

November 20, 2020

City of Detroit
Ms. Jennifer Ross
Historic District Commission
2 Woodward Ave., Suite 800
Detroit, MI 48226

RE: 2467 Cass Avenue—Atlanta Apartments

Dear Ms. Ross,

Kraemer Design Group, LLC (KDG) is writing on behalf of Sorin Enterprises, LLC to the Historic District Commission regarding the building located at 2467 Cass Avenue (also known as the Atlanta Apartments). The building is currently vacant, and this project will rehabilitate the building for new residential occupancy. The exterior rehabilitation plan for 2467 Cass includes brick and stone repairs, metal repairs, repairs to the entrance and new exterior doors, repairs to the balconies, installation of new windows, façade lighting, signage, new roofing, repairs to the rooftop penthouse, and rooftop equipment placement. The following is a detailed description of each exterior feature proposed to be rehabilitated.

Built around 1914-1915, the building at 2467 Cass Avenue is located at the southwest corner of Cass Avenue and Henry Street. The primary entrance faces east onto Cass Avenue. Both the east facade and the north facade (which faces Henry Street) are elaborately detailed with elements of the Italian Renaissance revival style. The building is four stories in height set on a raised basement and is faced in a muted orange brick in a running bond pattern with accents of honey colored stone. A prominent, green cornice is supported by heavy, metal consoles, also green in color.

The west facade is devoid of ornamentation beyond stone sills below each window. This facade is faced in dark brown brick. The south facade is also devoid of ornamentation and is faced in dark brown brick with the exception of the interior of the two deep indentations which are faced in a lighter colored brick. The bottom portion of the building, on all four facades, has been painted brown. The building is currently vacant, and the windows are boarded over.

Overall Site Plan

The district will be rehabilitated as a whole to create a unified, cohesive design. The local district comprises nearly the entire city block at the southwest corner of Cass Avenue and Henry Street with the western-most parking lot and the areas directly south of all buildings not included in the district. That being said, although the areas south of the buildings are not included in the district, because work is being proposed in two such areas—on the grassy area south of 2447 Cass and on an area directly south of 439 Henry—both areas will be discussed. The district consists of seven buildings situated along Cass Avenue and Henry Street.

The streetscape on Henry Street will be re-designed to eliminate most of the curb cuts as access to the parking lot between 489 Henry and 459 Henry will be accessed from the alley not from Henry Street. Further, that parking lot will be re-designed with a wide landscape buffer to shield the occupants of 489 Henry and 459 Henry from noise and headlight glare. A tot lot will be added to the area directly adjacent to the parking lot and 459 Henry. The sidewalk along the southern side of Henry Street will be retained, a wide greenbelt will be planted, and a decorative hardscape and patterned concrete will be used directly in front of 447 Henry for the anticipated retail/dining tenant. A forecourt will be created in front of each residential building by construction of a 12" concrete planter curb with ornamental plantings found within the forecourt. For the buildings along Cass Avenue – 2447 and 2467 Cass - an 18" aluminum garden fence will be placed in front of each building as well. The landscaping in front of each building will have a slightly different arrangement of landscaping and trees to provide greenery and visual interest to the buildings.

There is currently an alley running north to south between 439 and 427 Henry. This alley will be recreated into additional outdoor gathering spaces as well as parking for residents. The northern end of the alley will become a seating area with a granite chip surface—it will be surrounded by plantings and accessed through an aluminum fence and gate set back from Henry Street. The southern end of where the alley currently runs will become a surface parking lot with 15 parking spaces. The drive aisle will be accessed from the W. Fisher Service Drive. New concrete paving will be installed along the parking lot and provide access to 2447 Cass, 2467 Cass, 427 Henry, and 439 Henry. The



concrete paving will also extend in between 427 Henry and 2467 Cass. This area will have lawn furniture and will also be accessible via an aluminum fence and gate facing Henry Street. The alley that runs east to west, just south of the 439 Henry, 447 Henry, 459 Henry, and 489 Henry will be re-paved with asphalt and will remain accessible to vehicular traffic and barrier free entry to 439 Henry. A consolidated site refuse enclosure will be located along this alley and will be screened from the W. Fisher Service Drive with both plantings and a masonry screen wall. Along the service drive a staggered 6' tall ornamental aluminum fence will be built just south of 2447 Cass Avenue and the open green space south of 427 Henry to provide privacy from the I-75 service drive. In between 2467 and 2447 Cass, a public/private gathering space will be created with ornamental plantings and lawn furniture located closer to Cass Avenue, while a larger outdoor park for residents will be nestled further into the site, between the buildings, and will be accessed by an aluminum fence and gate off Cass Avenue.

Brick and stone

The building is clad in muted orange brick on the two primary facades (north and east) which is in fair condition in most areas with cracking, missing mortar, puncture holes, and some missing units found throughout. The brown brick found on the two secondary facades (west and south) is also in fair condition. At the base of the building on all four sides the brick has been painted brown. Overall, the brick is in fair-to-good condition. Stone is found at the entry surround, at windowsills, around each bay window, keystones and cornerstones found intermittently on the two primary facades, and the two columns which support the upper porch are also cast stone. The stone appears to be in fair to good condition overall.

All brick and stone are to be inspected for damage. The brown paint will be removed from any painted masonry and then all masonry will be cleaned with a light duty detergent and low-pressure water rinse prior to any masonry work to allow matching of mortar color. Brick and stone will be repointed, and loose or displaced units will be reset. Re-pointed mortar will match the color, texture, compressive strength, joint width and joint profile of the existing historic mortar. Damaged brick and stone will be repaired as necessary and loose or displaced units to be reset. If any units are too badly deteriorated to repair, they will be replaced—any salvaged brick will be reused where replacements are needed before new units are used. If new units are necessary, they will be selected to match the existing in size, profile, color, and finish.

Metal Cornice, Metal Bay Window Hoods, and Pressed Metal Spandrels

The cornice and consoles are comprised of pressed tin and are in fair condition. Corrosion, flaking paint, and damage is visible in some areas. Canted bay windows on the first three floors feature pressed tin spandrels and sit beneath a bracketed pressed tin hood, both of which are painted pale cream. The bracketed hood over each bay window is in poor condition with relatively significant corrosion visible. The metal spandrel panels appear to be in fair condition. All pressed tin metal work will be retained and repaired and repainted. If any tin work is too damaged to repair, new compatible metal will be used and will be painted to match the adjacent historic material.

Main Entrance and Doors

The main entrance is currently closed in with CMU units. These CMU units will be removed, and a new glazed panel door will be installed in the stone surround. The door will be compatible with the historic nature of the building without appearing falsely historic. The balconies will have new glazed panel doors. Please see the attached drawings for further details.

An ADA lift will be installed in the eastern-most inlet on the north façade of the building to provide ADA access to the first floor. A new entrance door will be installed in this location for access from the ADA lift into the building. Please see drawing for additional detail.

Windows

There are no windows in the building currently. Therefore, it is proposed that historic replica, aluminum clad wood windows will be used—these will be based on historic photographs, see attached.

On the east and north façades, it is proposed that eight-over-one and six-over-one units will be used in the bay windows. The east façade is the primary façade so it will receive six-over-one windows on the entirety of this façade with the exception of the aforementioned bay windows (which will receive both six-over-one and eight-over-one units) and the basement windows which will be one-over-one single hung units.



On the north façade, besides the bay windows already mentioned (six-over-one and eight-over-one units), the rest of the windows on the north façade will receive one-over-one windows. The secondary facades (south and west) will receive one over one single hung units.

Façade Lighting

Exterior building lighting will be provided and designed to highlight building features. Lighting locations may include up lights on the west façade and wall mounted fixtures flanking the entrance. Final lighting cut sheets are not yet available and will be provided to staff for review once ready.

Signage

Currently there is no signage on the building beyond the stone-inscribed "ATLANTA" above the main entry door. It is proposed that future signage will be reinstated in the same location. Final signage drawings (including size, color and design) will be submitted for staff approval before installation.

Roof, Rooftop Mechanicals, and Penthouses

The building currently has a flat membrane roof in poor condition; it will be removed and replaced with a new EPDM roof. Small condensers will be added to the center and western side of the roof with painted metal panel mechanical screens added to obscure the condensers. This location was selected so that the units will be minimally visible from the street within a one block radius—please see attached sightline study. The perforated metal screens will be gray in color. There are two penthouses in poor condition on the roof. Both will be rehabilitated and retained.

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, renderings, reports, and photos. Please contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Kraemer Design Group, LLC



Brian Rebain, RA, NCARB
Principal

