

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

FILE NAME: 216-218 Bates Avenue, Schornstein Garage
DATE OF APPLICATION: February 6, 2014
APPLICANT: Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)
OWNER: HRA
DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: February 27, 2014
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District
CATEGORY: Non-Contributing
CLASSIFICATION: Demolition Permit
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Christine Boulware
DATE: February 20, 2014

A. SITE DESCRIPTION: The Schornstein Garage at 216-218 Bates Avenue is comprised of two buildings; the two-story building was constructed in 1886 and the one-story section constructed in 1912. Both buildings are covered with aluminum siding. The carriage doors have been replaced with a sectional, overhead-opening garage door. The lower window of 216 is covered, and the upper windows currently have two-pane sliders with decorative shutters. 218 has two openings on the primary facade, both with decorative shutters; one fixed-pane window and one glazed paneled door. 218 also has a sectional overhead garage door on the north elevation. Per the inventory form, the buildings are categorized as non-contributing.

As evidenced in older photographs, 216 Bates Avenue was a two-story masonry load-bearing building with a flat roof behind a low parapet. Historically, the building had a brick exterior with two shallow, corbelled cornices and shallow corbelled brackets at each end. The two, second-story windows were double-hung, four-over-four, and the left (north) side first story window was a fixed four-light window with a two-light transom above. The windows have hidden lintels and rowlock sills. Double carriage doors occupy the right side first story opening. The doors were rail and stile, with diagonal bead-board panels. The left door had a secondary service door in it. The lower corners of the automotive entry had cast-iron, bullet-shaped corner protectors.

The 218 Bates portion of the Schornstein Garage is a one-story brick building that was constructed for use as an automotive garage. The exterior is brick and appears to be whitewashed in older photographs. It had a simple, two-course corbelled cornice, and the one partially-visible window has a hidden lintel and a rowlock cornice. The historic fenestration is unknown.

B. PROPERTY HISTORY AND CONTEXT: The Schornstein Grocery and Saloon at 707 Wilson (223 Bates) was constructed in 1884. It is architecturally and historically significant as one of the most unusual and ornate small Victorian era commercial buildings still standing in Saint Paul. The building was designed by Saint Paul architect, Augustus F. Gauger and has served as a focal point for the Wilson/Bates neighborhood since the late nineteenth century.

William Schornstein and his wife, Wilhelmina, were born in Germany and immigrated directly to St. Paul in 1873. William worked as a bartender for several years before moving to the predominantly German Wilson/Bates neighborhood in 1880. In that year he opened his first grocery store and saloon in rented quarters at the corner of Bates and Plum. In 1882, Schornstein purchased a lot a few blocks away at the NW corner of Wilson and Bates (site of the present building) and built a \$6000, two-story brick store. This building was destroyed by fire two years later. In the summer of 1884, he commissioned St. Paul architect Augustus F. Gauger to design the present building,

which was completed in the fall of 1884 at an estimated cost of \$5000. Gauger was a prolific German-born architect with a carpentry background who came to Saint Paul in 1875 and first worked in the office of architect Edward P. Bassford. Gauger designed a large number of houses, schools, commercial buildings, and at least one church in Saint Paul. He eventually gained a national reputation.

The new Schornstein Grocery and Saloon originally housed a grocery store in the main storefront, a saloon in the rear storefront (entry at Bates), the Schornstein's apartment on the second floor, and a meeting hall on the third floor. The one-story store attached to the west side was used by Schornstein's brother-in-law as a harness shop. Sometime after the turn of the century, the second floor was divided into two apartments. William Schornstein operated the saloon and grocery store until his retirement in 1910 when his son, Otto, assumed control of the business. William dies in 1920 and one year later Otto closed the store and sold the building.

The Schornstein Garage at 216-218 Bates was constructed in two phases: the two-story portion (216) in 1886 and the one-story portion (218) in 1912. When the one-story portion was constructed for Schornstein in 1912, he purchased the two-story portion.

The William Schornstein residence at 716 Wilson (Hudson Ave.) was constructed in 1912 (the same year as 218 Bates). The original building permit number is #59131. The residence is one-and-one-half stories and of frame construction. The front porch has been enclosed and Permastone applied to the area under the windows. The rest of the house has been wrapped in aluminum siding.

On the 1903-1925 Sanborn Map, the house and garage are shown occupying the same lot. Historically, Bates Avenue between Wilson and Hudson had been a commercial block.

C. PROPOSED CHANGES: The applicant proposes to raze both buildings; there are no current plans for new construction. The lot would be graded and seeded.

D. TIMELINE:

August 16, 2005 - the Certificate of Occupancy for Arco Dishwasher Service was revoked

August 17, 2005 - the property became a Category 2 vacant building

December 7, 2007 - the HRA purchased the property for \$110,000 with CDBG funds

April 2012 - Karen Gjerstad, architect, is hired by Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services (DBNHS) to evaluate the property in partnership with Load Bearing, Inc (construction management)

August 2, 2012 - Karen Gjerstad and DBNHS applied for HPC review to rehabilitate the property into two, four-bedroom, rental units. This included constructing an addition above the one-story portion.

August 23, 2012 - the HPC held a public hearing and reviewed and conditionally approved the rehabilitation of the property

November 15, 2012 - the project went out to bid as a package with 716 Wilson and 208-210 Bates Avenue

December 2012 - bids received

February 2013 - proposal from DBNHS to PED for subsidy

April - September 2013 - PED Housing staff discussed options to reduce the cost of the project

with DBNHS

October 2013 - PED Housing staff begin discussing rehabilitation vs. demolition scenarios with HPC staff

February 6, 2013 - The HRA applied to the HPC for demolition of the property

E. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:

Dayton's Bluff Historic District Guidelines

Leg. Code § 74.87. General principles.

(1) *All work should be of a character and quality that maintains the distinguishing features of the building and the environment. The removal or alteration of distinctive architectural features should be avoided as should alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance. The restoration of altered original features, if documentable, is encouraged.*

(2) *Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.*

(3) *Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event of replacement, new materials should match the original in composition, design (including consideration of proportion, texture and detail), color and overall appearance.*

(4) *New additions or alterations to structures should be constructed in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired.*

(5) *The impact of alterations or additions on individual buildings as well as on the surrounding streetscape will be considered; major alterations to buildings which occupy a corner lot or are otherwise prominently sited should be avoided.*

(6) *New construction should be compatible with the historic and architectural character of the district.*

§ 74.90. – New construction and additions.

(j) *Demolition. Demolition permits will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be determined by the category of building (pivotal, contributing and noncontributing) and its importance to the district, the structural condition of the building and the economic viability of the structure.*

§ 73.06(i)(2): Demolition

When reviewing proposals for demolition of structures within the district, the Heritage Preservation Commission refers to § 73.06 (i)(2) of the Saint Paul Legislative Code which states the following:

In the case of the proposed demolition of a building, prior to approval of said demolition, the commission shall make written findings on the following: the architectural and historical merit of the building, the effect of the demolition on surrounding buildings, the effect of any proposed new construction on the remainder of the building (in case of partial demolition) and on surrounding buildings, and the economic value or usefulness of the building as it now exists or if altered or modified in comparison with the value or usefulness of any proposed structures designated to replace the present building or buildings.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

District/Neighborhood

Recommended:

- Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings, and streetscape, and landscape features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the district or neighborhood. Such features can include streets, alleys, paving, walkways, street lights, signs, benches, parks and gardens, and trees.
- Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, and streetscape and landscape features such as a town square comprised of row houses and stores surrounding a communal park or open space.
- Protecting and maintaining the historic masonry, wood, and architectural metals which comprise building and streetscape features, through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and reapplication of protective coating systems; and protecting and maintaining landscape features, including plant material.
- Repairing features of the building, streetscape, or landscape by reinforcing the historic materials. Repair will also generally include the replacement in kind - or with a compatible substitute material - of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes such as porch balustrades, paving materials, or streetlight standards.
- Replacing in kind an entire feature of the building, streetscape, or landscape that is too deteriorated to repair - when the overall form and detailing are still evident - using the physical evidence to guide the new work. This could include a storefront, a walkway, or a garden. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

Alterations/Additions for the New Use

- Designing required new parking so that it is as unobtrusive as possible, i.e., on side streets or at the rear of buildings. "Shared" parking should also be planned so that several business' can utilize one parking area as opposed to introducing random, multiple lots.
- Designing and constructing new additions to historic buildings when required by the new use. New work should be compatible with the historic character of the district or neighborhood in terms of size, scale, design, material, color, and texture.
- Removing non-significant buildings, additions, or streetscape and landscape features which detract from the historic character of the district or the neighborhood.

Not Recommended:

- Removing or radically changing those features of the district or neighborhood which are important in defining the overall historic character so that, as a result, the character is diminished.
- Removing or relocating historic buildings, or features of the streetscape and landscape, thus destroying the historic relationship between buildings, features and open space.
- Failing to undertake adequate measures to assure the preservation of building, streetscape, and landscape features.
- Removing a feature of the building, streetscape, or landscape that is unrepairable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

Design for Missing Historic Features

- Introducing a new building, streetscape or landscape feature that is out of scale or otherwise inappropriate to the setting's historic character, e.g., replacing picket fencing with chain link fencing

Alterations/Additions for the New Use

- Placing parking facilities directly adjacent to historic buildings which cause the removal of historic plantings, relocation of paths and walkways, or blocking of alleys.

-Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the district or neighborhood.

-Removing a historic building, building feature, or landscape or streetscape feature that is important in defining the overall historic character of the district or the neighborhood.

F. FINDINGS:

1. On July 23, 1992, the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District was established under Ordinance No. 17942 (Council File #92-900). 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 demolition within designated heritage preservation sites **§73.04.(4)**.
2. **Leg. Code § 74.90.(j)** - The Preservation Program for the Dayton's Bluff Historic District states that consideration of demolitions will be determined by the category of building (pivotal, contributing and non-contributing), its importance to the district, the structural condition of the building and the economic viability of the structure.
3. **The category of the building.** The Schornstein Garage is classified as non-contributing to the Dayton's Bluff Historic District. Aluminum siding wraps and conceals the original brick exterior and openings have been altered. Staff considers the building's historic context to be good, as it is associated with the adjacent Schornstein Grocery and Schornstein House. The architectural integrity of the Schornstein Garage is fair, although the aluminum siding is seen as a reversible condition. The building has undergone exterior alterations to the openings; if the original opening sizes, fenestration and doors were restored, the property would likely be re-categorized as contributing.
4. **The importance of the building to the district.** The Schornstein Garage was constructed in two phases: the two story portion in 1886 and the one story portion in 1912. Both portions of the garage were constructed during the period of significance for the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District. The Dayton's Bluff Handbook states the following:

Most of the commercial buildings within the District are of masonry construction and date from the 1880s through the 1920s. Groceries and a variety of buildings housing small shops were concentrated along E. Seventh and near Maria and E. Third, and others occupy prominent corner locations. Many provided apartments above the retail space. Each Commercial building has a distinctive style or character which is associated with its primary period of construction. Each building is unique, but most share a two-part horizontal division with glazed (or once-glazed) storefronts at the first story. Brick or stamped metal details at the cornice or a parapet often deserve special attention and should not be covered over.

In the 1880s, and particularly during the peak years 1882-1884, Dayton's Bluff became a densely-built urban neighborhood. The construction of a series of bridges and the extension of streetcar service brought a new and diverse population to the bluff. Factory and railroad workers purchased small lots and erected a great variety of single and multiple-family houses. The newly-arrived settlers included recent immigrants from Sweden, Ireland, and Germany, but German-Americans were the predominant group. They joined a large contingent of well-established German-American business owners...

The number of the commercial buildings still extant in the Dayton's Bluff Historic District from this time period is unknown, and several have been removed since the adoption of the District in 1992. This is especially evident in reviewing historic maps of East Third and East Seventh Streets. Several of the small commercial corner stores still exist, but in a mostly residential use. At the intersection of Bates and Wilson, three commercial buildings identified on the 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map at the intersection are extant.

Staff has not researched any historical associations other than Schornstein that have contributed in some way to Saint Paul's history and development or an architect or association with an important event, with this property. The 1989 Dayton's Bluff inventory form did not

identify other individuals.

The Sanborn Insurance map for this site indicates the footprint of the building has not changed since 1925. There is not an alley on this block and the grade rises steeply to the east. The Schornstein Garage has an abutting driveway to the east. The grade change at this driveway allows for at grade entrance to the second floor apartment at the back of 216 Bates.

This block of Bates Street has seen several changes over the past several decades. A vacant lot historically sat between the Schornstein Garage and the Schacht Block, at 208-210 Bates, on the eastern side of the street. In 2001, Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services received conditional approval from the HPC for the construction of a three-unit townhome at 212-214 Bates Avenue and the construction of a six-unit townhome at 207 Bates Avenue. The stores and businesses that were located at the northeast and northwest corners of Bates and Plum Street appear to have been demolished prior to the adoption of the Dayton's Bluff Historic District.

The remaining historic buildings on the east and west sides of the block are: 209-213 Bates, 217-219 Bates, 204 Bates, 208-210 Bates and 216-218 Bates. All have varying degrees of historic integrity.

5. **Structural condition of the building.** A Code Compliance Report has not been ordered for this property, the building deficiency list was sent with the revocation of the Certificate of Occupancy on August 16, 2005, and there have not been any inspections conducted by DSI since 2005. The list of deficiencies is not necessarily all the deficiencies present at the time and would not substitute for a team inspection and Code Compliance Report. During a June 7, 2011 site inspection, HPC staff observed interior conditions with water staining and pooling, rising damp and spalling brick up to four courses above the slab. There were no original or early architectural or decorative features observed on the interior. The exterior features of the house have either been removed or covered. The fenestration, service doors and garage doors are not original to the property. Many of the openings have been reduced in size to fit stock windows and doors. HPC staff considers the overall condition of the subject building as fair to poor. A letter dated January 24, 2014 from Jeffery Garetz, Construction Manager for the project, states that the building has extensive rot and mold from years of water infiltration and it was determined that "the entire length of the east wall, and the roof of the one story section of the building should both be demolished."
6. **The economic viability of the structure.** According to DBNHS, demolition costs are estimated to be \$10,000 to \$30,000. The cost of rehabilitation, based on the bids received, was \$539,237 to \$640,740. The HRA purchased the property in 2007 for \$110,000 with CDBG funds. Ramsey County estimates the land value at \$18,000 and the building value at \$87,000. The property is sited at the southeast corner of the intersection of Bates and Wilson Avenue and the parcel size is .07 acres.

The property is currently zoned RTI with the former use as Legal Non-Conforming - Warehouse. Until the revocation of the C of O, the use of the property was Mixed Use - Commercial/Residential. The January 24, 2014 letter from Jeffrey Garetz states, "The existing usable space in the building was not sufficient to successfully adapt the building to accommodate two dwelling units. Given this fact, and the deterioration of the existing structural members, the architects devised a plan that modified the building to both improve its structural integrity while increasing its usable space."

The HRA posted an RFP for rehabilitation of the building into residential units, both in order to meet the funding requirements, but also because the current zoning for the property is residential.

7. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend against removing buildings that are important in defining the overall historic character of the district or the

neighborhood. Given the alterations to the building and its lack of integrity, HPC staff finds that the building does not currently reinforce the District's architectural and historic character. The Standards also recommend against and destroying historic relationships between buildings and open space. The demolition of the building would have a significant impact on the relationship of historic commercial buildings at the intersection of Bates and Wilson.

8. HPC staff finds that the proposed demolition of the buildings at 216-218 Bates Avenue will not adversely affect the Program for the Preservation and architectural control of the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District (Leg. Code §73.06 (e)). However, a vacant lot will have a negative impact on the historic district and the loss of historic fabric is irreversible. Future construction at the site shall comply with the new construction guidelines for the Dayton's Bluff Historic District, specifically Leg. Code § 74.90 and should also reinforce the historically commercial character of this node.

G. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the findings staff recommends approval of the demolition permit application provided the following condition(s) are met:

1. Prior to demolition, the applicant shall remove the siding to reveal the masonry exterior of the buildings and the building shall be documented following the Minnesota Historic Property Record (MHPR) archival photo documentation standards prior to demolition, at the owner's expense. Two copies of the 2012 HPC reviewed plans in 11" x 17" format will be accepted in lieu of as-built drawings. Two copies of the documentation shall be forwarded to the HPC (one copy to be delivered to the Ramsey County Historically Society.)

H. ATTACHMENTS

1. HPC Design Review Application
2. August 23, 2012 HPC public hearing:
 - A. Decision Letter
 - B. Public Hearing Minutes
3. Applicant Submittals:
 - A. *Letter from Hess Roise*
 - B. *Letter from Load Bearing, Inc.*
 - C. *Structural Analysis & Mold Evaluation of 208 Bates*
 - D. *Photographs and background information regarding project analysis*
4. Ramsey County Property Information
5. 2012 Bid Submission Tally
6. Aerials, Photographs, and Historic Map

Copies of the 2012 HPC Staff Report and 2012 Specifications for Bids are available at the meeting or by request.