

# CITY OF WASHINGTON

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

301 Walnut St. · Washington, IL 61571

Ph. 309-444-1135 · Fax 309-444-9779

<http://www.washington-illinois.org>

[joliphant@ci.washington.il.us](mailto:joliphant@ci.washington.il.us)

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Historic Preservation Commission  
FROM: Jon R. Oliphant, AICP, Planning & Development Director  
SUBJECT: Certificate of Appropriateness Request of Grist Mill Ventures, LLC, to Demolish an Existing Building and Construct a New Building at 140 Washington Square  
DATE: March 22, 2023

Grist Mill Ventures, LLC, plans to demolish the existing structures and construct a new building to house a brewpub and restaurant at 140 Washington Square. The site of the redevelopment includes two parcels which will be combined. Per the Square Building Design Guidelines, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) must be approved for the demolition of the existing structures, exterior design of the new structure, and the outside signage. The present buildings were constructed in 1950 and while not individually significant, are part of the Square Historic District. A variety of retail, office, and restaurant/food uses have been housed there during that time. The spaces within the buildings are currently unoccupied.

The proposed new building is intended to be compatible with the styles, zero lot lines, height, and scale of other Square structures while acknowledging that this would be a modern building amongst many that are more than a century old. It would use earthen tones similar to the brick color of the neighboring Danforth Building at 128 Washington Square. It would also use roughly the same parapet line as both adjacent structures. The windows are intended to allow for considerable visibility. Ten small round medallions would be placed near the top of the vertical ground level masonry-clad columns and one larger medallion would be located near the main entrance. Part of the second level would be exposed to accommodate an open-air eating and drinking area. The remainder of the upper floor would be enclosed to allow for year-round dining as well as up to five short-term rental units in the rear. The color of the wall signage on the Washington Square-facing façade would mirror the façade color scheme and be scaled appropriately. An attached narrative provides more depth on the inspiration behind the design.

The Square Building Design Guidelines includes a section covering infill building construction, a copy of which is attached. Per the guidelines, "...additional buildings may be considered if they add to the streetscape, promote economic development, and reflect the historic style of the surrounding buildings." The particular framework for infill buildings is as follows:

- New construction should utilize existing setbacks established by adjoining buildings. Most buildings in Washington utilize zero-lot-line conditions (no front or side setbacks). This building would be in harmony with those other structures.
- The back of the building, while not as important as the front façade, should generally match the adjoining buildings in building setback. This building would be consistent with most of those around the Square. A variance was issued by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) to waive the rear yard setback requirement that would ordinarily have been in place adjacent to the abutting alley.
- New construction should be oriented toward the Square. This building would be consistent with most of those around the Square.
- The height and width of the new building should be compatible with the adjacent buildings. In Washington, with a continuous façade in most parts of the downtown area, this means that the width should occupy the entire opening, if a building is to be located between two existing structures. The height should be one or two stories, depending on the side of the Square that the new construction is taking place. The height and width of this building would be consistent with the neighboring structures. The PZC issued a variance to allow for a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.0 rather than the

maximum of 1.0 allowed by the zoning code in the C-2 (General Retail) district. FAR is the numerical value obtained through dividing the gross floor area of a building by the total area of land on which such building(s) are located. The majority of the buildings around the Square have two stories with no setbacks and FAR's of about 2.0.

- The roof form should reflect the roof forms of neighboring structures, most often a flat roof. While part of the second level would not be enclosed to accommodate the outdoor beer garden, the remainder of the structure would have a flat roof.
- The new construction should be contemporary but should also reflect the design of historic structures. The design of this structure is intended to balance the history of many of the Square buildings while having a contemporary feel.
- If new construction is proposed to fill an area that historically is composed of multiple footprints, the front façade should have the appearance of traditional building widths rather than one large structure. This building would cover the width on the Walnut and Washington Square sides and be broken up evenly using vertical columns.
- Parking should be located to the rear of the building. Parking is also encouraged in marked on-street parking spaces in the Square. Allocating parking on the site is not realistic and it will utilize other public on- and off-street parking opportunities. The PZC issued a variance to waive both the off-street parking and loading requirements contained in the zoning code.

The draft exterior building design and wall signage renderings are attached. The COA request will be considered at the HPC meeting on March 30.

Attachments

**CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS**

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATION**

Applicant Name: CL Real Estate LLC Phone Number: 815-224-6574  
Owner Name: Grist Mill Ventures LLC Phone Number: 815-224-6574  
Contractor Name: Global Builders Phone Number: 630-522-330  
Architect Name: Lohan Architecture Phone Number: 312-809-8029  
Address or location of property: 140 Washington Square  
Property Tax ID Number (PIN): 02 \_02 \_24 \_108 \_016

Please describe the proposed work:  
(Additional Parcel 02-02-24-108-018)

The non-historic, 1950s existing commercial structure will be demolished and replaced with a two-story, commercial block, built on a slab, that reflects the massing, and basic façade organization, and materials of historic downtown buildings on the square. The parapet line is a continuation of 128 Washington Square's (The Washington Historical Society Building).

**PLEASE ATTACH:**

- The legal description of the property.
- Any architectural drawings or sketches to enable the Historic Preservation Commission to determine what the final appearance and use of the real estate will be.
- One hardcopy and one digital copy of the application and supporting materials.

*Certification: To the best of my knowledge, the information contained herein, and on the attachments, is true, accurate, and correct, and substantially represents the existing features and proposed features. Any error, misstatement, or misrepresentation of material fact or expression of material fact, with or without intention, shall constitute sufficient grounds for the revocation or denial of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness.*

  
Signature of Applicant

3-16-2023  
Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Date Application Completed: _____	Case No. _____

**Please contact Jon Oliphant, Planning & Development Director, at 444-1135 with any questions.**



ISSUED: 3/21/2023

## Certificate of Appropriateness – Design Narrative

Dear Washington Historic Preservation Commission

We would like to submit this short design narrative in addition to our application and provide some additional context.

In accordance with the goals of the Commission, the style of the building will not attempt a false historicity, but instead is contemporary, designed by the world-renowned architect, Dirk Lohan, whose works include Ravinia Pavilions, Soldier Field 2003 Addition, McDonald's Oak Brook Campus, and the Shedd Oceanarium.

The non-historic, 1950s existing commercial structure will be demolished and replaced with a two-story, commercial block, built on a slab, that reflects the massing, and basic façade organization, and materials of historic downtown buildings on the square. The parapet line is a continuation of 128 Washington Square's (The Washington Historical Society Building). The building will be built to be freestanding and will not affect adjacent historic buildings. In theory, its removal would not impair the historic district. The new structure will be a vast improvement in its contribution to the district, compared to the existing building.

The materials chosen are inspired by the founder of Washington, IL, William Holland, who settled here in 1825 while he was working for the Federal Government as a blacksmith. Holland built a horse-powered grist mill in town, which then became a defining institution that tied together the farmland and farmers in the surrounding vicinity. The materials echo these sentiments:

- Wood beams and terracotta slats emulate the old historic buildings downtown
- Bricks echo the many brick structures in the historic downtown
- Copper and black metals reference the blacksmithing history of the town's founder and the blacksmith that existed on site in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

We would like to note that furniture, fixtures, plantings, etc. depicted in the renderings are illustrative and may not be final. We do not believe that this should impact the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

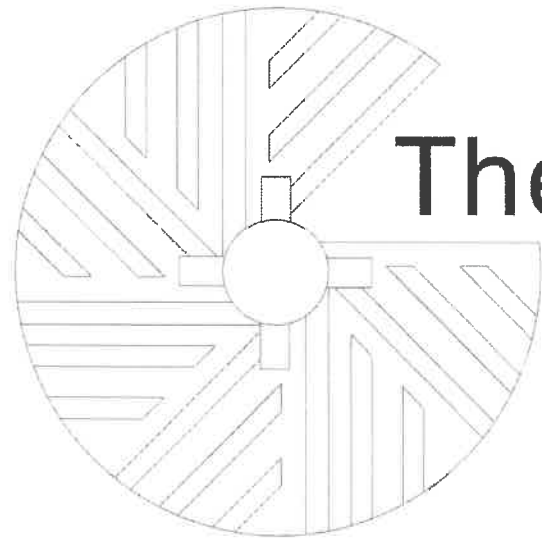
We believe that the building will be an asset to the community and that the brewpub will help to strengthen the economic base that sustains and renovates the many historic structures in the district. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

Nathan Watson  
Manager  
CL Real Estate Development  
nathan.watson@cl-red.com

CLRED is the real estate development company of family-owned CL Enterprises ([www.cl-enterprises.com](http://www.cl-enterprises.com)). CLRED is focused on unique opportunities in smaller towns and cities in the Midwest, using their own blend of creativity and bold new ideas to bring exciting and transformative projects to cities. CLRED invests in the projects they develop, putting their resources where they believe it will make a good return as well as making a transformational difference to the communities in which they choose to work.

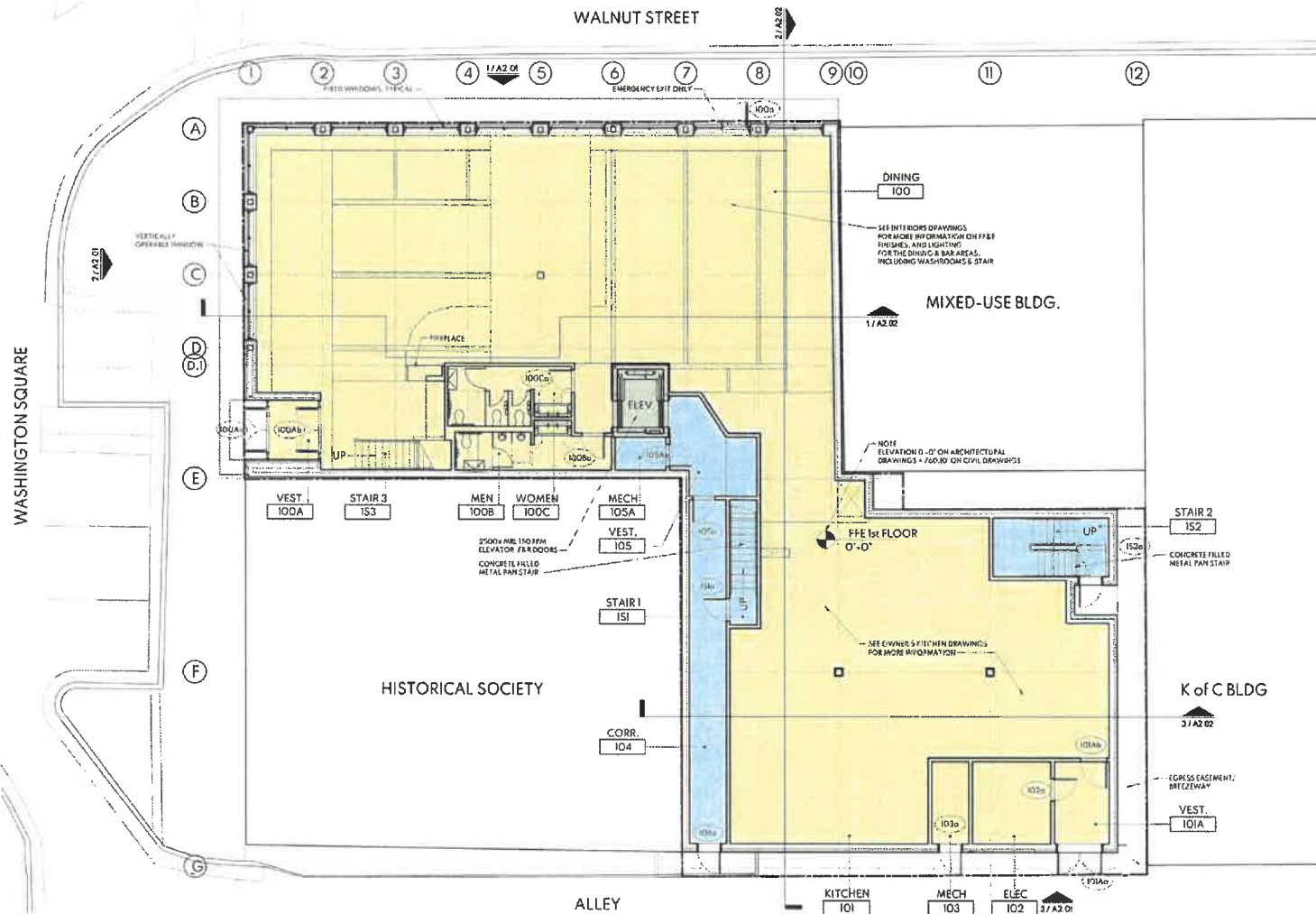
WEB: <http://cl-red.com/>



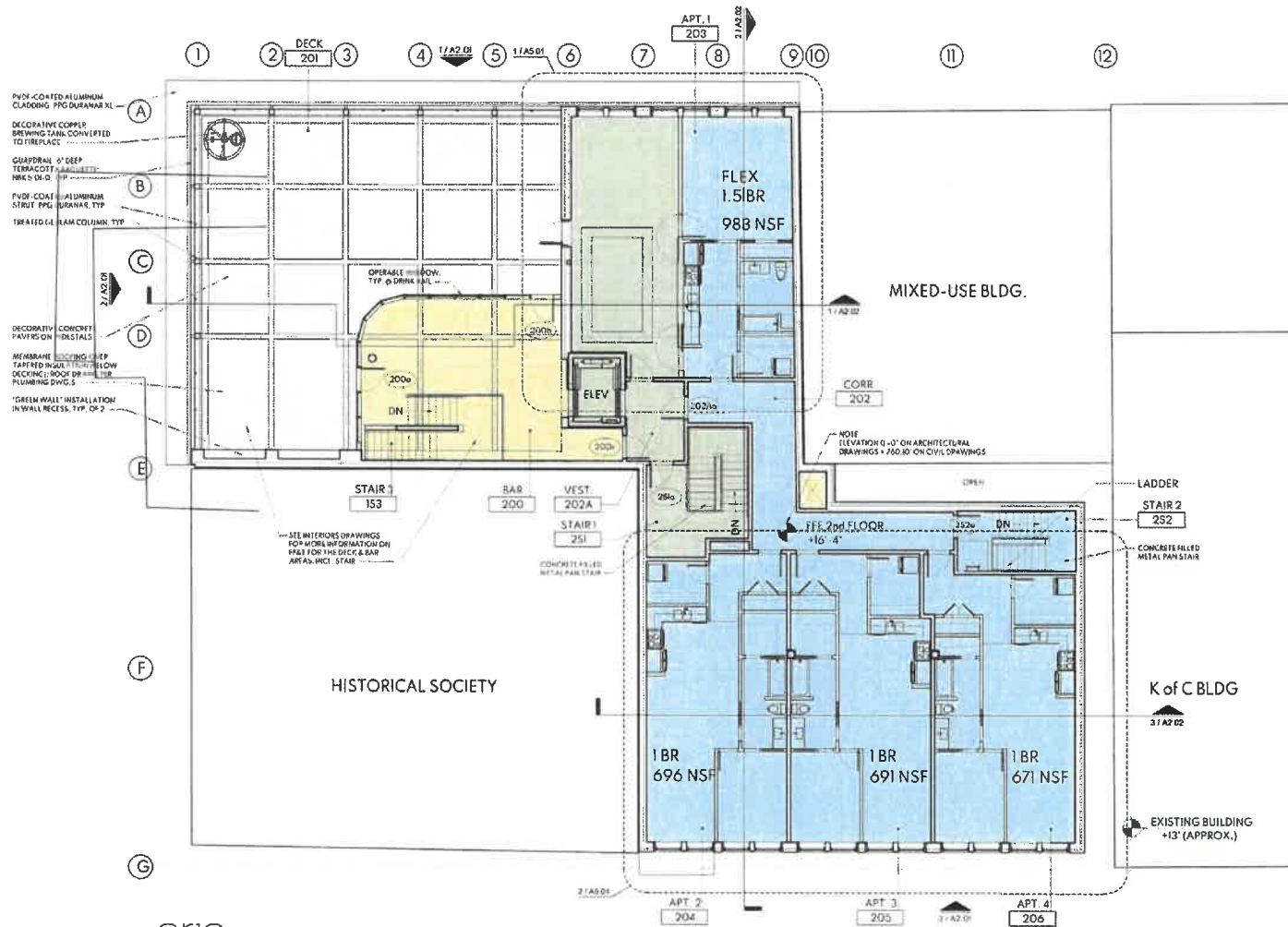
# The Grist Mill

Design Development Update



















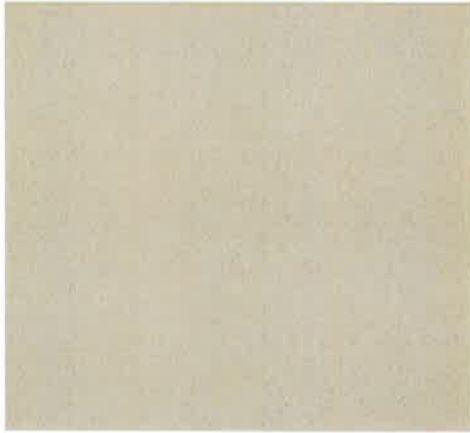












Terra Cotta 1 (Panels): NBK "1.01-0"



Terra Cotta 2 (Baguettes): NBK "5.01-0"



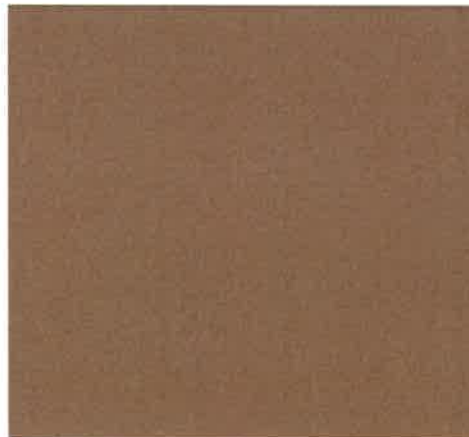
Glu-lam Timber



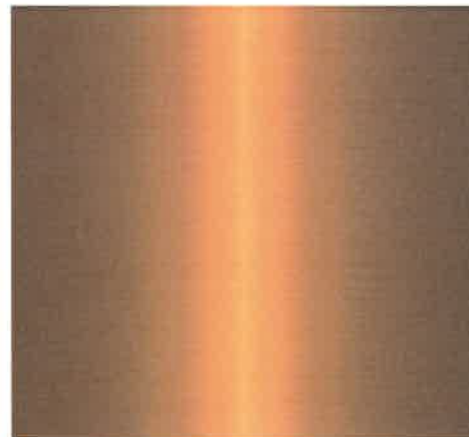
Green Wall & Planters: vertical hops



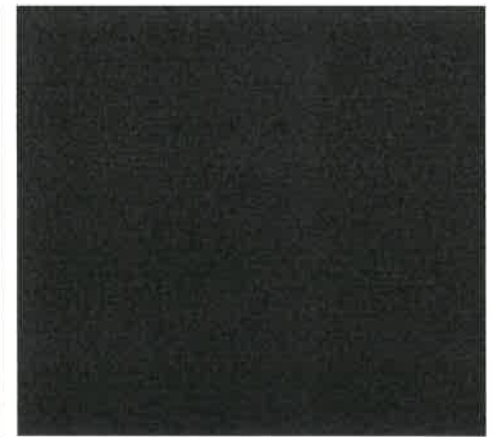
Brick: Belden "Durango Smooth" (Norman size)



Metal 2: Duranar XL "Copper Penny"



Metal 1 (Brewing Tank): Copper



Metal 3: Duranar "Statuary Bronze"

- (9) New Construction: New structures in a Historic District shall be compatible with the architectural styles and design in said districts. New construction is welcomed as long as it reflects the existing historic character of the commercial district. The characteristics, architectural detailing, size, and proportions of new structures and additions should be harmonious with the existing structures. Ultimately, new construction should not take the focus off the historic structures. The purpose of this section is to present guidelines for new elements to the district and to encourage design and quality that reflects the historic character of the surrounding district.
- (a) Infill Buildings: Where historic buildings have been lost or if there are vacant lots that are considering the addition of new construction, additional buildings may be considered if they add to the streetscape, promote economic development, and reflect the historic style of the surrounding buildings.
- (i) New construction should utilize existing setbacks established by adjoining buildings. Most buildings in Washington utilize zero-lot-line conditions (no front or side setbacks).
  - (ii) The back of the building, while not as important as the front façade, should generally match the adjoining buildings in building setback.
  - (iii) New construction should be oriented toward the Square.
  - (iv) The height and width of the new building should be compatible with the adjacent buildings. In Washington, with a continuous façade in most parts of the downtown area, this means that the width should occupy the entire opening, if a building is to be located between two existing structures. The height should be one or two stories, depending on the side of the Square that the new construction is taking place.
  - (v) The roof form should reflect the roof forms of neighboring structures, most often a flat roof.
  - (vi) The new construction should be contemporary but should also reflect the design of historic structures.
  - (vii) If new construction is proposed to fill an area that historically is composed of multiple footprints, the front façade should have the appearance of traditional building widths rather than one large structure.
  - (viii) Parking should be located to the rear of the building. Parking is also encouraged in marked on-street parking spaces in the Square.