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# HOLCOMB

DEVELOPMENT

January 31, 2022

City of Detroit  
Planning & Development Department  
2 Woodward Ave. Suite 808  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Attn: Ms. Audra Dye, Architectural Historian

RE: 686 Selden St. Window Replacements

Dear Ms. Dye

I am writing in response to your email from Friday, January 28, 2022 regarding the Historic District Commission submittal for the window replacement project at 686 Selden St. in Detroit. I hope to provide additional context to the submittal and larger rehabilitation project at 686 Selden St.

Our client, GW 1 Cass, LLC purchased the subject property in January 2020 and immediately commenced with a significant rehabilitation to the property. The general construction project included a complete replacement of the plumbing, electrical and life safety systems & kitchens, a rehabilitation of the bathrooms and mechanical system among other improvements. Throughout construction GW 1 Cass, LLC took significant care and spent funds to not only preserve the interior historic nature of the building but also repair damaged historic elements despite the additional expense vs replacement.

A sample of these repairs are itemized below:

- A complete like replacement of the building's oak flooring
- Restoration of the building's original elevator
- Uncovering & restoration of the buildings original ornate lobby, including a specialty plaster ceiling & marble flooring restoration
- Restoration of the building's original bathrooms
- Restoration of the building's textured plaster walls

In addition to the significant interior restoration, our client endeavored to repair & preserve the front façade which is the most prominent and focal façade of the building. Consistent with our previous submittal from last year, Holcomb replaced deficient front façade windows on floors 2-4 and had specialty trim carpenters repair & restore the front, first floor wood radius windows. This restoration included the complete custom rebuild of many of the radius windows.

As evidenced by the above work, GW 1 Cass, LLC has demonstrated their commitment to the historic stewardship of 686 Selden St. & a commitment to the Willis-Selden district in general. I believe it pertinent to highlight the interior renovation in context of this commitment. While many developers would opt for cheaper materials (i.e. vinyl flooring, drywall, tile inserts, etc) GW1 Cass, LLC went over and above to properly restore these elements despite a tight construction budget, rising material pricing and financial constraints.

Over the course of the original project, GW1 Cass, LLC & Holcomb continued to discover that our original repair scope of the existing windows on ancillary facades of the building was not feasible to accomplish in a way that was consistent with the new quality of building and despite a repair, would create discomfort among residents. The existing windows were replaced with out approval by the previous owner, are vinyl sliders circa 1990s and are severely deficient & broken. Upon extensive investigation of repair options and pricing of this scope, the project team opted to explore the complete replacement of these windows.

During this exploration the project team was faced with exponential material pricing escalation. We received pricing from multiple vendors for aluminum clad-wood windows & fiberglass options. The pricing of these projects had risen over 20% since the purchase of the front windows. To compound our issues with material pricing, labor availability had increased our per-unit replacement pricing by nearly 15%. In light of these issues, Holcomb explored the cost & availability of vinyl windows that would appear historically accurate & also work within these new budget constraints.

I appreciate the opportunity provide additional context to our submittal and the work of our client GW1 Cass, LLC. It is strongly our desire to restore the historic look of windows at 686 Selden St. despite the significant constraints of the market that we face presently.

Sincerely,



Andrew Casazza  
Managing Partner

cc:

Sarah Pavelko, GW 1 Cass, LLC  
Gene Casazza, Holcomb  
Matt Lelli, Holcomb