

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA
Lower Level – Room 41, City Hall/Court House, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard
April 25, 2013

Present: Richard Dana, Robert Ferguson, Matt Hill, Michael Justin, Rich Laffin, Matt Mazanec, David Wagner, Steve Trimble, Diane Trout-Oertel

Absent: Renee Hutter Barnes (unexcused), David Riehle (unexcused)

Staff Present: Christine Boulware, Amy Spong (partial), Bill Dermody

BUSINESS MEETING

- I. **Call to Order:** 5:03
- II. **Approval of the Agenda:** Commissioner Dana moved to approve the agenda; Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Approval of the meeting minutes:** Minutes were not submitted for review or approval
 - A. ~~March 14, 2013 Business Meeting~~
 - B. ~~March 28, 2013 Public Hearing/ Permit Review~~
- IV. **Chair's Announcements:** There were none stated.
- V. **Staff Announcements:** There were none stated.
- VI. **Old Business**
 - A. **Adopt resolution supporting lighting of the Civil War Monument at Kellogg and John Ireland Boulevards. Monument is not locally designated and does not require design review by the HPC as stated under Legislative Code 73.06. City Council action for acceptance of the donation will follow. This item was laid over for the final resolution (Spong, 266-6714).** Staff received information about lighting. Commissioner Trimble corrected that the portraits mentioned are actually statues. Commissioner Trimble also discussed that there has been contact with the grand-nephew of John Daniels, the sculptor.
- VII. **New Business:**
 - A. **484 Ashland Avenue - Ashland Hotel, Hill Historic District,** by John Harriss, Harriss Architects, Inc., for permits to rehabilitate the existing hotel building, demolish the adjacent 3-story additions, and construct a new 3-story addition. **File #13-019** (Spong, 266-6714)

Staff read the report recommending conditional approval of the application to raze non-historic structures, rehabilitate the Ashland Hotel and construct a new addition.

Chair Laffin clarified that the suggested fence is on Holly only. Ms. Spong clarified that there is enough landscaping in other areas, but the driveway is difficult to screen. Commissioner Dana inquired about an alley plan and Ms. Spong responded that the plan is to repair and protect the alley.

The applicant John Harriss was present to speak about the proposed drawings. Mr. Harriss discussed the changes that have occurred since July. Mr. Harriss discussed the memory garden, the railings, and the landscaping at the bays.

Chair Laffin noted that there was an improvement at the enclosure. Mr. Harriss explained that they are not using traditional storefronts, but a new aluminum clad system with pre-cast elements. Chair Laffin asked Mr. Harriss to address the finish of the vinyl-clad wood windows. Mr. Harriss clarified that the vinyl-clad windows were an alternate, and only aluminum-clad windows will be used.

Mr. Harriss noted that the alley detailing had been simplified and will now be pre-cast copper and brick.

Commissioner Wagner asked for clarification of the window treatment, and Mr. Harriss noted that it will be in-filled with brick. Commissioner Wagner suggested recessing this window, and Mr. Harriss agreed that this would be a good idea. Ms. Spong clarified that the lintels will stay in place.

Mr. Harriss inquired about stringing vines on the blank brick wall. Ms. Spong clarified that this wall is on the new construction portion of the property. Commissioner Laffin noted that the addition of vines will damage the brick and mortar over time.

Chair Laffin addressed the replacement of the columns at the main, front entry. Mr. Harriss noted that the bases are rotted and there are several options for repair or replacement.

Commissioner Dana inquired about the availability of an elevation drawing of the MacKubin Street entrance. Mr. Harriss referred to the presented drawings to show that there is no ramp, the entrance is at grade, and there is a two-level space.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel inquired about the intentions for the copper to weather. Mr. Harriss clarified that the copper will be allowed to weather naturally.

Chair Laffin noted that there are many improvements to the plan and inquired about the possibility of a larger buffer at the alley. Mr. Harriss noted that this may be possible.

Commissioner Dana clarified that there are 61 units in the building. Mr. Harriss noted that this is most likely true.

Chair Laffin asked that any members of the public who would like to speak come forward.

Former Commissioner Gar Hargens of Close Architects approached the podium to speak. Mr. Hargens noted that the project mostly complies with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, but there is a lack of design to fit into the current time. Chair Laffin noted that a previously submitted project was more modern, but was not accepted.

Len Jackson, a resident from 448 Ashland Avenue approached the podium to speak. Mr. Jackson expressed concern for increased traffic and asked for clarification on the number of units that would be in the building. Commissioner Dana clarified that there could not be more than 75 units, with the intention of no more than one occupant per unit.

Lisa Stegall, a resident of the neighborhood approached the podium to speak. Ms. Stegall expressed praise for the project, and noted that the sentiment is shared with other residents in the neighborhood.

Staff read aloud a letter from Judith Beck, a resident of 487 Ashland Avenue. Staff summarized that the letter stated support for developing a project that more closely reflects the historic built environment of the neighborhood. The letter further states that the currently proposed project does not reflect the historic built environment of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel motioned to adopt the findings and approve the application with staff recommendations. Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion. Commissioner Wagner reiterated that the commission should be conscious of building in the historic style, and building for the current time. The motion passed 8-0

B. 613- 619 Selby Avenue, Hill Historic District, by Chauncey Peterson, DeMars Signs, Inc., for a permit to install eight new signs on three elevations of the building. **File #13-020** (Boulware, 266-6715)

Michael Butler was present to present the minor revisions to the existing staff and addressed the new graphic changes to the proposed signs, and the location of the "Louisiana Cafe" sign. Chair Laffin agreed to proceed with the meeting.

Staff read the report recommending conditional approval of the sign proposal with the exception of the installation of the three signs with logos on the "monument" portion of the Selby Avenue facade.

Commissioner Trimble noted that at one time the Louisiana Cafe considered a sign on the Dale Street sign was very important, but now the location will be changed. Ms. Boulware confirmed that this is the case, and suggested that the applicant be asked about this change. Commissioner Dana confirmed the locations of the existing signs.

Mr. Butler inquired about the previous designs of the monument. Ms. Boulware clarified that the monument was reviewed and approved by the HPC at a previous date. Mr. Bulter noted that this monument competes with the entry to the building.

Commissioner Trimble inquired about the lighting of the signs. Ms. Boulware clarified that the proposed lighting is internal.

Commissioner Dana inquired about signage for the Louisiana Cafe on the south elevation. Ms. Boulware confirmed that there is no signage proposed on the south elevation. Ms. Boulware noted that the amount of signage proposed is beneath the amount allowed in the zoning code.

Mr. Butler noted that the addition of the signs on the monument would emphasize the three separate tenants of the building, and they are open to alterations to this plan. Chair Laffin noted that the placement of two North Star signs adjacent to each other would be redundant. Chair Laffin suggested the removal of the North Star sign on the monument. Mr. Butler discussed the decisions for placements of the signs in regards to visibility from the public street.

Commissioner Wagner requested clarification about the blade sign on the west elevation. Mr. Butler noted that there will be a Louisiana Cafe sign on the north elevation and the Selby Avenue elevation.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel inquired as to why there is a change in the design of the Heartland Home Studio sign. Ms. Boulware noted that the change was made between the time of the original application and the meeting.

Commissioner Dana requested clarification about an entrance on the Dale Street Side. Mr. Butler confirmed that this entrance is on the north elevation.

Confirmation was requested by a commissioner as to why the Heartland Home Studio wanted the sign on the south elevation so it would be the only sign on the south elevation. Mr. Butler noted that the sign is not very visible on the south elevation.

Commissioner Dana motioned to adopt the findings and conditionally approve the application with staff recommendations. Commissioner Trimble seconded the motion.

Commissioner Wagner requested clarification as to why staff recommended that the monument sign not have signage. Ms. Boulware clarified that this recommendation was based on the guidelines and the amount of clutter that should be on a building. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to the amount of signage that could still be allowed under zoning regulation. Ms. Boulware confirmed that the Louisiana Cafe could add signage based on the zoning regulation. Commissioner Wagner noted that the signage is weighted to the Selby Avenue elevation, and that this imbalance is ill advised based on what the commission should encourage. Chair Laffin agreed that the signage is biased toward the west end.

Commissioner Dana suggested that signage on the monument and above the windows on the south elevation is redundant. Commissioner Dana suggested that there either be signage on the monument or above the windows, and not both. Commissioner Dana noted that signage above the windows suggests that the building is traditional, and signage on the monument suggests that the building is not traditional. Chair Laffin suggested that if the commission were to vote on this change, that it may prompt the Louisiana cafe to speak with staff about including signage above the windows.

Commissioner Justin expressed concerned for the elimination of signage Heartland Home Studio on the west elevation.

Commissioner Dana inquired about the amount of control that the commission has on signage in the window. Ms. Boulware confirmed that the commission does have control only over signage attached to the window. Commissioner Dana clarified that it is the position of the commission to lobby for the applicant and staff to build a solution that does not face opposition.

Chair Laffin proposed a motion to accept Commissioner Dana's motion. The motion passed 8-0.

C. 513 Portland Avenue, Hill Historic District, by owner Brett Turner, for a permit to construct a 3+ stall garage in the rear of the property. **File #13-021** (Boulware, 266-6715)

Staff read the report recommending conditional approval of the rear garage proposal.

Chair Laffin noted inconsistencies in the drawings. Commissioner Dana clarified several aspects of the proposed materials.

Commissioner Wagner noted the width of the proposed garage doors, and inquired as to the historically appropriate width. Commissioner Wager requested clarification on the use of modillions as decorative features on the garage. Ms. Boulware clarified that these elements will only be on the south eaves.

Commissioner Dana noted that there is no alley behind the property, and inquired as to what will be visible from the public street. Ms. Boulware noted that there is a six foot privacy fence that covers that majority of the garage.

Commissioner Wagner questioned the use of the Anderson A-Series windows and is there is a precedent for there use. Ms. Boulware responded that there is no precedent in the neighborhood, but that photos of the windows provide evidence that they will be appropriate. Commissioner Wagner noted that he has seen the product first hand, and that the product will be appropriate for the building.

Chair Laffin inquired as to information about the company listed as the designer on the project. Ms. Boulware verified that the Sparrow & Stoll were also the designer of the rear addition of the main residence.

Chair Laffin noted that the elevation drawings shoe brackets on the south and modillions on the north. Chair Laffin also noted that the drawings are incomplete and do not show the complete elevations.

The applicant, Brett Turner, was present to discuss the proposal. Mr. Turner confirmed that the company Sparrow & Stoll are the designers, Cary Becker is the builder, and the patio and deck and being designed and built by a separate outfit. Chair Laffin inquired as to if Sparrow & Stoll had previously designed garages. Nancy Sparrow was present to discuss the project and confirmed that they had previously designed garages.

Chair Laffin noted the previously discussed inconsistent elements in the drawings. Chair Laffin also noted several drafting errors in regards to the doors and mechanical systems. Ms. Sparrow confirmed that these errors will not be carried over into the building.

Chair Laffin inquired as to the process of selecting a manufacturer for the garage door. Ms. Sparrow noted that there are several options for 42" doors, and they will likely choose the Therma-Tru brand.

Chair Laffin questioned the presence of plantings in front of the surface door. Mr. Turner confirmed that these plantings will not be in the final plans. Commissioner Dana inquired as to the use of brackets and modillions. Ms. Sparrow responded that these elements are a repetition of the design of the house, but they will be in the scale of the garage.

Commissioner Wagner noted that the details of the garage should have a significant width, and requested confirmation on the pattern of the narrow door. Ms. Sparrow

confirmed that Therma-Tru makes a three-panel door that is in proportion with the drawing, but has not been measured. Ms. Boulware confirmed that staff received the internet link to this product.

Chair Laffin inquired as to why the trim on this door is narrower than the other doors. Ms. Sparrow responded that they had done this when the door was to be four feet, but now that it is 42" the trim can be wider. Chair Laffin inquired as to why this door is shorter than the other doors. Ms. Sparrow responded that not all of the styles are available in seven feet.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel requested clarification on the accuracy of the carriage doors in the drawing. Ms. Sparrow noted that these drawings are representational.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel noted that the doors and windows do not line up with each other in the drawings. Ms. Sparrow noted that the drawings are a combination of hand-drawn and computer-generated images. Mr. Turner confirmed that all the elements will line up in the final drawings. Chair Laffin suggested that the applicant and the designer work with staff to produce the final drawings.

Mr. Turner requested confirmation on the items that were brought into question. Chair Laffin addressed the suggestion to include at least one block course between the siding material and the slab.

Commissioner Dana requested confirmation that the applicant had received easements from the neighbors; Mr. Turner confirmed that they had. Commissioner Dana requested confirmation on the setback from the property line; Mr. Turner confirmed that it is what is required by code. Ms. Boulware noted that the applicant should be aware of the setback of the eaves, and not only the building footprint.

Commissioner Wagner inquired as to the intention to heat the building; Mr. Turner replied that there is not one. Commissioner Wager inquired as to the proposed material for the storage area. The builder, Cary Becker was present and responded that the interior is all open and the rafter, etc. will all be visible. Commissioner Wagner addressed some inconsistencies with the truss systems and roof deck, but noted that this is out of the purview of the commission review. Ms. Sparrow confirmed that there is a truss plan that has been revised since the drawings have been submitted. Ms. Boulware confirmed that plan review has not seen these drawings yet.

Chair Laffin inquired as to the change from a 12-12 roof pitch to a 10-12 roof pitch. Ms. Boulware stated that this change was based on her recommendation.

Gar Hargens, a neighbor, expressed support for the design.

Staff read three letters of support from Ray and Sheila Meyer (526 Portland Avenue), Elaine Donahue (524 Portland Avenue), and Martin Lacey (513 Portland Avenue).

Commissioner Wagner motioned to adopt the findings and approve the application with staff recommendations. Commissioner Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0

D. 214 East 4th Street, Lowertown Historic District, by Guillermo Arriondo, HGA Design, LLC, for a permit to install signage including: mounted banners, monument signs, wall mounted signs, and dimensional letters on all elevations. **File #13-022**

(Dermody, 266-6617)

Mr. Dermody summarized the report recommending conditional approval of the sign permit proposal.

Commissioner Dana asked about what events the banners would be advertising. Mr. Dermody responded that advertising of events would most likely be limited to on-site events in order to conform to city regulations.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel asked for an explanation of the recommended condition addressing banners. Ms. Boulware explained how the banners could be adjusted on the concourse in order to meet the condition.

Commissioner Ferguson clarified that the proposed "Union Depot" sign is actually in the attic, not the entablature.

The applicant, Mr. Arridondo, presented the proposed sign package.

Chair Dana asked the applicant if he had any problems with the staff recommendation. Mr. Arridondo replied that they have no problems.

Chair Laffin asked about the proportions of the concourse banners conceptualized in order to conform to the staff recommendation. Mr. Arridondo discussed the options considered and right-of-way issues. He said that the banners will be moved to the side.

Bill Hosko, neighbor, noted that he had not noticed the "214" address from the street. He spoke in support of the originally proposed "Union Depot" sign.

Mr. Dermody noted that no written correspondence had been received.

Commissioner Dana moved to adopt the findings and approve the application with staff recommendations. Commissioner Trout-Oertel seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0.

E. 255 6th Street East and 266 7th Street East, Lowertown Historic District, by Dave Brooks, 9 & 19 Properties, LLC, for a permit to construct a skyway level exit bridge at the rear of both buildings for egress purposes. **File #13-023** (Boulware, 266-6715)

Staff read the report recommending conditional approval of the application.

Commissioner Trimble inquired as to how a person who owns both buildings acquires the air-rights between them. Ms. Boulware clarified that the city owns the alley and the owner must acquire the air-rights from the city.

Commissioner Wagner inquired as to why a skyway was chosen instead of an exit stair. Ms. Boulware replied that the rear portion of the building is an easement for the River Park Lofts. Applicant Dave Brooks was present and confirmed that the River Park Lofts owns the bottom two levels of parking. Ms. Boulware noted that there was a previous proposal for egress to the top of the neighboring fire house, but an easement was not granted. Ms. Boulware also noted that the third egress in the building has to be a certain distance from the other two and that this location complies.

Mr. Brooks stated that he agrees with the staff recommendation and is willing to comply with the conditions. The project architect, Dan Gleeson was present and spoke about the profile of the alley and the appropriateness of the size of the skyway. Mr. Gleeson presented drawings of the engineering aspects of the skyway.

Commissioner Trimble requested confirmation that this is an emergency exit only; Ms. Boulware confirmed.

Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if there are any precedents for alley bridges in the district; Ms. Boulware stated that there is not and that precedents and guidelines for fire escaped were used to form the findings. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if there are any guidelines for view sheds in the district; Ms. Boulware responded that there are, but they are general. Commissioner Wagner noted that that this project is precedent-setting. Ms. Boulware noted that the vacation was granted based on the use, and if the use changes the vacation will be terminated. Chair Laffin noted that this is a precedent with no other solution. Commissioner Wagner stated that the findings should be worded clearly so as to express the circumstances that required this solution. Commissioner Dana suggested that the findings clearly state that this is an emergency exit only. Ms. Boulware noted that it is possible to add a clearer condition to the report.

Mr. Brooks stated that the building lost the third egress point when the City of Saint Paul allowed for a parking ramp to be built. Mr. Brooks reiterated that this is a very unique situation and outlined the need for the egress with the potential increases of visitors to the Lowertown district. Ms. Boulware noted that this is the third proposal that has gone through HPC staff and plan review. Chair Laffin noted that this proposal occurred in reply to a change of occupancy.

Commissioner Trimble requested confirmation that the variance by the City of Saint Paul indicates that the skyway is not optimal; Ms. Boulware clarified that a variance is not required. Ms. Boulware noted that there can be a condition regarding the change of use and air-rights.

Commissioner Dana motioned that; whereas the sole purpose of this construction is to provide a specific use of emergency egress to 255 East Sixth Street; and Whereas the bridge cannot be used for any other purpose that egress from 255 East Sixth Street; then based on the finding the commission conditionally approves the application. Commissioner Trimble seconded the motion. Commissioner Wagner reiterated previously stated concerns. The motion passed 8-0.

F. 255 6th Street East, Lowertown Historic District, by Dave Brooks, 9 & 19 Properties, LLC, for a permit to install a 4-ft x19-ft illuminated sign on the upper east elevation of the building. **File #13-024** (Dermody, 266-6617)

Mr. Dermody summarized the report recommending denial of the application. He noted that staff could have recommended approval of a scaled-down sign located lower on the building, but not as presented.

Commissioner Dana asked about staff's interpretation in Finding #4: Is that no signage *above* the uppermost portion of the façade wall or *in* the uppermost portion?

Mr. Dermody said the actual language is “there should be no sign above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a façade wall.” He stated that staff was not looking at a particular word in this phrase, but rather the intent. They found that the intent was to avoid large signage in the top portion of buildings.

Commissioner Wagner asked if this building, with its 4-floor parking garage and two (2) stories above, changes staff’s sensibility as to what is the “upper portion” of a building. He noted that it feels like two distinct sections. He added that it feels as though the façade does not start until you get to the top portion.

Ms. Boulware responded that we would look at the building as a whole. She noted that zoning already forbids signs on top of the buildings. She stated that the intent is for more of a pedestrian scale.

Dan Gleeson, applicant’s representative, interjected that the 1st Bank sign has been declared a monument. Ms. Boulware noted that it could not be done today.

Mr. Gleeson and Mr. Brooks corrected the staff report is incorrect with regard to the sign size. They said that it is only 26 inches wide.

Ms. Boulware asked about the method of attachment and advised that more information about this would likely be needed in order to get a permit.

Mr. Brooks said that the sign looks better in its proposed vertical form up high, rather than on the girders on the parking garage levels lower down. He showed some pictures of other signs nearby that he feels are less attractive. He asked that this be considered a “double building” as Commissioner Wagner suggested.

Chair Laffin suggested that signage be allowed down low, as it was for the Union Depot case, but not up high.

Commissioner Dana moved to deny the request as recommended by staff. Commissioner Trimble seconded the motion. Commissioner Trimble stated that this should be considered one building, not a different building at the top. Commissioner Ferguson stated that it is difficult to apply the guidelines to a modern building like this that does not reflect the character of the district. He added that he found staff’s explanation helpful about the intent of the guideline language. The motion passed 8-0.

VIII. Committee Reports:

A. Awards Committee (Trout-Oertel, Laffin, Dana) Chair Laffin announced the Heritage Preservation Awards event. Ms. Boulware announced the need for volunteers for awards preparation. Ms. Boulware requested confirmation about presenters. Ms. Boulware discussed the honorees and award recipients.

Commissioner Trimble discussed the May 11th email regarding the statue.

IX. Motion to Adjourn: 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by: R. Cohn, B. Dermody