



## **CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** 6/9/2021

**To:** Mayor and Planning, Heritage and Design Commission Members

**From:** City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

**Division Manager:** Matt Sadowski – (262) 636-9152 [matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org](mailto:matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org)

**Case Manager:** Jeff Hintz

**Location:** 1908 De Koven Avenue and 1730 Phillips Avenue

**Applicant:** Jacquet Midwest

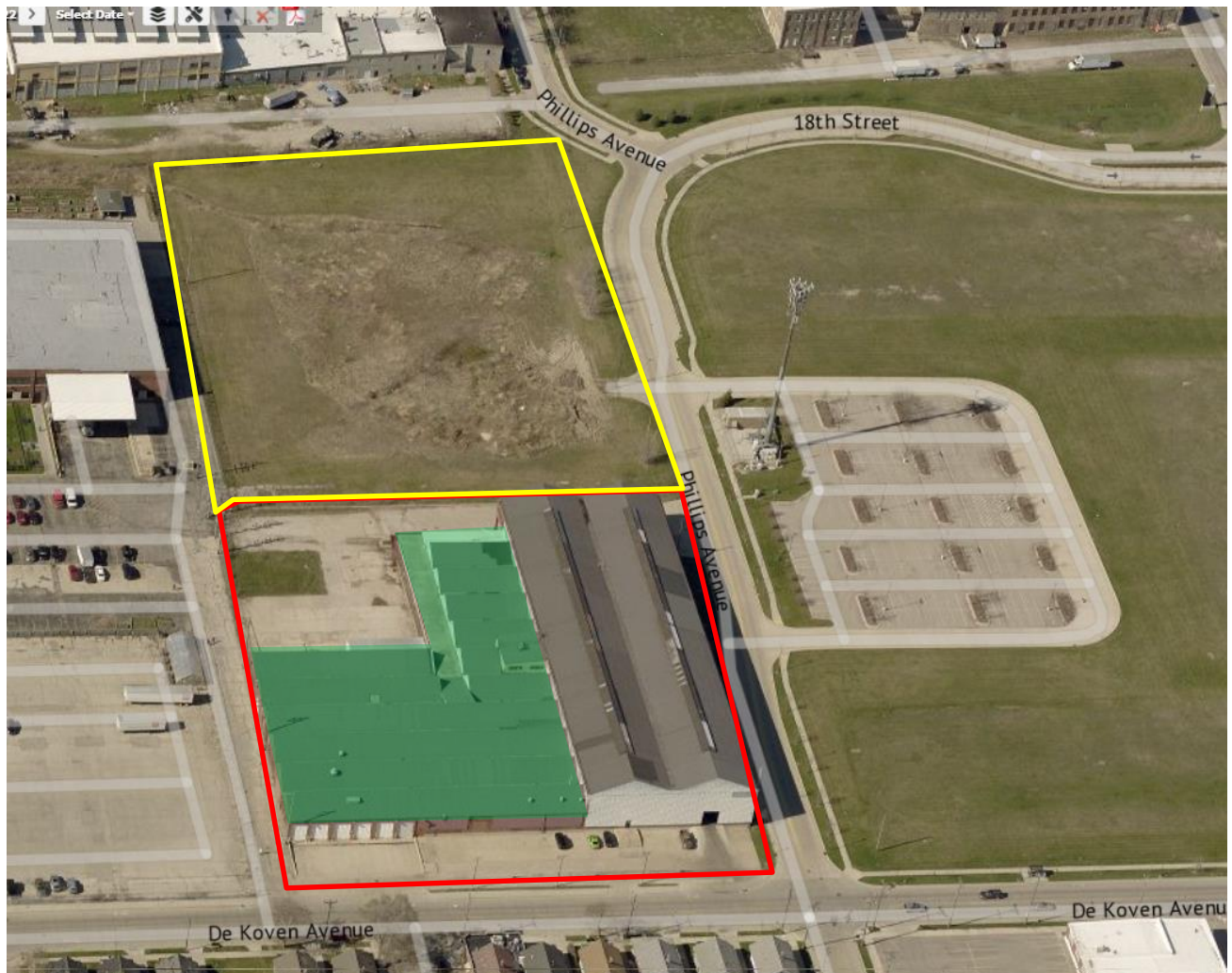
**Property Owner:** DeKoven Properties LLC and City of Racine Community Development Authority

**Request:** Determination of a yard for an industrially zoned property across the street from a residential district, as required by Sec. 114-570(2) of the Municipal Code and consideration of a design review of the proposed materials and façade treatments as allowed for by Sec. 114-735.5(b)(3) of the Municipal Code for proposed building remodeling and addition at 1908 De Koven Avenue and 1730 Phillips Avenue.

**BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:** The applicant proposes a substantial remodel of the facility which would demolish 39,796 square feet of the existing 89,089 square foot facility. An addition of 74,109 square feet is planned, resulting in a finished building of 113,905 square feet. Additional warehousing and processing areas for the business would be added to the facility, and a new office would be added on the southern portion of the building. A paved storage area with screening is included to the north of the facility and would be used for a future expansion when business needs dictate. The remainder of the existing building would receive an updated façade treatment to match the proposed addition to the facility.

Sec. 114-570(2) of the Municipal Code requires the Planning, Heritage and Design Commission to determine a yard (front in this case) since the industrial development is across the street from a residential district. In no case shall the required yard be greater than 25 feet; the proposal from the applicant is calling for an approximately 10-foot yard.

Sec. 114-735.5(b)(3) of the Municipal Code allows the Planning, Heritage and Design Commission to review the overall design of the building for compliance with that of the adjacent development.



Birdseye view of the property. Applicant owned portion indicated in red, City of Racine Community Development Authority portion in yellow (image from City Pictometry). Portion of the building to be demolished in transparent green shading.



Proposed Site Plan, (north is up) submitted by applicant.

Full renderings and elevations from the buildings can be viewed in the attachments section of the agenda for this item and are titled, “applicant submittal.”

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Parcel Number:** [16850002](#) and [16850010](#)

**Property Size:** 6.44 acres

**Comprehensive Plan Map Designation:** INDUSTRIAL AND INDUSTRIAL/BUSINESS PARK

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

- The plan should encourage mixed-use developments.
- 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.

**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.

## ANALYSIS:

**Building Setback** - The proposed office addition to the building is approximately 10 feet and when considering the historical setbacks/yards of all structures in this general vicinity, is actually an increase. To the west and south, the industrial and commercial facilities are built right to the street right-of-way line in many cases. This front yard is subject to review due to the fact the factory is right across from a residential zone district, which happens to be occupied by residential uses; many of these uses happen to have affront yards of 8-12 feet on average, with several having less than that.

This factory at one time produced tanks in the WWII era and on the east end of the building, war machinery would routinely be loaded and shipped to the front lines. Since transitioning from tank building, the current metal processing and fabrication operation utilizes the front area for loading and unloading with the process being in full view of the homes across the street. The proposed site plan moves all of these activities to the rear of the facility and places offices and some parking at the front of the building. While the setback (yard) on its face would seem small at 10 feet compared to the 50 there now, the function of the new facility is substantially less intensive. The current front of this building functions as a loading and maneuvering area for large trucks and contains all the on-site off-street parking for the operation. Overall the proposed development when done, will generate much less noise and be more aesthetically pleasing for those across the street to view.

**Building Materials and Proportions** – The building addition and scale is complimentary to that of other buildings in the general area, yet at the same time, makes clear this is a modern industrial facility. This is accomplished without dominating the façade with a garish colors and despite the juxtaposition of uses (industrial and residential) across the street from one another, the building fits this site and this neighborhood; the addition is respectful of the area and the building will certainly call attention to itself when travelling by, but for the right reasons. The addition fits with the neighborhood and finds a successful way to treat the façade of an old building without having to demolish the entire site. The original building had been transitioned to metal paneling which is past the due date in terms of aesthetic effectiveness and the proposal to outfit this face with modern materials, while keeping the original tank rollout area standing is a way to keep a fascinating story about this building alive for future generations to enjoy.

The overall color tones are modern, yet industrial and representative of modern industrial development. The proportions of colors and materials used while modern, still fit with the other well maintained industrial facilities in the area. The historical appearance of this building wasn't necessarily remarkable in terms of design, but it was reminiscent of an important era in manufacturing in Racine and the Midwest. Keeping the most noteworthy portions of the facility standing, but modernizing them in a classy way for a new addition and modern facility was certainly the balancing act in this design. The end result is something which can usher in a new era of industrial development in the corridor while being tasteful and respectful to the existing properties.

## **POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING, HERITAGE, AND DESIGN COMMISSION**

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Approve the request with conditions deemed necessary to mitigate any adverse impacts that could arise from the project; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM JACQUET USA, FOR YARD DETERMINATION AND DESIGN REVIEW AT 1908 DE KOVEN AVENUE AND 1730 PHILLIPS AVENUE BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- a) That the plans presented to the Planning, Heritage and Design Commission on June 9, 2021 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That all codes and ordinances are complied with and required permits acquired.

- c) That all comments on the plans from the Joint Plan Review Team review letter be addressed in the final submittal for site development permits.
- d) That the applicant completes the transfer of the property with the Racine Community Development Authority prior to the issuance of any permits.
- e) That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without approval of the Department of City Development, and no major changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission.