



Request for City Council Committee Action

Date April 25, 2002

To Transportation and Public Works Committee

Referral to Ways and Means Committee

Subject: Ballet of the Dolls – Off street Parking, Sheridan School Playground

Recommendation: Request authorization to prepare a schematic plan and cost estimate for a Municipal Parking Lot to be constructed on the Sheridan School playground to provide evening and weekend parking for Ballet of the Dolls.

Further that a loan of \$18,000 be authorized from the Municipal Parking Fund to be reimbursed by the project assessments. Also to authorize proper city officials to negotiate and execute an easement agreement for access to the parking lot with the Northeast Neighborhood Early Learning Center. Also to authorize proper city officials to negotiate and execute an agreement with Minneapolis Board of Education for lease of the Sheridan School Playground for a Municipal Parking Lot.

Prepared or Submitted by: Greg Finstad, P.E., Director 673-2158
 Approved by: David J. Sonnenberg, P.E. City Engineer, Director of Public Works

By: Greg Finstad *Gregory A. Finstad*

Presenters in Committee: Greg Finstad, P.E., Director of Transportation and Parking Services

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

No financial impact (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)

Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget

Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget

Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase

Action requires use of contingency or reserves

Other financial impact (Explain):

Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Background/Supporting Information

Attached to this letter find supporting information including a March 27, 2002 letter from Council Member Joe Biernat, January 25, 2002 letter from Craig Harris, Executive Director, Ballet of the Dolls, October 4, 2001, letter from Andy Nederveld, President, Sheridan Neighborhood Organization and a February 8, 2002 letter from William J. Laden, President of the Board, Northeast Neighborhood Early Learning Center.

The above noted letters of support for the Municipal Parking Lot to be constructed on the Sheridan School playground respond to a proposal and preliminary plan prepared by Public Works Transportation and Parking Services which determined the parking lot to be feasible. Further design and soils testing for the parking lot is required to develop a workable plan which meets the parameters of the Sheridan School, Northeast Neighborhood Early Learning Center, Ballet of the Dolls, zoning requirements and Public Works. A cost estimate for construction is also needed to finalize the project. The load of \$18,000 will be used to hire a consultant to accomplish the schematic design and cost estimate.

Assessment rates will be prepared and an ongoing effort by Public Works staff to monitor the operation, maintenance and assessment calculations will be required.

The workload required by staff is estimated to require 2 to 4 hours of work per month with additional time required to handle extra ordinary situations.

The Municipal Parking Fund as an enterprise fund would have the capability to financially accomplish this project since all deficits would be assessed to the benefited property "Ballet of the Dolls" Ritz Theater project. The business plan for the Municipal Parking Fund is currently being studied by Management Analysis and Public Works, and when this analysis has been completed it will be discussed at the Transportation and Public Works Committee. It is anticipated that the analysis will be completed by June 2002.

cc: Joe Biernat
George Sutton
Craig Harris
Andy Nederveld
William J. Laden
Mike Sachi
Tim Blazina

OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL
307 City Hall
Minneapolis Minnesota 55415-1383

Phone: 673-2203

JOE BIERNAT
COUNCIL MEMBER, THIRD WARD



March 27, 2002

Greg Finstad
Director of Transportation and Parking Services
Department of Public Works
Room 210 City Hall

Dear Mr. Finstad:

The restoration of the Ritz Theater at 343-347 13th Ave NE for use by the Ballet of the Dolls is one of the most exciting projects in the Third Ward. The project has the full support of the Sheridan neighborhood and many surrounding businesses. The Ritz Theater project successfully negotiated a purchase of the theater from the MCDA last year, and has proven capable of successfully running a theater like the Ritz. The Ballet of the Dolls thoroughly investigated the feasibility of the project, and I am confident that they will be a success.

An essential element of this success is to ensure that the Ritz Theater has access to adequate parking. During the many years that the Ritz sat vacant, a building was constructed on the theater's former parking lot. However, the Ritz Theater project has been working with the Minneapolis Board of Education to gain access to the Sheridan School playground in evening and weekend hours, which would provide more than enough parking for the theater. The Board of Education has given initial support to the plan. They are willing to work with the city's Public Works department to make this proposal work.

The next step in this process is to develop a plan for the parking lot. These development costs will require a loan of about \$18,000 from the city's General Parking Fund to the Ritz Theater project. These funds would be repaid by the project through assessments. I have every confidence that they will be able to repay these assessments in full, once the theater is up and running.

The rehabilitation of the Ritz Theater is an essential ingredient for reinvigorating 13th Ave. NE. The Ballet of the Dolls have proven through their feasibility studies that there is a demand for a theater like the Ritz, and that there is enough support in the private sector to make the project work.

Sincerely,



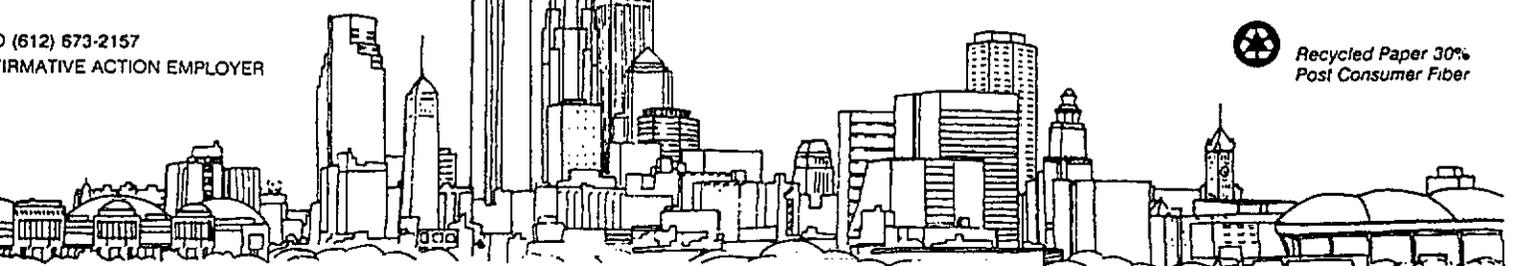
Joe Biernat
Council Member
Ward Three

Cc: George Sutton, Ritz Theater Project

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FEB - 4 2002

January 25, 2002

Mr. Joe Biernat
Vice President
Minneapolis City Council
350 South Fifth Street
City Hall, Room 307
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Council Member Biernat,

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss the status of the Ritz Theater development project. Ballet of the Dolls is remains actively engaged in the project, as is evidenced by our mounting the show "The Red Shoes" in the raw theater in September of 2001. It was a marvelous opportunity to demonstrate the enormous potential that a renovated Ritz Theater will have in the community.

As we all agreed during our meeting, establishing a solution for parking for the Ritz Theater and for other development along 13th Avenue in Northeast Minneapolis is a crucial step for moving forward with the project. The rezoning of the theater is dependent on the parking situation, and a favorable solution for parking will go far in building support for the project in the community.

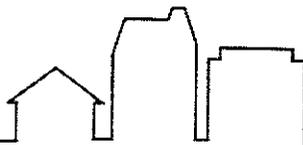
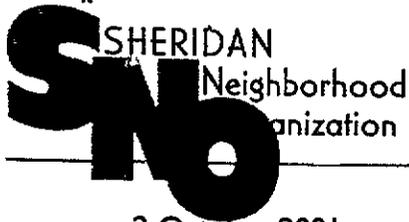
The next step is to determine the actual development and operational costs related to the parking solution. As Ballet of the Dolls moves forward with our next step in the predevelopment process, we will be revisiting the development and operational costs for the project. We will factor costs for the parking component of the project into our capital and operational budgets as the estimates become available, and I look forward to working together to ensure that we can keep this important project moving forward.

Thank you again for your ongoing work on this project. This is clearly a community initiative, and you remain an ardent advocate. It is encouraging and gratifying to have your support.

Sincerely,



Craig Harris
Executive Director, Ballet of the Dolls.



OCT 04 2001

Strengthening and Celebrating the Sheridan Community

2 October 2001

Mr. Joe Biernat
Vice President
Minneapolis City Council
350 South Fifth Street
City Hall, Room 307
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Council Member Biernat,

This note is to confirm the unwavering support of the Sheridan Neighborhood Organization (SNO) for the Ritz renovation project currently being undertaken by the Ballet of the Dolls. For nearly three years, we have been engaged with the Dolls whom we feel will bring tremendous value to our community, not only by turning the lights back on in the Ritz after twenty years of dormancy, but by forging partnerships with other institutions in our community providing new opportunities for children, adults, and seniors. Our commitment to this effort may be evidenced by our allocation of \$75,000 towards the project to date.

As you will agree, a critical element of this project is securing adequate off-street parking. Without parking, no rehabilitation of the Ritz Theater would be possible. SNO wholeheartedly embraces the concept first developed by your office to create a shared use opportunity with the Sheridan Global Arts and Communications Magnet to permit theatergoers, and patrons of other 13th Avenue businesses, to utilize the paved portion of the School's playground during non-school hours. We believe this makes efficient, sensible use of the resources available.

We are encouraged by the favorable responses from the Sheridan School Site Council and School Officials regarding this concept – they recognize clearly the opportunities a new Ritz would mean for the students they serve. Additionally, SNO appreciates deeply the continued support of your office, the MCDA, and various City Agencies in advancing this project, which is so dear to our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Andy Nederveld
President, Sheridan Neighborhood Organization

cc: Craig Harris
Executive Director, Ballet of the Dolls

Sheridan Neighborhood Organization
909 Main Street NE · Lower Level
Minneapolis, MN 55413
Phone: (612) 379-0728 · Fax: (612) 378-7986

FEB - 8 2002



Northeast Neighborhood House
 Northeast Child Development Center
 Menlo Park Alternative School
 1700 Second Street NE, 55413
 Phone: 612.781.6011

NEST - Way To Grow
 NE Neighborhood Early Learning Center
 342 - 13th Avenue NE, 55413
 Phone: 612.362.4141

The Seniors' Place/Outreach
 1801 Central Avenue NE, 55418
 Phone: 612.788.9188
 The Senior Food Shelf
 Phone: 612.788.9521

Friendship Center
 Adult Day Care
 1717 Second Street NE, 55413
 Phone: 612.781.2052

Northeast Park Center
 1615 Pierce Street NE, 55413
 Phone: 612.781.2242

Beltrami Park Center
 1111 Summer Street NE, 55413
 Phone: 612.331.1722

Luxton Community Center
 112 Williams Avenue SE, 55414
 Phone: 612.331.8676

East Side Employment Network
 University Technology Centers, Inc.
 1313 Fifth Street SE, 55414
 Phone: 612.379.3800

Camp Bovey
 Gordon, Wisconsin
 Phone: 612.781.6011

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 Jennifer Young

William J. Laden, LISW
Executive Director



February 7, 2002

Joe Biernat
 Council Member, Third Ward
 350 South Fifth Street, Room 307
 Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Council Member Biernat:

The Northeast Neighborhood Early Learning Center (NENELC) Board of Directors supports the rehabilitation of the Ritz Theater for use by the Ballet of the Dolls. This project will be a great benefit to Northeast Minneapolis.

The Northeast Neighborhood Early Learning Center is aware that the Ritz Theater requires access to parking in order for the project to work. The Ballet of the Dolls proposes to use the Sheridan School playground to meet their parking requirements during evenings and weekends. The proposed access to this parking would be through the parking lot of the NENELC facility at 342 13th Avenue NE.

The Board of the NENELC, which owns and operates the NENELC facility, is willing to negotiate an easement with the Ritz Theater project to allow access to the Sheridan School playground through the NENELC parking lot. This access should be limited to evenings and weekends, so that parking and traffic in the NENELC lot will be unaffected during regular business hours.

I look forward to working further with your office and the Ritz Theater project to further develop this proposal to the benefit of all parties involved.

Sincerely,

William J. Laden, M.S.W., L.I.S.W.
 President of the Board, NENELC

cc: Greg Finstad, City of Minneapolis Public Works
 George Sutton, Ritz Theater Project