



2545 W. Diversey Avenue  
Suite 225  
Chicago, IL 60647  
(773) 929-5552

September 30, 2020

Rafael M. Leon, Chair  
Commission on Chicago Landmarks  
City Hall  
121 N. LaSalle Street, Room 1000  
Chicago, IL 60602

Re: Permit Review Committee Item #4: Proposed Morton Salt Company Warehouse Complex

Dear Chairperson Leon:

North Branch Works (NBW) wishes to support the proposed interior and exterior rehabilitation of the existing industrial complex for the Morton Salt site project located at 1357 N. Elston Ave. NBW is a membership-supported nonprofit neighborhood organization that for more than three decades has promoted balanced, job-creating economic development along the North Branch of the Chicago River. North Branch Works has long been a City of Chicago “delegate agency” providing an array of services to local businesses.

NBW wants to see this area continue to be a vibrant, business-rich area with job generating uses. This project from Blue Star Properties and R2 Companies will repurpose an iconic Chicago building for new uses while still retaining the industrial character of the area.

We at NBW support the permit as it has been found to be consistent with the Commission’s Rules and Regulations, the Commission’s Guidelines for Alterations to Historic Buildings and New Construction, and Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10 of the U.S. *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*. The project will not have an adverse effect on the significant historical and architectural features of the proposed landmark property and approve the project with the conditions enumerated by DPD staff. We look forward to seeing this project move forward.

Regards,

Jonathan Snyder /s/  
Executive Director

cc: Tyler Quast, Blue Star Properties  
Matt Garrison and Zack Cupkovic, R2 Companies



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January 20, 2021

Noah Szafraniec  
Supervising Zoning Plan Examiner  
Department of Planning Development  
Bureau of Zoning  
City Hall, Room 905  
121 N. LaSalle St.  
Chicago, IL 60602

## Support for the Proposed Development at 1357 N Elston Avenue (Morton Salt)

Dear Mr. Szafraniec:

Friends of the Chicago River (Friends) has met with R2 Companies about concepts for the planned riverfront project to be located on the Morton Salt site (1357 N Elston Avenue). We are glad to see this creative adaptive reuse project moving forward along the river. We are also pleased that the development will maintain a significant portion of the site as open space, include an extensively landscaped river edge area, provide future river access points (boat/kayak launches), use stormwater filtering Omni soils, and create other river oriented features. We believe the proposed project will enhance this stretch of the river, so we would like to express our support for its approval.

There are several river edge features of the project that have not yet been fully designed in detail or included in the draft PD, so we would also like to offer the following considerations as the project moves forward into implementation:

- 1. Create a diverse, native-planted site with multi-level plantings:** In general, we urge the developer to incorporate native plants, maximize tree cover, incorporate understory and shrub plantings, and include other recommendations from the "Nature" section of the Chicago River Guidelines throughout the site plan. Maintaining native habitat zones, even small ones, substantially improves the migration opportunities, resting spots, and microhabitats for endangered local and native North American birds, mammals, plants, and insects such as the monarch butterfly. Because of the additional outdoor areas on this site, it has an extensive opportunity to enhance the ecological function of the downtown river corridor.
- 2. Ensure future connectivity opportunities of the bike trail beyond the site boundaries:** The bike trail as shown works with the constraints of the existing buildings, but creates unusual conditions where it ends. We hope that with CDOT's oversight, future bike trail layout on adjacent developments will coordinate to create a safe transition. For example, a safe crossing on Blackhawk Street should be planned, as well as a connection to the bike lanes on Elston Avenue.
- 3. Incorporate creative, nature-based stormwater design into the site plan:** Because the development will have a greater portion of open space on the site than is typically available in downtown areas, there is a greater opportunity to incorporate creative stormwater design that maximizes the use of nature-based green infrastructure solutions such as bioswales, rain

gardens, porous paving, and other BMPs. We hope that these green infrastructure strategies can be incorporated into the review by the Department of Water Management.

We thank the developer for the opportunity to discuss this high profile river edge project with Friends of the Chicago River and we are excited to see the revitalization of this river edge site.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margaret Frisbie  
Executive Director

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January 20, 2021

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Best Regards,

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Margaret Frisbie  
Executive Director



January 18th, 2020

City of Chicago  
Department of Planning & Development  
121 North LaSalle Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: Morton Salt Redevelopment

To Whom it May Concern,

Friends of Goose Island ("FOGI") was formed by major employers and property owners on Goose Island to make our evolving area into a more competitive and dynamic urban environment. Our mission is to promote better infrastructure, open-space, amenities, an active riverfront and connections to the vibrant neighborhoods that surround our unique and well-located 160 acre island. FOGI represents over two dozen businesses & land owners across Goose Island, as well as thousands of employees. Members of Friends of Goose Island include Mars-Wrigley, MxD, Big Bay Realty, Hines, CB2, Watersaver, R2, Transportation 1, Circle Logistics, Revolution Cannabis, IAC Properties, Diamond Holdings, Greenstone Partners, & many more.

We have closely reviewed the program for the renovation of the historic Morton Salt warehouse into a venue. We fully support the development which is closely aligned with the mandate of our organization. While the Morton Salt venue is not on Goose Island, it is directly across the river and we believe the success of the project is tied to the growth of our neighborhood. We appreciate that the project is an adaptive reuse development that will save and give new-life to one of the areas most iconic properties.

We believe that the addition of the venue, which has planned music, retail, restaurants, festivals, etc. will be a major job creator and centerpiece that will bring Chicagoans from across the City into our neighborhood.

We look forward to seeing this project come to fruition and the positive effects it will have for our neighborhood.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel P. Ciral".

**Daniel P. Ciral**  
FOGI Board Member



**HALSTED  
TRIANGLE**  
OWNERS ASSOCIATION

January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020

City of Chicago - Department of Planning and Development  
121 N. LaSalle Street, 10th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602

*Re: 1357 North Elston Avenue – Morton Salt Venue*

The Halsted Triangle Owners Association ("HTOA") is the recognized representative Not-for-Profit organization for owners of property located within the Halsted Triangle, that neighborhood bounded by Halsted Street, North Avenue, the Chicago River channel, and Division Street. Its membership includes over 90% of the buildings and land within that neighborhood and therefore has a strong interest in the nearby development of the historic Morton Salt Warehouse on Elston Avenue.

After reviewing the Planned Development application for the project, led by R2 Companies and Blue Star Properties, we are firmly in support of the project and its benefit to the neighboring businesses and residents in the HTOA. We believe the venue, restaurants, retail and office planned at the site will serve as a beacon for the North Branch Industrial Corridor and provide an engine for job growth and economic development that will benefit the members of our organization.

Additionally, the use of the riverfront at the location will add another riverfront node for boating and kayaking our area, which will further support the Wild Mile, a mile-long eco-park and floating garden system, located fully within the Halsted Triangle Neighborhood.

We look forward to the project delivering in 2021.

Thank you,

**J. Michael Drew**

President - Halsted Triangle Owners Association

**Halsted Triangle Owners Association**  
211 N. Clinton, 3S, Chicago, IL 60661  
Phone: (312) 261-5775  
HalstedTriangle.org



January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020

City of Chicago - Department of Planning and Development  
121 N. LaSalle Street, 10th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602

*Re: 1357 North Elston Avenue – Morton Salt Venue*

Urban Rivers is a nonprofit organization that has been working in the North Branch Channel since 2015 and is spearheading the Wild Mile park on the east side of Goose Island between North Avenue and Halsted Street. Any new development being planned within Goose Island is of interest to our organization and volunteers for it can greatly impact the Wild Mile and its development within the North Branch Channel.

After reading the Planned Development application for the project, led by R2 Companies and Blue Star Properties, our team fully supports the project and what it can do for local businesses and residents. Additionally, as residents become more connected to their river system, we see projects such as the proposed one at the historic Morton salt property, will increase community involvement in the Wild Mile.

We look forward to the project coming to fruition in 2021.

Best,

**Zachary Damato**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Zachary Damato'.

Co-Founder – Urban Rivers