

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

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FILE NAME: 208-210 Bates Avenue  
DATE OF APPLICATION: February 6, 2014  
APPLICANT: Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA)  
OWNER: HRA  
DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: February 27, 2013  
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Dayton's Bluff Historic District  
CATEGORY: Pivotal  
CLASSIFICATION: Demolition Permit  
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Christine Boulware  
DATE: February 24, 2014

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**A. SITE DESCRIPTION:** The Schacht Building, at 208-210 Bates Avenue, is a two-story commercial building with a stone, brick and iron first story storefront and a wood frame with brick veneer second story. It was designed by architect Charles Neuhausen and constructed as a store and flats in 1885. A wide cornice with simple brackets lines the front of the parapet that hides the flat roof. The two, squared oriel windows rest on heavy brackets set in the sign panel, interrupting the storefront cornice. A corrugated metal panel runs across and between the fronts of the oriels. The doubled windows in the oriels are currently horizontally-divided two-over-two double hung, and the two single windows between the oriels and vertically-divided two-over-two double-hung. The first story facade is divided by four square brick Doric columns into two separate storefronts with a central door to the upstairs. Fluted cast iron posts with molding details divide each storefront into two display windows with transoms and an inset entry with a transom. All transoms and display windows are currently filled with plywood, and plywood covers the bulkheads except for some inset panel bulkheads surviving in the inset entries. The entry doors are currently metal, paneled contemporary doors. The stone walls on the other three sides are rendered (stuccoed) and struck to look like ashlar stone. All windows on the secondary elevations have segmental arched openings appear to have double-hung windows. There is a frame, shed addition at the rear of the building, and some of the brick veneer ties have failed on the north side of the building, leading to a partial collapse of the veneer. The property is categorized as pivotal to the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District.

**B. PROPERTY HISTORY AND CONTEXT:** As evidenced by the 1903-1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map and the 1934 Saint Paul City Directory, Bates Avenue between Wilson (was Hudson Ave.) and Hudson (was Hastings Ave.) had many commercial businesses. Hastings Avenue was an important thoroughfare to the east and it ended at a five-way intersection at Plum Street and Bates Avenue. A sample of the immediate businesses and occupants on Bates Avenue during the period of significance included:

200 Bach & Brown - feed store	211 Fredrick C Kicherer - barber
201 Mounds View Market - grocery	213 Fred H Bigler - potato chips (store)
202 Bates Avenue Tire Shop	216 Schornstein Garage/Pothoff Bros Garage
203 Butcher Shop	217 Louis McGowan - shoes/store & dwelling
204 Bates Avenue Garage	Harold Eliason
207-09 Joseph F. Ryan (Hamm's) - bev.	Adwell S McGowan
208 J Dzikiewicz - furniture & dwellings	219 Carl E Johnson - grocer
210 Mrs. Helen Bley	Mrs. Harriet T Miller

The Schacht Building is the only surviving Victorian-Era building on the block.

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

**D. TIMELINE:**

April 16, 2002 - the property became a Category 2 vacant building

October 2005 - the HRA approved the acquisition of the Schacht Building through eminent domain. The acquisition cost was \$325,000.

2010 - The HRA partnered with Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services (DBNHS) to evaluate the property

August 2, 2012 - Karen Gjerstad, architect, and DBNHS, stated owner, applied for HPC review to rehabilitate the property into two, four-bedroom, rental units

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 216-218 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 exterior work within designated heritage preservation sites **§73.04.(4)**.
2. **Leg. Code § 74.90.(j)** - The Preservation Program for the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation 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 Schacht Building is categorized as pivotal to the Dayton's Bluff Heritage Preservation District. Although openings on the facade have been altered, it still retains character defining details such as the iron columns, oriel windows, bracketing and dentiled cornice. Staff considers the building's historic integrity to be good; it can still be read in the historic commercial context of that block of Bates Avenue. The architectural integrity of the Schacht Building facade is fair-to-good; the aluminum and plywood sheathing is a reversible condition. The architectural integrity of the non-primary elevations of the building is poor. The limestone first floor has been parged and the brick veneer along the second floor has been separating from the wood sheathing and falling from the building. According to the 2010 structural assessment identified significant differential settlement of the foundation that has created sloping floors and bowed walls.

4. **The importance of the building to the district.** The Schacht Building was constructed in 1885 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. The three corner, commercial buildings identified on the 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map at the intersection of Bates and Wilson are extant.

Staff conducted some research on historical associations with this property that may have contributed in some way to Saint Paul's history and development. Staff briefly searched the Minnesota Territorial and U.S. Census' and Saint Paul directories for information about August Schacht and architect Charles Neuhausen and were not successful. The 1989 Dayton's Bluff inventory form did not identify any other individuals.

The Sanborn Insurance map for this site indicates the footprint of the building has not changed since 1925. There is no alley on this block and the grade rises steeply to the east. Historically, there was a driveway to the south of the building that led to a garage and a small barn/shed at the back of the lot. The outbuildings and driveway were removed prior to the adoption of the District.

This block of Bates Avenue has seen several changes over the past several decades. A vacant lot historically sat between the Schornstein Garage and the Schacht Block 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 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. The Schacht Building at 208-210 Bates Avenue is the only Victorian Era storefront remaining on the block and the facade retains architectural character defining details.

5. **Structural condition of the building.** A Code Compliance Report was not ordered for the Schacht Building, the building deficiency list was sent with the revocation of the Certificate of Occupancy on August 24, 2009, and there have not been any further inspections conducted by DSI. 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 which included mold, water damage, and an uneven floor. There were no original or early architectural or decorative features observed on the interior. The stone exterior along the first floor of the building has been parged and the brick veneer on the second floor is separating and falling from the substrate, as water has entered the walls and the brick ties have disintegrated. There are broken and boarded windows and openings on the facade have been infilled. Original trim and detailing on the facade does remain. After observing the property and reading the engineering report HPC staff concurs that the overall condition of the Schacht Building is poor.

6. ***The economic viability of the structure.*** The HRA estimates the demolition costs to be \$10,000 to \$30,000. The cost range to rehabilitate the building into two, side-by-side, up-down, four bedroom residences, based on the bids received in 2012 were \$607,281 to \$760,264 which included: removal of the rear addition, removal of the brick from the exterior walls, lifting the building to remove the foundation walls, filling in the basement and constructing new foundation and first-floor walls, installing new brick at the second floor walls, installing new windows and doors, installing a new roof overlay, restoring the facade and storefront design, constructing a new stairway addition at the rear of the building, constructing a two stall garage at the rear of the lot, site work including retaining walls and a driveway to be accessed from Wilson Avenue. Additional bids exploring ways to reduce costs were not submitted for review.

Ramsey County estimates the land value at \$90,000 and the building value at \$10,000. The HRA acquired the property through eminent domain in 2005 for the cost of \$325,000. The property is sited on the east side of Bates Avenue in the middle of the block and the parcel size is .12 acres.

The property is currently zoned RTI with the former use as Legal Non-Conforming - Three/Four Family. Historically, the building was mixed use with commercial on the ground floor and residential above. The HRA posted an RFP for rehabilitation of the building into two, four bedroom, residential units, both in order to meet the funding requirements, but also because the current zoning for the property is residential.

7. In general, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend against removing buildings that are important in defining the overall historic character and destroying historic relationships between buildings and open space. Despite the alterations to the primary elevation of the building, the facade retains integrity and reinforces the District's architectural and historic character, especially the commercial store and flats character that has been lost over time. Given the alterations to the non-primary elevations of the building and its poor structural integrity, the building behind the facade would require nearly complete replacement, thus leaving no historic fabric intact.
8. The proposed demolition of the Schacht Building at 208-210 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, the loss of the historic facade will adversely affect the District as it is the last remaining decoratively detailed Victorian-era façade on this block of Bates Avenue and this property type is pivotal in maintaining the early commercial character of the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood.

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.

**G. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

1. Stabilize, retain and restore the facade of the building for incorporation into future construction at the property. The applicant shall retain the proper qualified preservation professionals to carefully and creatively explore façade preservation in the short-term and for incorporating into future construction. The final outcome and scope shall be brought back to the HPC for final review and approval.

**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. 2005 HRA Report re: Authorization to acquire 208-210 Bates Avenue
5. Ramsey County Property Information
6. 2012 Bid Specifications
7. 2012 Bid Submission Tally
8. Aerials, Photographs, and Historic Map

Copies of the 2012 HPC Staff Report will be available at the meeting or by request.