

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA
Lower Level – Room 41, City Hall/Court House, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard
February 13, 2014

Present: Barbara Bezat, Richard Dana, Robert Ferguson, Matt Hill, Renee Hutter, William Lightner, Matt Mazanec, David Riehle, Steve Trimble, Diane Trout-Oertel, David Wagner

Absent: Michael Justin (excused)

Staff Present: Amy Spong, Christine Boulware, John Beaty

BUSINESS MEETING

I. Call to Order 5:03 PM

II. Approval of the Agenda Commissioner Riehle moved to approve the agenda; Commissioner Hutter Barnes.

III. Approval of the meeting minutes

A. January 16, 2014 Business Meeting

Commissioner Ferguson submitted minor corrections. Commissioner Bezat moved to approve the minutes; Commissioner Trout-Oertel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. January 30, 2014 Public Hearing

Commissioner Bezat moved to approve the minutes; Commissioner Hutter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Chair's Announcements

V. Staff Announcements

A. Federal Communications Commission (FCC): National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) & Section 106 Review of Distributed Antenna Systems (DAS)

Staff discussed the memo and letters submitted.

Commissioner Bezat inquired as to if the HPC should submit their own letter; Ms. Boulware responded that it will not be necessary as PED staff are working on a response.

Ms. Boulware discussed the nature of the proposal and impacts that it would have.

B. Ms. Spong discussed the Downtown Public Bike Plan released by Public Works and the availability for the Commission to review and comment on the plan.

VI. Pre-Application Review

A. 740 Seventh Street East, Dayton's Bluff Historic District, by Mississippi Market Co-op, Gail A. Graham, for a preliminary review to construct a 23,500 sq. ft., two-and-one-half story building at the southeast corner of East Seventh and Maple Streets. The building footprint will be approximately 15,000 sq. ft. with a 56 stall parking lot to the south (rear) of the store. (Dermody, 266-6617)

Ms. Spong noted that Mr. Dermody was not present at the meeting and read aloud the staff report.

Chair Dana inquired as to how much time has been spent with the applicant to reach this point; Ms. Spong discussed the meetings that have taken place regarding this proposal and overall development plan.

Bruce Cornwall, from LHB Architects, was present to speak on behalf of the project.

Mr. Cornwall summarized the current status of the project and design aspects that are currently being discussed.

Commissioner Wagner noted the reflective metal surface in the branding of the market and inquired as to what staff and the Commission would think of its use.

Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if the use of the color suggested for the fiber-cement panels is being proposed; Mr. Cornwall discussed the influence for this color and noted that it is not necessarily a final proposal. Commissioner Wagner and Mr. Cornwall discussed other design details.

Commissioner Riehle requested clarification as to which side of the building the loading dock is located; Mr. Cornwall clarified that it is on the south side of the building and discussed the possible routes for the delivery trucks to enter in relation to the adjacent housing.

Commissioner Riehle inquired as to how wide the loading dock will be; Mr. Cornwall responded that it will be approximately 18-20 feet wide.

Commissioner Wagner discussed onsite “renewables” and inquired as to the possible visual impacts the installation of these systems may have; Mr. Cornwall responded that there is interest in these “renewables”, but the cost may be prohibitive for systems at that scale.

Commissioner Lightner commended the design and inquired as to the durability of the exterior fiber-cement and if additional material will be required; Mr. Cornwall responded that a cast-stone base will eventually be included.

Ms. Spong referenced Commissioner Wagner’s comments and noted that the guidelines suggest that raw metal surfaces should be limited and discussed other options for the proposed corrugated metal sign.

Ms. Spong requested confirmation from Commissioner Wagner as to his interpretation of the “blind window”; Commissioner Wagner confirmed that he was referring to spandrel glass and Mr. Cornwall agreed. Ms. Spong clarified that was not staff’s interpretation, but a bricked window with a reveal. Commissioner Wagner discussed the use of patterns and articulation.

Commissioner Mazanec referenced the supporting columns at the entrances and inquired as to if there has been consideration to make them slimmer to better relate to surrounding historic buildings; Mr. Cornwall discussed design options.

Commissioner Mazanec expressed concern that the traffic layout will have an impact on residential street; Mr. Cornwall noted that this has been discussed with the community.

Commissioner Ferguson referenced the fiber-cement panels and suggested that it is reminiscent of coursed masonry and inquired as to if other coursing options had been considered; Mr. Cornwall discussed the design decisions related to the coursing and window placement.

Ms. Spong asked the Commission if they are comfortable understanding this proposal within the historic district, and if not if they would like to see it visually represented; Chair Dana responded that it would be helpful information, but may not change their opinion. Mr. Cornwall suggested some visual materials he could provide; staff suggested that these materials include visuals of the building in relation to the surrounding district.

Commissioner Wagner suggested visual materials that represent the view of the roof of the building from above; Chair Dana noted the reference to this view in the staff findings.

Commissioner Mazanec noted the adjacent houses and suggested materials to show their relationship to the project.

Commissioner Trimble suggested that it might be the future apartment project to the west that may obstruct the view.

Commissioner Ferguson suggested that additional blocks in the historic district should be considered as well.

Commissioner Trimble noted that the Dayton's Bluff Community Council may already have some of the discussed images.

Eduardo Barrera, the project manager in PED, was present and discussed the traffic impact studies that have been submitted.

Commissioner Riehle discussed the empty space present at the site.

Commissioner Trimble stated that the Mississippi Market is something the community wanted, and the City decided to include the apartment building; Ms. Spong noted that there was conversation to include both projects in one discussion, but that they will be considered separately.

Ms. Spong discussed the impact of potential future projects of the district.

Commissioner Riehle inquired as to if there are any more construction proposals coming to the Commission; Ms. Spong noted that the housing component of the site will likely be coming to the Commission next month.

A discussion was had regarding other vacant sites in the district.

Chair Dana requested confirmation that the brick shown is veneer brick; Mr. Cornwall confirmed.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel suggested that the housing and market projects will be reviewed simultaneously; Ms. Spong noted that it is dependent on the timelines.

Commissioner Mazanec requested confirmation that the Commission will be reviewing the entire site; Ms. Spong confirmed and noted that only a small portion sits outside of the district boundaries.

Commissioner Lightner inquired as to the use of the vacant lot at Metro State; Ms. Spong noted the history of this project and the current plans for the parking structure entrance. Commissioner Trimble discussed the design changes.

Chair Dana summarized the design issues discussed including:

- The offsets to distinguish the different facade and the basement level.
- The possibility that the raw metal panels read more as signage than siding.
- The size of the front entry columns.
- The coursing in relation to the window openings.
- Visual context of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Split-face concrete in the retaining walls.
- The use of reflective metal.

Mr. Cornwall noted that the brick referenced is not a true veneer, but a cavity wall built with actual brick.

Ms. Spong noted Commissioner Wagner's comments regarding "renewables" and suggested that it be considered.

Commissioner Wagner discussed the corrugated metal of the sign and design options to retain the placement on the building and comply with the guidelines.

VII. Public Comment

A. United States Post Office and Custom House, 180 Kellogg Boulevard East., by the Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, for Certified Local Government Comment on the nomination of the United States Post Office and Custom House to the National Register of Historic Places. The HPC will allow for public comment and submit the comments to the SHPO. (Spong, 266-6714) \

Ms. Spong presented the nomination.

Commissioner Trimble discussed the building history.

Ms. Spong inquired as to if any of the Commissioners were surprised that this building did not meet the requirements for architecture; a discussion was had regarding this decision and the impact it will have on future HPC considerations and potential local designation.

Commissioner Bezat discussed this importance of addressing the cultural and architectural historic aspects of the building.

Commissioner Trimble inquired as to if the architectural component can be added at a later date; Ms. Spong noted difficulties with this situation and discussed future projects that would have an influence on it.

Commissioner Bezat summarized that the Commission is in support of the nomination and that they strongly encourage the architectural aspect of the building be included.

Ms. Spong discussed future possibilities for the building and future review by the Commission.

Commissioner Riehle suggested that the Commission should comment on the statement.

Chair Dana proposed that staff submit a letter that the Commission unanimously supports the nomination, but is concerned that the report suggests that the building does not meet the criteria for architecture.

Commissioner Bezat suggested that the statement be expanded to include that the consideration of the building was too narrow.

Ms. Spong added that the report was influenced by a study performed by the Post Office and an evaluation by an outside organization and in consideration with many other Post Office buildings.

A discussion was had regarding buildings in St. Paul that would be considered in an evaluation of Art Deco style buildings.

VIII. Adjourn 6:40 PM

Submitted by R.Cohn