

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA
Lower Level – Room 41, City Hall/Court House, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard
January 30, 2014

Present: Richard Dana, Barbara Bezat, Robert Ferguson, Matt Hill, Michael Justin, Bill Lightner, Diane Trout-Oertel, David Wagner

Absent: Renee Hutter Barnes (excused), Matt Mazanec (excused), David Riehle (excused), Steve Trimble (excused)

Staff Present: Amy Spong, Christine Boulware, Renee Cohn, John Beaty

PUBLIC HEARING/ DESIGN REVIEW

I. Call to Order 5:09p

- II. Approval of the Agenda** Ms. Spong requested that Items V. A and V. B be moved after Items V. C and V. D. Commissioner Hill requested that Item VI.B. 601 Western Avenue Discussion be added to New Business.

Commissioner Bezat moved to approve the agenda; Commissioner Lightner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

III. Chair's Announcements

A. Chair Dana discussed the departure of former Chair Laffin and acknowledged his service to the HPC. Ms. Spong noted that former Chair Laffin will be recognized for his service at the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Awards in May.

IV. Staff Announcements None were stated.

V. Old Business

A. Lowertown Ballpark, by the Department of Parks and Recreation, adopt resolution regarding the 100% Design Development-level plans and public comment received January 16th. File #LTBPK (Spong, 266-6714).

Ms. Spong summarized the draft resolution and indicated changes that had been made to incorporate the discussion and comments from the previous meeting.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel moved to adopt the resolution; Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion.

Chair Dana inquired if staff had received comments from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); Ms. Spong responded that comments have not been received and noted these comments will be the second of three to be received.

Chair Dana inquired to staff if signage will have to go through staff approval; Ms. Spong responded that it will not, but she has been in communication with the design team regarding signage.

Chair Dana referenced Item E and noted that the direction is clear.

Commissioner Wagner proposed that Item E be modified to use the word "intentionally" instead of "overly"; Ms. Spong noted that the language was based on language from a letter from SHPO. Commissioner Wagner proposed that instead of referring to the color and detailing as "important" that it be suggested that color

and detailing are “some ways” in which the ballpark can relate to the Lowertown Historic District.

Chair Dana suggested the Commissioner Wagner’s comments be incorporated with comments by other Commissioners for an amendment.

Commissioner Ferguson agreed with Commissioner Wagner and suggested that the word “overly” be struck from the resolution.

Commissioner Ferguson referred to Item F and discussed problematic elements suggesting that the trees be “randomly” spaced; Ms. Spong responded to this comment and discussed other language used to describe the placement of trees in the Lowertown Historic District.

Commissioner Ferguson referred to Item D, public art, and noted that the construction of principles 1, 4, and 5 could be interpreted as specifying subject matter or content and noted that this should not be the case.

Chair Dana inquired to Commissioner Ferguson if he takes issue with the principles themselves; Commissioner Ferguson responded that he did not. Chair Dana suggested changing some language in the introduction to the guidelines so as not to change the intent; Commissioner Ferguson agreed.

Ms. Spong noted that the public art guidelines referenced are intended to be broad and possibly used to mitigate impacts to connect the ballpark to the character of the Lowertown Historic District. Commissioner Ferguson clarified that he is not objecting to historical-based art, but expressed concern about future guidelines for the Lowertown Historic District.

Commissioner Ferguson submitted grammatical corrections to staff.

Commissioner Hill noted that the time given to the Commission to review the draft resolution was not sufficient.

Commissioner Hill suggested expanding Item C to incorporate more language supporting the development in the area related to the connection of the ballpark and the Lowertown Historic district, cultural aspects, and tourism.

Chair Dana summarized the suggestions made and asked for a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Wagner proposed a friendly amendment to include:
(1) Changing “more important” to “are some ways” and “overly” to “intentionally” in Item E.
(2) Add “the HPC has used the following principles, among other design principles, when considering art installation” to Item D.
(3) Strike “randomly” and include “irregularly” in Item F.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel proposed that “substantially differentiated” should be used instead of “intentionally differentiated” in Item E;
Commissioner Wagner accepted the change.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel accepted the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Hill proposed an addition to the friendly amendment to change Item C to read: “Create a cultural district that will enhance and complement historic Lowertown through appropriate support for signage, tourism, and community engagement that preserves and promotes the district.”

Commissioner Lightner requested clarification on whether the proposal is in addition to Item C, or if it is a replacement; Commissioner Hill clarified that it is a proposal to replace Item C.

Chair Dana repeated Commissioner Hill’s proposal.

Commissioner Wagner requested clarification on what it means to create a “cultural district”; Commissioner Hill noted that he would be open to other language, but that the intent is to continue the expectation of engagement of the ballpark to the Lowertown Historic District to tourism and the community.

Chair Dana suggested that Item C as written does not have any language to promote the district; Commissioner Hill discussed the relationship of the ballpark to the district and using this relationship to promote the district and area.

Ms. Spong explained the intent of Item C, as written, and discussed the connection to the Lowertown Historic District guidelines and the problematic aspects of using the word “engage” for staff.

Chair Dana suggested that Item C stay the same and that Commissioner Hill propose an additional item.

Commissioner Hill changed his friendly amendment that would be an additional Item to read: “Encourage exploration of a cultural district that will enhance and complement historic Lowertown through appropriate support for signage, tourism, and community engagement that preserves and promotes the district.”

Commissioner Hill continued to say that this amendment can be used by staff in discussions through the design process to include history and Lowertown as a primary factor in relationship to future development and funding opportunities.

Commissioner Lightner requested confirmation as to who the audience is for the amendment; Ms. Spong responded that the audience is the design team and SHPO for the resolution. Ms. Spong noted that there may be strategies in the Lowertown Master Plan that are similar to Commission Hill’s proposal.

Chair Dana inquired as to if Ms. Spong is comfortable with the proposed language from Commissioner Hill; Ms. Spong responded that she is.

Commissioner Wagner referenced Commissioner Lightner’s comments and suggested that the language specifically relate to the Greater Lowertown Master Plan and encouraged Commissioner Hill to consider a change to the wording.

Commissioner Hill proposed that the phrase “and aligns with the Lowertown master plan” be added to the end of his previously stated amendment.

Commissioner Lightner suggested that “aligns” should be replaced with “as described in”.

Chair Dana accepted both suggestions as friendly amendments.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel and Commissioner Hill accepted the friendly amendments.

Commissioner Lightner requested that Chair Dana read aloud Item E as amended.

Chair Dana read aloud Item E as: “the aspects of color, material, and detailing are some ways to emphasize compatibility when other aspects such as size, scale, and general design are substantially differentiated as in the ballparks’ design intent.”

The motion passed 7-0.

B. Dayton’s Department Store, 411 Cedar Avenue, adopt resolution providing recommendations to the Mayor and City Council. File #14-Daytons.

Ms. Spong summarized the draft resolution. She discussed previous studies regarding this building and the surrounding potential district.

Chair Dana commended staff on the draft resolution and requested confirmation that the Saint Paul Urban Renewal Historic District National Register Evaluation Form will be included in the resolution; Ms. Spong confirmed.

Commissioner Wagner moved to adopt the resolution with the following modification to Item 4: “the buildings design at the immediate street level was intended to address the pedestrian” and “additional uses that would benefit from this portion of the original design intent”.

Chair Dana suggested the word “aspect” in place of “portion”;
Commissioner Wagner accepted the change.

Commissioner Wagner noted that this change is intended to ensure that the design intent is only related to the street level and not related to the upper stories.

Commissioner Bezat seconded the motion.

Commissioner Bezat discussed the use of action words in the resolution language and suggested that: (1) be changed to say “properly evaluate and that the paragraphs are flipped; (4) be changed to say “encourage adaptive reuses” or “encourage consideration of adaptive reuses. Chair Dana clarified that this suggestion is to incorporate transitive verbs in (1) and (4).

Commissioner Ferguson noted a correction on page one, No. 5 that Mr. Nason is the president of the bank, not the building.

Ms. Spong discussed (4) and noted that part came from comments made by Commissioner Ferguson and discussed the intention for the second part of the

sentence. Chair Dana suggested that the intention could be addressed if “since” is added to the beginning of the statement. Commissioner Wagner agreed with Chair Dana’s suggestions.

Commissioner Wagner addressed the Port Authority staff present and expressed his preference for the building to be adaptively re-used.

Chair Dana referred to an article in the Pioneer Press regarding the building that referenced a brochure and an analysis and inquired to the present representatives of the Port Authority if the documents are available.

Lorrie Louder (Senior Vice President of Business and Inter-Governmental Affairs of the Senior Management Team), and Lee Krueger (Senior Vice President of the Real Estate and Development Team) were present to represent the Saint Paul Port Authority in the matter.

Mr. Krueger responded to Chair Dana and noted that the analysis will be available electronically and the brochure is available in hard copy and electronic copy.

Mr. Krueger discussed the building, the intention to adaptively re-use the building and the challenges of the building.

Ms. Louder discussed the marketing strategy for the building, encouraged the Commission to make suggestions for items to pursue in the report, and discussed pertinent aspects of the building.

Ms. Louder asked about to a 20-day notice rule for historic properties and noted that they had not received it yet.

Chair Dana discussed the building and the role of the HPC in adopting this resolution.

Ms. Louder noted that the 20-day requirement in question comes from Sec. 73.05 (D) of the Legislative Code; Ms. Spong responded that this notice refers to when the HPC is going to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding local designation of properties and is not applicable to the resolution being considered for adoption.

Commissioner Wagner requested to see the brochure; Mr. Krueger distributed hard copies of the brochure.

Commissioner Lightner inquired as to the basic timeline of the building: Mr. Krueger outlined several issues regarding maintenance and development of the building and stated intent to not own the building through another winter.

Commissioner Lightner referenced the recommendation for patience and inquired as to other steps that the Port Authority is taking to sell the building that Macy’s couldn’t; Mr. Krueger discussed the differences between the ownership by the Port Authority and Macy’s and described incentives that the Port Authority can provide for potential buyers.

Ms. Louder noted that the Port Authority has been active in acquiring financial incentives for preservation related to supporting the State Historic tax credit.

Chair Dana noted that the intent of the resolution is to lay out areas of concern for the HPC to advise the Port Authority to consider.

Commissioner Wagner noted several points of concern in the visual aspects of the brochure that encouraged redevelopment of the site, but none showing reuse of the building.

Commissioner Bezat discussed Raymond Loewy and Victor Gruen and their significance related to the building.

Commissioner Hill discussed re-use and encouraged the Port Authority to view the HPC as a partner in marketing the building.

The motion passed 7-0.

C. Draft Annual Report (item was laid over from the January 16th Annual Meeting)

Ms. Spong summarized the Annual Report.

Discussion was had regarding aspects of the Annual Report and the status of projects throughout the year.

D. 2014 HPC Work Plan (item was laid over from the January 16th Annual Meeting)

Ms. Spong summarized the 2014 HPC Work Plan and discussed projects that will likely come to the Commission in the coming year.

Commissioner Hill commended staff, encouraged staff to overlay grant opportunities, and challenged the Commission to work more closely with City Council members.

Chair Dana commended staff and inquired as to the next step of the Annual Report; Ms. Spong noted that the Annual Report will be translated into a visual version and distributed.

VI. New Business

A. Hamline Midway Community Plan (District 11), by the Department of Planning and Economic Development, adopt resolution providing recommendations to the Mayor, City Council and Planning Commission. File #14-HMCP (Boulware, 266-6715).

Ms. Boulware summarized the resolution and discussed the factors that contributed to writing the resolution.

Staff presented photos and maps related to the resolution.

Chair Dana requested confirmation as to who produced the Hamline Midway Community Plan (District 11); Ms. Boulware confirmed that it was the Hamline Midway Coalition. Ms. Spong noted the history of the Hamline Midway Community Plan (District 11) related the

City Council and the planning department.

Chair Dana commended the writing and construction of the Hamline Midway Community Plan (District 11).

Commissioner Justin inquired as to the appropriateness of including a deadline in the suggestion to re-word page ten, Historic Preservation: Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies HP3; staff responded that this has not been done before and may cause complications when the plan is updated.

Commissioner Ferguson referred to page nine, Housing: Housing Objectives and Strategies H 1.2 and noted issues with specifying "lead window replacement"; a discussion was had to include a line to "encourage lead paint remediation".

Chair Dana suggested that Commissioner Ferguson is making a motion to adopt the resolution with the change to page nine, Housing: Housing Objectives and Strategies H 1.2; Commissioner Ferguson agreed that he was making a motion; Commissioner Wagner seconded the motion.

The motion passed 7-0.

B. 601 Western Avenue Discussion

Commissioner Hill discussed recent articles published regarding 601 Western Avenue North and issues regarding re-use of building, vacant buildings, and communication with City Council for this property and generally for the city.

VII. Adjourn 7:32pm

Submitted by R.Cohn