build a new structure that can accommodate their spatial needs. The new high-bay addition proposed would encompass approximately 133,000 square feet of space which, when combined with the north block, will give the applicant just over 171,000 square feet. The basement level would include a large, open floorplate at the center of the space with ancillary workshops around the perimeter. Near the northern end of the addition there would be restrooms, a breakroom, and mechanical and electrical spaces. The main level of the addition would house the showroom, event rental space, prop display, float wash area, and an open atrium that would provide visuals down into the float construction area below, as well as views out to the Detroit Riverwalk.

Moreover, as a secondary consideration, the significant roof truss damage in the drill deck that is proposed to be repaired requires clear overhead access to remove and reinstall the damaged truss. That access is currently hindered by the south block, and its demolition will open up the south end of the drill deck for clear access to repair the roof.

Condition of the Artworks: Demolishing the southern block is not something the applicant takes lightly given the fact that important Depression-era artworks are located in this section of the building. The applicant fully understands the importance of these artworks and intends to prioritize the removal and treat these pieces as a part of the architectural and artistic legacy that belongs to the people of Detroit. Because of this, the applicant is determined to make every reasonable effort to save, rehabilitate, and display these important art pieces. An integral part of the applicant’s project proposal is safely removing and storing the artwork before demolition begins. As the applicant does not yet own the building, intensive testing has not yet been conducted on the artworks, however, professionals have been retained to advise on, and produce a plan for, the careful stabilization and extraction of the art. Thus, in light of the need for expert advice on the mural conservation, the Detroit Institute of Arts (Barbara



Wardroom showing David Fredenthal mural, 2022



Detail from the Edgar Yaeger mural, 2022

Heller) has agreed to provide high level consultation and advice to The Parade Company on the preservation of some WPA murals, frescos, and architectural elements. Ms. Heller has also provided consultation and advice in identifying the conservator to take on this highly specialized work. In turn, Anthony Kartsonas of Historic Surfaces, Inc. is the lead conservator for the removal, rehabilitation, and re-installation of the murals. Mr. Kartsonas has consulted numerous sub-specialists in the initial analysis of the murals including one of the leading experts in historic masonry, Simon Leverett of Leverett Masonry Consulting, experts at the Winterthur Museum, and he has had informal conversations with mural experts in Italy as well.

There are four substantial areas of designated artworks in the building along with other historic artifacts/objects. The description and condition of each of these murals/objects are discussed, below in brief. Additional information about each of the murals can be found in the materials in Exhibit C.

Fresco mural by David Fredenthal (Wardroom): As examined by Anthony Kartsonas, the Fredenthal mural in the wardroom is in "overall fair [condition] except for the eastern panel which is poor. Amazingly, the actual paint finish of the fresco is mostly stable with limited areas that are loose or flaking except for the eastern panel. The biggest issue with the fresco mural is the structural stability of the plaster." See Exhibit C for a full description and analysis of the condition of this mural.

Canvas mural by Edgar Yaeger (Dining Room): The mural in

the dining room by Yaeger covers 174 linear feet of wall surface and these murals are painted onto canvas and applied to a plaster substrate. From Anthony Kartsonas' report concerning the condition of the murals: "At first glance, the canvas murals appear to be in fair condition with minimal loss or damage." Kartsonas goes on to elaborate that because the canvas murals were applied to the wall with lead paste (as opposed to the wheat pastes) the bulk of the murals have remained relatively attached to the substrate which has prevented severe detachment and warpage. That being said, "there are some random areas of loose canvas. The largest is an area of canvas delamination on the south wall on the western end." There are also areas of significant flaking paint. See Exhibit C for a full description and analysis of the condition of this mural.

Fresco mural by David Fredenthal (Bar): The fresco mural by Fredenthal in the bar is in very poor condition: "The previous water infiltration has caused significant damage to the paint and plaster. There is severe water damage and loss, especially on the left side (north) of the mural. There is also significant plaster delamination, efflorescence, flaking paint, losses and discoloration on other areas of the mural as well." See Exhibit C for a full description and analysis of the condition of this mural.

Plaster relief mural by Gustav Hildebrand (1st Floor Corridor): The plaster relief panels were created by the artist, Gustav Hildebrand, by carving into the completed plaster.

“No laboratory analysis was completed of the plaster, but it appears to be a standard gypsum plaster.” These relief panels are in fair to poor condition, depending on the location. “There is a large area of water damage on the north wall of the west corridor and a large loss at the pilaster in the east corridor where the plaster and lath are completely missing.” See Exhibit C for a full description and analysis of the condition of this mural.

Woodwork carvings (John Tabaczuk): Historically, throughout the building there were approximately 20 carvings set into doors executed by John Tabaczuk who was an assistant to Edgar Yaeger. Today only two remain and they are in fair condition.

USS Dubuque Bulkhead: Captain Brodhead personally selected the steel bulkhead from a mothballed destroyed in Philadelphia, the USS Dubuque. Brodhead had them sent to Detroit for installation in a steel bulkhead which sectioned off the base of the stairwell leading to the wardroom, and Tabaczuk carved a thick door to the stairs located in the bulkhead at the base of the staircase. The door no longer remains but the bulkhead itself is still in place although it is heavily corroded in areas.

Artworks Scope of Work:

Because extensive testing has not yet been conducted on the murals some questions remain unanswered. For instance, the condition of the various plaster substrates and the conditions of the structural backing of all the murals is unknown. The answers to these questions will determine how much of the murals can be saved.

As mentioned above the Detroit Institute of Arts has been providing high level consultation on this project and the DIA's Ms. Heller has also helped provide expertise in how to evaluate the murals in terms of prioritizing what to save and how. From a conservation/art historian's perspective if more than 40% of the artwork has lost integrity (be it via damage or missing material) the work itself is no longer a priority for conservation. This is because the time and effort needed to save the artwork combined with the lack of understanding the artist's intent for those missing/damaged portions has to be weighed against the realities of the conservation process. This is because of the realities inherent in nearly every conservation project such as loss of material/loss of intent, decreasing likelihood of good quality outcomes, budget, and staff time. Using this metric, the applicant team is prioritizing the fresco murals in the wardroom (by Fredenthal) and the canvas murals in the dining room (by Yaeger), while admitting that the murals in the bar (by Fredenthal) are likely far too damaged to salvage and the incised relief panels in the first-floor corridor (by Hildebrand) are also severely compromised. Pictures of the Fredenthal mural in the bar can be seen at Exhibit A, Figure 61 and pictures of the incised Hildebrand mural can be seen at Exhibit A, Figure 38-43.

Anthony Kartsonas of Historic Surfaces is the lead conservator for the mural removal and his analysis and report is available in Exhibit C. Additionally, Mr. Kartsonas has also been in contact with noted masonry expert Simon Leverett on the best method to saw cut the plaster and CMU backing block to move one of the murals—see Exhibit C. Once HDC approval is obtained, the objectives of the development agreement are satisfied, and the applicant closes on the property, in depth testing will begin to initiate the stabilization and removal process. Once field conditions are verified the murals will be carefully removed and stabilized and then stored while the new facility is rehabilitated/built. The applicant wants to caution that many things are unknown and, although all reasonable efforts will be made to save these two murals it is anticipated that there will be some flexibility required as the removal process begins. Our experts further caution there is real risk involved here. Moving these kinds of monumental pieces, in an unstable environment, with unknown conditions, with some pieces attached to CMU blocks and other building structural pieces presents real challenges and risks that the removal may not be 100% successful. But the applicant has assembled a team of experts to help ensure as much of the art is salvaged as is reasonably practicable.

At this point, a final display location has not been conclusively identified for the art, however, it is anticipated that the art will be displayed in the north block once the rehabilitation of that section of the building is complete. The final positioning inside the north block that has not yet been determined, although the drawings from Rossetti show some possible locations where the artwork may be located—see Exhibit B for the Rossetti plans and renderings.

Fresco mural by David Fredenthal (Wardroom): The plan is to save and remove the entirety of this mural although there are questions as to whether the severely deteriorated area at eastern end of the mural can be successfully salvaged due to its condition. Water infiltration at the eastern end of the mural has severely damaged the panel in that area. Please see Exhibit C for a full report on the recommendation considerations as described by Mr. Kartsonas. Mr. Kartsonas discusses many of the options and variables and also provides diagrams for the condition of the mural.

Canvas mural by Edgar Yaeger (Dining Room): The canvas murals in the dining room present unique removal challenges due to the type of glue used to adhere the canvas to the wall. Please see page 10-11 in Exhibit C for a full report on the glue type, the challenges it presents, and the recommendation considerations as described by Mr. Kartsonas. The adhesive used to hang the canvas murals on the walls is lead-based which creates a much stronger bond that water soluble pastes more typically used for these types of installations. The lead-based adhesives create an exceptionally strong bond between the canvas and the wall which will greatly slow the removal process. Additionally, because



Bar mural by David Fredenthal, 2022



Plaster Relief Mural by Gustav Hildebrand, 2022



Detail of the Wardroom mural by David Fredenthal, 2022

the adhesive is lead-based the conservation team will be required to wear protective gear during removal which may be a factor in the actual mechanics of how these canvases are removed. As Mr. Karstonas details, the process to remove these canvases will be highly labor intensive. Because of the extreme labor costs that would be inherent in a full removal of all 174 linear feet of this mural, it is proposed that a large panel or portion of this mural be salvaged. The exact portion and size of the panel(s) to be moved has not yet been decided and will likely depend upon a variety of factors once removal begins (e.g., condition upon beginning, condition as the removal process continues, condition of the canvas after removal, and the pace of the progress of removal). Once the removal process has begun, if it goes well and goes more quickly than anticipated, than it may be possible to save more of this mural—if that occurs then as much of the mural will be salvaged as possible. The applicant intends to maximize the amount of mural saved in this room based upon field conditions once the work begins.

Fresco mural by David Fredenthal (Bar): After the initial consultations with our experts, we believe this mural is too deteriorated to prioritize its removal and stabilization. The majority of this artwork has lost integrity due to missing material and faded paint and, as mentioned above, this is based on the standard of care within the conservation/art historian industry where artifacts with less than 40% integrity are not candidates for conservation. However, because this mural has the same construction method as the wardroom murals, the bar mural is identified by Mr. Kartsonas as a potential area to test the removal method proposed for the wardroom murals (see page 9 of the report at Exhibit C) to ensure the method is fully tested before trying to remove the murals in the wardroom. Because of this, this mural may be stabilized for removal, removed, and then, if removal is successful, may be stored along with the rest of the murals during the renovation of the north block. Note, that this plan will depend upon how the test run with this mural goes. The goal would be to test the removal process with the bar room mural to ensure the maximum chance of success with the wardroom mural and, in the process, hopefully save some of the bar mural as well.

Plaster relief mural by Gustav Hildebrand (1st Floor Corridor): Because of the deteriorated conditions of the relief murals, it is proposed that one panel of the Hildebrand mural be removed and rehabilitated. When The Parade Company initially began planning to acquire the Brodhead they originally intended to salvage and remove the tall sailor panel at the eastern end of the northern corridor, however, in just two years that panel has now deteriorated near the bottom and it is no longer the best candidate for conservation. Because of this, an alternate panel is proposed to be removed. The panel now identified for removal is located on the west wall of the corridor and it shows several sailors pulling a large

chain. Additionally, the art conservation experts have discussed potentially casting a mold on the remaining panels to re-create the entirety of the mural, but this has not yet been conclusively decided. Mr. Kartsonas discusses the various options in regards to this mural on page 11 of his report at Exhibit C.

This chain of events underscores a reality the applicant is dealing with in regards to this entire rehabilitation project: conditions on the property are ever-changing and the deterioration that is ongoing is accelerating. Our art conservators have been emphasizing that flexibility must be a key component in the art conservation plan because conditions on the ground are rapidly changing and what appeared salvageable two years ago or even one year ago may not be once the project begins.

Woodwork carvings (John Tabaczuk): The two remaining carvings by Tabaczuk will be removed and rehabilitated and re-installed in the new facility. The exact location where it will be re-installed has not yet been determined. The applicant has been contacted by a person who owns some of the original wood carvings that were removed from the building—these wood carvings, which include the door that used to be installed in the USS Dubuque bulkhead, will be acquired by the applicant so they can be reinstalled in the new facility.

USS Dubuque Bulkhead: A portion of the bulkhead will be removed and re-installed in the new facility. The exact location where it will be re-installed has not yet been determined. The applicant has been contacted by a person who may be willing to donate the historic wood bulkhead door—these conversations are ongoing, but the applicant intends to obtain the door and reinstall it in the new facility if possible.

A final note about the artwork salvage plan: The applicant understands that there are a lot of questions and uncertainties surrounding the removal of these murals and features but the team is working with a world class group of experts to maximize conservation. As soon as the team is able to verify field conditions of the substrate and begin testing a removal plan, the Historic District Commission will be updated if anything materially changes about the work proposed in this application. Additionally, if the HDC would like a formal follow up application once a firmer plan for the murals has been established, the applicant is willing to provide additional details to the HDC at a later date. Note, however, that the applicant must first close on the property before in-depth testing can occur due to costs and ownership and liability issues.

South Block Demolition:

Because of the realities of the space configuration in the south block and because the artwork has become so damaged, the applicant is proposing to salvage all of the artwork that is reasonably practicable and to demolish the structure once the art-

work is removed. Unfortunately, the space configuration of the south block cannot be “renovated its way” into feasibility for the applicant’s needs. As discussed above, the applicant requires at least 160,000 square feet of high bay open floor plates to meet their float building objectives and the highly segmented south block, with low floor to ceiling heights, would not be adequate even with radical space/programming renovations. The proposed newly built facility will provide adequate room for the new Parade Studio with spaces in which to design, build, construct, and store their parade floats and big heads.

The new addition will extend from the southern edge of the north block along the lot toward the Detroit River. The building will be slightly differentiated from the historic north block in scale as the addition will be slightly taller than the north block. On the east and west façade, the new addition will be clad in salvaged limestone from the south block, cast in place concrete, vertical metal panels in a warm gold color, and polycarbonate panels. Windows on the east and west facades will be anodized aluminum frames with clear glass. The south façade, facing the Detroit Riverwalk and Detroit River, will be primarily composed of anodized aluminum window frames with clear glass, polycarbonate panels, and a perforated aluminum guardrail along the outdoor patio. To access the high bay spaces and to load and unload floats, a custom painted coiling overhead metal door will be added to the both the east and west facades of the new addition. Please see Exhibit B for drawings and renderings of the new addition.

Community Benefits

Given the condition of the south building, the south building’s size and floor-to-ceiling heights, and to support the re-development of the north building, it is proposed that the southern block of the Brodhead be demolished to allow for the development to move forward while still saving and restoring the north block and the historic murals. There are several major components to this plan that will confer a major public benefit to the City of Detroit.

First, this project will entail saving half of the historic structure and it will be renovated to a high standard with preservationists, historic architects, and conservationists all working together to ensure that the north block is rehabilitated to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. Perhaps most importantly, the project proposes to save as much of the artwork in the south block as is reasonably practicable. The applicant understands how important these artworks are and hopes the various experts marshalled together for this HDC application evidences their commitment to saving the art in the south building. Every reasonable effort will be made to save the artwork as these items are perhaps the most important part of the entire south block structure. We believe the mural removal and restoration is perhaps the most important community benefit offered by the applicant as the artwork contained inside the Brodhead Armory is nearing a point of no return. Architecturally speaking, although the south block of the Brodhead contains some nice features as a building, in the opinion of KDG, the highest artistic value of



1974 Thanksgiving Day Parade

the south block is contained in the murals inside the building, and we believe their removal and restoration is of critical importance. The plan put forth by The Parade Company succeeds in both renovating the highly visible north block while also moving and rehabilitating the priceless artwork inside the south block, which, considering the condition of things at the Brodhead is a best-case scenario for all parties involved.

Secondly, the applicant intends to open its doors to its new facility at the Brodhead Armory to the community and its immediate neighbors including the Detroit River Front Conservancy, Jefferson East, Inc., Rivertown Detroit Association, and to all Detroiters. The acquisition and renovation of the Brodhead Armory presents the opportunity to expand their operations and engage the community, which will facilitate new educational, charitable, and civic programs. This will be in furtherance of The Parade Company's stated mission which is to serve the people of Detroit by operating exclusively for the educational and charitable purposes by sponsoring and coordinating a parade and other civic festivals within the city.

Finally, the public benefit of having a reactivated Brodhead Armory that acts as a beacon of civic engagement and education is a major benefit to the city, especially located in a such a prominent, highly visible location. When Detroit almost lost the Thanksgiving Day parade during the mid-1980s due to Hudson's closure, the sense of collective dismay was palpable—see Exhibit A, Figures 75-76. The Parade Company is a non-profit and this permanent facility will help ensure The Parade Company will be

well positioned to continue hosting events that foster civic pride, entertain thousands, and showcase all there is to love about Detroit to a nationwide audience well into the future.

Demolishing the south block will enable The Parade Company to redevelop the entire site to suit their needs, rehabilitate the front building including the historic drill hall, rehabilitate and re-install the historic artwork in the north block, and re-imagine and re-activate a blighted property that is prominently located on Jefferson Avenue. Because of this, the renovated north block and the newly constructed addition on the southern end of the building will provide a major improvement program for the City of Detroit as it will create a new facility for one of Detroit's most venerable nonprofits while still saving the priceless WPA artwork inside the building that is currently deteriorating at an alarming pace. KDG believes the plan put forward by the applicant is the only feasible plan to both save a portion of the Brodhead Armory while also undertaking the monumental task of rehabilitating the artwork contained in the south block.

The plan put forth by The Parade Company is the only viable avenue that will ensure that a portion of the building will be saved and the priceless art inside the building will be moved, restored, and accessible to the public. Inaction, further delay, or rejection of The Parade Company's plans likely means the murals will be completely lost unless the current owners take immediate action to stabilize and repair the damage that is actively occurring onsite. With the approval by the HDC, the applicant will have succeeded in securing a critical component needed to move forward with the development agreement.

City Council and Public Engagement

The applicant has been planning this acquisition, renovation, and construction project for many years. As of now, the applicant has secured three of the four needed approvals in order to acquire this property including a zoning update to allow for the new use, a land sale and development agreement, and a master plan amendment. Through all of this, the applicant has been working closely with City Council and the community to facilitate this process. Detroit’s City Council has approved the sale of the property to the Parade Company and a development agreement has been executed between these parties. The last major obligation for The Parade Company to complete the development agreement is to secure “Historic District Commission Approval” as outlined in the agreement accordingly:

“2. Historic District Commission Approval. The City’s Historic District Commission shall have reviewed and commented on the transaction contemplated by this Agreement.”

Certificate of Appropriateness

At their August 18, 2020 advisory review hearing, the HDC concluded that “the proposed development will have a demonstrable effect that is beneficial due to the rehabilitation of a substantial portion of the building, subject to the condition that the applicant preserve as much of the character-defining features as possible and provide evidence of need for demolition where proposed.” The Parade Company has thus proceeded to undertake a significant step in design development of the project, and this application further showcases that ‘beneficial demonstrable effect’ while also outlining a detailed plan for the preservation of the majority of the character defining features of the building.

Because of this, KDG is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission in order to move forward with this project. If a certificate of appropriateness is not applicable or is inappropriate in these circumstances, the significant public and community benefit inherent in the applicant’s plans for the Brodhead Armory merit a finding of “substantial benefit to the community” as outlined in Detroit City Ordinance Chapter 21, Article II, Division 4 (Section 21-2-75). We believe, as outlined in Section 21-2-75(2), that if a historic resource is a detriment to a major improvement program, a notice to proceed is the right course of action to ensure the transformational development can move forward. We believe Section 21-2-75(2) applies here. That being said, at a minimum, KDG is seeking “review and comment” by the HDC as this is needed for the applicant to close on the property per the stipulations outlined in their development agreement with the City of Detroit.

On behalf of The Parade Company, and in conjunction with the strong team of professional preservation consultants on the development team, we look forward to presenting this transformational project to Detroit’s Historic District Commission; a project that promises to further reinvent Detroit’s riverfront as well as position The Parade Company for generations to come as an essential component of Detroit’s cultural legacy.

Sincerely,
Kraemer Design Group, LLC



Brian Rebain, RA, NCARB,
Principal



Crowds gathered to watch the Thanksgiving Day Parade, undated