



CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 3/20/2023

To: Mayor and Planning, Heritage and Design Commission Members

From: City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

Division Manager: Jeff Hintz – (262) 636-9151 jeff.hintz@cityofracine.org

Case Manager: Jeff Hintz

Location: 209, 219 and 303 Dodge Street

Applicant: River's End Real Estate, LLC

Property Owners: River's End Real Estate, LLC

Request: Consideration of Z.Ord.0002-23, which would change the zone from I-2 General Industrial to B-5 Central Service District at 209, 219 and 303 Dodge Street.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The current property owner acquired the properties subject to this request and several others in the general vicinity on February 17 of 2023. The properties subject to this request for rezoning previously operated as restaurants, but under a conditional use permit since the property is currently zoned industrial. When the restaurants vacated for 12 consecutive months, the existing conditional use permits became null and void.

The general area was rezoned from I-2 to B-5 in 2006, but the subject properties were not rezoned at that time. The proposed B-5 zone is consistent with that of the surrounding area and also allows for the operation of a restaurant (among other things). The subject properties are within the Downtown Design Review District, and any exterior changes do require review and approval prior to any Building Permit(s) being issued.



Birdseye view of the properties, outlined in red (image from City Pictometry).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: 02526000, 02529000, and 02528000

Property Size: Approximately 60,000 square feet (1.35 acres)

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: Commercial

Consistency with Adopted Plans:

The [Racine Comprehensive Plan](#) states that:

- The plan should encourage the redevelopment of older areas and commercial areas.
- Maintain and develop a land use pattern that strengthens the character and livability of the City's downtown core, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods.
- New development should be designed so it is compatible with established development.

Corridor or Special Design District?: Downtown Design Review District

Historic?: No

Current Zoning District: I-2 General Industrial

Purpose of Zone District: The I-2 general industrial district is intended to accommodate those industrial activities which may produce moderate nuisances or hazards in areas that are relatively remote from residential and commercial development. .

Proposed Zone District: B-5 Central Service District

Intent of proposed Zone District: The B5 central service district is intended primarily to furnish areas served by the B4 central business district with a wide variety of services which may be incompatible with the uses permitted in the B4 district. The B5 district also serves as potential expansion areas of the B4 district.

Existing Land Use: Restaurant buildings and a surface parking lot.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	B-5 Central Service	Vacant land
East	B-5 Central Service	Marina facility
South	B-5 Central Service	Root River
West	B-2 Community Shopping	City-owned open space

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards (under the flex):

Density ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 5 [Bulk Regulations](#) & 8 [Lots](#)):

Standard	Required	Provided
Lot Area	No minimum	1.36 acres
Lot Frontage	30 feet	470 feet
Floor Area Ratio	8.0 maximum	.26

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): This will be reviewed when exterior changes are submitted for consideration.

Off-street parking and loading requirements (114- [Article XI](#)): The provided parking meets the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): The existing improvements on the property comply with the requirements of the municipal code.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage will be reviewed during the design review process.

Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)): The existing buildings appear to have their lighting configured in a manner which complies with the requirements of this section.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): The existing trash storage facility location complies with the requirements of this section.

REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:

ZONE CHANGE FINDINGS (Sec. 114-82. - Findings of fact and recommendations of Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission.)

The plan commission shall make findings based upon the evidence presented to it in each specific case with respect to, but not limited to, the following matters:

1) The Existing uses of property within the general area of the property in question.

Staff Comments: The uses in the area are a mixture of former industrial sites which are now mostly vacant land, and commercial facilities related to the operation of a marina. Industrial uses once would have selected a site like this for transportation when the City was founded, but with the advent of the railways and later on motor vehicles and roadways, the site became less important for industrial uses. In 2006 the bulk of the property in this area was zoned out of industrial, but the restaurants had valid conditional use permits to operate, and were not rezoned.

2) The zoning classification of property within the general area of the property in question.

Staff Comments: Given that the properties are surrounded by commercial uses and undeveloped property, the current I-2 General Industrial zoning on the property is too intensive for the area and not complimentary to the existing and established uses. Historically speaking, the industrial zoning made sense, but is not what the property should be zoned now or going into the future. The proposed zoning designation fits into the development patterns of the area. It is expected that the B-5 zoning, similar to that of the general area is more conducive to the expected development patterns in an area along the river, just across from the downtown core.

3) The suitability of the property in question to the uses permitted under the existing zoning classification.

Staff Comments: The buildings on this property subject to the request are restaurants and are proposed to be opened again as restaurants. The rezoning guarantees that the noxious and incompatible uses allowed for in the I-2 zone district will not be able to locate on this property. The subject property is along the Root River and a very unique property in terms of location; the commercial, office, and

residential uses allowed by this zone district are a much better fit than plants, factories, warehousing, and other intensive facilities allowed in the most intensive zone district in the City.

4) The trend of development, if any, in the general area of the property in question, including changes, if any, which have taken place in its present zoning classification.

Staff Comments: The trend of development in this area is not industrial and has not been for some time. On the subject properties, they have had a conditional use permit as early as 1979 to operate a restaurant, so the land use has not been as intensive as the base zoning would allow for many years. The general area was rezoned in 2006 and since the restaurants were allowed to operate with conditional use permits, the owner did not rezone them. Now that the conditional use permits are no longer valid, having expired for over 12 months, a rezoning will allow the restaurants to open as a permitted use, but also, the rezoning will remove industrial uses which should not occupy this general area.

5) The objectives of the current land use plan for the city.

Staff Comments: The Comprehensive Plan calls for this area to be “commercial.” The B-5 designation on its face is of course commercial, but the zone district allows for a mix of commercial uses, office uses, and some opportunities for residential development as well. The zoning district is generally flexible within those aforementioned categories and going forward, would make the most sense for the property when considering all of the criteria subject to this application.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING, HERITAGE, AND DESIGN COMMISSION

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Recommend the adoption of an amendment changing the zoning classification of the property in question to any higher classification than that requested by the applicant; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request.

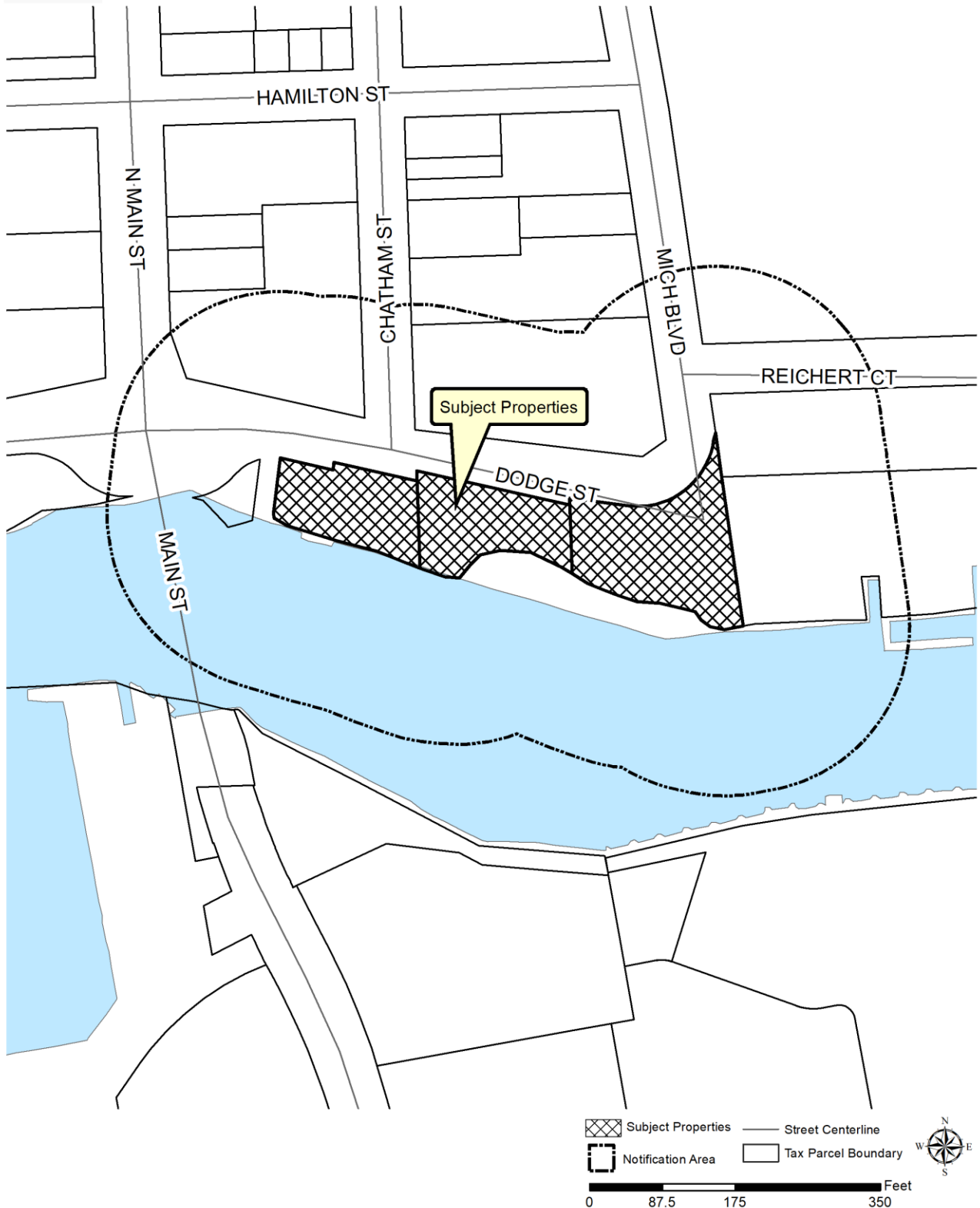
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: That ZOrd.0002-23 be adopted, which would rezone 209, 219 and 303 Dodge Street from I-2 General Industrial to B-5 Central Service District.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Property owner notification map indicating the subject property;
- 2) Aerial Photo indicating the subject property;
- 3) Zoning Map indicating the subject property;
- 4) Land Use Map from Comprehensive Plan, indicating the subject property;
- 5) Site photos of the property and general area; and
- 6) Submittal documents (view in legistar).

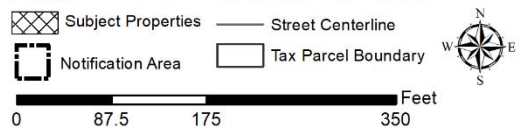
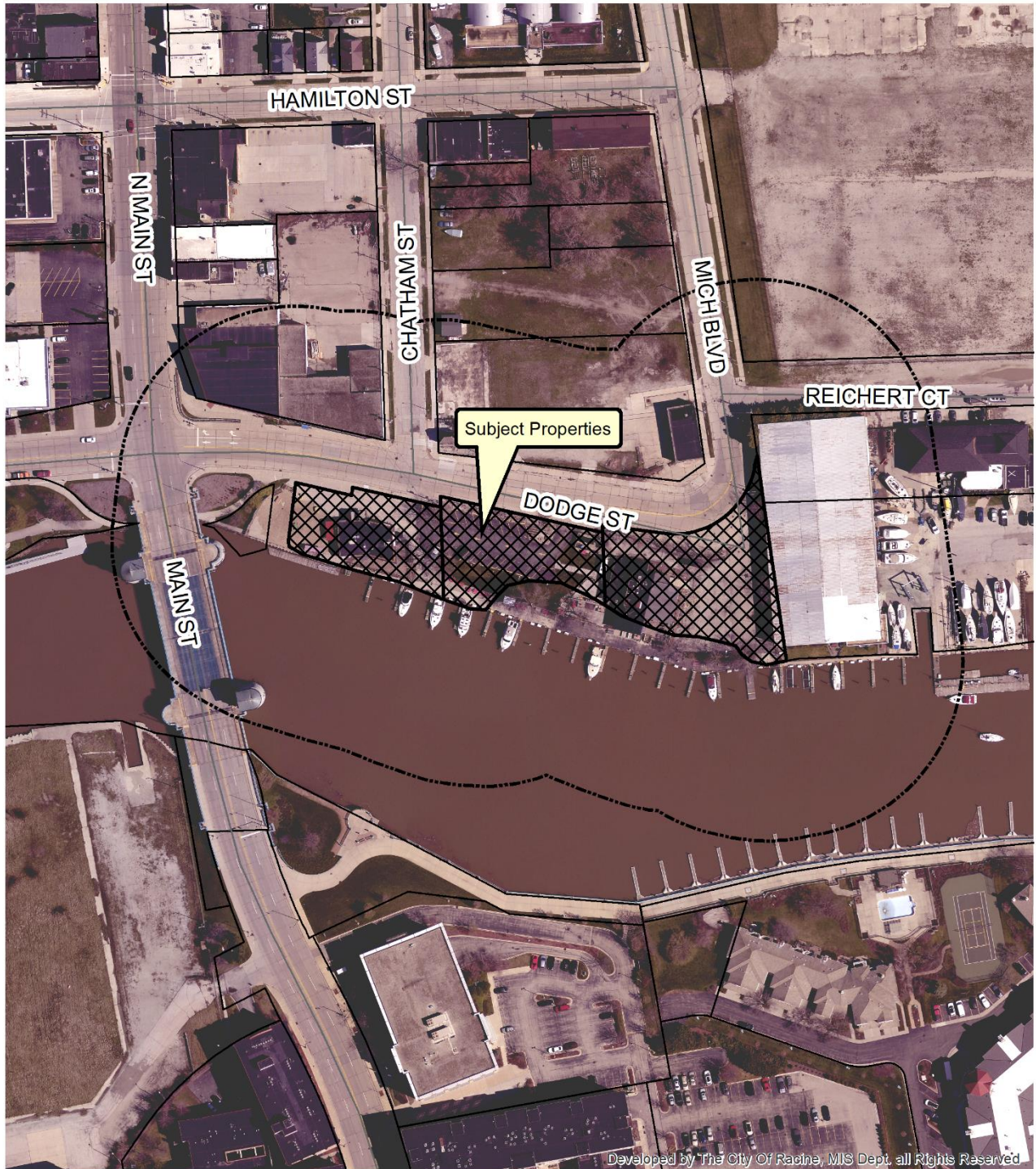


Rezoning Request - 209, 219 & 303 Dodge Street



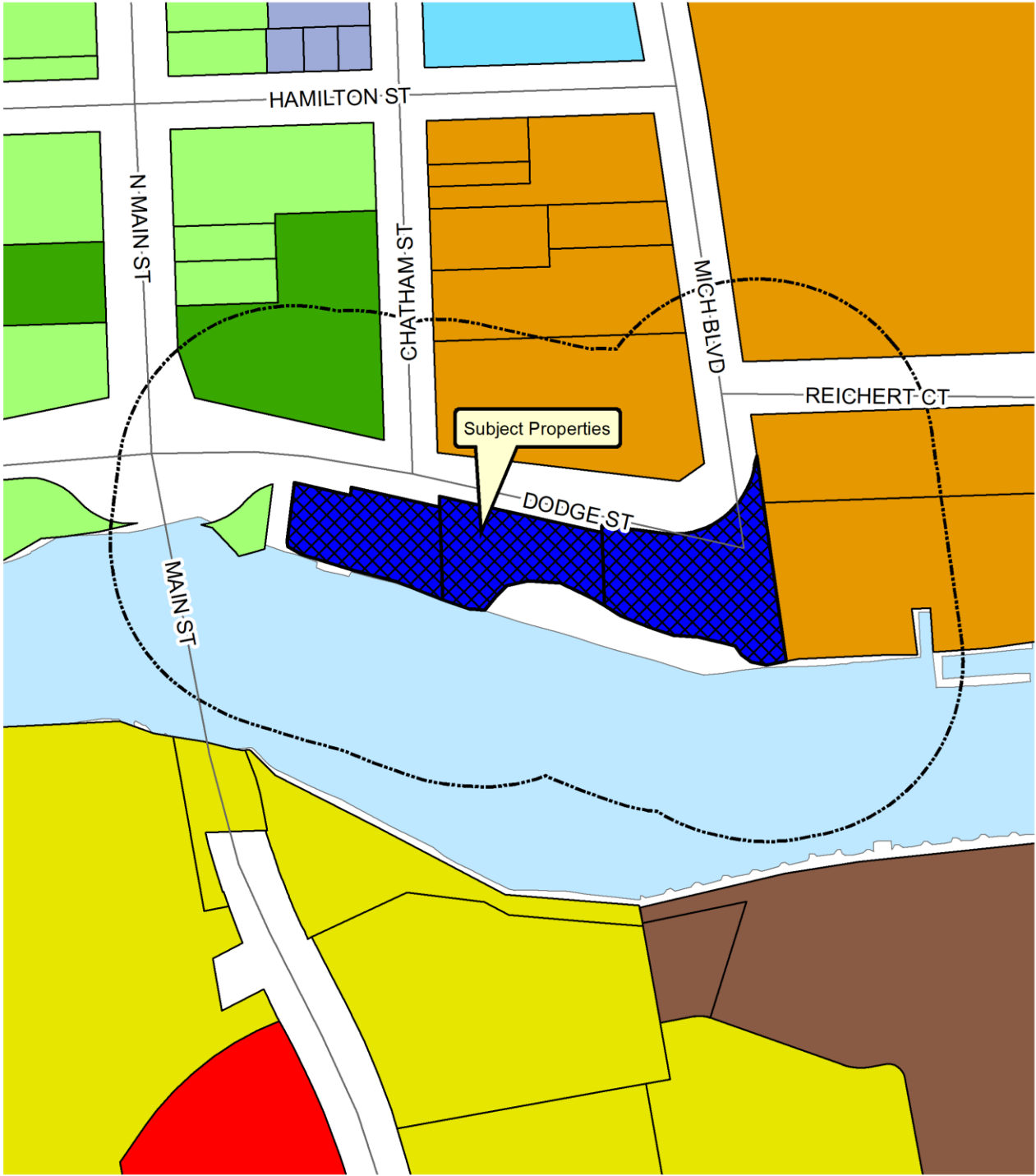


Rezoning Request - 209, 219 & 303 Dodge Street





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Zoning Designation

I-2	B-4	R-5	I-1	R-6
B-5	B-3	B-2	R-3	

Subject Properties

Notification Area

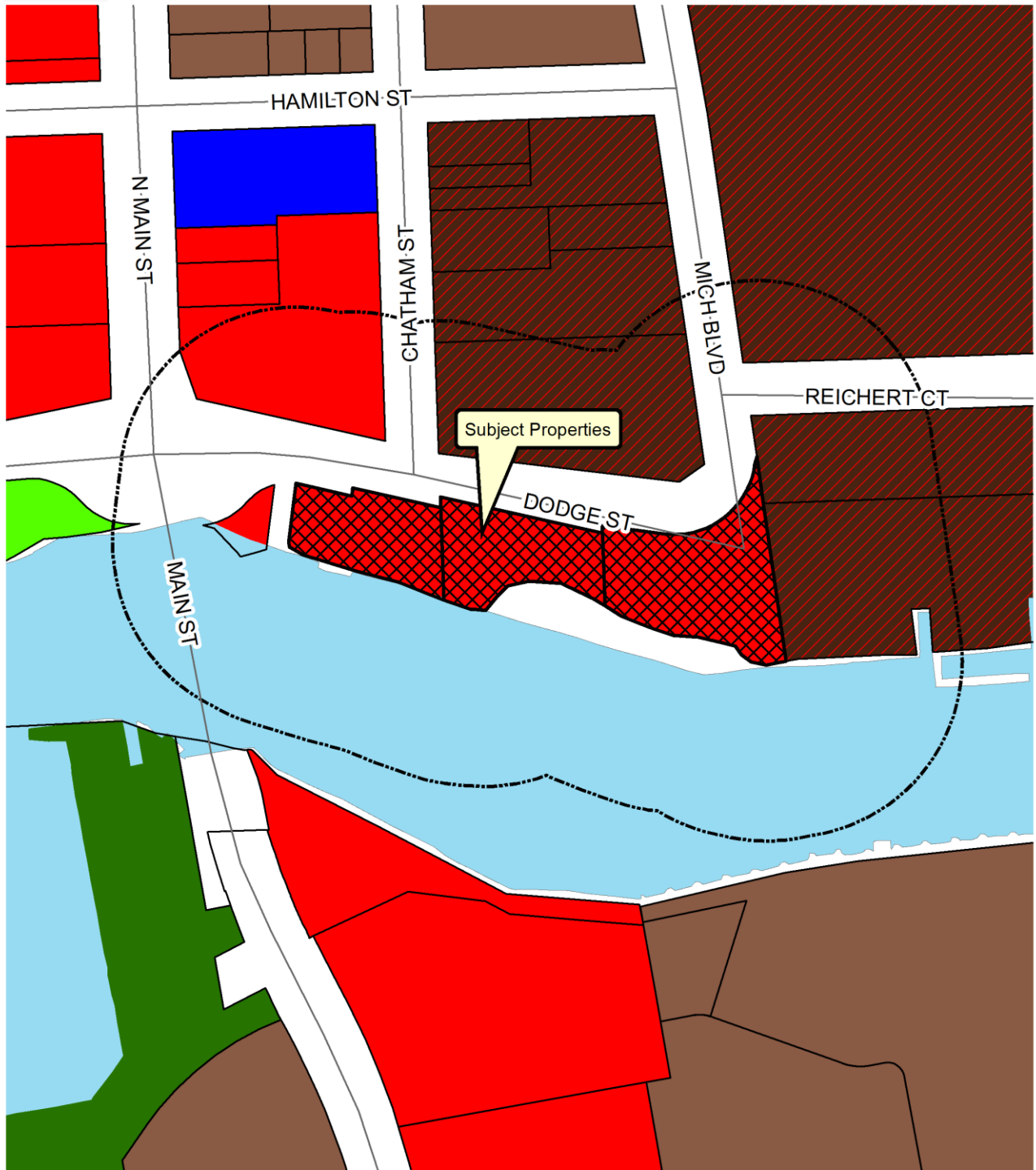
Street Centerline

Tax Parcel Boundary

0 87.5 175 350 Feet

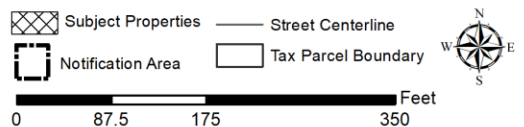


Rezoning Request - 209, 219 & 303 Dodge Street



Land Use Designation

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Commercial | Mixed Use - Residential Emphasis |
| High Density Residential | Governmental and Institutional |



Site Photos



Looking southwest at 303 Dodge Street



Looking south at 209 Dodge Street



Looking east from 219 Dodge Street



Looking north from the subject properties



Looking west in front of 303 Dodge Street



Looking north from 219 Dodge Street