



STAFF REPORT
WEST ALLIS PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, February 27, 2019
6:00 PM
Room 128 – City Hall – 7525 W. Greenfield Ave.

- 2A. Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plans for exterior building alterations and site improvements to an existing office building located at 1135 & 1205 S. 70 St., submitted by Cobalt Partners, LLC. (Tax Key No. 440-0257-002 & 440-0256-002)
- 2B. Signage Plan Appeal for an existing office building located at 1205 S. 70 St., submitted by Cobalt Partners, LLC. (Tax Key No. 440-0256-002)

Items 2A and 2B may be considered together.



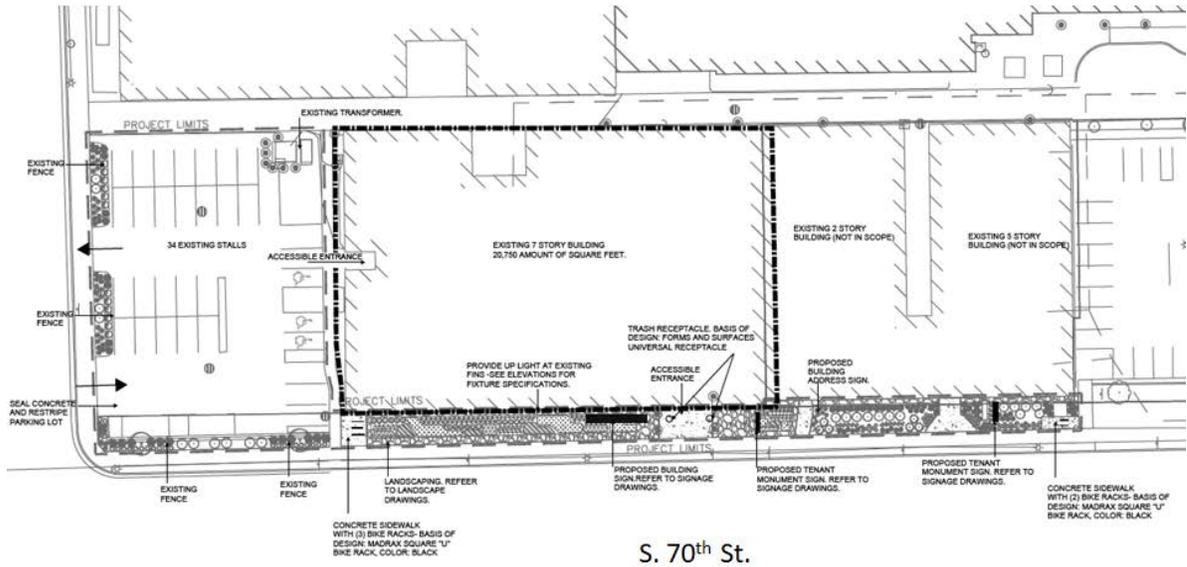
Overview & Zoning

RINKA, on behalf of Cobalt Partners, LLC, is proposing to clad the existing building at 1205 S. 70th Street (West Allis West Milwaukee School District building) with an aluminum composite paneling, to re-paint the existing painted brick, and to update signage. Additionally, the applicant is proposing updated landscaping for both 1205 & 1135 S. 70th Street, including the parking lot. These upgrades are proposed in conjunction with the larger West Quarter redevelopment project, which is envisioned to be a transit-oriented, amenity-rich, mixed-use district along both sides of S. 70 St. north of W. Greenfield Ave. 1205 & 1135 S. 70 St. are zoned C-3 Community Commercial District.



Site & Landscaping Plans

The proposed site plan includes the following elements: seal concrete and restripe parking lot; upgrade landscaping along W. Madison St. and S. 70th St. for parking lot, 1205 & 1135 S. 70th St. buildings; inclusion of bike racks; and new signage for 1205 & 1135 S. 70th St. buildings. The proposed landscape plan is comprehensive and includes a variety of new plantings.



Parking

The combined gross floor area for the buildings located at 1205 S. 70 St. and 1135 S. 70 St. is 155,593 sq. ft. The off-street parking requirements are one (1) space for every 300 square feet of gross floor space, or 519 parking spaces. The parking lot adjacent to the 1205 S. 70 St. building includes 34 parking stalls, three (3) of which are accessible (in line with required standards). There are two additional parking lots associated with these properties, located on the 900th block of S. 70 St. (116 parking stalls) and on the 1000th block of S. 70 St. (204 parking stalls). The three parking lots combined provide a grand total of 354 parking stalls. While the minimum parking requirements are not being met, this is consistent with previously approved plans.

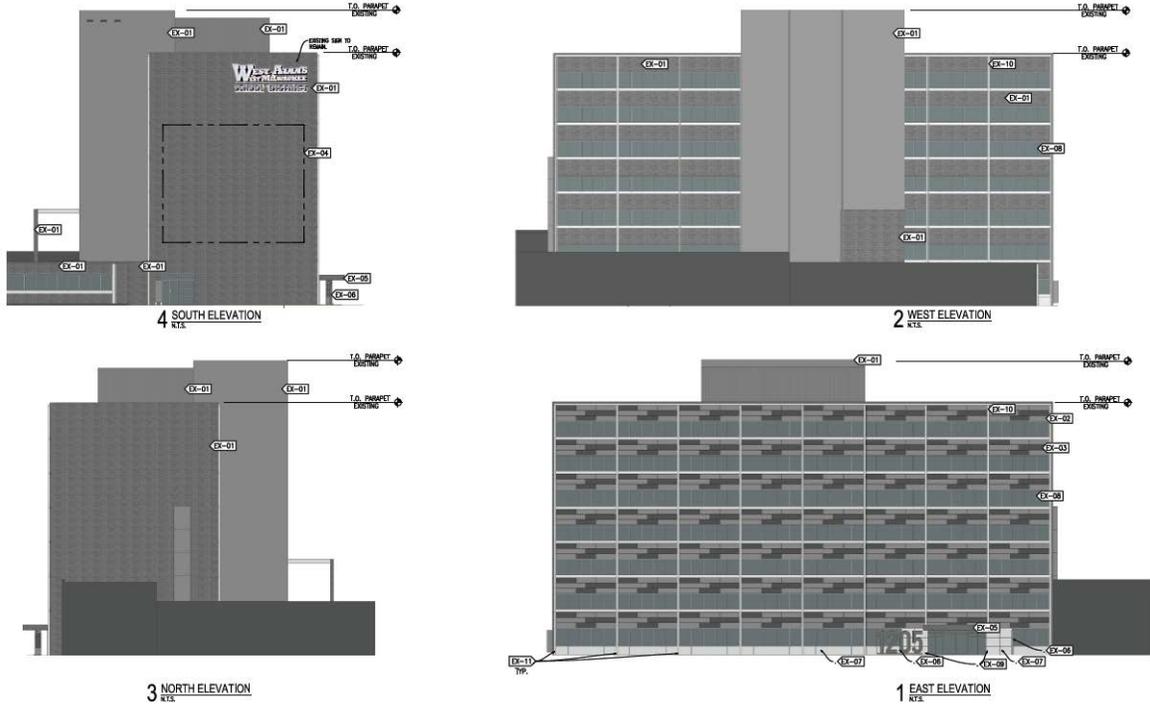
Architectural Plans

The current building façades are painted brick. The existing east and west façades have clear anodized ribbon windows with aluminum panels below, galvanized vertical fins, and a galvanized fascia fin. There is a small 1-story annex structure on the west side, which consists of similar building elements.



EXISTING BUILDING
N.T.S.

The applicant is proposing to clad the existing painted brick on the building's east side with black aluminum composite paneling. Half of the panels will be gloss and half will be matte. The existing window frames and associated aluminum panels will be painted. Brick on the north and west facades will be re-painted to a charcoal gray, and a West Quarter mural is proposed for the south façade. The main entry canopy will be re-cladded with gloss black aluminum composite paneling.



PROPOSED BUILDING
N.T.S.



Sign Plan Appeal

As part of this proposed update, the applicant is also requesting a Sign Plan Appeal, under the City's Creative Sign subsection within the Sign Code, for an additional freestanding sign at 1205 S. 70th St.

Creative Signs Overview

The Creative Sign subsection was created to "establish standards and procedures for the design, review and approval of creative signs" that do not otherwise conform to the existing code. The Plan Commission has the authority to approve creative signs.

In order to qualify as a creative sign, "the sign shall: (a) Constitute a substantial aesthetic improvement to the site and shall have a positive visual impact on the surrounding area. (b) Be of unique design, and exhibit a high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination, inventiveness, and spirit. (c) Provide strong graphic character through the imaginative use of graphics, color, texture, quality material, scale and proportion."

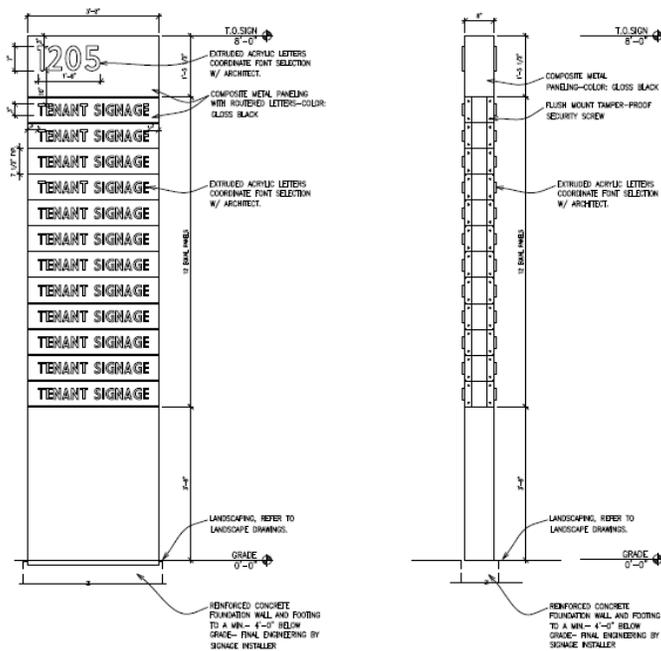
The sign shall also conform to contextual criteria by including "one of the following elements: (a) Classic historic design style. (b) Creative image reflecting the current or historic character of the City. (c) Symbols or imagery relating to the entertainment or design industry. (d) Inventive representation of the use, name or logo of the structure or business."

Sign Plan

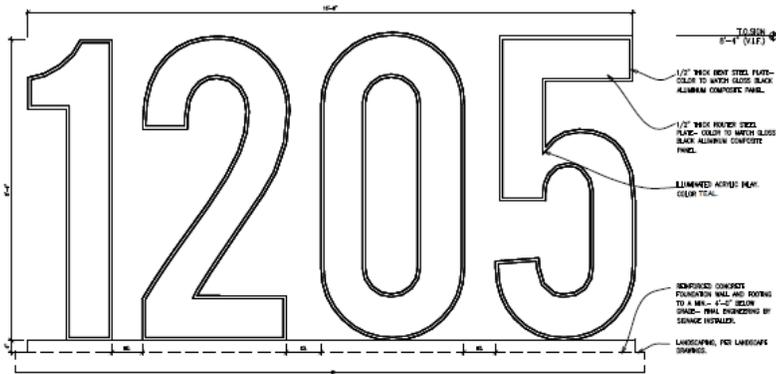
Free Standings Signage

The Sign Code permits 1205 S. 70 St. to have one freestanding sign up to 12-feet tall and 150 sq. ft. in area. Proposed signage for the property includes two freestanding signs:

- One freestanding tenant sign at 11 ft. & 3 in. tall and 70 sq. ft. (individually complies with code). The tenant sign will be gloss black with composite metal paneling with routed letters.



- One freestanding creative address sign at 8 ft. & 4 in. tall and approximately 139.5 sq. ft. (individually complies with code). The address sign will be made of gloss black ½ in. thick router steel plates with a teal illuminated acrylic inlay.



Staff finds the inclusion of the second freestanding address sign to be in alignment with the Creative Signs criteria (positive visual impact, strong graphic character through quality materials, scale, and use of color, and inventive representation of the structure).

Wall Signage

The Sign Code also permits 1205 S. 70 St. to have two wall signs with a maximum area of 200 sq. ft. Wall signage for the property is intended to include one West Quarter mural sign. The mural sign is expected to be larger than 200 sq. ft., and will also require a Sign Plan Appeal to be approved by Plan Commission. The applicant intends to bring the mural proposal to Plan Commission for review and approval as a Creative Sign at a later date.

Recommendation (2A): Recommend approval of the Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plans for exterior building alterations and site improvements to an existing office building located at 1135 & 1205 S. 70 St., submitted by Cobalt Partners, LLC. (Tax Key No. 440-0257-002 & 440-0256-002), subject to the following conditions:

(Items 1 through 3 are required to be satisfied prior to any work being done that is associated with the proposal reviewed by Plan Commission. Contractors applying for permits should be advised accordingly.)

1. Revised Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans being submitted to the Department of Development to show the following: (a) City Forester approval of the landscaping plan. Contact Katie Bennett, City Planner at 414-302-8463.
2. An estimated cost of landscaping and screening being submitted to the Department of Development for approval. Contact Katie Bennett, City Planner at 414-302-8463.
3. A surety bond or other form of security as required under Sec. 12.13(14) of the Revised Municipal Code in the amount of 125% of the estimated cost of landscaping and screening shall be executed by the applicant prior to the issuing of a building permit. Contact Katie Bennett, City Planner at 414-302-8463.

4. Request for a Grant of Privilege with approved plans being submitted by applicant to the City Attorney's Office, for issuance of an updated Grant of Privilege. Contact Margaret Jutz, Attorney's Office, at 414-302-8445.

(Remaining conditions of approval to be satisfied by the property owner within one year of Plan Commission approval)

5. Compliance with Section 2814 of the City's Policy and Procedures Manual relative to that policy as it relates to the replacement and repair to City walkways of damaged or defective (if any) abutting sidewalk.

Recommendation (2B): Recommend approval of the Signage Plan Appeal for an existing office building located at 1205 S. 70 St., submitted by Cobalt Partners, LLC. (Tax Key No. 440-0256-002).