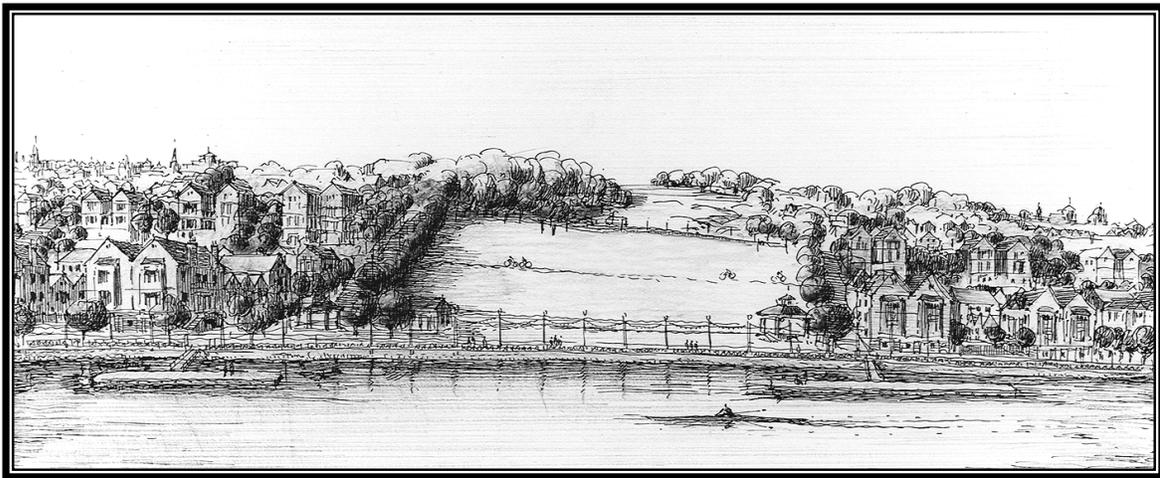


**B E E R L I N E**

**"B"**

**MASTER PLAN &  
NEIGHBORHOOD CODE**



**Engberg Anderson Design Partnership  
Solomon, Inc.  
JJR Incorporated**

*PREPARED FOR*

**Redevelopment Authority of the  
City of Milwaukee**

May 1999

# Chapter 1 • Preliminaries

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

Support for this planning effort came from many sources. Our process included three public meetings and numerous meetings with interested individuals and constituent groups. We wish to acknowledge the following city officials, stakeholders, individuals, and groups for their contributions.

### **City of Milwaukee**

Mayor John Norquist  
 Alderwoman Marlene Johnson Odom  
 Commissioner Michael Morgan  
 Peter Park  
 Michael Wisniewski  
 Janet Grau  
 John Hyslop  
 Commissioner James Kaminski  
 Thomas Miller

The following firms comprise the Beer Line "B" Project Team:

### **Engberg Anderson Design Partnership**

Charles Engberg, AIA  
 Mark Ernst, AIA  
 Thomas Hofman (Team Leader)  
 Kevin Donahue

### **Solomon, Architecture & Urban Design**

Daniel Solomon, FAIA  
 John Ellis AIA, RIBA  
 Thai Nguyen  
 Nils Hammerbank  
 Benjamin Carlson  
 Malesun Harris

### **JJR Incorporated**

JJR/Madison

### **STS Consultants, Ltd.**

Steven Hunt, P.E.  
 Paul Tarvin, P.E.  
 Kevin Brehm, P.E.

### **The Jenann C. Olsen Company**

Jenann Olsen

### **Martinsek & Associates**

Kristine Martinsek

### **Larsen Engineers, SC**

Roger Harris

### **The Mandel Group**

Barry Mandel  
 Richard Lincoln

## Chapter 1 • Preliminaries

### Community Stakeholders

The following individuals who represented themselves, local neighborhoods, and local businesses were generous in their participation and support by attending the public meetings as well as meeting with the planning team members.

Gary & Patty Ahrens *Milwaukee Rowing Club*  
Frank Alioto *Brady St. Association*  
David Berkley *Martin Luther King EDC*  
Eva Berry *Daily Reporter*  
Steve Bialk *Brewer's Hill*  
Jay Blankenship *Children's Outing Asso.*  
Brigette Breitenbach *Riverwalk District*  
Dennis Burgener *Resident*  
Tim Burns  
Ellen Callahan *Brady St BID*  
Mike Carnahan  
Walt Chowanec *Melanec's Restaurant*  
Jeff Clausen *Business Owner*  
Bob Crawford *MPS Teacher*  
Fletcher Crawford *Halyard Park Asso.*  
Jeff & Catherine Crawford  
Dorothy Dean *County Supervisor*  
Sam Deny *Schlitz Park*  
Tim Dixon *Resident*  
Michael Dries *Business Journal*  
Angela Duckert *Brewer's Hill*  
Ginger Duivan *East Village Asso/Brady St Asso.*  
Mary Dzeiwiontriski *Brewer's Hill*  
M. Eastwood *Brewer's Hill*  
George J. Edward  
Gene Eggert *Architectural Designs*  
Bill Farmer *MMSD*  
Shirley Ferguson *East Village Asso/Brady St Asso.*  
Janet Fitch *Neighbor*  
Mark Franke *Brewer's Hill*  
Claude Gagnon *Resident*  
Denise Gaumer *Hunter Group*  
Sharon Gayan *DNR*  
Jim Gormley *Foley & Lardner*  
Gary Grunau  
Charles & Carolyn Hampton *Halyard Park Asso.*  
Patrick Hartmann *GMCVB*  
Michael Hatch  
Sherman Hill *Harambee Ombudsman Program*  
C. Kay Hinchliffe *Neighborhood*  
Mark Jeske  
Steve Marcus  
Michelle Love Johnson *ESHAC*  
Stephen Johnson *Uptowner/Homeowner*  
Mike Kaufmann *Homeowner*  
Jim & Nancy Ketchman *Brewer's Hill Asso.*  
Ann C. Kinney  
Russ Klisch *Lakefront Brewery*  
Julilly Kohler *Brady Street Asso.*  
Kate Kolitz *Brewer's Hill Asso.*  
Jason & Mark Krasno *Bella Luna Pasta*  
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Lazenby *Homeowners*  
Julie LeSage *Resident*

Mike Loughran *DPW*  
Mike Lowrey *Neighborhood*  
Shel Lozoff *Realtor*  
Chris Magruder *MMSD*  
Tonya Mantilla *ESHAC*  
Henry Manzer *Homeowner*  
Tom Mellencamp *RACM*  
Nicholas Migan  
Paul Milakovich  
Mary Ann Mitchell *Brewer's Hill Asso.*  
Jim Moran  
Bill & Annie Nalen  
Ken Nelson *Milwaukee Rowing Club*  
William Nolen *Brewer's Hill*  
Dave Novak *DPW*  
Kevin Oglesby *Brewer's Hill*  
Emily Overholt *Homeowner*  
Bob Plusnick  
Matt Plusnick  
Marty Probs *East Village Asso.*  
Carl Rogahn *MMSD*  
Joshua Roland *Student UWM SARUP*  
Yoshiko Rongholt *Homeowner*  
Donna Rongholt-Niegan *Homeowner*  
Randy Roth *King Drive BID*  
Dave Rotter *National Ace Hardware*  
Max Samson *Children's Outing Asso.*  
Ray Schaefer  
Bill Scherbarth *East Village Asso.*  
Donna Schlieman  
Wat Schumann  
Mike & Julie Scott  
Maron Sherwood *Brewer's Hill*  
Donna & Pete Siegworth *Brewer's Hill Asso.*  
Gerald Skalmusky *Homeowner*  
Shaun Smart *Homeowner*  
J.W. & Faith Spear *CH2MHill*  
Moreen Spear  
Deana Swetlik  
Jay Allen Stokes *ICRC*  
Cathy Thomas *East Village/Brady Street*  
Lynn Torgerson *DNR*  
Charlie Trainer *TMB Development*  
Debra Usinger  
R. Waswo *Resident*  
Will Wawrzyn *DNR*  
Michael Weber *Brewer's Hill*  
Jenny Weiss *Riverwalk District*  
V. Wilson *Brewer's Hill*  
Claude Yates  
Patty Yurich *Homeowner*  
Tom Zabjek

**1.0 Cover Page**

1.1 Title Page .....1-1  
 1.2 Acknowledgements .....1-1  
 1.3 Table of Contents .....1-3

**2.0 Introduction**

2.1 Goals and Objectives .....2-1  
 2.2 Process of Neighborhood Involvement .....2-1  
 2.3 History of Site .....2-2

**3.0 Site Analysis**

3.1 Milwaukee Density Study .....3-1  
 3.2 Surrounding Built Context .....3-7  
 3.3 Site Access .....3-11  
 3.4 Riverfront/Riverwalk .....3-12  
 3.5 Existing Civil & Utilities Analysis .....3-16  
 3.6 Preliminary Environmental Evaluation .....3-18  
 3.7 Existing Geotechnical Conditions .....3-18  
 3.8 Existing Topographical Analysis .....3-19

**4.0 Master Plan & Planning Principles**

4.1 Master Plan .....4-1  
 4.2 Alternative Land Use .....4-7  
 4.3 Density .....4-8  
 4.4 Proposed Foundation/Ground Improvement Alternatives .....4-8  
 4.5 Environmental Management .....4-11

**5.0 Neighborhood Code**

5.1 Regulating Plan .....5-1  
 5.2 Urban Code .....5-1  
 5.3 Architectural Code .....5-21  
 5.4 Landscape Code .....5-25

**6.0 Appendices**

6.1 Market Overview .....6-1  
 6.2 Preliminary Environmental Evaluation .....6-4  
 6.3 Existing Geotechnical Conditions .....6-11

# Chapter 2 • Introduction

## 2.1 Goals and Objectives

The Beer Line "B" project has evolved from a series of investigations exploring the revitalization of the area between Pleasant Street and Humboldt Avenue along the Milwaukee River. Formerly an industrial and commercial zone along the river, it has for many years been grossly under utilized. Because of its strategic location in the middle of vibrant urban neighborhoods, the City of Milwaukee Department of City Development has undertaken several studies using its own staff in conjunction with a variety of consultants to examine the nature and possibilities of this unique urban area.

This study is in response to the City's request to examine residential and neighborhood commercial development as a new use for this land. Although under multiple ownership, the vision for this underutilized land is a unified development for new urban housing with commercial and recreational components. This vision capitalizes on the natural amenities of the river, the former Beer Line "B" rail right-of-way, and the views to the downtown afforded by the steep bluffs.

Major goals for the project are as follows:

- Design a unified pedestrian friendly master plan which uses the amenities of river frontage, flat land, existing infrastructure, and the steep terrain to integrate this new development area into the downtown, the adjacent neighborhoods, and the Riverwalk system.
- Develop a market-responsive plan which provides a diversity of building types with the emphasis on owner-occupied housing.
- Connect the Brewer's Hill neighborhood with the new area below by extending elements of the upper street grid to the river.
- Examine the potential of Kilbourn Park and its relationship to the development areas adjacent to the river and the Riverwalk system.
- Provide additional information regarding the suitability for development and disposition of multiple parcels vis-à-vis existing buildings, infrastructure and environmental condition.

- Use the area's topography and natural amenities to develop unique public places and housing typologies.
- Involve stakeholders and adjacent neighborhood residents in identifying issues and building consensus and support for the final development plan.

In the context of the above-stated goals, the design team has worked with the Department of City Development to develop the following project objectives:

- Produce a final document which will be useable by the City as a basis for writing discrete "Requests for Proposals" from developers.
- Develop the final document as a "code" for decision-making regarding zoning issues, acceptable densities, building typologies, landscape amenities, open space strategies, and integration with the expanded infrastructure.
- Provide within the "code", design and density guidelines which provide a strong framework, yet allow developers creative flexibility to propose alternative options for given pieces of property.
- Design an overall plan in which the development interests of existing landowners are accommodated.
- Improve overall traffic patterns and ease of access to and through the site taking into account "traffic calming" measures suitable to a residential area.
- Increase the public's access to the river at several points within the development area, carefully differentiating public areas from private.

## 2.2 Process of Neighborhood Involvement

The design team involved the neighborhood as follows:

- Publicized the fact that the design process for the Beer Line "B" area is seeking to involve interested groups and individuals.
- Invited stakeholders (i.e., major land owners, representatives of neighborhood groups, members of the business community, agency representatives, etc.) to participate in workshops.

## Chapter 2 • Introduction

- Held six public meetings to discuss:
  - Goals, objectives, and issues.
  - Options for the development plan and its components.
  - A final draft development plan which incorporates the specific concerns of groups and individuals.

The preliminary development plan has been described throughout this process as a conceptual plan which emphasized choice and flexibility.

These public meetings were established to make public the sequential evolution of the planning process and to demonstrate at each level of refinement that public input was being heard and incorporated as a major resource throughout the entire initiative.

Outside the public meetings, the design team had numerous interviews with constituent groups and individuals to discuss in detail the ways in which proposals could affect their respective interests.

In addition, the team produced articles for various neighborhood and business association newsletters and a newsletter named the "Beer Line Buzz" to inform neighbors and stakeholders of the progress. This process was extremely helpful in defining the final master plan, particularly with respect to the use of the waterfront, the character of the housing, the relationship to the park, and finally, to the stakeholder interests on specific land parcels.

### 2.3 History of Site

---

The Beer Line "B" site along the west bank of the Milwaukee River, between Pleasant Street to the south, Humboldt Avenue to the northeast and Kilbourn Park and Reservoir Boulevard to the northwest, was developed in the early nineteenth century as part of Milwaukee's prospering industrial revolution. The rivers and lake were the dominant geographic features of the area and greatly aided in the transformation of Milwaukee from an early fur trading post to a major economic and industrial center. The Milwaukee River became navigable by large vessels only after a new harbor entrance from Lake Michigan was completed in 1857, allowing ships upstream and creating opportunities for development as far as the northern portions of what is today the Beer Line "B" site.

Byron Kilbourn, a surveyor, financier and ambitious land developer, was eager to develop other transportation links with local waterways, cities and ultimately the Mississippi River in 1836, so he obtained a land grant and charter to build the Rock River canal. Actual construction of the canal began in 1839, along with a dam across the Milwaukee River just south of North Avenue that helped to divert and harness the power of the flowing water for industry. Unfortunately for Kilbourn, the popularity of another form of transportation, the railway, proved too much for the success and completion of the canal and the project was abandoned with only one mile of canal constructed. The portion of the canal that was built paralleled the west bank of the River and provided a source of water power for the grist mills, flour mills, tanneries, foundries and factories which sprang up between the River and the canal. In 1884, after years of neglect, the obsolete canal was filled in and paved over to become Commerce Street. By the early 1900's, the influence of the Milwaukee River on industry and transportation had almost been totally usurped by the popularity of steam driven power and the railroad.

By the 1850's, the influence of the river on the growth of commerce and industry was in great decline. In 1854, the La Crosse and Milwaukee Railroad built a rail line along the west bank of the canal, traversing the natural bluff. This rail line serviced the factories, mills, tanneries and coal yards before climbing the grades of the bluff to the Humboldt Yards and roundhouse north of the Beer Line "B" site and immediately east of Humboldt Avenue. As with the canal, the necessity of the railroad as the major mode of transportation for the site diminished to the point of extinction in the 1920's. The tracks were removed due to the decline in rail activity along the corridor by the advent of new highway systems. At this point in history, industry was no longer tied to the river for its source of power and transportation, and the factories, mills, and foundries moved elsewhere where land was plentiful and access more convenient.

In November of 1959, the last boat delivery of coal to the site of the former Humboldt Avenue detention tank was off-loaded marking the end of the importance of the Beer Line "B" site to the industrial growth of Milwaukee. Most of the buildings that had been dedicated to this growth and progress, just decades earlier, were razed. The remaining buildings on the site have been adequately reused. The former Gimbel's

warehouse is converted into apartments and the City's Forestry building has been renovated into a microbrewery. Today, just a small amount of development activity continues while most of the site remains fallow.

Sources for this portion of the report include:

- "Phase I Environmental Site Assessment of the Beer Line "B" Project Site Milwaukee, Wisconsin"
- "Beer Line "B" Redevelopment Study", by HNTB, October 21, 1991
- "RFP, Beer Line "B" Redevelopment Area Master Plan and Neighborhood Code
- The Best of All Worlds; Milwaukee, Ruth Fromstein, Copyright 1990