PLANNING COMMISSION
Barbara A. Wencl, Chair

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6565
Facsimile: 651-228-3261

DATE: July 15, 2015

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Neighborhood Planning Committee

SUBJECT: Proposed designation of the *Pioneer Era Limestone Buildings of Saint Paul* at 445 Smith Avenue, 383 Goodhue Street, 282 West Seventh Street, 202 McBoal Street, and 178 Goodrich Avenue as Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Sites

SITE DESCRIPTION

The five sites proposed for designation as a thematic nomination are noncontiguous buildings constructed during Saint Paul's pioneer era using the locally-available stone as the primary structural material. Specifically, the five sites (the Anthony Waldman House at 445 Smith Ave., the Christian Reinhardt House at 383 Goodhue St., the Justus Ramsey House at 252 West Seventh St., the Martin Weber House at 202 McBoal St., and the Schillinger-Brings House at 178 Goodrich Ave.) are all houses built in the West Seventh Street neighborhood of Platteville limestone between the years 1854-1880.

The City Council has previously designated the Justus Ramsey House (1978), the Schillinger-Brings House (1981, 1994 after move), and the Martin Weber House (1995) as individual Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Sites. The Justus Ramsey House is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1975).

BACKGROUND

In December of 2014, the owner of the Anthony Waldman House, Tom Schroeder, submitted the thematic nomination to the Heritage Preservation Commission and requested the HPC review the materials and consider their designation. The HPC has not formally reviewed the request; however, a public hearing by the HPC is anticipated for August 13, 2015. A *Designation Activities Checklist* and timeline is attached indicating the steps for pursuing local designation.

By the time the City's first comprehensive *Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul and Ramsey County* was completed in 1983, the Justus Ramsey House was already locally designated (1978) and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1975) and the Schillinger-Brings House was locally designated (1981). Three of the five stone houses, the Martin Weber House, Anthony Waldman House, and the Schillinger-Brings House, were surveyed as part of the 1983 project and identified as Sites Eligible for

Designation. The Schillinger-Brings House was then moved and designated a second time in its new location on Goodrich Avenue in 1994 and the Martin Weber House was locally designated in 1995. The Christian Reinhardt House was never surveyed as part of the 1983 survey or the 1992 Uppertown Survey conducted by Jim Sazevich. This is likely due to the fact that the early Greek Revival wood-frame portion and the limestone addition were covered in vinyl siding and hidden from view. In 1991, Don Empson purchased the Reinhardt House, removed the synthetic siding and restored the wood and stone walls.

Aside from the Justus Ramsey House, the four remaining stone houses have not been fully evaluated for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, but have been recommended along with a thematic study of limestone houses in the West 7th Street neighborhood in the 2011 Historic Resources Inventory conducted by Mead and Hunt for the HPC, Historic St. Paul, and the Ramsey County Historical Society. Three of the stone houses are also included within the boundaries of the Uppertown Residential Historic District that was recommended for further study.

PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE

A Planning Commission recommendation regarding proposed new Heritage Preservation Site designations is required per Legislative Code 73.05 (b) (emphasis added):

The heritage preservation commission shall advise the city planning commission of the proposed designation of a heritage preservation site, including boundaries, and a program for the preservation of a heritage preservation site, and secure from the city planning commission its recommendation with respect to the relationship of the proposed heritage preservation designation to the comprehensive plan of the City of Saint Paul, its opinion as to the effect of the proposed designation upon the surrounding neighborhood, and its opinion and recommendation as to any other planning consideration which may be relevant to the proposed designation, together with its recommendation of approval, rejection or modification of the proposed designation. Said recommendation shall become part of the official record concerning the proposed designation and shall be submitted by the heritage preservation commission along with its recommendation concerning the proposed designation to the city council. The heritage preservation commission may make such modifications, changes and alterations concerning the proposed designations as it deems necessary in consideration of the recommendations of the city planning commission.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONFORMANCE

The proposed designation is in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, including the following specific provisions of the Historic Preservation Chapter:

> **Strategy 3:** Identify, Evaluate and Designate Historic Resources
> **3.11.** Make the designation of significant historic resources as heritage preservation sites a priority for the City Council.
> **3.12.** Designate historic resources, such as buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, historic districts, and landscapes as Saint Paul heritage preservation sites or historic districts.
> **Strategy 4:** Preserve and Protect Historic Resources

4.3. Protect undesignated historic resources.

The proposed designation is also in conformance with the District 9 Area Plan Summary, which is an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, the following strategy applies to the proposal:

> 52. Pursue local and National Register designation of the original limestone residential and commercial buildings in West 7th.

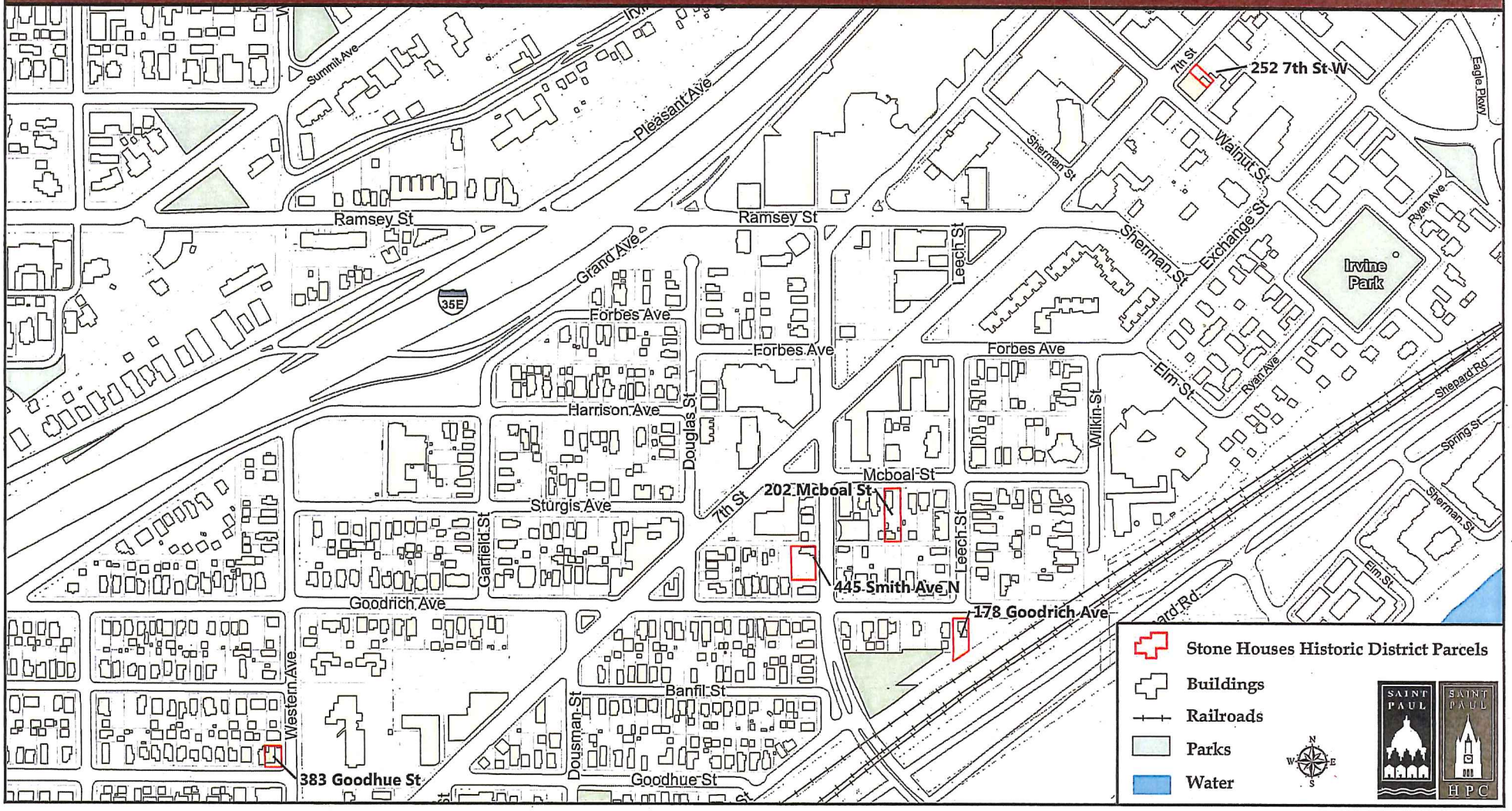
EFFECT ON SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD

Historic properties can help define the character of their neighborhoods, create a strong sense of place, enhance the quality of life of residents, and serve as a catalyst for investment in surrounding properties, both residential and commercial. Designation ensures that the historic integrity of the properties is maintained, allowing their benefits to the surrounding neighborhoods to be sustained and enhanced. It can also pave the way for state or national designation and associated tax credits.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Neighborhood Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Commission approve the attached draft resolution supporting the designation of the *Pioneer Era Limestone Buildings of Saint Paul* at 445 Smith Avenue, 383 Goodhue Street, 282 West Seventh Street, 202 McBoal Street, and 178 Goodrich Avenue as Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Sites.

Attachments:

1. Map of Properties Proposed for Designation
2. Pioneer Era Limestone Buildings of Saint Paul Designation Study
3. Preservation Program for the Pioneer Era Limestone Buildings of Saint Paul
4. Draft Planning Commission Resolution
5. Designation Activities Checklist /Timeline

Stone Houses Historic District