

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

FILE NAME: 23 Empire Drive
DATE OF APPLICATION: October 18, 2013
APPLICANT: Dan Regan, 23 Empire LLC
OWNER: same
PROJECT ARCHITECT: David Sorenson, Welsh Architecture
DATE OF REVIEW: November 7, 2013
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Jackson Street Shops Heritage Preservation Site
CATEGORY: Pivotal
CLASSIFICATION: Sign Permit
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Christine Boulware
DATE: October 31, 2013

A. SITE DESCRIPTION:

The building at 23 Empire Drive is historically known as the Machine Shop and is one of the oldest railroad buildings extant in St. Paul. It was built between 1881 and 1882. The Machine Shop is constructed of Platteville limestone; the random rubble walls are two-feet thick and load-bearing. This one-story building has a rectangular plan with a low-pitched gable roof and segmental arched window and door openings. The original Machine Shop measured 112 ft. by 290 ft.; the southernmost 20 ft. wide bay was removed for the construction of a new roadway in the 1980s. There is also a 40 ft. by 80 ft. boiler room wing at the south end of the west elevation.

There are twelve segmental arched openings on the east elevation; at the north elevation there are three smaller segmental arched openings. Fenestration of the building includes rectangular double- and triple-hung wooden sashes with divided-lights. The property is one of three historic buildings remaining at Empire Drive that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are also locally designated as a St. Paul Heritage Preservation Site. The Machine Shop, Storehouse, and Pattern Shop of the Jackson Street Shops Heritage Preservation Site underwent restoration in 1985 and received Federal Historic Tax Credits.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES:

The applicant proposes to install one sign at the west entrance, one on the south elevation and construct two monuments signs.

West Entrance Signs:

The west entrance is protected by a freestanding, projecting entrance canopy composed of steel posts set on concrete bases that support a gabled roof constructed of wood framing with exposed trusswork. The canopy was added to the building in 1985.

- The existing address sign will be removed
- A new sign containing the address number and the name and logo of the building tenant will be installed (1/A-4.0)
 - o The number sign will be individual, flat-cut, painted aluminum numerals (total area: 1'-9" tall by 2'-3" wide) placed on a square backer with an open middle and mechanically fastened to the framing.
 - o The tenant logo and name will be individual flat-cut, painted aluminum letters (total area: 2'-0" tall and 14'-6" wide) placed on a dark background, matching the wood framing. The background and the letters will be silicon-mounted and mechanically fastened.
 - o No illumination is proposed

South Elevation Sign:

- Individual flat-cut, painted aluminum letters spelling the name of the tenant, and the tenant logo will be affixed through the mortar joints to the south elevation of the building above the center entrance door and flanking windows. They will occupy an area approximately 3'-0" tall by 28'-5" wide.
- Illumination is not proposed.

Monument and Directional Signs:

The existing monument sign will be removed and two new monument signs are proposed: one at the south east corner of the east parking lot and the other in the location of the existing sign. (AS-1.0)

- The signs will be framed in natural stone veneer with precast concrete caps.
- Each sign will have four sign bands for the building tenants.
- The east monument sign is 5'-6" tall by 6'-0" wide by 6" deep. The individual tenant panels will be 12" tall by 48" wide. The sign is internally lit
- The west sign is 3'-6" tall by 4'-4" wide by 4" deep. The individual tenant sign panels will be 8" tall by 36" wide. This sign will not be internally lit. (6/A-4.0)

C. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Preservation Program

The Jackson Street Shops buildings should be preserved in a manner consistent with the original design intent; this applies to all facades. Signs and other attachments should not conceal architectural detail, clutter the buildings' images or distract from the unity of the facades. The relationship of the buildings to each other should be maintained and any infill construction should be sympathetic in massing and detail, but contrasting in architectural materials; such construction should clearly read as new. (1985)

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal changes to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size,

scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

E. FINDINGS:

1. The Heritage Preservation Commission shall protect the architectural character of heritage preservation sites through review and approval or denial of applications for city permits for exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites §73.04.(4).
2. The Jackson Street Shops are a designated Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site and the Machine Shop at 23 Empire Drive is categorized as a pivotal property.
3. The proposed monument signs and west entrance signs will *not conceal any architectural details*. The monument signs are located at the entrances to the parking lots and the west entrance sign will be attached to the 1985 canopy. The signs will not *clutter the building* or site's images or *distract from the unity of the facades*.
4. In order to avoid concealing or physically impacting architectural details, the south elevation sign should be raised several inches above the central entrance stone arch. To minimize the impact of attachment into mortar joints, the individual letters should be installed on a rail system and the rail system would then be attached into the mortar joints only.
5. The two new monument signs are proposed to have a stone veneer and concrete cap. The Preservation Program for the Jackson Street Shops addresses new/infill construction and states it *should be sympathetic in massing and detail, but contrasting in architectural materials*. The proposed materials do not comply with program and should be changed to an appropriately detailed wood or metal frame (no stone veneer).
6. Internally lit signs are generally not recommended for use in historic districts and sites, lighting from the front is encouraged. The HPC has accepted some proposals for internally lit signs upon further review of the historic site, location, sign type, but has conditioned those approved signs to have an opaque and dark background, with only the lettering and logo appearing to be lit. The proposed signs have light backgrounds with dark lettering, thus not complying with internally lit signs.
7. The proposal to add signage at 23 Empire Drive will not adversely affect the Program for the Preservation and architectural control of the Jackson Street Shops (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)) provided the conditions are met.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings staff recommends approval of the sign permit application provided the following conditions are met:

1. The individual letters and logo of the south elevation sign shall be affixed to a double-rail mounting system. The rails shall have a matte gray finish and shall be anchored to the building through mortar joints only.
2. The south elevation sign shall be positioned and installed several inches above the central entrance stone arch.
3. The framing/support materials of the monument signs shall be revised with contrasting materials, such as wood or metal. The existing canopy could also be referenced in the new design. Revised plans and details shall be submitted for review and approval by HPC staff and/or the HPC.
4. The tenant panels on the internally illuminated monument sign shall have dark and opaque backgrounds with light colored lettering and graphics.
5. Any revisions to the approved plans shall be reviewed and approved by the HPC and/or staff.

G. ATTACHMENTS

1. HPC Application
2. Plans & Photographs



Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission
Department of Planning and Economic Development
25 Fourth Street West, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102
Phone: (651) 266-9078

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION

This application must be completed in addition to the appropriate city permit application if the affected property is an individually designated landmark or located within an historic district. For applications that must be reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission refer to the HPC Meeting schedule for meeting dates and deadlines.

1. CATEGORY

Please check the category that best describes the proposed work

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repair/Rehabilitation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sign/Awning | <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction/Addition/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence/Retaining Wall | Alteration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Application Review Only |

2. PROJECT ADDRESS

Street and number: 23 Empire Drive Zip Code: 55106

3. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of contact person: Dan Regan

Company: 23 Empire LLC

Street and number: 1875 Highway 36 W, Suite 200

City: Roseville State: MN Zip Code: 55113

Phone number: (612) 564-4070 e-mail: dan.regan@airlakedevelopment.com

4. PROPERTY OWNER(S) INFORMATION (If different from applicant)

Name: _____

Street and number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone number: (____) _____ e-mail: _____

5. PROJECT ARCHITECT (If applicable)

Contact person: David Sorenson

Company: Welsh Architecture

Street and number: 4350 Baker Road, Suite 400

City: Minnetonka State: MN Zip Code: 55343

Phone number: (952) 897-7842 e-mail: dsorenson@welshco.com

6. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completely describe ALL exterior changes being proposed for the property. Include changes to architectural details such as windows, doors, siding, railings, steps, trim, roof, foundation or porches. Attach specifications for doors, windows, lighting and other features, if applicable, including color and material samples.

Jackson Street Shops Heritage Preservation District
Machine Shop
See attached sheets.

Attach additional sheets if necessary

7. ATTACHMENTS

Refer to the *Design Review Process sheet* for required information or attachments.

****INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED****

ARE THE NECESSARY ATTACHMENTS AND INFORMATION INCLUDED?

☒ YES

Will any federal money be used in this project?
Are you applying for the Investment Tax Credits?

YES

NO

☒

YES

NO

☒

I, the undersigned, understand that the Design Review Application is limited to the aforementioned work to the affected property. I further understand that any additional exterior work to be done under my ownership must be submitted by application to the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission. Any unauthorized work will be required to be removed.

Signature of applicant: _____ Date: 10/17/13

Signature of owner: _____ Date: _____

FOR HPC OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received: 10-18-13

FILE NO. 14-006

District: _____/Individual Site: Jackson Street Shops

Contributing/Non-contributing/Pivotal/Supportive/:

Type of work: Minor/Moderate/Major

____ Requires staff review

Supporting data: YES NO
Complete application: YES NO

The following condition(s) must be met in order for application to conform to preservation program:

It has been determined that the work to be performed pursuant to the application does not adversely affect the program for preservation and architectural control of the heritage preservation district or site (Ch.73.06).

HPC staff approval

Date _____

☒ Requires Commission review

Submitted:

- ☐ 3 Sets of Plans
- ☐ 15 Sets of Plans reduced to 8 1/2" by 11" or 11" by 17"
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ City Permit Application
- ☐ Complete HPC Design Review application

Hearing Date set for: 11/7/13

City Permit # _____ - _____