From: Paul Hiebert [mailto:]
Sent: Friday, September 05, 2008 2:34 PM
To: Skundberg, Inga; mhofer[..]; Sasa Radulovic
Cc: Joshi, Deepak; Thorgrimson, Barry; Bugailiskis, Giles; Sheegl, Phil; Park, Jo-Ann
Subject: Re: Heritage Conservation Tax Credit - Frost and Wood Warehouse - 230 Princess Street

Hi Inga,

Thank you for the minutes, and your assistance in scheduling our presentation to the city. Both Sasa and I appreciated the affirmation and encouragement we received for this project, and look forward to continuing to work with the city and hopefully the province to make this another model of innovative restoration of an existing structure in our downtown core.

I am attaching a letter we sent to the province in July 2008. The same was sent to The Honourable Gord MacKintosh.

These letters motivated the province to ask MHRC to meet with us on August 12, 2008. We were commended by MHRC for initiating this project. However, we were informed there was not a program in place to support a downtown project of this nature. We were also informed the province might once again initiate a program which would support our type of development. We trust this may in fact become a reality. Yesterday Mark Hofer, the developer, received a letter from the Honourable Steve Ashton also commending Mark on the project, and suggesting there was some movement to initiate a downtown housing program to assist developers through a revised tax credit program. This is encouraging.

Please forward this note to the councilors who attended the meeting if it is appropriate.
We look forward to hearing from you later this month.

Thanks again
Paul

Honourable Steve Ashton
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
Minister responsible for Emergency Measures
301-450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Dear Mr. Ashton,

I am writing this letter as a downtown business owner who is committed to seeing Winnipeg's downtown develop and prosper, and we believe that housing development is a key factor in an overall downtown development strategy. We are in the process of developing 230 Princess Avenue with the objective of turning the upper floors into unique residential units, and have been working with our architects to create preliminary concepts. Our focus is mid to lower price points with high level of design and we are quite excited about the project. We invited JELD-WEN, an international window and door manufacturer to move their sales operation downtown instead of into the suburban industrial parks they were considering. We are presently developing their sales centre on the main level, and JELD-WEN is very excited about the building and location, and hopes to inspire other manufacturers to consider the downtown for their sales operations.

We are willing to make a significant investment but will need some assistance in closing the gap between project costs and marketability of the thirty-six rental units. From our discussions with Jim August and his staff, we understand that the government had come out with an Innovative Housing Program a year or so ago, and that those funds have been allocated to projects in the North portage area. It is programs like this that can act as an important lever for additional housing development throughout the downtown.

This letter is being sent to encourage government to be creative and innovative in addressing and encouraging residential development downtown. We believe that the private sector can and should play a lead role but the economic gaps need to be addressed without debilitating red tape. We encourage you and your colleagues in Cabinet to create a new Innovative Housing Program and work with us to make downtown Winnipeg a better place.

I would be please to meet with you to discuss further.

Sincerely

Mark Hofer
Cc Jim August……Linda Mcfadyen