

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION
CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA
Lower Level – Room 41, City Hall/Court House, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard
December 5, 2013

Present: Richard Laffin, Richard Dana, Renee Hutter Barnes, Robert Ferguson, Matt Hill, Michael Justin, Bill Lightner, Matt Mazanec, David Riehle, Steve Trimble, Diane Trout-Oertel, David Wagner

Absent: Barbara Bezat (excused)

Staff Present: Amy Spong, Christine Boulware, John Beaty

PUBLIC HEARING/DESIGN REVIEW

- I. **Call to Order** 5:09 pm
- II. **Approval of the Agenda** Item VI was moved to the next meeting. Commissioner Dana motioned to approve the agenda; Commissioner Riehle seconded the motion.
- III. **Conflicts of Interest** Commissioner Hutter-Barnes stated for Item VIII. A. that she was a part of the 2011 archaeology and architectural survey team of the Diamond Products Site through her past employer, but there is no conflict.
- IV. **Chair's Announcements** Chair Laffin noted that there has not yet been a meeting with the nominating committee for new officers.
- V. **Staff Announcements** None were stated.
- VI. ~~**Approval of the meeting minutes**~~ This item will be laid over.
A. ~~November 21, 2013 Public Hearing/Permit Review~~
- VII. **Old Business** None was stated.
- VIII. **New Business**
 - A. **Presentation of the proposed new Saints Ballpark, by the Department of Parks and Recreation and design team. This is directly adjacent to the local and National Register Lowertown Historic District and not located within the boundaries (Spong, 266-6714).**

Staff listed the published and additional materials available regarding the design of the ballpark and described the roll of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Commission.

Staff summarized the proposal and the history of the project related to the potential impacts to the Lowertown Historic District. Staff noted several aspects of the Design Guidelines for new construction related to the Ballpark design.

Staff referenced current and historic maps and discussed the change in the historic streetscape and building configuration.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel addressed the issue of the potential impacts to the eastern edge of the Farmer's Market. She referenced the guideline to retain a wall surrounding the market and inquired whether the street wall will continue along the east side; Ms. Spong responded that this is a guideline and that there can be flexibility.

Commissioner Ferguson requested that staff suggest the most relevant guidelines from the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards; Ms. Spong discussed the guidelines from the Preservation Brief #14 and historic district guidelines that were included. Commissioner Ferguson suggested that sections from the SOI guidelines referencing site considerations be included in the information available on the HPC web page.

Commissioner Hill requested clarification of the note on page two of the Memo related to the EAW statement; Ms. Spong discussed the difference between being required to review versus consultation.

Jody Martinez, Project Manager from Parks and Recreation, gave a presentation on the past and current state of the Saints Ballpark design and construction.

Elizabeth Gales, a consultant from Hess Roise and Company, gave a presentation on visual components of the Summit Environmental Report published in 2011 and history of the area.

Logan Gerken, an architect from Ryan Companies, gave some additional comments regarding the site conditions and design of the Saints Ballpark.

Julie Snow, from Julie Snow Architects, Inc., discussed the design decisions made for the Saints Ballpark in context of the Lowertown Historic District.

Mr. Gerken commented on the efficiency of the design and construction. Ms. Snow continued to detail the design of the Ballpark.

Chair Laffin inquired as to decisions left to be made for the design; Ms. Snow noted that the project is primarily finished, but some changes will be made. Mr. Gerken discussed the design-build nature of the project.

Commissioner Trimble discussed some down sides of the design-build process and noted it can be more expensive than design-bid-build. Mr. Gerken discussed other construction bid options.

Commissioner Riehle requested an informal straw poll from the public present of who would be interested in giving comments at a later date; Chair Laffin took a poll and counted three people who would like to give comments in the future.

Commissioner Trimble inquired as to why there would be additional community input if the project design is only a week away from completion; Ms. Snow referred to Chapter 138 of the State Statute and noted that SHPO will still have some say in the process.

Commissioner Hutter-Barnes inquired as to if there has been discussion of the SHPO letter and recommendations; Ms. Snow noted that there has and referenced the issues regarding the massing and material palette of the project.

Chair Laffin inquired as to if the brick noted in the design was a different material at an earlier point; Ms. Snow noted that it was and other materials were explored before the budget was finalized.

Chair Laffin noted that the palette suggests a dark brown brick while most brick in Lowertown is red. Chair Laffin inquired as to if there is still discussion over the final material choices; Ms. Snow discussed the choice for the brick in context of the pavilion color.

Commissioner Riehle noted the grade described and requested clarification of the location of the slope on the field; Mr. Gerken listed the elevations of various point on the field and around the site.

Commissioner Riehle noted that the area east of Broadway was previously a marsh and inquired whether related environmental conditions have been explored; Mr. Gerken described some considerations that have been taken related to the environmental factors and efforts to mitigate contaminated materials and storm water management.

Commissioner Riehle noted the possible necessity to remove contaminated soil; Mr. Gerken discussed the dirt that is being removed from the site. Mr. Gerken stated the contamination on the east side is due to environmental factors and the west side is debris-laden soil from former buildings.

Commissioner Riehle inquired as to the purpose for the group sales area noted in the plan; Mr. Gerken described the need for this area for user-group events.

Commissioner Wagner noted the gates on the 5th Street entrance and requested clarification on the materials and size; Ms. Snow noted the desire for transparency and the possibility of steel as the final material. Ms. Snow noted that the current picket fence is a place-holder until the material and design is finalized.

Chair Laffin noted the view of 5th street is slightly impeded by the pavilion and inquired whether this was intentional; Ms. Snow noted the desire to be visible from 5th, but also the alignment with the scoreboard and the middle of the street. Ms. Snow noted possible uses for the pavilion space.

Chair Laffin inquired as to the provision being made for public art in and around the Ballpark; Mr. Gerken noted that this is being achieved with an artist team to consult on engaging artists throughout the Ballpark. Mr. Gerken noted that there was not a typical call for art in order to encourage integrative and collaborative art. Ms. Snow noted other potential places to show art in the Ballpark.

Commissioner Lightner requested confirmation of the material of the stair tower; Ms. Snow responded that it will be masonry.

Commissioner Lightner inquired as to the role of the LBDCC in deciding the color of the masonry; Ms. Snow stated that they presented several options to them, but did not confirm with them the masonry color.

Commissioner Lightner requested confirmation that the pavilion is metal; Ms. Snow confirmed.

Commissioner Riehle inquired as to the distance from home plate to the fence at center field; Mr. Gerken responded that is 398 feet. Commissioner Riehle inquired whether this was requested by the Saints; Mr. Gerken stated that this decision was made in consideration of the site constraints and field requirements.

Commissioner Riehle noted the convention site and inquired as to the realistic nature of people gathering past left field; Mr. Gerken noted that there will be space along with concessions and amenities.

Chair Laffin noted the preferred view from left field to downtown St. Paul and inquired whether this will be a place where ticket holders are expected to move around; Mr. Gerken responded that it is.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel inquired as to the material of the buildings on either side of the entrance gate; Ms. Snow responded that they are both brick. Commissioner Trout-Oertel referenced the transition, noted by Mr. Gerken, from brick and mortar to landscaping (i.e. the transition from the buildings of Lowertown to the parkland to the east) and inquired as to if there were possibilities for strengthening the western edge along Broadway. Commissioner Trout-Oertel suggested that functions in this area could be contained by a brick wall in order to strengthen the hard edge on the west, along Broadway; Ms. Snow noted that this is something that can be discussed. Ms. Martinez noted some other walls that may be able to be included. Ms. Snow noted the need for 7,000 people to be able to leave the stadium and noted a potential issue with additional divisions with brick walls. Ms. Snow also noted potential safety concerns with additional walls. Ms. Gales noted the historic precedent regarding the current design.

Commissioner Wagner noted the black steel panels and inquired as to if these will be made of stainless steel; Ms. Snow stated that raw steel will have a patina and sealed to protect against rust. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to the expected life span of the sealant coating; Mr. Gerken stated that the life span is expected to be seven years. Commissioner Wagner noted that the maintenance may be similar to a painted material; Mr. Gerken discussed the maintenance. Ms. Gales noted that the same steel coating was used recently on the interior of the Ford Center Building in Minneapolis.

Commissioner Wagner noted the steel structure and requested confirmation that painted steel will be used; Ms. Snow confirmed that where steel is indicated on

this section, painted steel will be used. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if this dark palette is the reason for choosing the dark brick color to make compatible tones; Ms. Snow stated that the color palette is present in Lowertown. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if a species of wood has been chosen; Ms. Snow responded that cedar has been chosen. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if this choice is to provide a warm material in contrast with the steel; Ms. Snow confirmed this intention. Commissioner Wagner inquired as to if the choice of dark black steel is to create a thin presence in order to highlight what is beyond, and not the structure itself; Ms. Snow confirmed this intention.

Ms. Spong presented additional images of former buildings that have existed on the site showing multi-story buildings. Ms. Gales questioned the location of the images that Ms. Spong presented.

Commissioner Ferguson referenced the Greater Lowertown Master Plan and the discussion regarding the relationship of the Farmer's Market and the plaza; Ms. Snow responded that the intention is for the pavilion to be utilized during Farmer's Market hours.

Commissioner Hill noted the economic opportunity for the City of St. Paul and questioned the fast-tracked process of the design and the lack of contribution from the Commission regarding the potential impacts on the Lowertown Historic District. Commissioner Hill inquired whether the City will allow for additional opportunities for the Commission to comment on the potential disruption to the historic district and to make recommendations on how to fully integrate the Ballpark.

Ms. Martinez requested clarification of the questions being asked.

Commissioner Hill inquired as to what the City is doing to ensure that traffic, parking, and public safety are being managed in a manner that is sensitive to the historic district; Ms. Martinez discussed the EAW process and noted that discussions have continued regarding these issues of safety concerns. Ms. Snow noted that fitting into the historic district is a priority of this project.

Commissioner Riehle noted to Ms. Gales that the St. Paul Gas and Light Companies originated in the 1850's at this site.

Chair Laffin inquired as to how the design has changed since the meeting with SHPO and plan for signage. Ms. Snow noted that only schematic designs were submitted to SHPO and the material palette has been chosen since then, and that their concern for massing has been dropped. Mr. Gerken noted that they made sure that the material was compatible, but not mimicking the historic district.

Ms. Spong referenced the letter from SHPO and the discussion regarding the punched openings, the comments made on the curtain wall, and the appropriate materials. Ms. Spong inquired whether the issues regarding the curtain wall have been addressed for the upcoming submission; Ms. Snow noted that they have

included more masonry, but the expanse of glass is important for the use in the Ballpark. Mr. Gerken noted changes that have been made regarding the masonry concerns.

Ms. Spong responded to comments made by Mr. Gerken and notes from the minutes from SHPO and the concern of the floating appearance of the glass wall; Mr. Gerken noted that this was addressed in the discussion of massing.

Chair Laffin requested that the signage be discussed; Ms. Snow stated that a sign package has not been created yet.

Ms. Spong noted concern for the potential to include LED signs on the exterior of the Ballpark; Ms. Snow noted that this is not their intention.

Commissioner Riehle inquired as to the origin of the 7,000 attendance figure; Mr. Gerken noted that this is the maximum capacity and is driven by the St. Paul Saints pro forma and the AAA baseball standards.

Chair Laffin requested a discussion regarding the SOI standard regarding new construction and if the design of the Ballpark strikes a balance between the new and being compatible to the historic district.

Commissioner Wagner noted that the SOI standards can be interpreted on a broad spectrum, and is of the opinion that the design is on one end of the spectrum and is compatible.

Commissioner Dana expressed belief that the current design is both differentiated and compatible with the historic district.

Commissioner Hutter-Barnes agreed with Commissioner Wagner regarding the interpretation of SOI standards and commended the designers on incorporating the comments from SHPO.

Chair Laffin noted that the color palette may be too somber and encouraged a continuing exploration of the material color palette of the Ballpark, particularly of the masonry materials.

Commissioner Trout-Oertel requested that better elevations be submitted to the Commission before final comments are made.

Ms. Spong requested additional views from Broadway and from the Allen Building and suggested a continuing discussion of the relationship of the Ballpark to Broadway.

Chair Laffin concluded that there will be a continuing discussion of the Ballpark design.

IX. Committee Reports None were stated.

X. Motion to Adjourn 7:20 pm
| Submitted by R.Cohn