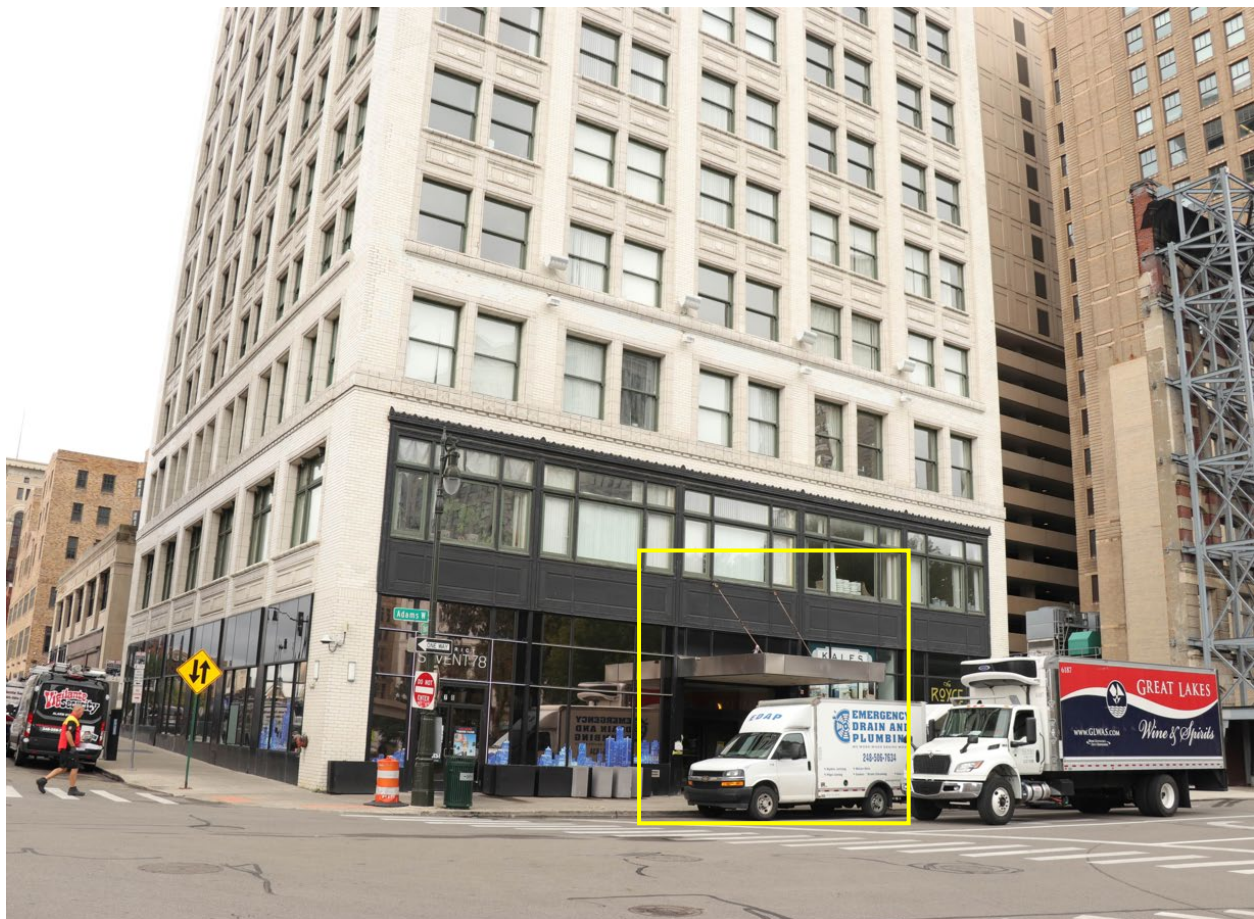


STAFF REPORT: OCTOBER 8, 2025 REGULAR MEETING PREPARED BY: B. SALIE
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00566
ADDRESS: 76 W. ADAMS
HISTORIC DISTRICT: GRAND CIRCUS PARK
APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER: THE KALES GRAND CIRCUS PARK LLC
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 09/15/2025
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 09/24/2025

SCOPE: INSTALL STOREFRONT DOORS* & FLOOR TILES*, REHABILITATE ROOF CANOPY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Kales Building, formerly known as the Kresge Building (named after founder S.S. Kresge) is an 18-story skyscraper located adjacent to Grand Circus Park. The building features storefronts on the first and second floor, and apartment units from the third floor and above. The building underwent extensive rehabilitation in 2004, and still sits as one of Detroit's most prominent historic skyscrapers today.



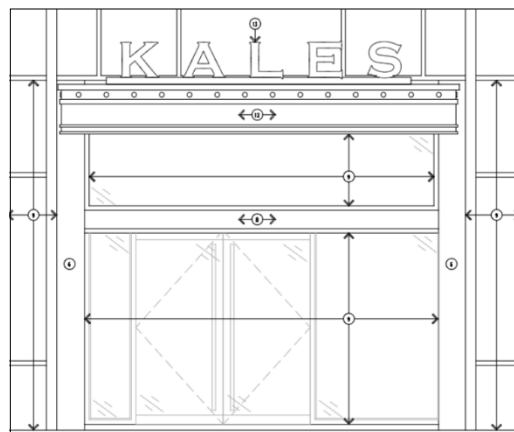
The Kales Building, 76 W Adams – Grand Circus Park Historic District. Photo taken by staff on 09/24/2025.

PROPOSAL

The Scope of work is as follows:

1. Rehabilitate storefront at the main building entrance
 - a. Install glass doors (with gold bronze handles)
 - b. Install new porcelain floor tiles at entrance
 - c. Rehabilitate roof canopy
 - d. Install “KALES” signage

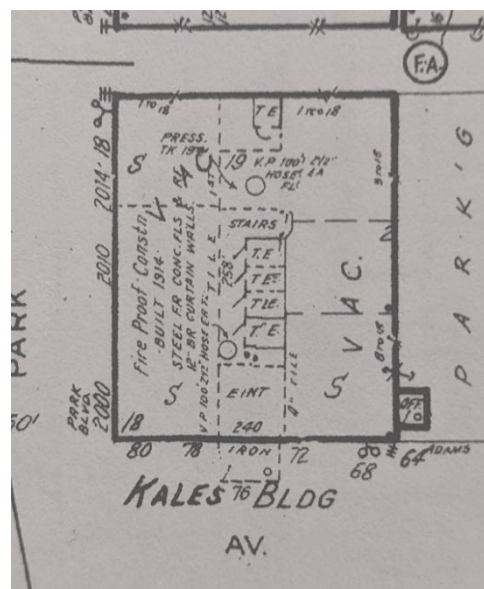
*With the exception of the proposed roof canopy rehabilitation and tile installation, **all of the above-listed work items have been completed without HDC approval.**



Proposed Front Storefront Elevation

STAFF OBSERVATIONS & RESEARCH

- Grand circus Park was designated as a historic district in 2002
- Grand Circus Park was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985
- Sanborn Map shows the roof canopy as an original feature of the historic building; which is also visible in the historic photos shown on the next page.
- After the building shutdown in 1981, it fell into disrepair, and the storefront lost its original roof canopy. The roof canopy that was built in its place is not within the period of significance and therefore alterations to the roof canopy may be considered, within the standards of review.



- The district’s designation report provides a description of the building’s storefront in 2002: *“The first floor retail storefronts have been reconstructed with **brown granite piers and aluminum surrounds for plate glass.** A bulkhead of brown granite continues to the ground. The original overhanging marquee awning recently fell from the building and was removed.”*

76 W Adams, storefront current appearance.
Photos taken by staff on 09/24/2025.





Photo 1: Taken in 1914



Photo 2: Taken in 1922



Photo 3: Taken in 1957



Photo 5: Taken in 2002



Photo 5: Taken in 2002

Photos 1-3 from the Detroit Public Library, Digital Archive: Burton Historical Collection

Photos 4-5 from 2004 Staff Report for the rehabilitation of the interior and exterior

- The compilation of historic photos show that the first level storefront has undergone multiple alterations since opening in 1914.
- Also, the below elevation drawing indicates that the most recent storefront, to include the extant canopy, as well as the aluminum doors, sidelites, transom and floor tiles which were recently removed without HDC approval, were installed in 2004.



Elevation drawing of new aluminum storefront and canopy, approved by HDC in 2004.



Storefront, canopy, and floor tiles that were installed in 2004. Photo provided by applicant. As noted previously, the transom, doors, sidelites and floor tiles captured in this photo were recently removed and replaced without HDC approval.

- The current canopy rehabilitation will result in an appearance that follows the flow of existing roof canopies within front entrances to skyscrapers surrounding the Grand Circus Park.

*Grand Park Centre Roof Canopy
Photo taken by Staff 09/24/2025*



- The proposed storefront design is compatible with the historic character of the building and its context, in staff's opinion, as it conforms to the District's Elements of Design. In particular, Elements # 3, 4, 6, 10, and 15, which state:
 - *(3) Proportion of openings within the façades. Large, square storefront windows and entrance bays line the ground floor of most buildings, although many are covered with temporary boards or other barriers and, therefore, their actual condition is not visible. Individual window units above the ground floors and/or mezzanines are usually taller than wide but are frequently grouped in openings that are as tall as wide or wider than tall. Openings containing more than three window units also exist. Groupings in arched configurations exist at the upper floors, mezzanine levels, and ground floors of some of the buildings in the district. Double-hung sash windows are prevalent, sometimes with transoms above, with pivot windows and other single-paned types present. Windows are frequently subdivided by muntins. The Central United Methodist Church features Tudor-arched openings and lancet windows with tracery and leaded glass. Where they exist, non-original materials on the façades often obscure the original proportions of openings within the façades. Consequently, areas of voids are approximate, and originally ranged from about one-third to two-thirds of the front façade areas, with the two-story building at 18-24 West Adams*
 - *(4) Rhythm of solids to voids in front façades. Voids in the front façades of buildings originally used for commercial purposes are generally arranged vertically in bays and horizontally by floor in a regular fashion due to the stylistic derivation of the buildings, their function and/or their steel frame and curtain wall construction. Voids are arranged according to functions of spaces behind them in the Central United Methodist Church: the front façade contains the main double door arched entrance flanked by arched windows; a large stained-glass arched window is located over the door; the tower contains a Tudor-arched entrance on the first floor of the south elevation and a window on the west elevation; and the other stories of the tower are fenestrated in a variety of ways with consistency at each level as are most other parts of the building.*
 - *(6) Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections. **The original arrangement of entrances creates an irregular pattern along the street. The placement of original entrances on individual façades is not consistent; rather, it is dependent on the width of the building and the number of retail spaces entered from the street. No façade projections beyond the front lot line exist at ground level; marquees and awnings above first-floor entrances were common and some still exist.***
 - *(10) Relationship of architectural details. Architectural details generally relate to architectural styles. Early 20th Century buildings exhibit roman arches, cartouches, fluted pilasters, and other Classically-derived details. The Fyfe Building on the northwest corner of Woodward and Adams Avenues and the Central United Methodist Church on the opposite, northeast corner, display details of English-Medieval-influence, such as tracery lancet arches, crenellation, shields and/or finials. On the taller buildings, ground floors, mezzanine levels and the upper levels are frequently areas of ornamentation. Where they exist, cornices are richly ornamented, sometimes with brackets and trim; where cornices have been removed, plain surfaces have replaced them. Spandrels between arches, tops of pilasters, and string courses also tend to be decorated. **Storefronts typically have apron walls and large expanses of glass, but are frequently altered or covered over.***
 - It is common within the historic district for first floor storefronts to have alterations.
 - *(15) Scale of façades and façade elements. Individual building façades range from small in scale*

to large, with the majority being in the moderate range. Details within individual façades range from small to moderate in scale; the repetition of small scale detail is common. Signage is provided for above the ground floor storefront windows, often in a panel designed for such purpose and sometimes as part of a marquee. Rooftop sign structures also exist.



2002



October 2025

- The tiles that were removed without HDC approval were not of historic age and had no impact on the historic integrity of the building.



Non-historic, ca. 2004 floor tiles which were recently removed without HDC approval. Photos provided by applicant.

- Staff's opinion that the change to the Kales Building storefront is appropriate for the historic district for the following reasons:
 - Storefronts within the historic district have undergone multiple changes over the decades
 - The storefronts and floor tiles which were recently removed without HDC approval were not of historic age/installed in 2004
 - The existing canopy is not historic/was installed in 2004
 - The new storefronts and floor tiles are compatible with the building's historic appearance and conform to the district's Elements of Design
 - The proposed rehabilitated canopy design better aligns with the building's historic character as well as its adjacent surrounds versus the current non-historic, brushed-aluminum canopy.

ISSUES

- None

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

Recommendation 1 of 1 – COA – Install storefront doors and floor tiles, rehabilitate roof canopy

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be appropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Grand Circus Park Historic District's Elements of Design.