

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

FILE NAME: 90 West Fourth Street
DATE OF APPLICATION: October 3, 2014
APPLICANT: Saint Paul Public Library, Jill Boldenow
OWNER: (same)
DATE OF HEARING: October 23, 2014
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Individual Site – Saint Paul Central Library
CATEGORY: pivotal
CLASSIFICATION: signage
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Amy Spong
DATE: October 16, 2014

A. SITE DESCRIPTION:

The Library was completed in 1917 as a raised three-story building housing two libraries. It was designed by Electus D. Litchfield of New York City, with the guidance of national library expert Charles C. Soule. The building is a fine example of North Italian Renaissance architecture; it is of a symmetrical design with seven bays and two pavilions. Exterior walls of Tennessee marble serve as a neutral background for the Palladian entries, arched windows, dentiled band courses, garland and swag frieze, and the heavy dentiled cornice, which created the rich Renaissance form of the building. The building is surrounded and framed by a matching Tennessee marble railing. The building fills an entire city block, with the primary facade facing onto Rice Park. Kellogg Boulevard runs along the rear facade, with Market and Washington Streets framing the sides.

B. PROPOSED CHANGES:

The applicant is proposing to 1) replace existing signage on two banner poles, 2) install two bronze wall plaques, and 3) install two new banners each measuring 5'6" by 24'8" on the Fourth Street façade facing Rice Park. On June 10th the Saint Paul Central Library was renamed the George Latimer Central Library in honor of the former Saint Paul Mayor. The Public Library also unveiled a new logo and this new signage will reflect both the logo and the new name. The bronze plaques at the entrance doors at Fourth Street and Kellogg Boulevard honors and informs the public about Mayor Latimer's service to the City and Library. All of the proposed banners will be a red color with white lettering that reads "George Latimer Central Library—Library--Saint Paul Public Library," with the new logo.

C. BACKGROUND:

Saint Paul Public Libraries commissioned a site assessment from consultant Michael Haug after meeting with HPC staff about proposed signage and the honorary naming. Staff then met an additional time with Mr. Haug and Library staff. One of the challenges discussed was that the need for large-scale signage was mostly created when the Library stopped using the main entrance stairs facing Fourth Street and started using the central entry door at grade. Originally this central door was to access the children's reading room. There has been confusion by building users as to which door to enter given the lack of formal entry into the main original lobby.

The entrance changes took place in 1984. At that time two small signs were placed atop the marble railings on each side of the entry door. Later free-standing banner poles with two banners each were installed on the Fourth Street and Kellogg Boulevard sides near the public sidewalks. In 2010, the HPC reviewed and conditionally approved four large temporary banners for an exhibit the James J. Hill Reference Library held. While these banners were temporary and approved on both sides of the Central and Reference Libraries, there were conditions placed that the anchors facing Fourth Street shall remain in the mortar joints on a permanent

basis, so that other temporary banners would have to utilize those same attachments to not further damage the facade. There have never been any permanent signs or banners physically attached to the Library until this current proposal.

In 2007, the Landmark Center requested four large banners, two facing Rice Park and two facing Sixth Street and staff recommend approving only the banners facing Sixth Street but the HPC heard the testimony, staff report and after discussion, approved the permanent banners for the Rice Park elevation too.

D. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Preservation Program (Ordinance #16538, C.F. No. 273086)

The present exterior of the Saint Paul Public Library and the James Jerome Hill Reference Library should be preserved in a manner consistent with its original design intent. The stone balustrade surrounding the building site should be preserved. The Library's inner courtyard is of vital importance as the sole landscaped open space on the immediate thoroughfare (Kellogg Boulevard), and this garden also served as a foil for the building's unique window treatment. Maintaining this landscaping around the building, including the courtyard on the southern side is encouraged.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (1995):

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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 property was listed on the National Register in 1975, and was locally designated as a Heritage Preservation Site on July 7, 1979 under Ordinance No.16538, § (1)(2) (under Mayor George Latimer). The City's Legislative Code states the HPC 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 preservation program for the site does not specifically address sign/interpretive guidelines and considerations. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation also do not directly address signage for historic properties but they do reference "exterior alterations" which the addition of banners on the site and building façade are.

3. Other individually designated commercial buildings in St. Paul have preservation programs that state: "Signs and other attachments should not conceal architectural detail, clutter the building's image, nor distract from the unity of the facade, but should be integrated in a manner which complements the overall design. There should be no signs above the first floor."

4. *Bronze Plaques.* The two bronze plaques next to the two main entrances comply with the guidelines so long as their attachment is into mortar joints only. The information provided addresses Mayor Latimer's years of service as Mayor and as chair emeritus of The Friends of the Public Library in 2012 but it should also state that he was the Mayor when the building was both listed on the National Register and declared a Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site.

5. *Existing banner pole sign replacements.* The existing banners poles with two banners each were approved at an early date and replacing them with new banners to reflect the new logo and name complies with the guidelines as there will be no loss of historic fabric or negative impacts to the site.

6. *New banners on Fourth Street elevation.* Both the National Register and local nomination forms state that a significant element of the Fourth Street facade is its' symmetry. The banners are being proposed in a symmetrical way at each side of the new main central entrance. As you move around to the wings and courtyard, there is more asymmetry in the design.

7. The nomination form highlights the large amount of window glass and the diversity in the openings. The Public Library main facade is "pierced by over seventy windows." The nomination addresses the importance of the solid space in relation to the voids (windows) as the building "retains a virtue common in Greek design" which is the "employment of blank spaces in the composition. The proportion of solid to void employed by Litchfield for the Central Library facade is noted as out of the ordinary for such a monumental building. The nomination states "The grandeur of the building is achieved through the extreme simplicity of the front design and the daring of its tranquility. The two proposed banners will cover much of the solid between three of the first floor windows which may disrupt the overall rhythm of the various elements.

8. The banners also extend above the arched windows and cover up round marble medallions that are repeated horizontally across the façade. The guidelines state that signs shall not cover over architectural detail so the current proposed size does not comply. The height of the banners that extend above the top of the arched windows results in the banners not being "...integrated in a manner which complements the overall design."

9. Frames around the two banners are being proposed although it's not clear from the application how many anchors are necessary to securely attach the banners. The applicant is proposing to install into mortar joints only. The frame is a mill finish and appears to come in either a square or beveled profile. Mill finish would not be appropriate and the frames should be finished to correspond to the tones in the marble. A beveled profile seems appropriate in this application. Anchors should be inspected periodically.

10. There are two owners/tenants of this important building but there does not appear to be a

master sign plan for the site and building as a whole. This should be a collaborative effort especially as the Reference Library is using their space for new uses and as a rental venue.

11. The proposal to change the existing banner pole signs, to install two bronze plaques and two new banners with frames will not adversely affect the Program for the Preservation unless the following conditions are met.

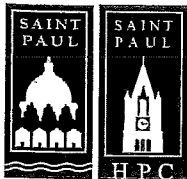
F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. The two proposed banners on the Fourth Street side will be reduced in height to not cover over the original medallions. The height shall not extend above the top of the arched windows. The width of the banners shall be reduced slightly to provide for some additional solid space between the banner and the marble window trim. The dimensioned and scaled plans with the resized signs/banners will be submitted to staff for final review and approval.
2. The frames will be finished with a color that blends with the marble and the number of anchors will be provided to staff.
3. Any attachment to the building will be through mortar joints and removal of marble is not allowed. Annual inspection of the anchors will be completed by the building owners to determine any failure or necessary repair work.
4. In addition to the recommended conditions, staff would encourage the Public Library and the Reference Library staff to collaborate to establish a Master Sign Plan for the site and building, which addresses future temporary and permanent signage in the context of the historic and architectural significance of the building. Finally staff would encourage the bronze plaques to include information about the historic designation of the building and the creation of the HPC during Mayor Latimer's tenure.

G. ATTACHMENTS

1. HPC application
2. Plans
3. Early photo



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: 90 W. 4th Street Zip Code: 55102

3. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of contact person: Jill Boldenow

Company: Saint Paul Public Library

Street and number: 90 W. 4th Street

City: Saint Paul State: MN Zip Code: 55102

Phone number: (651) 266-7029 e-mail: Jill.Boldenow@stpaul.gov

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

Name: City of Saint Paul

Street and number: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone number: () _____ e-mail: _____

SIGN DESIGNER

5. PROJECT ARCHITECT (If applicable)

Contact person: Michael Haug

Company: Michael Haug Design

Street and number: 5000 81st Lane North

City: Minneapolis State: MN Zip Code: 55443

Phone number: (763) 218-4051 e-mail: mike@michaelhaugdesign.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.

Exterior signage proposed for George Latimer Central Library, at 90 West 4th Street, Saint Paul. Specifications attached.

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?

YES ☐ NO ☒

Are you applying for the Investment Tax Credits?

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: Jill Boldenow Date: 10/2/2014
Signature of owner: _____ Date: _____

FOR HPC OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received: Oct. 3, 2014 FILE NO. _____

Date complete: _____

District: _____ /Individual Site: _____

Pivotal/Contributing/Non-contributing/New Construction/Parcel:

Type of work: Minor/Moderate/Major

____ Requires staff review

X Requires Commission 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 _____

Submitted:

- ☐ 3 Sets of Plans
- ☐ 15 Sets of Plans reduced to 8 1/2" by 11" or 11" by 17"
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ CD of Plans (pdf) & Photos (jpg)
- ☐ City Permit Application
- ☐ Complete HPC Design Review application

Hearing Date set for: 10.23.14

City Permit # _____ - _____

Saint Paul Public Library

Attachment with Heritage Preservation Commission Design Review Application

Sign Specifications

1. Wall Sign on Fourth Street Façade

A new, permanent sign is proposed that consists of two panels above the library's ground-level entrance on Fourth Street. The panels feature durable banner material on a wall-mounted tension frame. The frame will be permanently attached to the building at grout lines, and the banner panel may be removed and replaced as needed. Each panel is 5' 6" X 24' 8". Color is red (Pantone 200C) with white letters.

2. Wall Plaques at Entrance Doors on Fourth Street and Kellogg Boulevard

Two plaques designed in the same manner as the library's existing historic designation plaque are proposed to hang next to entrance doors at Fourth Street and Kellogg Boulevard. Each plaque is 14 ¾" X 11 ¾".

3. Replacement Pole Banners on Fourth Street and Kellogg Boulevard

Pole banners, which are situated near the sidewalk at Fourth Street and Kellogg Boulevard, have been replaced with new banners with the new name and logo. Banners are each 24" X 82".

Background

On June 10, 2014, the Saint Paul Central Library at 90 West 4th Street was renamed George Latimer Central Library, in honor of the former Saint Paul Mayor. At the same time, the Saint Paul Public Library unveiled a new logo. New signage is proposed to reflect the new name and logo and to better communicate the library's civic purpose and its entrance location.

After the renaming, the library commissioned a site assessment from consultant Michael Haug, who has professional experience with historic building signage. The proposed signage was selected based on the assessment of the site and the library's needs.

Proposed wall sign text identifies the facility identity, "*George Latimer Central Library*," and the civic purpose, "*library*." The logo identifies the library as part of the Saint Paul Public Library system.

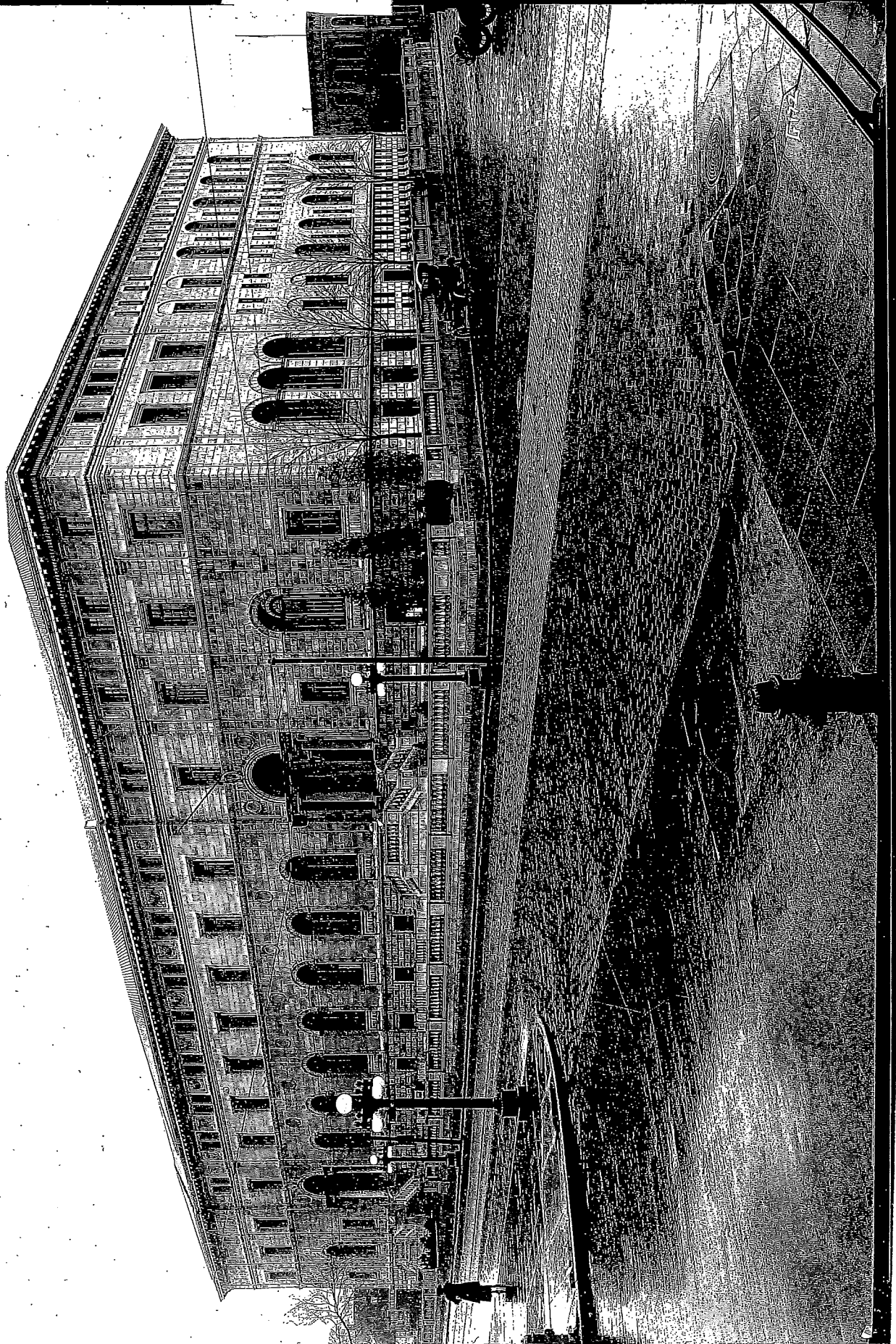
The wall sign will help the public identify the location of the library's ADA-compliant entrance, which is not original to the building. The original, non-functioning entrance, which features prominent architectural elements, is often mistaken for an entrance, while the functioning entrance is not clearly identified.

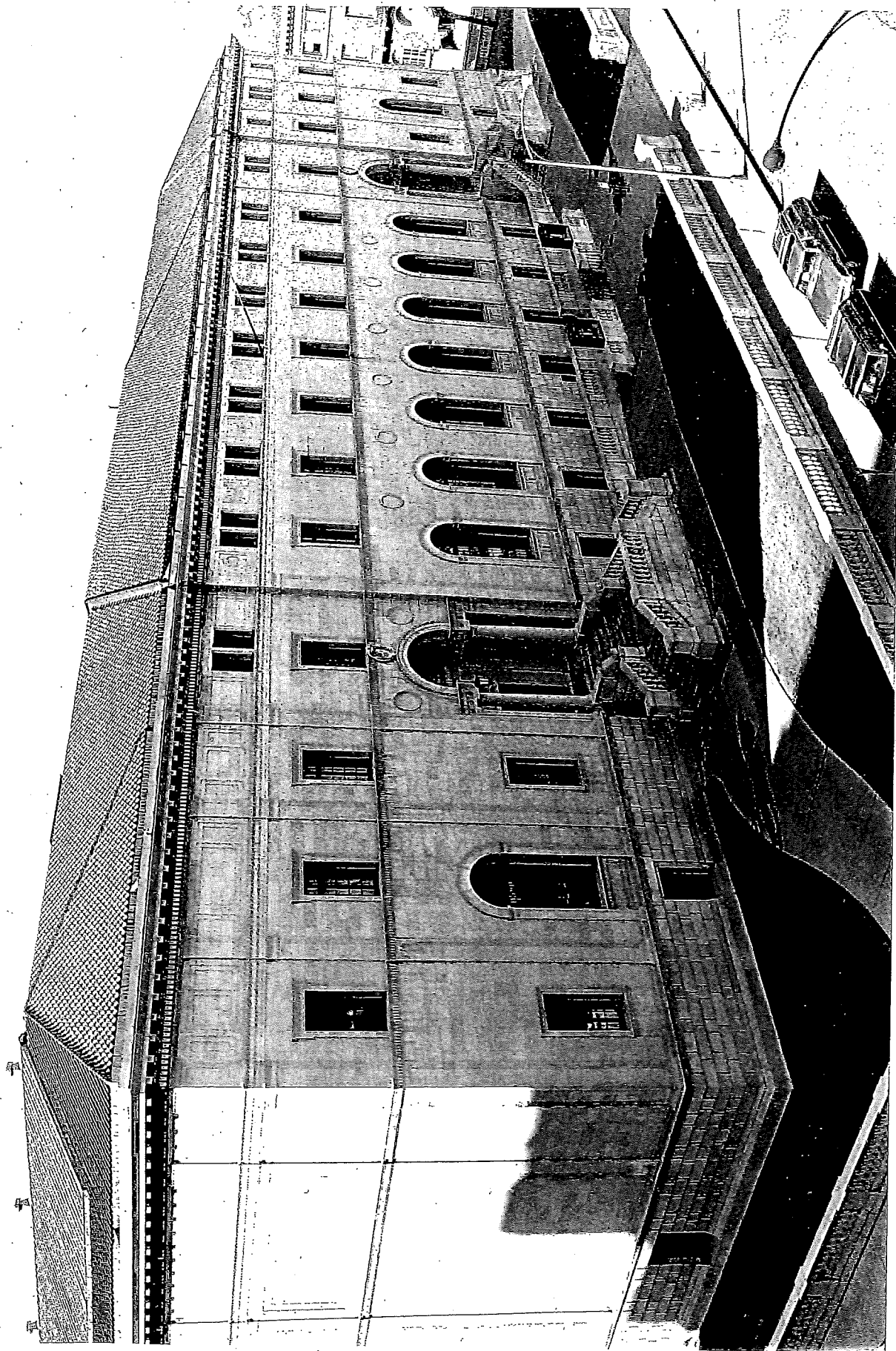
The sign is proposed for the library's Fourth Street façade. Facing Rice Park, this façade is visible to many. However, currently the building does not effectively identify the city's public library or engage the public to utilize the library's resources.

Plaque text honors and informs about George Latimer's service to the City and the library.

Per 4495
mt 1695D

Attachment IV.A. G.3.
ca 1920





ca 1970:
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