

2/13/2023

Ms. Jennifer Ross  
City of Detroit  
Historic District Commission  
2 Woodward Avenue  
Suite 808  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

RE: 1133 Griswold and 1145 Griswold

Dear Ms. Ross and Historic District Commissioners:

Kraemer Design Group (KDG) is writing to submit information to the Detroit Historic District Commission (HDC), on behalf of Detroit & Northern LLC regarding the rehabilitation of 1133 Griswold. In 2022 Detroit & Northern LLC bought the building and is currently planning a complete renovation of the structure in order to rehabilitate one of the last vacant buildings in Capitol Park. The work planned on 1133 Griswold will also include some façade alterations on the 1145 Griswold lot-line party walls facing 1133; however, for continuity both buildings are discussed in this application as they stem from one project which is almost wholly focused on 1133 Griswold. Note that 1145 Griswold Street LLC owns 1145 Griswold and is a related party of Detroit & Northern LLC. The rehabilitation plan for 1133 Griswold includes adding four additional stories to create a total of eleven floors while the also fully renovating the interior. The first two floors are planned for commercial tenants while the upper floors will be apartments. The apartments and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor office tenant in 1133 will be accessed solely through the 1145 lobby, elevators and corridors, so tenants will be using the 1145 address. The following letter contains a brief description and history of the building along with a detailed description of the planned work.

#### Historic Designations

The building at 1133 Griswold is located in the local historic district (Capitol Park Historic District) as a contributing resource and it is also a contributing building listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the Capitol Park Historic District. The period of significance as indicated in the National Register nomination is 1877 to 1945.

#### Original Design

Built in 1921 and designed by Albert Kahn, 1133 Griswold is a seven story building located directly south and east of the Capitol Park Lofts Building located at 1145 Griswold. 1133 Griswold fills a notch in the Capitol Park Lofts Building which had been constructed nine years before 1133 Griswold. As originally designed by Kahn, 1133 Griswold had a profusely decorated Classical Revival façade, dominated by a monumental tripartite arcade on the first two floors and an elaborate entablature topped with a metal antefix cornice of anthemion leaves at the parapet. See photo #28. Upon completion in 1921, the building had a primary façade that fronted on Griswold Street although the highly decorative finishes on this façade also wrapped the corner into the alley and ran for one bay, likely because the alley façade is partially visible on Griswold Street. In this document, the primary façade refers to the Griswold façade and the first bay on the alley façade. The rest of the alley façade was far simpler in detailing and is referred to throughout this document as the secondary façade. Historically, the building was faced in limestone on the primary façade and the alley façade and there were regularly spaced windows, seven per floor, on floors 3-7 on the primary façade. On Griswold, there were two primary entrances: one centered on the façade providing access into the first-floor tenant and feature revolving doors while the second entrance was located in the northern-most bay and provided access into a lobby for the upper floors. The original tenant was the United Savings Bank of Detroit.

#### 1971 Renovation

In 1971 the Detroit and Northern Savings and Loan Association bought the building and embarked upon a radical renovation which entailed a complete removal of the historic limestone cladding, most of the windows facing Griswold Street, and nearly all decorative details. See photos #29, #31, and #32. At that time, the building was re-clad in pink granite which was set with thin mortar joints to create the appearance of a monolithic stone façade. The pink granite covered two and a half bays on the Griswold façade, installed on the second floor to the seventh. In order to install the granite, nearly all the original limestone cladding was stripped from the façade and nearly all of the windows



were removed and infilled with block. The stone façade was removed to anchor new vertical steel columns to the face of the original structural frame and new beams were mounted to the face of the new columns. Granite panels and metal fins were hung on the grid of steel beams. On the Griswold façade, the pink granite cladding only covers a portion of the facade because a slatted metal screen was installed in the two end bays allowing some light to reach the remaining windows at each end. It appears, from limited exploration, that small portions of the limestone trim around some windows still remains underneath the slatted metal screen. The metal slatted screens created a verticality which, when combined with the monolithic granite, created an austere façade that evokes the design trends of the era. At the first-floor level, there were five engaged square columns which broke the façade into four bays—the columns ran from grade to the top of the second floor on the primary façade. White marble was installed on each of these five columns; however, this material is no longer extant and the CMU structure is now exposed to view. As originally designed, white marble was also installed on the one bay of the alley façade that is visible from Griswold as well. The marble on the alley bay was removed in 2013-2014, is no longer extant, and the CMU infill structure is now exposed in this area as well. On the Griswold façade, large format aluminum and glass storefront was installed in between each column and a double set of fully glazed aluminum framed doors were located in the second bay from the south. The words DETROIT & NORTHERN were pin-mounted to the pink granite just above the second floor level on the Griswold façade. The original structural frame and slabs for the building appears to exist behind the 1971 façade.

#### Façade: Prior Modernization and Current Scope of Work

The 1971 granite façade was partially removed by a prior owner and is currently in poor condition. One of the major reasons this building has not yet been rehabilitated is because the building has almost no daylight on floors 3-7 due to the cladding that was installed in 1971. The windows on the alley façade provide only indirect light as the adjacent building to the south blocks all direct sunlight. Removing the existing façade and reinstating windows on this building is an imperative in order to rehab this building for a new use. The proposal presented here seeks to update the façade by designing a historically compatible design that is still wholly new and not falsely historic.

The pink granite cladding, the metal slatted screen, and the existing storefront system will all be removed, stripping the façade back to the original structural frame and slab. The building will then receive a four-story addition which will add floors 8-11. A new primary façade will then be reconstructed. On the alley façade, the fire escape will be removed and the limestone on the alley façade, which is still extant, will be cleaned and repaired. Much like the historic condition, the primary Griswold façade will wrap the corner and run for one bay on the alley façade.

To facilitate the addition, the existing roof deck will be demolished, and a new structural steel frame and concrete slab will be built atop, creating the new 8<sup>th</sup> floor line and a clean structural platform for the new addition. Three stories of load bearing cold formed metal framing will then be built atop the new concrete slab and steel frame, transferring the load down to the original structure, and forming floors 9-11. The 11<sup>th</sup> floor will be held back from primary line of the new Griswold façade creating an outdoor terrace for the top floor apartment and allowing the return cornice on the south side of 1145 Griswold to remain visible from the public ROW.

#### New Façade, and New Addition (floors 8-11)

At the first and second floor, four new engaged, squared arches will be built on the Griswold facade. The three southern-most arches will be wider while the northern arch will be narrower. These arches will be framed with natural stone and will accentuate four aluminum curtain wall windows with divided lights. The aluminum framing for the curtain wall systems will be a champagne-colored anodized finish. A double set of fully glazed doors with a champagne-colored anodized aluminum frame will be placed in both the first bay from the south and the third bay from the south. The other two arches will also have aluminum framed curtain wall systems; however, they will not have doors and will be set upon a low knee wall of granite. Pilasters will be placed in between each monumental arch on the first floor—they will be clad in granite to a height of approximately 7' while the upper portion of the columns will be glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC). At each end of the first-floor façade, fluted GFRC panels will be installed.

On the upper floors (3-10) the columns will spring from each cornice/belt course, terminating at the cornice/belt course above. In between each column, regularly placed windows will be set at each floor level with spandrel panels of GFRC set above and below each window and fluted GFRC panels on either side. The windows will be black fiberglass and will be historically appropriate with a large central, fixed panel and two smaller panes on each side. The small square panes on each window are operable awning windows while the rest of the panes are fixed. The eleventh floor is slightly set off by an aluminum and glass railing set upon a projecting cornice just below. The windows on the eleventh floor are black fiberglass sliding units. Because the cornice of 1145 wraps the corner from Griswold onto the south façade, the eleventh

floor of 1133 was purposefully designed with a setback to ensure the new addition does not impede the decorative cornice of the neighboring building. All windows will have clear glazing.

Four cornices/belt courses are proposed to provide visual interest to the façade: one will be placed directly above the second floor, another will be installed above the eighth floor, a third above the tenth floor, and a final cornice at the parapet above the eleventh floor. These cornices visually break the building into four distinct sections. The cornice above the eighth floor is strategically placed between the old structure and the new addition, effectively using architectural features as a visual break and control joint between structural systems. Each section has columns of windows which will be separated by flared GFRC columns while the windows at each floor level will be separated by GFRC spandrel panels.

The first bay of the alley façade will have the same decorative features as those found on the Griswold façade. The first bay of the alley façade is infilled with CMU between the two concrete piers; this CMU infill dates to the 1971 renovation. Historically this first bay contained two punched window openings per floor—see Photo 26. Because there are no window openings on the first bay of the alley façade, window openings will be punched into this bay to provide light to this area of the building. The same monumental arch described on the Griswold façade will also be built on the first and second floor in this bay. Above the monumental new openings will be punched for new black fiberglass window units matching the front facade. These units will be historically appropriate with a large central, fixed panel and two smaller panes on each side. See section directly below for information regarding the rest of the alley façade.

#### Inspiration for New Façade

The new façade design draws upon commonalities found within the local district—especially the Art Deco forms and motifs found on buildings like the David Stott tower and the Cunningham’s building—with the end result being a Post-Modern interpretation of classic Art Deco design. The new design is both sympathetic to the scale, form, and design of the surrounding district while still offering a new interpretation that could not be confused with a historic façade. The new design comports with the Elements of Design for the Capitol Park Historic District enumerated at Chapter 21, Article II, Division 5, Section 21-2-224 of the Detroit City Code and as summarized below:

- Height: 1 to 37 stories with the average height being 9 stories.
  - The new façade will be 11 stories in total.
- Proportion of front facades: Tend to be taller than wide.
  - The new building will be taller than it is wide.
- Proportion of openings on the façade: 35% to 60% openings on front façade. Storefront and display windows on first floor are common. Window openings tend to be vertical, rectangular, double-hung, fixed, and pivot windows centered within bays.
  - There are regular openings on the façade and there are large format storefront windows at the first floor. The new windows are rectangular in shape with fixed and operable awning sashes.
- Rhythm of solids and voids: Most buildings have a regular rhythm of solids and voids on primary façade...with the exception of United Savings Bank of Detroit Building at 1133-1139 Griswold.
  - The new design re-instates the regular rhythm of solids and voids in the building which was negated by the 1971 renovation.
- Rhythm of spacing of buildings: Buildings typically abut each other.
  - 1133 Griswold directly abuts its neighbor 1145 and the new addition brings the total height of 1133 in line with 1145.
- Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections: Little uniformity among primary entrances as many buildings in the district have several entrances to accommodate multiple businesses. Most entrances are flush with the façade and are typically located at grade level.
  - There will be two entrances into 1133 Griswold, and both are found at grade.
- Relationship of materials: There are a variety of building materials including brick, terra cotta, limestone, granite, concrete, stone, marble, and glass. Windows tend to be steel, aluminum, wood, and concrete.
  - The new façade will feature granite, a thin shell concrete material called GFRC (glass fiber reinforced concrete) which closely resembles real stone, and large aluminum framed storefronts at grade.
- Relations of textures: Rough surfaces of brick, stone, and concrete contrast with smooth surfaces like terra cotta, granite, and glass. The base often differs in expression and material than the upper cladding material. Textural variety is added by architectural details like belt courses, pilasters, arches, etc.

- The new façade design features both smooth materials (glass and granite) with rougher textures like the GFRC. Additionally, the design provides visual texture with belt courses/cornices, pilasters, and arches.
- Relationship of colors: Natural brick colors of red, orange, buff, tan, and brownish red dominate the district and are often contrasted with granite, concrete, tile, and stone ornamentation and bases that are red, beige, blue, and cream.
  - The new design blends these historic tones by including, buff, tan, and beige colors into the new façade.
- Relationship of architectural details: There are a wide variety of styles in the district including Art Deco, Beaux Arts, and Modern.
  - The new design finds inspiration in the Art Deco designs found in the district.

Note that although not all Elements of Design are discussed above, the vast majority of these design elements are echoed by the new design, resulting in a Post-Modern interpretation of classic Art Deco design elements.

#### Alley Façade including Limestone, Windows, and Fire Escape

One bay of the alley façade has been stripped of its cladding material and the CMU structure is visible—this bay will receive the same decorative treatment as the Griswold façade, please see the section above. The rest of the alley façade is clad in limestone with a blind arcade at the first two floors. Above this there are regular punched openings which are filled single hung wood windows which are in poor condition with open joints, excessive rot, and broken panes. Because of these excessively deteriorated conditions, the windows will be removed and replaced with fiberglass single-hung Pella Impervia windows with a black finish to match units utilized directly adjacent on the 1145 Griswold facade. An alternate is proposed for the single-hung windows, the Kawneer TR-9700 windows which would also match the units directly adjacent on 1145 Griswold's alley façade. The limestone on the alley façade will be cleaned and repaired. The fire escape is not needed for egress nor is it decorative or a contributing historic feature to the building. Because of this, it is proposed that the fire escape will be removed. All bolts, hangers, and other fasteners will be removed, and the stone will be repaired.

#### Rooftop

The current parapets on 1133 Griswold are almost 11' high on the Griswold façade and approximately 48" high on the alley façade. Both of these parapet walls will be removed to facilitate the construction of the new addition. Additionally, in order to accommodate the new addition, the existing penthouse structure on the roof will be removed. This penthouse is in poor condition and has no contributing architectural character. The roof will then be prepared for the new addition (discussed in detail, above). A new steel skeleton frame structure will be built to house the eighth floor addition and to provide a base of support for the upper three floors which will be constructed of cold-form metal steel bearing walls and steel joists. After the addition is complete, the new flat roof will receive an EPDM or TPO roofing system. New parapet walls of approximately 48" in height will be constructed and will shield small and mid-sized mechanical units from view. There will be no penthouse on the roof of 1133 Griswold, but rather, access to the roof will be accomplished through the existing penthouse of 1145 which is directly adjacent. A new door will open from the east face of the south penthouse to provide access to the 1133 roof.

#### Signage

At this time, no signage is proposed.

#### Work to 1145 Griswold

As mentioned above, the new addition on the top of 1133 Griswold will involve infilling windows on the party wall between 1133 Griswold and 1145 Griswold. New openings will be punched through the façade of 1145 to connect to 1133. After the new addition is complete the south and east façades of 1145 that currently extend above the roof of 1133 will no longer be visible.



## Lighting

It is proposed that flush mount lighting fixtures will be placed on the façade to accentuate the architectural elements. These fixtures will be embedded in the GFRC and GFRP features and will be minimally visible from the public right of way. These fixtures will be placed at the following locations:

- At the water table in between each bay, shining up.
- Above the second floor above the cornice/belt course, shining up.
- Set into bottom of the cornice/belt course at the eighth floor, shining down.
- Above the cornice/belt course at the eighth floor, shining down.
- At the cornice below the eleventh-floor balcony, shining down.
- In roof overhang cornice and shining down on balcony.

Additionally, code required utility fixtures will be added over alley doors and on the roof to provide visibility for maintenance. Please see the provided documents for a rendering which shows the intended locations and general aesthetic of these lights.

The items listed above provide a synopsis of the proposed scope of work for the rehabilitation of the building. Further detail is provided in the attached drawings and photos. Please contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Kraemer Design Group, LLC



Nate Lindsey, RA, NCARB

Senior Project Architect